

TEODORO A. DEHESA AND
VERACRUZ IN THE PORFIRIATO 1892-1913:
A CASE STUDY OF MEXICAN FEDERAL STATE RELATIONS

by

Karl B. Koth

A dissertation
presented to the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation studies the relationship between the State of Veracruz and the central Mexican government from 1892-1913 under the governorship of Teodoro A. Dehesa. He was an influential figure in Veracruz and Mexican politics because of his friendship with President Díaz and because of his inveterate opposition to the Científicos.

The dissertation concludes that the Porfirian system, although autocratic, was not as despotic as has usually been thought. There was considerable room for a Governor like Dehesa to manoeuvre. This study also suggests that the President was not deus ex machina behind the system. Furthermore, it argues that Dehesa was an important transitional figure from the Porfiriato to the Revolution. It was Dehesa who introduced Madero to old President Díaz, and who stood by Madero's right of political opposition, safeguarding the first President of the Revolution on his political campaigns through Veracruz.

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Preface

Since the publication of the Historia Moderna, edited by Daniel Cosío Villegas between 1955 and 1972, studies of the Porfiriato have become increasingly popular.¹ The period, so important for the understanding of the Revolution, has received treatment in some aspects of its development. However, as a number of well-known scholars have attested, much remains to be done as several aspects of this important and interesting period of Mexican history await scholarly penetration.²

Bryan et.al. have persuasively called for more regional studies of the Porfiriato, particularly of the relationship between the various states and the federal government, so as to reveal the nature of Díaz's political system. Although the regime was highly centralized, some of the President's main sources of power were in the provinces, over which a strong governor could exercise considerable political control.³ Indeed, Díaz relied heavily on his Governors, and they in turn, could use their political power to put their personal stamp on the state they governed. In another work Bryan has shown how Bernardo Reyes in Nuevo Leon endeared himself to the

people of that state through his talent for administration and personal honesty. Reyes was also the first governor to successfully introduce a labour code, which became the model for the code incorporated into the later
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revolutionary constitution.

Unavailability of sources has not always been the reason for the lack of research on the Porfiriato. An excellent source is the Porfirio Díaz archive at the Universidad Ibero-Americana. The alphabetical organization arranged by Díaz's secretary has been preserved and so it is relatively easy to locate correspondence with any particular person. There is, of course, no way of ascertaining the integrity of the papers. However, cross reference with other archival material is possible and mandatory. Despite the comprehensiveness of this archive there are still difficulties in unearthing the particulars of the decision-making process. Other historians, (Cosío Villegas and Cott, for example), have attested to the fact that official correspondence rarely included details of the matter being discussed. Díaz did not like to commit himself on paper, and therefore some documents contain only allusions to questions of policy and action. Thus, only in bringing new sources to bear on the period, as well as strict cross-referencing, are we able to overcome these barriers. Other important archival material has been available to scholars for decades, yet remains unexploited. Such has been the case with the personal archive of the popular governor of Veracruz from 1892-

1911, Teodoro A. Dehesa, who was not only an intimate friend of President Porfirio Díaz, but was also an influential politician at the centre of power. He was also considered a champion of a more modern form of Mexican "liberalism" and was an outspoken and inveterate opponent of the group known as the Científicos.⁵ His political vision allowed him to see further than the immediate requirements of the Porfirian system. Dehesa earned the support of an overwhelming proportion of Veracruzans and Mexicans because of his talent and liberalism-- in no part of the republic was there such freedom of the press. Furthermore, Dehesa, although always personally loyal to the President, did not hesitate to disagree with Díaz, and on occasion refused to execute the President's desires. He realized too, that Mexico, which was undergoing a rapid pace of capitalist development, would have to pay heed to the demands of the emerging working class, if chaos and revolution were not to ensue.

However, Dehesa was no cynical realist. From his youth he was characterized by a genuine sense of justice and sympathy for the poor.⁶ His administration was punctuated with personal acts of kindness, for example by dipping into his own pocket to help landless peasants as well as poor urban youngsters in need of a scholarship. In 1906 he recognized the Gran Circulo de Obreros Libres of Orizaba, the centre of the important textile industry in

the State, giving it a status enjoyed by no other workers' organisation in Mexico. ⁷ In conformity with his modern ideas on labour policies he commissioned the draft of a new labour code for the republic in 1907 by the famous jurist, Silvestre Moreno Cora, which was presented to the Mexican Congress, where it was defeated by the Científico deputies before it even reached the floor of the Chamber of Deputies for debate. ⁸

Dehesa was a genuinely popular figure in Mexico, not only in his home state of Veracruz. Such was his popularity that the progressive press wished to have him named as Vice-President, and even Francisco Madero, the revolutionary who wanted to avoid revolution, agreed that if Dehesa were to run as Vice-President in the 1910 election, he would find this acceptable.

A general aim of this work will be to study the relation between the federal Mexican government and the State of Veracruz under the leadership of Teodoro A. Dehesa. What it attempts to do specifically is to chart the various possibilities of action open to Dehesa and to show the extent to which he could act independently. By doing so it is hoped that more light will be thrown on the inner working of the porfirian regime. The reasons for choosing Dehesa are manifold. He was an intimate friend of the President and thus very close to the centre of power. Secondly he represented a loose group of political men who were adamantly opposed to the Científicos. Dehesa's

policies and political ideas were quite different from the members of this latter group to the point where, as is argued here, had he been able to capture the vice-presidency in 1910 the course of Mexican history might have been less violent and traumatic. Dehesa was known for his "progressive" attitude and also for his personal honesty and integrity.

The first chapter of this work examines the Porfirian regime itself as the context in which the State governor was forced to operate. It makes no claims to comprehensiveness but charts the main lines of power in the system. Chapter Two describes Governor Dehesa's background and life but focuses especially on his early adherence to General Porfirio Díaz and the reasons for the close friendship between the two men.

The third and fourth chapters then analyze Dehesa's governorship. Chapter Three deals with the politics of the State of Veracruz from 1892 to 1900, in particular the factionalism and opposition to Dehesa, and his problems in gaining the support of Veracruzans for reelection. Chapter Four describes Dehesa's administration, the methods used to develop the State and their success.

Land policy has come to occupy an important position in Porfirian research. Consequently Chapter Five deals with the politics surrounding the commutation of communally-held land into private plots. Despite the efforts of Dehesa to ensure that the consequences of commutation were to the

benefit of the Indians in Veracruz, the policy of subdividing communal land caused a rebellion in Papantla in 1896 and a revolt in Acayucan in 1906. The importance of Acayucan has been generally neglected in the historiography of this period. This work recognizes the Acayucan revolt as the beginning of the Mexican Revolution.

Labour is another topic which has received some treatment. However, apart from the very general interpretation of Porfirian labour policy as backward and repressive, few studies have analyzed the problem in detail. Governor Dehesa was opposed to the labour policy of the Científicos and worked assiduously to convince the President that working conditions and wage rates would have to be improved drastically. Chapter Six therefore examines the Rio Blanco labour dispute of 1906-07 and especially the role played by Governor Dehesa.

Chapter Seven examines Dehesa's role as a counter-weight to the Científicos and his attempts to get Díaz to understand that the men who most influenced the President after 1900 were almost universally hated in Mexico. Dehesa's attempts failed despite his popularity in Mexico, and he was unable to secure the vice-presidency, an action which might have obviated the Mexican Revolution. The dissertation concludes that the Porfirian system, although autocratic, was not as despotic as has been usually thought. There was considerable room for a Governor like Dehesa to manoeuvre although it took the

utmost in political talent and integrity to do so. This study also suggests that the President himself was not deus ex machina behind the system. Díaz was allowed to remain in power as long as he kept Mexico relatively peaceful and did not interfere with the rapid capitalist development which made victims of peasants and workers. The study shows that, while Díaz may have been personally sympathetic to the plight of peasants and workers, he did not have the insight and the courage to accept the ideas of men like Dehesa who advocated a more democratic, humane and modern labour and land policy.

There are many debts owing in the preparation of this dissertation. Of special importance was the friendly guidance and support of my advisor Professor Timothy E. Anna. A special thanks is also due to Licenciado Leonardo Pasquel who offered me the comfort of his home and office and allowed me to work in the Dehesa Archive. A debt of gratitude is also owing to the staff of the Colección Porfirio Díaz in the Universidad Ibero-America and the many courteous and helpful Mexicans in the following archives and libraries: the Biblioteca de la Ciudad Xalapa, Veracruz; Biblioteca 'Daniel Cosío Villegas', El Colegio de México, Mexico City; Biblioteca Central de la Universidad Veracruzana, Xalapa, Veracruz; Biblioteca 'Lerdo de Tejada', Secretario de Hacienda, Mexico City; Biblioteca 'Manuel Orozco y Berra', Centro de Investigaciones Historicas, INAH, Mexico City; Biblioteca

del Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Historia, Mexico City; Biblioteca Nacional, UNAM, Mexico City; Biblioteca de la Universidad Ibero-Americana, Mexico City; Biblioteca del Instituto de Antropología y Historia, Xalapa, Veracruz. Finally, my thanks go to my wife Beverly, and Charles, Christopher and Natalya for their patience and toleration.

PREFACE

NOTES

1. Anthony T. Bryan, "Political Power in Porfirio Díaz's Mexico: A Review and Commentary", The Historian, 38 (Aug. 1976), pp.648-668.
2. Ibid. See also Robert Potash, "Historiography of Mexico Since 1821", Hispanic American Historical Review, 40 (Aug. 1960), pp.383-424; Paul Vanderwood and Anthony T. Bryan, "Research Materials for the Porfiriato" in Research in Mexican History: Topics, Methodology, Sources and a Fractical Guide to Field Research edited by Richard E. Greenleaf and Michael C. Meyer, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), pp.159-161.
3. Ibid.
4. Bryan, "Political Power".
5. Daniel Cosío Villegas, "Quinta llamada particular" in El porfiriato: la vida política exterior: primera parte (Mexico City: Editorial Hermes, 1970), p.xvi; Archivo Teodoro A. Dehesa, Seminario de Historia, Xalapa, Veracruz, hereafter cited as ATD. I am indebted to Licenciado Leonardo Pasquel for allowing me access to this archive, and also to Maestra Silvia Moreno, Director of the Historical Seminar in Xalapa, Veracruz, for allowing me to use the archive after it had been removed to Xalapa and was being catalogued.
6. Maria Elena Sodi de Pallares. Teodoro A. Dehesa: una epoca y un hombre (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepétl, 1959, pp.7-8.
7. Daniel Cosío Villegas, El porfiriato: la vida política interior: segunda parte (Mexico City: Editorial Hermes, 1972), p.721.
8. Leonardo Pasquel, La Revolución en el Estado de Veracruz 2 vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepétl, 1972), v.1, p.62. See also Mexico, Leyes del Congreso de la Union (Mexico City: 1906-08).

CHAPTER I.

VERACRUZ IN THE PORFIRIAN SYSTEM

To understand Teodoro A. Dehesa's role in Mexican politics during the Porfiriato, it is necessary first to know something about the State he presided over between 1892 and 1911, and whose rapid development he oversaw. This man, who started his working life as a simple clerk in a dry-goods store, rose through diligence and loyalty to occupy the leading political office of one of the most important, perhaps the most important Mexican State. And since Veracruz's importance was due partially to its geography, a discussion of this subject is necessary. Furthermore, to understand how a clever and industrious Governor could maximize his State's material potential for use as a power base within a highly centralized and autocratic system, it is necessary to examine the general nature of the regime of which Dehesa was a part. This chapter will begin with a geography of the State of Veracruz and then briefly examine the major characteristics of the system of government during the Porfiriato, paying

particular attention to the tactics used by the President, Porfirio Díaz, to maintain control. Examples used to illustrate these will, of course, be taken from Veracruz during the time in which Teodoro Dehesa was Governor.

Veracruz, one of the most beautiful and rich States of the Mexican union, occupies almost all the land between the vast mountain range known as the Sierra Madre de Occidental and the Gulf of Mexico.¹ It is bounded on the north by the Pánuco and Tamesí rivers, and on the south by the Tonalá, and covers approximately 72,000 square kilometres of territory. The coastline is seven hundred kilometres long, and from the coast to the mainly eastern and southern borders, its width varies between 32 and 222 kilometres.² On the north it is bordered by the State of Tamaulipas, on the West by San Luis Potosí, Puebla and Hidalgo, on the south by Oaxaca and Chiapas, and on the south-East by Tabasco.

The natural richness of the State derives from the variety of its topography and climate. The coastland is low and studded with many bays and inlets, except for the southern extremity of the State where the mountains thrust out into the sea. In a few places the low ground extends inland for quite a distance, as in the southern Cantons of Los Tuxtlas, Acayucan and Minatitlán, but generally the land rises fairly quickly from the coast giving way to luxurious mountains with every describable variety of fauna and flora, including vast pine forests. The highest points of the Sierra Madre Oriental are found in the State as are the

famous extinct volcanoes, the Pico Orizaba (5700 meters)
and the Cofre de Perote (4000 metres).³ Numerous streams
and rivers form in the Sierra watershed, making Veracruz
one of the best-watered States of the Mexican union.⁴ On
the way to the coast these form a variety of waterfalls,
cascades and rapids which give Veracruz an advantage in the
production of hydro-power, the basis for the development of
its textile industry.⁵ The rivers also provided an
important means of communication. In the north the Pánuco
River is navigable for its course through Veracruz.⁶ Before
the building of an extensive highway system, regular river
steamers also connected Alvarado on the coast with San Juan
Evangelista by the San Juan Michapan River, and with
Tuxtepec, just across the border in Oaxaca, by the
Papaloapan River.⁷ Important international ports were and
are to be found in the natural harbours of Tuxpan and
Coatzacoalcos (later Puerto Mexico), and the historic
port city of Veracruz, whose artificial harbour and dike
systems were built during the governorship of Dehesa.⁸

The climate of Veracruz is as varied as its
topography, ranging from the torrid heat of the coastal
area to the freezing temperatures on the ice-bound peaks of
the highest mountains. Rainfall and wind conditions are
difficult to predict and generalize. There are areas with
very little rainfall such as the Central Plain. On the
other hand, mountain convection brings considerable
precipitation to the upland regions.⁹ The sea breezes blow

inland during the day bringing a slight cooling effect to the hot areas, but also bringing in the moisture which produces the precipitation in the upland areas. The rainy season is between May and October.

In general, the climate favours a vigorous agriculture as do the fertile soil conditions. Besides the extensive forests with their various species of wood, maize, beans, sugar cane, bananas, citrus, coffee, sarsaparilla, vanilla, tobacco, cacao, potatoes, wheat, maguey and sisal are grown.¹⁰ The fishing industry is of some importance. Sugar cane and coffee early established themselves as the most important cash crops and continue to occupy first place in the State's agricultural production. Besides these, cattle and dairy ranching are possible because of the extensive plains with good pasture land. The soil is blessed with a number of important ores and minerals, among them, gold, silver, copper, iron, lead, manganese, cinnabar and sulphur. Marble and various hard stones useful in construction exist. The most important mineral resource, however, discovered around the turn of the century, and which today occupies the most important position in the Mexican economy, is oil. In 1901, 10,345 barrels were produced in the northern region, production reaching 12 million barrels by 1912.¹¹

Because of its favourable position as the State through which most Mexican imports and exports flowed, and therefore in which the major portion of customs duties were collected, as well as having a rich and extensive

agricultural and resource base, Veracruz early became one of the key industrial States of the Mexican union. It therefore offered a tremendous power base to the Governor who would be shrewd enough to recognize and use these resources to his advantage.

In 1876, at the beginning of the Porfiriato, the State of Veracruz was still relatively underdeveloped and sparsely populated; but the efforts to exploit its potential brought about rapid change. By 1895 there were more than 4,655 manufacturing establishments representing a total capital of 4.3 million pesos, the most important of which were the manufacture of cigars and cigarettes, forestry, and fishing. Commerce was also of relative importance.¹² However, in 1892 the basis was already being laid for the expansion of the textile industry, which was to become so important for Veracruz and Mexico, not only economically, but politically as well.¹³ Recognizing the potential of the State's hydro electric resources, the Banco de Avío and Lucas Alamán financed the establishment of the first textile factories between 1835 and 1840 in Xalapa and Orizaba.¹⁴ This development quickly converted Veracruz into one of the prime manufacturing centres in Mexico.¹⁵ In 1892, the modern textile factory of Río Blanco at Orizaba was inaugurated by President Díaz. With 50,000 spindles, 1000 looms and six large presses, it put Veracruz and

indeed the country in the position of being able to
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compete with the best of British cotton imports.

Total capital investment in the textile industry in Veracruz was between 2.5 and 3 million pesos in 1892 rising to 6.5 million in 1896 and 15 million in 1908. The capital increase was due to the completion of the large hydro electric plant at Rincón Grande in 1897. By 1895 that complex was producing a dividend to shareholders of 25 percent on investment, which averaged 20 percent in the years 1894-99.¹⁷ In 1896, a conglomerate, La Compañía

Industrial Veracruzana, with French and German capital, was established in the town of Necoxtla near Orizaba, and constructed the Santa Rosa factory for stamping cloth and producing yarn. Nearly 1,000 workers were involved in the construction and a road was built to join the two towns. Total capital investment here was 3.5 million pesos, and the factory continuously paid dividends of approximately 13 percent.¹⁸ With these investments Veracruz accumulated 44 percent of the spindles in the country and became one of the most important manufacturing centres.¹⁹

In other areas of the economy the growth rate was also quite spectacular. By 1911 Veracruz accounted for half the entire coffee output of Mexico, and between 1876 and 1910, there was a 350 percent increase in the output of sugar and oil.²⁰ Other industries and enterprises continued to provide diversification of the economy and the government of Mexico facilitated investment where it could. In 1901, a new mineral law was passed to allow for

exploration of the subsoil without taxes for ten years:
this benefited companies like Weetman Pearson's Compañía
Méxicana de Petroleo, which was to become the largest
Mexican oil company in the ensuing years. ²¹ In 1897,
Prescotte and Co. of New York acquired large tracts of land
for growing rubber trees as well as setting up the
processing machinery, and in 1905 agriculturalists in the
Canton of Zongólica formed a company investing over 400,000
pesos to grow rubber trees whose product had a ready market
in New York. ²² A hydro-electric plant was constructed in
that year too, in Córdoba, utilizing one of its waterfalls,
to supply power to a huge sugar factory as well as to the
city's tramways. ²³ In Tuxpan, in the north, between Lake
Tamiachua and the Gulf, another company was established to
market daffodils. ²⁴ In the south, in Minatitlán, a sugar
factory utilizing the most modern refining process was
built with a capital of over one million pesos. ²⁵ One year
later a United States company sent agents to both Zongólica
and Papantla to acquire lands for the commercial growing of
vanilla. ²⁶

Such was the promise of Veracruz that the Minister
of the Interior, Ramón Corral, requested Governor Dehesa's
help for a businessman who had established an office in
Mexico City for the purpose of transmitting economic
information on the various Mexican States to foreign
capitalists. Dehesa pointed out that for some time his
State had had an office run by a U.S. citizen, Alex M. Gaw,

for that same purpose, and therefore his help would be limited.²⁷ Letters requesting information on Veracruz were continuous and showed a vigorous interest in establishing industries in that State.²⁸

Certainly the rapid growth of the State caused problems for the government, especially from agriculturalists who resented the concessions granted the new industries. Dehesa tried to facilitate the industrial sector which was obviously expanding, at the behest of the central government, although he was careful to try and maintain harmony between the two sectors, and was not about to give the new industries an absolutely free hand by removing all taxes.²⁹ Nevertheless, by the turn of the century, industry acquired an importance far greater than that of agriculture. This development was to modify considerably the social structure of the State and would have important consequences in the future.³⁰

One of these consequences was a rapid increase in the population of the State. Between 1893 and 1910 the population increased from 720,331 to 1,328,590. Of these numbers the native population made up approximately 20%. The percentage distribution of urban to rural inhabitants was also fairly steady, although there was a light shift in favour of urban population, which by 1910 was 28.27%. Although there are no reliable figures, one of the dramatic increases was in the growth of the urban labour force. In Orizaba, for example, the largest textile manufacturing town in Veracruz, the population increased

from 17,000 to 24,000 by 1910, of which textile workers
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accounted for 6000 of the latter figure. There was,
therefore, a corresponding shift in Veracruz's
political position. Considering also its role as the
international gateway of Mexico, its manufacturing
establishments, not to speak of its agricultural and
mineral potential, Veracruz, by the year 1900, had earned
the reputation in the Porfiriato as one of the most
important Mexican States.

Much of the success of this development was due to
Dehesa's steady but firm hand at the helm. And it enabled
him to play an increasing political role in Mexico. To
understand this process, however, one must first discuss
the nature of the political system in question. A picture
of the Porfiriato has emerged which characterises Mexico in
this period as an authoritarian State in which there was
little or no inclination to pursue a liberal-democratic
path, one in which rigged elections, restrictions on
freedom of the press, a servile judiciary and the
suppression of political opposition, were the main
hallmarks. Although this view is too general, there is a
great deal of truth in it. Although the franchise allowed
all males over eighteen, who possessed a valid tax
certificate, to vote, election results were rigged. The
consolidation and retention of power in the hands of the
President was accomplished through the skillful employment
of a number of manipulative political techniques. First,

as far as was possible, Díaz almost always had his military cronies elected to oversee the various States as Governors

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and jefes políticos. Trained in carrying out orders,

these men would be more likely to enforce the President's will than civilians. Second, power was concentrated at the federal level, specifically in the person of the President, who oversaw all government activity, but especially

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correspondence with the Governors and jefes políticos.

Third, he surrounded himself with close members of his own family wherever possible, and with intimate friends to ensure that he would be obeyed, and that plots or incipient revolts would be uncovered before they could be brought to

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fruition. A fourth tactic was the skillful use of the concept divide et impera in which rival groups were played off against one another, so that no group ever seemed to

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have finally and irrevocably enjoyed the President's favour.

The regime was therefore built around the unconditional support that Díaz gave to his Governors,

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and which they in turn gave to him. Even in cases

where Díaz had to countermand a Governor's position, it was done without the removal of the Governor as in the case of the unpopular Carlos Díez Gutierrez of San

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Luis Potosí. For their part the governors did the same in respect to their State institutions and

offices, nominating the members for the legislature, the judiciary and the municipal offices.

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At the same time they were made responsible for any violations of constitutional and federal laws which occurred in their

States. This measure, in practical terms, gave them the opportunity to centralize all State power in their own hands. Thus Díaz built up a series of State political machines which were completely dependent on him, and were allowed to maintain themselves as long as they kept order.⁴⁰ In other words, the federalism which had been defined and incorporated into the Constitution of 1857 existed only in name, rarely in practise.⁴¹ For a Governor to implement any kind of independent policy was therefore not a common practice under the regime, but it was possible for strong personalities, such as Governors Bernardo Reyes in Monterrey and Dehesa in Veracruz, who were genuinely popular in their States, to imprint their own style and ideas on their particular bailiwicks.⁴² And the country was quick to respond with its approbation for Governors who actually took their mandates seriously and with integrity, as was the case with Dehesa. Applauding a good Governor, after all, was one way of getting around the strict and implacable censorship of the press, although some papers like La Patria (Mexico City) and El Diario del Hogar (Mexico City), did level criticism, but paid the price for it.⁴³

The other important office in the Porfiriato was the jefe político who was usually appointed by the Governor after consultation with the President as head of each Canton, or State administrative division. The origin of this office has been traced to the early years of the

nineteenth century when Liberals, anxious to strengthen local government against the encroachments of central power, had them appointed by the Governor. Díaz, however, completely changed the role of these appointees. From being the watchdogs against the heavy hand of the central government they became its local representative, with roles akin to that of the Intendant in France.⁴⁴ From 1887 these were appointed by the State Governors, obviously after consultation with, or even on the recommendation of the President. They were responsible to the Governors, although it was expected that they would report directly to the President and often did.⁴⁵ They were given executive power in their Cantons and judicial power in certain cases. They were also in control of the Rurales (federal mounted police), as well as State police. The jefe político was definitely the "man on the spot" in the Porfiriato, for he ensured that the government's chosen candidates won local elections, and that the Governor's wishes were carried out.⁴⁶

Because of their far-reaching powers, jefes políticos had to be closely watched by both President and Governor. Numerous were the occasions in which private citizens, for one reason or another complained to the President about one of these officials, prompting an investigation by the Governor. Dehesa, however, knew his men, and took the trouble to find out about those the President asked him to appoint, so that often he had to reject sharply the President's accusations against some who

were the target of the most vicious and vehement complaints by friends and acquaintances of Díaz. For example, in 1908, various citizens from the Canton of Jalacingo, Veracruz, complained to the President of the cruelty of their jefe político, his rigidity, firmness, arbitrariness, and his levying of heavy fines and jailing of other citizens.⁴⁷

Dehesa's reply was that the charges were "completely untrue" and that the real reason for the complaint was that the government was protecting natives from exploitation by lawyers and shysters (tinterillos)!⁴⁸

Sometimes, too, the accusations were not even clarified. Citizens in the Canton of Minatitlán petitioned the President complaining in February, 1902, about the conduct of the jefe político who was sowing ill-feeling with his behaviour. Specific charges were not laid, yet the President wrote Dehesa that the individual was not worthy of the confidence that the Governor had placed in him. Dehesa's reply was that the jefe político was a person of good background, that the complaint was probably from a man who felt that he ought to be in charge and that the President could consult with the Minister of Finance who knew the jefe político.⁴⁹

Similarly, during the investigation of a murder in the Canton of Cosamaloapam in 1898, Díaz asked Dehesa to order the jefe político to cease bothering an old friend. Dehesa's investigation revealed that the police had entered the old man's house looking for his son who was wanted for

questioning, and had not molested him. Yet, when a few years later the same jefe político was accused of protecting the secretary of the municipality who had been accused of corruption, Dehesa promised that if it were true the situation would be "radically corrected."⁵¹ In the case of the jefe político of San Andres Tuxtla, repeated charges which appeared in the press and complaints from citizens that he was in league with cattle thieves caused Dehesa to undertake a special journey to the Canton, which resulted in the official being removed.⁵² However the replacement was unable to gain the confidence of the citizenry and was himself replaced by a man who had been born in the Canton, and who was, besides, an old friend of the President's. Unfortunately this Col. Ortiz was not liked by one of the Porfirian factions called the "rich", who disliked him particularly because he was said to always be surrounded by the other faction called the "poor."⁵³ Because of the continued rivalry but also because of Ortiz's apparent favouritism, Dehesa had him replaced with his own appointee, which did not work out either.⁵⁴ Other jefes políticos were replaced because they were a focus of opposition to the governor, as in the case of Ignacio Betancourt in Misantla, or because their families tried to take advantage of their connections for personal reasons.⁵⁵ Sometimes too, they were replaced because of personal problems such as alcoholism as in the case of Demetrio Santaella in Zongolica.⁵⁶

The press was also quite active in reporting on local

conditions and alleged abuses and also contributed to the removal of some jefes políticos. In February 1901, El Paladín (Mexico City), a newspaper representing Spanish interests in Mexico, and a virulent opponent of Dehesa, printed a strongly-worded article complaining of abuses committed against the native population in San Juan Evangelista in the Canton of Acayucan. The jefe politico was said to have imposed heavy fines on the Indians of Sayula because their cattle had caused damage to the lands of a hacendado. He was also accused of drunkenness, and was transferred
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to another Canton. The jefe politico of Papantla in that same year was also accused of molesting the poor, with the sarcastic comment that he had given them "...all manner of guarantees that they were free and could continue their travels to the Valle Nacional, and receive the necessary military instructions so as to be able to defend the integrity of the country against the threatened Yankee
58 59
invasion." The next month Dehesa had him replaced.

The position of jefe politico was so sensitive that it is no wonder that frequent replacements were necessary. Factional strife was always present as were those who tried to use their friendship or acquaintance with the President to obtain preferential treatment in some business matter. And while the President's appointments were made with an eye to keeping order, he was sensitive to abuses and tried to correct them. With the guidance of a Governor like Dehesa, who demanded scrupulous honesty and justice from

his jefes políticos, there were many cases where this local authority performed well and was praised by citizens and even the opposition press. Ignacio Canseco, the jefe político of Huatusco, appointed in 1892, was truly popular, and considered by some as the best jefe político the Canton had ever had.⁶⁰

The new jefe político who replaced Santaella in Zongolica was also considered to be doing a good job, especially in the area of public morality, which meant that he was trying to contain gambling and

drunkenness.⁶¹ Even El Paladín whose criticisms of Dehesa could be strident, had to admit that his choices for jefes políticos were sometimes excellent.⁶²

Other newspapers went further, listing the actual achievements of the local authority. A prisoner in the jail at Jalacingo wrote to El Nacional praising conditions in the jail which had been improved by the new jefe político. The prisoners had been treated to a succulent Christmas dinner, and a gallery had been constructed in the prison where prisoners could make arts and crafts for sale in order to help support their families.⁶³

The jefe político of Cosamaloapan, Lorenzo Gómez, who had been there for eight years built a boys' school, a public market, a parade square, a theatre and a women's jail. His financial administration was also sound, the tax intake was properly monitored, and the entire administration was considered one of the best in the State. La Patria commented that his success "... reinforced our thesis that a government as progressive as that of Veracruz needs secondary officials who are as competent as those to

whom they are subordinate." In Orizaba too, the administration of Angel Prieto received much praise. Here, too, workshops were established in the prison in order to allow the prisoners to be productive. In the area of public order he appears to have imparted swift and fair justice, and forced thieves and bandits to go elsewhere. Taxes were properly collected and used to carry out civic improvements, including the installation of street lights

and the building of a theatre. When complaints against Prieto upset Díaz, Dehesa was quick to denounce the accuser and prove that his was an unfounded complaint based solely

on personal animosity. Prieto also used his office as a conciliator in labour disputes, bringing management and

labour together to solve problems.

Dehesa was not always able to have his own men appointed, however, and was careful not to take his opposition to the President too far. A new jefe político for the Canton of Minatitlán was appointed in 1901, with the acclamation of El Paladín. He did not last long and was soon replaced by another Dehesa appointee. However, certain people began complaining to Díaz that he was molesting them. Dehesa backed his choice, Augustín Guevara, but after continued pressure from the President, was forced to ask for his resignation. Two more jefes políticos were recommended by the President, but these did not work out either.

Díaz did not always consult the Governor either, in

regard to appointments, and sometimes questioned even the behaviour and loyalty of those he had imposed on the State. This was the case with the appointment of Demetrio Santibañez to Minatitlán in 1905. This man had been imposed on Dehesa after he had made another choice. Such had been the arbitrariness of the appointment that Dehesa had to request his address from the President in order to send him the official notice of appointment. But when Santibañez was accused of disloyalty by Díaz a few years later for giving aid to the Madero revolutionaries, Dehesa had to point out that although he had his faults, disloyalty was not one of them.

There seems to have been no consistency in the way the President handled appointments or complaints. At times he could be arbitrary, at others an implacable sense of justice would prevail. This, of course, made it extremely difficult to deal with him, and lesser men than Dehesa might have succumbed to the temptation of merely carrying out orders. But Dehesa always pressed his point as far as he could, not hesitating to give the real facts in any situation. During the sensitive period prior to the Revolution, army commanders were quick to use their authority and sometimes committed grave offences against innocent people. When the army commander for Acayucan arrested someone in December, 1910, without informing the jefe político, José María Camacho, under whose jurisdiction such an action fell, he complained to Dehesa. The Governor told him to remind Col. Jasso tactfully of the harmony

which had always existed between the two offices. The reason for the arrest was that the colonel and some of his subalterns had been drinking heavily at a bar, and when requested to leave, had arrested the proprietor, refusing to release him when Camacho intervened. When Dehesa informed the President a direct order was sent to have the man released.⁶⁹ Later, the colonel was severely reprimanded.⁷⁰ This system of local authority with direct access to the President was extremely efficient in maintaining control. That it could also be arbitrary or oppressive is without doubt. Only a Governor as competent and adamant as Dehesa could ensure that the system would not be abused.

Another method which Díaz used to maintain political control was to undermine the authority of ministers in the Cabinet. Between 1892 and 1900 the Cabinet served as an administrative body, the ministers taking orders directly from the President.⁷¹ But when any group seemed to be gaining ascendancy they were swiftly opposed by another group. This was the case until 1900 when Díaz tried to oppose the Científico group, headed by his father-in-law, Manuel Romero Rubio, by constantly playing them off against Joaquín Baranda, whose close friend was Teodoro Dehesa. Whenever he wished to make the Científicos uneasy he would confer exclusively with Baranda and Dehesa.⁷² In a similar fashion, Governors who were too popular, or too ambitious, could be counteracted by playing

them off against military commanders, as was the case with Dehesa and Rosalino Martínez, a rivalry which reached its peak at Río Blanco.⁷³

As another means of ensuring control Díaz achieved the reduction of both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate to the status of "rubber stamps." At no time were elections to Congress the result of the popular vote and, after 1892, the selection of personnel for those bodies was done by the President himself.⁷⁴ Lists were submitted to him which he would reject or not. Suggestions by Governors were naturally possible. Francisco Dehesa, the Governor's brother, and Teodoro Dehesa's eldest son, Raúl, were both representatives in the Chamber of Deputies for Veracruz. The same system was true for the State legislatures, where Díaz would send lists to the Governors. Dehesa, however, kept his own council frequently, and would indicate that he had already made a choice which he did not wish to compromise. At other times he simply refused to accommodate Díaz's wishes to select the President's friends.⁷⁵

Control of the press was another element in this system. It was not always successful, however. Throughout the Porfiriato there was always an opposition press. Some publishers and writers were willing to risk imprisonment for being critical of the government.⁷⁶ A more subtle form of criticism, however, was exercised by praising Governors or officials who had acted honestly and justly. Newspapers were supported for carrying the government line, but even when there was general support for the regime, some papers

attacked particular States or Governors with singular ferocity. La Patria, whose publisher, Ireneo Paz, was an old friend of Díaz, and who never wavered in support of the President, did level heavy criticism at some of the badly-governed States and their Governors while reserving unstinting praise for others, such as Veracruz under Dehesa, who was doing an excellent job.⁷⁷

Dehesa himself had his own "idiosyncratic" methods of dealing with the press.⁷⁸ Indeed, he protected El Dictamen of Veracruz, which was considered an opposition paper, and which seemed to take the side of the workers' movement, although it consistently supported Dehesa. And when Díaz accused him of disloyalty because of his protection of the paper, Dehesa answered:

I have always told you the truth, and intend to continue doing so even when you have the patience to listen to many stories about me which are intended to raise doubts about my loyalty to you.⁷⁹

Instead of taking arbitrary action, Dehesa tried to confront the writers of inflammatory articles against him, forcing them to substantiate their charges or publicly withdraw their accusation. Dehesa's primary enemy was the newspaper El Paladín. This paper consistently hurled charges that his administration was ineffective and that he was doing nothing for the State. Every conceivable petty incident was used as the basis for an article repeating these charges as if their veracity had already been established.⁸⁰ Not all Spaniards supported the paper, (which supposedly represented their interests), let alone

its accusations. Some of these even began countering with a broadsheet distancing themselves from the paper. However,

the articles made Díaz nervous and he asked Dehesa to deal with them.

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Dehesa's tactic was to invite the authors of articles that accused him of misconduct to Veracruz, where, in front of the jefe político of the Canton in which abuses were supposed to have taken place, they were asked to

repeat and substantiate the charges. This they were always

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unable to do. Because of the continuing campaign of vilification, one of the Spanish citizens living in

Veracruz, Ramón Alvarez Soto, wrote to the publisher of El

Paladín asking him to cease the campaign against Dehesa

since " the Spanish colony of this State is rich and

numerous and is completely satisfied with the present

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administration."

Díaz was extremely sensitive to the press, especially when he found himself unable to influence or control it. Such was the case in Yucatan in 1905 when some periodicals printed articles attacking the federal government. The problem here was that they were protected by the Governor, who was also helping them financially. Díaz then asked Dehesa, who was a friend of the general, to

"...call attention to his (the general's) anti-patriotic

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conduct." Dehesa discreetly dropped some hints although the records do not indicate whether the matter was solved

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to the President's satisfaction. The President also kept

a close watch on the foreign press to see what it was

saying about him.

The President, surrounded by factions and groups, all of whom wanted a share of the power, and sometimes more than that, never knew exactly whom to trust. Even close and loyal friends such as Dehesa were spied on if Díaz had the slightest doubt that matters were not being handled

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entirely his way. Dehesa must have been aware of this, yet his support of the President never wavered, as far as can be ascertained. On the other hand he never shirked from reporting his objections to the President whenever he found "dirty hands" at work in the government, obliging Díaz to take energetic measures to uncover the situation and punish

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offenders.

There is no doubt that the political system in the Porfiriato was highly centralized and authoritarian. Yet the picture is false if one takes this to mean that there was no room for flexibility. In fact, there was considerable room, especially in the case of a Governor like Dehesa who was not afraid to speak his mind, to resist the pressure from his enemies, and demand that certain actions be taken. The next chapters will attempt to show how these were accomplished and how far he could go in implementing his own policies, as well as the limits he faced.

CHAPTER I

NOTES

1. Juan Zilli, Historia sucinta de Veracruz (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepetl, 1962), p.9. The exact geographical limits are 17.10.30 to 22.19.25. latitudes North, and 0.28. to 5.30. longitudes East of the meridian of Mexico City. Alfonso Luis Velasco, Geografía y estadística del estado de Veracruz Mexico City: T. González Sucesores, 1895), p.8.

2. John R. Southworth, El estado de Veracruz-Llave: su historia, agricultura, comercio e industrias (Jalapa: Gobierno del estado de Veracruz, 1900), p.5.

3. Zilli, Historia sucinta, p.9.

4. Southworth, El estado de Veracruz, p.5.

5. Luis Pérez Miliucía, Compendio de geografía del estado de Veracruz (Xalapa: Tipografía del Gobierno del estado, 1902), p.20; Dawn Keremitsis, La industria textil mexicana en el siglo XIX (Mexico City: Secretaria de Educación Pública, 1973), p.101; Luis Chávez Orozco and Enrique Florescano, Agricultura y industria textil de Veracruz: Siglo XIX (Xalapa: Universidad Veracruzana, 1965), pp.93-96. This potential was recognized shortly after independence, and the exploitation of hydro-electric power in Veracruz for industrial purposes is an early example of Mexican national policy.

6. Velasco, Geografía y estadística, p.9.

7. Pérez Miliucía, Compendio de geografía, p.35; Velasco, Geografía y estadística, pp.13-15.

8. Pérez Miliucía, Compendio de geografía, p.35.

9. Ibid., p.28; Zilli, Historia sucinta, p.10.

10. Zilli, Historia sucinta, p.11; Pérez Miliucía, Compendio de geografía, p. 29; José María Pérez Hernández, Estadística en la Republica Mexicana (Guadalajara: Tipografía del Gobierno, 1862), p.149.

11. Pérez Miliucía, Compendio de geografía, p.29; Hector Manuel Mar Olivares "Estudio historico y economico de Chicontepec, Veracruz" (Ph.D dissertation, Escuela Normal de Mexico, 1981), p.177; Angel de Bassols Batalla, Las Huastecas en el desarrollo regional de Mexico (Mexico City: Editorial Tritles, 1977), pp.332-333.

12. Jan Bazant, Historia de la deuda exterior de Mexico (1823-1946) (Mexico City: El Colegio de Mexico,

1968), p. 138. In 1875 the peso was on a par with the U.S. dollar, but by 1891 had fallen to 1.27 pesos to the dollar. In 1905 it took two pesos to buy one dollar; Velasco, Geografía y estadística, p.197.

13. Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.112; El Imparcial, 23 Aug. 1893.

14. Alamán was a noted politician and historian in the early years of the Mexican state.

15. Chávez Orozco, Agricultura y industria, p.93, pp.98-99.

16. El Imparcial, 23 Aug.1893; Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.144.

17. Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.144.

18. El Cosmopolita, 29 Aug.1897; Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.149.

19. Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.112.

20. Dudley Ankersen, Some Aspects of Economic Change and the Origins of the Mexican Revolution, 1876-1910, Working Papers #12 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Centre for Latin American Studies, n.d.), p.17.

21. Romana Falcón, El agrarianismo en Veracruz: la etapa radical (Mexico City: El Colegio de Mexico, 1977), p. 29.

22. El Diario del Hogar, 3 Feb. 1897; La Patria, 14 June 1905.

23. La Patria, 20 June 1905.

24. La Patria, 27 Sep. 1905.

25. La Patria, 17 Nov. 1905.

26. La Patria, 8 Feb. 1906.

27. Corral to Dehesa, 8.2.05, and Dehesa to Corral, 14 Mar. 1905, Archivo Teodoro Dehesa (hereafter cited as ATD); see also Dehesa to Díaz 24 May 1901, Colección Porfirio Díaz (hereafter cited as CPD), L26:003986-87, and Díaz to Dehesa, 24 May 1901, CPD, L26:003989 on a similar request for a subsidy from the New York Bureau of Information and Commercial Agency.

28. Ignacio Mariscál to Dehesa, 6 Mar. 1906, Dehesa to Mariscál, 7 Mar. 1906, Dehesa to Santibañez, 7 Mar. 1906, requesting information on the suitability of the plantation "Oaxaquena" for growing sugar cane for a Mr. William Todd of Omaha. Cf. Hans Juergen Harrer, Raíces económicas de la revolución mexicana, trans. Ingrid Geist (Mexico City: Taller Abierto, 1979), pp.51-52. Mexico was one of the preferred areas for foreign, mainly European investment, receiving about 25 percent of the entire investment for Latin America during this period. Weetman Pearson, for example, invested \$1.8 million U.S. over a seven year period and paid 7 percent of earnings from oil to the federal treasury, and 3 percent to the State of Veracruz. B.W.Aston, "The Public Career of José Yves Limantour" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Technical University, 1972), p.201.

29. Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.93

30. Chávez Orozco, Agricultura y industria, p.89, pp.98-99. Large coal seams had also been discovered and were being worked. La Patria, 2 May 1905.

31. El Colégio de México, Estadísticas económicas del porfiriato: fuerza del trabajo y actividad económica por sectores (Mexico City, n.d.), pp.8, 121, 149-150; Rodney D. Anderson, "The Mexican Textile Labor Movement, 1906-07: an Analysis of a Labor Crisis", (PhD. dissertation, University of Arizona, 1967), pp.12-13, 159; Alfonso Luis Velasco, Geografía y estadística del Estado de Veracruz, (Mexico City: T. González Sucesores, 1895), p.37. Additional social data is to be found on pp. 164-65.

32. This is not to say that he did not utilize other techniques. But a distinction is made here between political and purely administrative tactics, which would include the use of the army or the Rurales. El Diario de Hogar, 8 Mar. 1892; Ankerson, Some Aspects, p.19; Eugene M. Braderman, A Study of Political Parties and Politics in Mexico since 1890 (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1938), p.10. Examples of election fraud may be found on pp. 47,73.

33. Frank Tannenbaum, Peace by Revolution: Mexico after 1910 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p.99.

34. Ibid., p.98.

35. Henry Bamford Parkes, A History of Mexico (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1938), p.286.

36. Braderman, A Study of Political Parties, p.10.

37. Donald Fithian Stevens, "Agrarian Policy and Instability in Porfirian Mexico", The Americas 39 (October 1982):153-166. Díaz had aided the Indians of Tamazunchale in retaining their traditional lands against the governor who had tried to expropriate them.

38. Rafael de Zayas Enriquez, Porfirio Díaz trans. T. Quincy Bourne, Jr. (New York: Appleton and Co., 1908), p.207.

39. The Articles in question are Nos. 104 and 105, Cap. I, 31, May 1896 in Gob. L1666-1a, Archivo General de la Nación (hereafter cited as AGN.)

40. Carleton Beals, Porfirio Díaz: Dictator of Mexico (Philadelphia: J.B.Lippincott Co., 1932), pp.276 & 288.

41. Anthony T. Bryan, "Political Power in Porfirio Díaz's Mexico: A Review and Commentary", The Historian 38 (August, 1976): 648-668; El Monitor Republicano, 8 Apr. 1896.

42. Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.372; Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepetel, 1959), p.168.

43. Daniel Cosío Villegas, ed., Historia Moderna de México, 9 vols., (Mexico City: Hermes, 1955-72), v.9. La vida política interior: segunda parte by Daniel Cosío Villegas, p.493; El Diario del Hogar, 1.12.08. It should be noted that this paper was hostile to the regime, and its famous editor, Filomena Mata, was continuously in jail. On this occasion it referred to Dehesa as that "exceptional governor" who "has the attention of all the republic". See also La Patria, 1 Jan. 1903.

44. Paul J. Vanderwood, Disorder and Progress: Bandits, Police and Mexican Development (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), p.86.

45. Ankerson, Some Aspects, p.19. They could also be subject to the President's personal investigation. In July

1900, Díaz went to Ozuluama to investigate the alleged victimization of a young man by the jefe político, Díaz to Dehesa, 28.7.00, ATD, File #30.

46. Ankersen, Some Aspects, p.19; Rodolfo Orozco Espinosa, "El sistema agrario del regimen porfirista y la reforma agraria de la revolución de 1910" (Ph.D. dissertation, UNAM, 1963), p.47.

47. Various to Díaz, 5 June 1908, CPD, 133:8197-98.

48. Dehesa to Díaz, 12 June 1908, CPD, L33:8195.

49. Díaz to Dehesa, 21 Feb. 1902, Dehesa to Díaz, 11 Mar 1902, ATD, File #3.

50. Díaz to Dehesa, 18 May 1898, CPD, L23:6258;

Dehesa to Díaz, 20 May 1898, CPD, L23:6259; Dehesa to Díaz to 31 May 1898, CPD, L23:8651-52.

51. Dehesa to Díaz, 16 Mar 1905, CPD, L3570.

52. El Monitor Republicano, 4 Jan. 1893, Díaz to Dehesa, 14 Dec. 1895, CPD, L20 C39; Dehesa to Díaz, 15 Dec. 1895, CPD, L20 C39.

53. León Medel y Alvarado, Historia de San Andres Tuxtla 1532-1950 (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepetl, 1963), pp.439-440; El Cosmopolita, 21 Aug. 1898.

54. Dehesa to Díaz, 25 Oct. 1901, CPD, L26:10359; various to Díaz, n.d., L33:2893-2915, CPD.

55. El Monitor Republicano, 19 Jan. 1893. See also Chapter 3, #11. In Acayucan Rontilla was replaced with José Beltran, brother of General Joaquín Beltran.

56. Dehesa to Díaz, 14 July 1897, L22:8908-09, CPD.

57. El Paladín, 7 Feb. 1901.

58. Ibid. The Valle Nacional was an infamous place to which people could be sent without charge where they were forced to work under horrible conditions from which there was rarely any escape. See John Kenneth Turner, Barbarous Mexico (London: Cassell, 1911) for a vivid description of the Valle.

59. El Paladín, 3 Mar. 1901.

60. El Monitor Republicano, 30 Apr. 1892; El Nacional,

7 Oct. 1903; Díaz to Dehesa, 26 Jan. 1893, L18:302, CPD.

61. Díaz to Dehesa, 21 Oct. 1899, L24:15288; Dehesa to Díaz, 25 Oct. 1899, L24:15285, CPD.

62. El Paladín, 11 Apr. 1901, 24 Nov. 1901, The references here were to the new jefes políticos of Papantla and Tuxpam.

63. El Nacional, 17 Jan. 1895.

64. La Patria, 17 Feb. 1906.

65. El Nacional, 21 Mar. 1895, 4 June 1895.

66. Dehesa to Díaz, 6 Dec. 1895, L20:19179, CPD.

67. El Cosmopolita, 21 Mar. 1897.

68. El Paladín, 27 Oct. 1901; Díaz to Dehesa, 21 Feb. 1902, ATD; Dehesa to Díaz, 11 Jun. 1902, ATD; Díaz to Dehesa, 27 Apr. 1903, CPD, 28:5166; Dehesa to Díaz, 24 Dec. 1904, CPD, L29:16284; CPD, L30:17017; Díaz to Dehesa, 18 Oct. 1910, CPD, L35:15344, Dehesa to Díaz, 25 Oct. 1910, CPD, L35:15331. He was accused of tolerating revolutionaries in his Canton and of having amorous relations with the wife of

a Madero supporter who was in San Juan de Ulua prison, ATD, File # 16.

69. Camacho to Dehesa, 2 Dec. 1910, ATD; Dehesa to Díaz, 2 Dec. 1910, ATD; Díaz to Dehesa, 3 Dec. 1910, ATD.

70. Camacho to Dehesa, 3 Dec. 1910, ATD; Dehesa to Camacho, 5 Dec. 1910, ATD; Díaz to Dehesa, 8 Dec. 1910, ATD.

71. Beals, Porfirio Díaz, pp.287, 357.

72. Ibid., p.281; Jorge Fernando Iturribarria, Porfirio Díaz ante la historia (Mexico City, 1967), p.121.

73. Parkes, A History of Mexico, p.292.

74. Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.289.

75. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.423; Dehesa to Díaz, 9.1.93, CPD, L18:296; Dehesa to Díaz, 9 Aug. 1905, CPD, L20:12535; Dehesa to Díaz, 9 Feb. 1897, CPD, L22:1767; Dehesa to

Díaz, 11 Nov. 1899, CPD, L24:16497; Dehesa to Díaz, 9 Aug. 1905, CPD, L30:10874; Dehesa to Díaz, 11 May 1907, ATD.

76. El Diario del Hogar, 20 May 1894, 23 May 1894, 5 Dec. 1897; José Luis Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve historia de Veracruz (Xalapa: Universidad Veracruzana, 1960), p.184; Carlo de Fornaro, Mexico tal cual es: comentarios (Philadelphia, 1909), p.107.

77. Paz to Díaz, 25 Mar. 1911, CPD, L36:4372; La Patria, 1 Feb. 1905; Salvador Ortiz Vidales, Prologo to Algunas campañas, by Ireneo Paz (Mexico City: Sepsetentas, 1944), p.x.

78. Dehesa to Díaz, 27 Mar. 1903, CPD, L28:3595.

79. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, p.594. Dehesa was a friend of the owner, Juan Malpica Silva. See interview conducted by Rodney Anderson with Gabriel Cházaro in Rodney D. Anderson, Outcasts in their own Land. Mexican Industrial Workers, 1906-1911, ed. Laurens B. Ferry (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976), p. 209.

80. El Paladín, 17 Jan. 1901, 16 June 1901, 20 June 1901, 5 June 1902.

81. El Paladín, 11 July 1901; Díaz to Dehesa, 15 Apr. 1902, ATD.

82. Dehesa to Díaz, 21 Apr. 1902, ATD.

83. Gonzalez Mena to Alvarez Soto, 21 Sep. 1902, ATD, File #10.

84. Díaz to Dehesa, 29 May, ATD, File #11.

85. Dehesa to Díaz, 3 June 1905, ATD, File #11.

86. Basler Nachrichten, 30 Oct. 1892, and Le Matin, Paris, 29 July 1906, in CPD, L17:17069, L31:9749-50. Díaz also had Zayas Enriquez send him articles from various newspapers in the United States, L31. C24, CPD.

87. Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.225 remarks that Díaz "set faithful men to watch doubtful men." The opposite was also the case. See Chapter 3 for the discussion of Barrón who was sent to Xalapa to spy on Dehesa.

88. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.175.

CHAPTER II

TEODORO A. DEHESA

Teodoro A. Dehesa was born in the port city of Veracruz on October 1, 1848. His father, Teodoro Dehesa y Bayona, was an Aragonese born in the town of Egea de los Caballeros, in the province of Zaragoza, Spain, whose parents had possessed a small bakery shop where the son learned to make pastries. His parents had destined him for the ministry, but not inclined to don monk's robes, he had left for America, landing at Veracruz where he opened his own pastry shop called "La Jota Aragonesa" and from which he prospered. He soon married a distinguished Xalapa lady, Antonia Méndez y Ruíz de Olivares, who gave birth to their first son Teodoro, in 1848. It was in his father's house that the little boy came face to face with social reality, for his parents were continuously discussing the plight of the poor. From an early age Teodoro seems to have gained a distinct sympathy for them. The story is told that he once raided a small cash box of his father's, distributing the contents to some poor children who were attending the municipal school of Santo Domingo which faced their house.

On hearing the commotion outside of the scramble to pick up the coins, his father caught young Teodoro in the act. Instead of scolding him, however, he is reputed to have said that all that is given to God would be returned.²

Another basic factor in Teodoro's formation was the fervent religious education imparted by his mother, who seems to have been a very devout Roman Catholic. His academic education began in the Amiga (Kindergarten) of the Torres sisters, Jacinta, Carmen and Dolores, all spinsters. Thereafter he attended the College of Juan Rodríguez in Veracruz, and, when the family moved to Xalapa, completed his elementary education at the school run by don Francisco Ramos. He then entered the Lyceum at Xalapa, whose headmaster at the time was the well-known and influential educator, Teodoro Kerlegand. Dehesa was an excellent student and at the top of his class.

His father died while on a trip to Spain, and the mother, who had no knowledge of business, gave the shop to young Teodoro to run. In order to strengthen his knowledge of business, for which he was not particularly inclined, she apprenticed him in the dry-goods store of Manuel Loustau. There he was first occupied with menial tasks such as sweeping the street in front of the store, dusting the stock and cleaning up after an undisciplined cat, as well as measuring out the cloth that was sold in large quantities, all of which Teodoro endured stoically.³

Soon he became one of the most trusted employees,

advancing to be bookkeeper and finally the private secretary of the owner. After eight years of work he was still earning the modest salary of fifty pesos per month. Many times other businessmen tried to solicit his services, but out of loyalty he refused to leave Loustau. This trait of loyalty once he had committed himself was to reappear again and again, but especially in his relationship with the future president of Mexico, Porfirio Díaz.⁴

In the 1860's the young Dehesa followed the events surrounding the French invasion of Mexico with interest and some trepidation at the imposition of a foreign monarch, Maximilian Hapsburg, to rule over the Mexican people. It was during these events that he observed the heroism of General Porfirio Díaz and began to admire the great victor of Puebla.⁵ This initial sympathy grew with time, but especially some years later when Díaz began to demonstrate an opposition to the re-election of President Benito Juárez.

In his early twenties, Dehesa joined the Porfirian movement and was elected to the executive of the Republican Club of Veracruz which was seeking the election of Porfirio Díaz as President. In the elections of 1872 Díaz opposed Juárez on a platform of anti-reelectionism; but the elections were fraudulent, and Díaz was not successful. Dehesa felt that his candidate would have been successful in Veracruz, if not in the whole country, and argued that since the electoral road was not possible, the only way for the Porfirian group to achieve success would be through armed rebellion.⁶ The day after Juárez was declared elected

by the Mexican Congress on October 12, 1871, a revolt was launched. This came to be known as the Revolt of La Noria, after the hacienda Díaz owned in Oaxaca.

Several months later Díaz's brother was killed in the field and the defeated Porfirians were seeking a way out of the country. This colourful episode was the subject of a number of local newspaper articles as well as some shorter monographs. Porfirio Díaz's flight through Veracruz and the valuable help given him by the young Dehesa, were described in Dehesa's memoirs:

The revolt not having been favourable, Don Porfirio found it necessary to seek refuge in Veracruz where he knew he had friends and followers, in order to escape abroad... Together with General Galván they came through the Sierra of Zongolica with direction for Coscomatepec where they encountered Colonel Honrato Domínguez, who knew the country and who directed them towards the coast, putting up in the house of Don Juan Viveros. Without doubt Domínguez Don Porfirio that one of his loyal followers lived in Veracruz, and from there I suppose that General Díaz wrote me the letter asking for my help in securing passage on a ship out of the country, either to Havana or to the United States. In my youthfulness I was eager to serve General Díaz and Providence complied. 9

Dehesa, after receiving the letter, set about finding a vessel in which Díaz could escape. With the help of friends in the port, managed to secure passage for Díaz and General Pedro A. Galván aboard the English vessel Corsica which departed Veracruz on February 1, 1872, for New York.

This was the beginning of a long and lasting friendship between the two men that was to result in close cooperation throughout the Porfiriato, but especially after Dehesa's assumption of the governorship of Veracruz in

1892. After Díaz's flight, Dehesa became even more involved with the Porfirian movement, deciding to enter active politics himself. In the meantime President Juárez had died of a heart attack and the president of the Supreme Court, Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, another Veracruzán, was sworn in as President. With Juárez's death and the passage of power to his constitutional successor, the reason for the revolt of La Noria no longer existed, and subsequently collapsed. Lerdo de Tejada cleverly issued an amnesty to

which Díaz decided to submit on October 13, 1872. ¹¹

However the Porfirian party was not dead and one historian, Cosío Villegas, remarks that in fact, Díaz began thinking about the next revolt right after arriving in the capital where he was received by Lerdo. ¹² However, his political

fortunes being at their lowest ebb, Díaz decided to retire completely from politics and return to agriculture. ¹³ The

sugar business at La Noria being rather poor, he decided to take over a small sugar ranch near the Veracruzán town of Tlacotalpam called La Candelaria, which was awarded to him by the State Legislature. ¹⁴

Happily for the Porfirian followers in Veracruz, the President removed the Juarista Governor substituting the well-liked and distinguished Veracruzán, Francisco Landero y Cos, who sympathized with the Porfirians. ¹⁵ In the October elections for the State Legislature, Dehesa, only twenty-four years of age, won a seat to represent Xalapa, the State capital. ¹⁶ Dehesa's victory was due to the acclamation he received from many Veracruzans,

traditionally more liberal than the rest of the country, who had watched Díaz's stand against reelection with approval. Dehesa and other followers then tried to animate Díaz to reenter Mexican political life through the open door of Veracruz politics. General Luis Mier y Teran, another close companion of Díaz, and fervently loyal, proposed that Díaz be nominated as governor for Veracruz. Since Landero y Cos was about to resign from the governorship, and since it was possible to name an interim Governor, Dehesa proposed this manœuvre to Díaz. But Díaz politely refused. ¹⁷ However, an offer by the State government, Mier y Teran and Dehesa, that the general run for a vacant seat for the Mexican Congress was accepted. Díaz believed that if he were not able to win a seat, the opportunity for higher office would be lost forever. ¹⁸ In fact Dehesa presented a list of candidates he felt would best represent Porfirian interests in the forthcoming State election of 1875, among them Díaz as congressional Deputy. ¹⁹ The majority of these were subsequently elected, including Díaz, the result being that he again appeared officially as a political figure awakening hopes in the hearts of many of those who were becoming disillusioned with the presidency of Lerdo. ²⁰

With the election of a Governor as well as a slate of representatives favourable to the Porfirians, Díaz's political fortunes began to wax again. The political movement, headquartered in Veracruz and headed by Dehesa, began to gather momentum. He carefully nurtured it,

gathering around him the most important political figures
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in the state, including the able General Mier y Teran.

Dehesa explained the process:

The solid Porfirian party, representative of the majority of the people in the country, founded clubs in order to contest the vote to Don Sebastian, candidate for the presidency. In the port of Veracruz the "Republican Club" was founded with Teran as president, and me in another post.²²

This support and Lerdo's declared intention to seek reelection probably motivated Díaz to think about initiating plans for a revolt since it was unlikely that Lerdo would
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be able to win an election without massive corruption.

The movement in Veracruz, which had spread to other parts of the country, was not the only source of opposition to Lerdo. In the capital, too, leading newspapermen were spearheading a movement severely critical of the president. Vincente Riva Palacio in El Ahuizote (Papantla) and Ireneo Paz in El Padre Cobos (Mexico City) were constant in their criticism, and towards the end of 1875 published a book in which they attempted to raise their criticism "before the
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tribunal of history." Both were severely criticizing Lerdo's intention of seeking reelection. The Porfirian party however, was already considering revolt as Lerdo had confirmed his intention of seeking reelection. In June 1875 there were unfounded rumours that Díaz had left La Candelaria for Oaxaca, his home state, where he would be
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raising an army. Actually, Díaz had had his passport extended to December 1 by the military commandant of Veracruz, and on December 3, together with Manuel González,

had left the port by ship for Brownsville, Texas. From there he proceeded to solicit funds, buy arms and raise an army. On March 20, 1876, he crossed the frontier with about 400 men and initiated the revolt of Tuxtepec.

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Of events in Veracruz Dehesa writes:

A movement was initiated in the capital, Xalapa. The governor, Don José María Mena, was an illustrious Cordoban, but completely indolent, and, owing to this circumstance, a chief of the Rurales, Captain Merino, took him prisoner, and so the situation changed there. The legislative and judicial powers were removed to Veracruz and I went along. The events in Veracruz had such repercussions on the rest of the country, that the Federation declared a state of siege there, naming General Marcos Carillo as Governor and Commander-in-Chief. Such were things there, and continuing to express my opinions with absolute freedom, that Gen. Carillo called me to him one day and said, "I don't want to have to give Veracruz a day of mourning, and you therefore can consider yourself under arrest."²⁸

Dehesa was then removed from Veracruz to Orizaba where he was detained for a few days until he could be removed to Mexico City. He was well treated in Orizaba and Mexico City where he was kept under house arrest in the Hotel Iturbide, after which he was removed to a prison on March 24, 1876.

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Dehesa remained there until December of that year, keeping in touch with political events through daily visits from the editor of the influential El Monitor Republicano (Mexico City), Vincente García Torres. He was also in correspondence with Díaz, writing under the assumed name of Estanislao Mendoza, and giving accounts of the political climate in the capital.

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The battle of Teocac which took place on November 16, 1876, decided Lerdo's fate. Because of the timely intervention of one of Díaz's generals, Manuel González, the

battle became a victory for the Tuxtepecans. Five days later, on November 21, Díaz entered Mexico City, and Lerdo embarked for the United States from Acapulco. After Lerdo's flight from the capital, Dehesa made his way back to Veracruz with Gen. Mier y Teran, eventually meeting up with Díaz in the home of a Spaniard. Remaining with Gen. Mier y Teran, but refusing to enter military service, Dehesa returned to the port where he was named Inspector of Maritime Customs, an important post. Here his task was to inspect the operations of the Customs, in particular to uncover corruption and smuggling which were so draining on this source of government revenue. ³¹ Dehesa remained at this post through Díaz's first presidential term. He also served Díaz's successor, President Manuel González, until the end of that mandate in 1884, doing an excellent job of suppressing corruption within the custom's service. Dehesa used the time well by cementing his political contacts. On the return to the presidency by Díaz in 1884, Dehesa was eventually given the top position as Administrator with the enormous salary of 50,000 pesos annually. ³² This salary was intended to ensure the honesty of the Administrator, since the Mexican state, dependent on custom's duties as its primary source of revenue, had to maximize this source. There was probably no better person than Dehesa. Even among his enemies, he enjoyed the reputation of being scrupulously honest. Nevertheless there were those who tried to impugn his integrity. In 1882, an anonymous letter

accused Dehesa and other employees of having diverted goods destined for Messrs. Muñoz and Dessine. The resulting investigation cleared them of all charges, revealing that the goods had in fact been properly shipped to the destination indicated on their bills of lading. ³³ But the matter was never forgotten and it became grist in the mill for his later political enemies. None other than the Minister of Finance, José Yves Limantour, attempting to discredit Dehesa, ordered an investigation in 1898 of the Customs House during Dehesa's administration. All that he could find was an unpaid debt of 7.50 pesos, which Dehesa ³⁴ immediately repaid. Dehesa remained as Custom's Administrator until he was elected Governor of Veracruz in 1892 carrying out important reforms in the system of collections, instituting changes in tariffs, and imposing a ³⁵ strict regimen in regard to honesty among his subalterns.

Despite his jobs as Inspector, and then Administrator, Dehesa continued to be active in Porfirian politics. By now he belonged to the inner circle, and, from the Veracruz legislature where he had represented Xalapa, he was elected, or, to be more exact, chosen, as Deputy in the Mexican Congress in 1884, replacing the well-known poet and ³⁶ his friend, Salvador Díaz Mirón. Then, two years later at the elections for the thirteenth Congress, he was elected to the Senate. By this time the Díaz political machine was well oiled, elections were politically maneuvered and all the Senators and Deputies were government supporters. This Senate consisted of two groups: the first

consisted of the friends of the "men of the situation", that is those who were political supporters of the Plan of Tuxtepec; the second group were those who had already occupied a seat for a few years, but had been Díaz supporters.

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Nothing shows Dehesa's closeness to the President more than this fairly rapid rise through a succession of important political posts. Díaz naturally wanted men he could trust, and Dehesa became part of that small inner circle which Cosío Villegas has called the Brahmins. It was even speculated that on Manuel Dublán's death in 1891, Dehesa would be chosen for the important finance ministry, but the President wanted him right where he was, in the Customs at Veracruz. However, opportunity for further advancement was not long in coming.

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In 1880, Apolinar Castillo had been elected as Governor of Veracruz. Díaz's personal choice had been an old friend and distinguished military companion, General Juan de la Luz Enriquez, but the latter's friendship with General Mier y Teran, who had brutally executed some so-called anti-Díaz plotters in 1879, had prevented him from being elected immediately. Furthermore Díaz, respecting his own call at Tuxtepec for no reelection, had resigned the presidency at the end of his first term and had thrown his weight behind General Manuel González, the man who had achieved the victory at Tecuac. However, González was not a puppet of Díaz and wanted his own men as Governors. But Díaz would have his way and two years into the electoral

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period Castillo was accused of corruption and relieved of the governorship, General José Cortés y Frías being named interim Governor.⁴⁰ In 1884, Enriquez was installed as Governor of Veracruz. He had been one of Díaz's most trusted generals. During the Revolt of Tuxtepec he had been commander-in-chief of the military front through Tabasco,⁴¹ Campeche and Yucatan.

Enriquez was not merely a friend of Díaz. He was a genuinely popular Governor and has been credited with an excellent administration.⁴² He was reelected again in 1888, and under his careful administration the State flourished as never before: the finance ministry was brought under control and the public debt totally amortized; public education was reformed, cantonal schools were established; a Normal School was built in Xalapa, which became a model for teacher education under the wise tutelage of the Swiss educator, Enrique Rebsamen; a rural police was organised;⁴³ and an efficient and fair tax system was introduced.

Despite Enriquez's popularity his decision to run for a third term aroused much hostility in Veracruz. This State had been one of the most fervent supporters of the principles of Tuxtepec which called for no reelection. The eight year period since Díaz's revolt had not been sufficient to dim these memories, and there were many Veracruzans who wished these principles respected. El Reproductor, the influential paper printed in the former Veracruz capital, Orizaba, tried to calm the political storm by pointing out the advantages of continuity which

should take precedence over principles which had been presented in a different political context. It argued that the fears entertained in regard to the constitutional reforms that would permit reelection were only a product of "former calamitous times", and because of Enriquez's "honour, patriotism, intelligence and activity, respect for the people, homage to the rights of the people and spirit of progress," there was no necessity to seek a new Governor.⁴⁴ Its efforts were not successful, however, and the speculation about other possible candidates increased⁴⁵ as the election of 1892 drew close.

Dehesa, motivated by pure ambition and seeing his chance under the banner of anti-reelectionism, unleashed a furious campaign against Enríquez for the governorship. The newspaper El Nacional (Mexico City) supported him. It revealed a unique approach to the concept of "principle" which had become the guiding political concept of the Porfiriato. According to this concept, principles such as "no reelection" were sacred, but could and should be subsumed under another principle, that of "national necessity." Justifying Dehesa's campaign against Enríquez the newspaper explained:

Before the Tuxtepecan revolt Veracruz had accepted the article of no reelection in its constitution. If the public voice accepts the reelection of Díaz it is because that follows a supreme national necessity. But its people have never wanted nor accepted that its representatives remain in power. Such was the principle cause of the terrible crusade that the followers of Teodoro A. Dehesa undertook against the reelection of Enríquez. Not hatred but defense of a principle, especially democratic, was the cause of the antipathy to

the last administration.

As early as February, 1891, Dehesa's friends were at work in various parts of the state. In Tuxpam, in the north, a club called the "Huastecan Circle" was established.⁴⁷ In Orizaba, a "Club Independencia Díaz-Dehesa" was formed in December.⁴⁸ And in Misantla, the "Club Central: Díaz-Dehesa" was founded in March, 1892.⁴⁹ His political platform was based on the Plan of Tuxtepec with its demand for no reelection. Curiously, although Dehesa was campaigning vigorously under the slogan of "no reelection" in Veracruz, he had no doubt that the best thing for the country would be Díaz's own reelection, a view that was shared by many people.⁵⁰ At the same time he appealed to the President that the same reason did not apply to Veracruz. The electorate wanted and the State needed a change of administration. He therefore left no stone unturned in consistently petitioning Díaz on his own behalf, reminding the President of his, Dehesa's, consistent loyalty and friendship. He even enlisted the help of the old and respected General Felipe Berriozabal in trying to convince Díaz to support his candidacy after an attempt to see the President had been unsuccessful.⁵¹ Dehesa's difficulties were considerable. Enríquez had been a good governor, was very popular with the people, and, moreover, enjoyed Díaz's confidence.⁵² The decision must have been painful for Díaz. On March 17, Dehesa sent him copies of newspaper articles from the port in support of various candidates. He, however, recommended

that the President read one particular article, by Dehesa's
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friend Díaz Mirón, supporting his candidacy.

Despite Enríquez's popularity there was some cause for complaint, especially from the press, which, in Veracruz, had always enjoyed considerable freedom, and now felt itself under attack from the Governor because of their support for the principle of no reelection. On March 9, Pedro Castillo, editor of El Ciudadano Libre and El Imparcial in the port city, wrote to the President asking him to intervene on his behalf with the Governor. He had written an article censoring the administration, accusing it of immorality and disregarding the very laws that were supposed to be observed. The reasons for his assertions, he added, were that a Justice of the Peace and Notary Public, had been incarcerated because of drunkenly conduct. He had reported the fact as an example of the immorality and debauchery of the government. And since Enríquez did not permit anyone to criticize his administration, he had ordered the jefe político to accuse Castillo of defamation of character and had him sent to prison for two months
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until his release on bail.

Happily for Dehesa and the opposition, Enríquez died
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suddenly on March 17 of a heart attack. Manuel Levi, Minister of the Interior in Veracruz, was named interim Governor, and Enríquez was buried on March 20, with full
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honours and attended by a huge cortege. With him out of the way, Dehesa's campaign could proceed without much fear

of opposition, though there were still obstacles to
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overcome. The late Governor had, as in common practise,
filled all important government posts with his own
supporters. These men had been and were loyal to Díaz as
well as to the Governor and they could not be removed
quickly without compromising their support for the
President. These officials, on the other hand, were
essential if the election were to result in Dehesa's
favour. On the same day as the funeral Díaz wrote to Levi
reminding him that apart from this group all the other
people who could be utilized in the administration were to
be followers of Dehesa. He, Levi, should therefore confer
with Dehesa and whatever agreement they came to would be
supported by him. The President also disclosed that he had
already spoken with Dehesa and that he expected a patriotic
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solution to the political problems of the State. This was
clear evidence of two things: first, that Díaz had
previously favoured Dehesa although he had found himself in
an awkward situation unable to show open support; and
second, that he would not allow anything to stand in the
way of Dehesa's success, since it was obvious that Levi was
an Enriquista. However, he was equally careful to warn
Dehesa not to undertake any reprisals against that group
which might create insurmountable obstacles for Dehesa's
future administration. He wrote:

You know my ideas in respect of the necessity of
following a conciliatory course toward the enriquista
party. I have seen in El Amigo del Pueblo that it
has been attacked with great vehemence, and as well
unjustly. I would therefore like to call your attention

to the matter, in order to avoid the appearance, much later, of grave difficulties against which you would have to fight and which might hinder the course of your administration.59

Obviously everyone was aware of the political realities of the pork barrel, although direct appeal to the President could and sometimes did succeed in avoiding too severe treatment. 60 Dehesa, however, was not a vindictive person, besides Díaz's advice was politically wise. Dehesa therefore wrote to him giving the assurance that he had communicated with "our friends" in diverse places asking them to cease the publication of articles critical of the previous administration, not only in view of the President's wishes but also his own. 61

The close and harmonious cooperation between Díaz and Dehesa was obvious from the moment Enríquez died. Even so another obstacle now appeared. This was the attempt of a previous governor Apolinar Castillo, to regain that position. Dehesa was now forced to press his attack against that quarter, but because of the potential divisiveness of that struggle, Díaz intervened. Despite the assurances of Castillo that he had not been interfering in Veracruz politics, he lost the confidence of the President and had to withdraw into voluntary exile in the little town of San Andrés Chalchicomula. 62

The public support for Dehesa, however, demonstrated that his candidacy was a truly popular one. It extended even to students in the Preparatory College (pre-university) in Xalapa, who, apparently against the wishes

of their masters, who were Enriquistas, gave spontaneous
demonstrations on the campus in favour of Dehesa. Yet
there was little need for these public demonstrations as it
was quite obvious that Dehesa was the President's choice.

Despite the presence of an interim Governor, state business
was already being carried on between Díaz and Dehesa.

Reams of letters were exchanged by the two after March
discussing government business such as the choice of jefes
políticos and how to influence the new interim Governor,
Leandro Alcolea, in carrying out their wishes. Díaz

continued to press Dehesa to ensure that as many
Enriquistas as possible were kept on in government
employment and did not hesitate to exert his influence in
the local matter of selecting representatives to the State
Legislature. Here already, Dehesa demonstrated that he
was not to be treated as a mere yes-man to the President
and that he was determined to keep as free a hand as
possible in the affairs of the state. To Díaz's request that
he appoint Guillermo A. Esteva to the State Legislature, he
answered:

With Esteva the Enriquistas will have four out of
the eleven representatives. As this will mean a
representation of more than one third, I would agree that
Esteva come with a little false restraint, that is, as a
substitute representative for someone with whom he would
not agree. This will fulfill his desires and we will have
prevented any capriciousness in the future, because I
know Guillermo since college and he is a little
mischievous.

Díaz answered with thanks for Dehesa's consideration,
adding that given the reasons cited he approved of the way
the matter would be handled. However, even minor matters

were handled by the two men such as the request of a group of carpenters asking Dehesa to intervene in the removal of a tax on wood which had hitherto been imported duty-free, and to which the President agreed.⁶⁹ Not all people were aware of Dehesa's close friendship and influence with the President. In April a group of businessmen and agriculturalists in Cordoba had written to Dehesa asking him to recommend Alcolea as Governor, a request which certainly appears ironic in view of other archival material.⁷⁰

In the elections for Governor, held in July, Dehesa received a majority of ballots and was duly confirmed and sworn in by the state legislature.⁷¹ The election was not without its critics, some of whom claimed fraud. The Liberal Club of Veracruz complained that ballots had not been distributed by the head of the prison as was the usual method. Instead they had been controlled by the gendarmery, who did not know the citizens, thus bringing about irregularities. Dehesa's answer, likewise printed in El Diario del Hogar of Mexico City, pointed out that according to law it was indispensable to present a tax receipt at the polling booth, but that there were so many poor people who did not pay taxes that he did not feel it was right to exclude them from the balloting.⁷² With this election began Dehesa's governorship which was to last until 1911, contrary to his own principle of no reelection, but, in the minds of most contemporary observers and later

historians, to the decided benefit of Veracruz.

By 1892, Dehesa was not only the Governor and the most influential person in Veracruz politics, he was also a fairly wealthy man who could afford to give up the lucrative Custom's position for the much less-well paid one

⁷³ of Governor. The point was not lost on contemporary historians, and some later historians have also presented the argument that Dehesa was already so rich that he could not possibly have come by his wealth by any but dishonest means. In particular they looked at his considerable landholdings as evidence of his corruption. A careful

examination of land titles and records, however, needs to be done before final conclusions can be drawn. Certainly Dehesa cannot be accused of using his position as Governor to deal himself the choicest bits of property as has been

⁷⁴ asserted by Fowler-Salamini. Some of his wealth came from his mother's business and he acquired more property in the Huastecas through his marriage to Teresa Nuñez. ⁷⁵ Other

lands were acquired during his time as Custom's Administrator. However, the charge has been made that he used his influence as Governor to acquire nationalized ⁷⁶ property belonging to Indians. The entire question needs

careful research as even the President, instigated by Dehesa's political opponents, was misinformed of events surrounding the purchase of a huge parcel of land called Juchique de Ferrer in the Canton of Misantla, and asked for

⁷⁷ clarification. Dehesa responded with a long memorandum on the subject and an emphatic rejection of the accusations

made by his enemies, referring to their "bad will and
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calumny" in occasioning the inquiry.

There is, however, another side to this story, which, as far as could be determined from the land records of the Comisión Agraria Mixta, appears to be exact. It is also consonant with other material which shows Dehesa as an honest and fair-dealing person, with more than just compassion for the poor. Early in 1891, a full year and a half before he became Governor, Dehesa had become interested in the lands called Juchique de Ferrer. In January these lands having been nationalized, they were adjudicated to Dehesa for the sum of 2800 pesos plus taxes for a total of 4500 pesos. They consisted of two separate properties, Arroyo Blanco and Juchique de Ferrer,
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comprising some 1860 acres. In March, the lands were duly inspected by one of Dehesa's agents and a map and
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description were sent to him. On attempting to take possession, however, Dehesa found that Arroyo Blanco was already occupied by three other proprietors who had legal
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title to the land. Recognizing their prior claim, Dehesa merely asked the government to reimburse him for the amount
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he had paid. However, as it turns out, Dehesa had not bought the lands for himself. Juchique de Ferrer had indeed been nationalized, then put up for auction, and since the previous occupants, the Indians, did not have the cash to repossess the lands which had belonged to their ejido of the Municipality of Juchique de Ferrer, Dehesa had

purchased them on behalf of the Indians. He then transferred them back to the Indians, through their municipal representatives, for the amount he had paid for them. This sale to the Indians was made possible by two arrangements. First, the Governor, Enríquez exempted the municipality from the transfer fees.⁸⁴ Second, in order to raise the money to pay Dehesa, the Indians sold three small ranches consisting of pasture land.⁸⁵ For this they received the sum of 14,000 pesos, enough to pay Dehesa and to invest in agricultural equipment. The residents of Juchique wrote:

As we are resident in Juchique and the governor has helped us we feel it right and necessary to disclose this act. Instead of founding one of those huge properties which inhibit agriculture and the well-being of the people, he has initiated the prosperity of a municipality. Besides, Governor Dehesa has inaugurated a road which will help in the promotion and development of all Misantla making it possible for its products to find their way to the sea.⁸⁶

This misinterpretation of Dehesa's action is not merely due to inadequate research. His sale of Juchique de Ferrer may have been beneficial to the people of that municipality, but there were serious complaints from other natives that in fact their village had suffered because of the transaction. Aided by an enemy of Dehesa in Naolinca, Antonio Casa, the natives of Chiconquiaco, neighbours of Juchique de Ferrer and Plan de las Hayas, complained to Díaz that their village borders had been violated in the transaction. Because their village was in the canton of Xalapa, the dispute centred around the cantonal boundaries.⁸⁷ Dehesa subsequently arranged a meeting

between the villagers of Chiconquiaco, Juchique and Yecautla, but since representatives from the latter could not attend, the meeting was postponed till a later date. The complaint that the Chiconquiacans made against the village of Juchique was without substance since their borders had been fixed by a decree dated June 9, 1891. However, no agreement could be reached and these villagers continued their complaints over the next few years. ⁸⁸ Later the State of Veracruz was able to prove with documents that none of the lands of Juchique encroached in any way on those of Chiconquiaco. ⁸⁹ These complaints probably stemmed from jealousy or animosity of some sort, because the government examined the old titles going back to the colonial period and was not able to substantiate any of the claims. Dehesa's action stands as a singular bit of evidence of his generosity and his concern for the peasants.

Nevertheless, this is not to say that Dehesa was not a sharp businessman on the lookout for bargains. He was not averse to using his influence in government circles to obtain good land that the government was putting up for sale. But this author uncovered no evidence whatsoever that would indicate that he used his influence to defraud others or to take advantage of anyone or any group in the period when land was being nationalized and sold. In December, 1891, at his request, the Sub-secretary of Finance in Mexico City sent him the following information:

In conformity with your desire, I have informed Mr. Ross, who has asked that the office which designated the engineer of the Commission resident in Xalapa, order him to give possession of the lands to those who have legal title. The surplus government land may then be sold to you. I will be careful to advise you of the name of the engineer as well as his instructions so that you can activate things and have the lands you wish adjudicated to you.90

On January 16, 1892, the Sub-secretary advised Dehesa that Rafael Ramírez had been named engineer for the division of lands in Naolinca and had been advised to contact him if there was any difficulty. ⁹¹ Dehesa then wrote Ramírez advising him to see a lawyer named Manuel García Mendez, and to Mendez introducing Ramírez "who is sent by the Ministry of Finance in the business of Las Aldas." ⁹² Ramírez was carrying out the adjudication and division of lands belonging to the extinct community of San Mateos, and sent the following request to Dehesa:

Please have the kindness to recommend me to the governor to give me papers for the authorities in Naolinco and an escort of Rurales to eventuate any difficulties. Even though I carry a letter from General Enríquez I believe that your recommendation will be of much utility.93

There is no follow-up to this interesting correspondence. But no property of Dehesa's was listed around Naolinco in any archive, and the correspondence probably concerns an attempt to carry out the adjudication of property with as little upset as possible, since the native peoples were rightfully suspicious of survey activities, and did not like, let alone understand, the government's policies regarding the division of ejidos into small plots with private ownership. ⁹⁴

However, Dehesa did possess other and extensive properties. There was an estate at Paso de la Milpa in Las Vegas.⁹⁵ And there were more extensive properties belonging to his wife in Perote.⁹⁶ Another estate named Hacienda Bejuco in the Canton of Ozuluama comprised 2,338.5 hectares.⁹⁷ In addition, there were four other properties: Arroyo Hondo and Piedra Grande near Misantla, and La Vega and Piedra del Caballo near Colipa.⁹⁸

Teodoro Dehesa lived a thoroughly respectable family life, living in a large house just opposite the State Palace in Xalapa.⁹⁹ From there he used to walk across to his office in the palace greeting passers-by. There also, three of his children were born. Teodoro, the first, was born in Veracruz, but a few years later had to be taken to New York for a series of operations.¹⁰⁰ Dehesa was in Mexico City when this crisis occurred and he hurried back to Veracruz where the family embarked immediately for the United States.¹⁰¹ The boy survived almost one month but died on June 12, 1894. His body was embalmed and returned to Veracruz on June 25, where he was buried.¹⁰² The other children were Raúl, who later occupied a seat in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, and who was married to Emma García Pena, daughter of Madero's Minister of War and the former head of the Geographical Commission in Veracruz,¹⁰³ Ramón and Teresa.

After the fall of the regime, Dehesa resigned his position on June 20, 1911. He returned to his house in the city of Veracruz but, learning that his life was in danger,

left for New York, returning shortly after, in March,

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1913. He remained until the victory of Venustiano

Carranza, when, due to a vicious campaign against himself and his family, he was forced to go into exile again in September, 1914. He stayed for a short time in Florida then took up residence in Havana. Unfortunately his wife had to return to Veracruz on account of her health, where she stayed in their house in Xalapa which had been returned by Carranza. They were never to see each other again.

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Despite detailed letters of complaint to Carranza, which were never answered, Dehesa's other properties were not returned. Because of a Carranza decree that only those Porfiristas could return to Mexico who swore not to make any public statements, Dehesa saw himself forced to remain in Havana. The man who never hesitated to speak his mind would not bend to an order which he considered unfair and undemocratic. In 1917, his wife died and was laid to rest in Veracruz. Dehesa continued on in Havana until the government of President Alvaro Obregón, considering the Porfirian movement as finished, returned Dehesa's properties and withdrew the decree.

Dehesa then returned to Veracruz where he took up residence in his old home in the port city receiving visitors of all kinds, including Indians who came to him for advice on how to regain or retain their property. On September 25, 1936, at the age of eighty-four, he died.

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CHAPTER II

NOTES

1. Most of these early biographical details are based on the memoirs dictated to Dehesa's eldest son Raul in the ATD.

2. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, pp.7-8. Mrs Sodi de Pallares was the official biographer of the Dehesa family, whose head, Raul kept his father's archive for many years. Many of these anecdotes were from Raul who was especially close to his father.

3. El Reproductor, 20 Feb. 1908. This reprint of an article taken from La Libertad of San Diego, Duval County, Texas, claims that Dehesa left school in 1864 to enter commerce with a Miguel Mouston, where he remained until 1873.

4. Dehesa is reputed to have refused the position of Minister of the Interior in the first Madero cabinet. See Ricardo García Granados, Historia de México desde la república en 1867, hasta la caída de Porfirio Díaz, 4 vols., (Mexico City: A. Botas y hijo, 1912), v.4, p.128.

5. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.4

6. Teodoro A. Dehesa, "De mis recuerdos", ATD; Walter V. Scholes, Política mexicana durante el regimen de Juárez, 1855-72 (Mexico City: Fondo de cultura económica, 1976), p.215, makes the somewhat ambiguous statement that "The revolt reached the culmination at the beginning of November with the Plan of La Noria, which was published in Mexico on November 13;" See also Ralph Roeder, Hacia el México moderna: Porfirio Díaz, 2 vols., (Mexico City: Fondo de cultura económica, 1973), v.1., pp.34-35; and José Lopez-Portillo y Rojas, Elevación y Caída de Porfirio Díaz (Mexico City: Librería Español, 1921), pp.89-90, who sees the revolt as having no basis besides the desire for power.

7. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.1., pp.641-642; Ralph Roeder, Juárez y su México (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1980), p.1054. Both historians agree on the date for the beginning of the revolt but give different justifications for choosing it. For Cosío Villegas it is the date on which a letter bearing the letter-head "Popular Revolutionary Army, was written by Luciano López, one of the

men leading the revolt in the Ciudadela in Mexico City, to Porfirio Díaz, who is addressed as General-in-Chief of the revolt. For Roeder, it is the date on which Díaz actually rides out of Oaxaca.

8. El Imparcial, 17 Dec. 1933; Daniel Cosío Villegas, Porfirio Díaz en la revuelta de La Noria (Mexico City: Editorial Hermes, 1953); José M. Domínguez Castilla, Ensayo crítico histórico sobre la revolución de La Noria (Mexico City: El Cuadratín, 1934); Miguel Domínguez, Cómo salió el General Díaz al fracasar la revolución de La Noria (Mexico City: no pub., 1947).

9. Dehesa, "De mis recuerdos", ATD.

10. See Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.1, p.720, for a discussion on the date of departure. Dehesa's memoirs contain the date September 1, 1871, which was an error, probably due to the fact that the memoirs were written in the 1930's. Later research established the date as February 1, 1872. Dehesa's date is impossible as the insurrection did not begin until October/November 1871. See also Aurelio González Sempé, Evolución política y constitucional del estado de Veracruz-Llave (Mexico City: Seminario de derecho constitucional, 1965), p.210.

11. Ralph Roeder, Juárez, p.1068. Juárez died July 18, 1872; Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.1., p.305.

12. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.1., p.766.

13. Idem, Historia Moderna, v.1., p.305.

14. Lopez-Portilla y Rosas, Elevación y caída, p.100.

15. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.24.

16. Ibid., p.25; Dehesa, "El General Mier y Teran," ATD; Cf. El Reproductor, 20 Feb. 1908, which gives the date as 1873. 1872 is the correct one.

17. Díaz to Dehesa, 21 Oct. 1873, reprinted in La Patria, 7 June 1904. A copy of the letter was given to the paper by Dehesa.

18. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.25; José C. Valadés, El porfirismo-historia de un régimen: el crecimiento 2. vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Patria, 1948), v.1., p.14.

19. Dehesa, "De mis recuerdos", ATD.

20. Abel R. Pérez, Teodoro A. Dehesa- gobernante veracruzano (Mexico City: Imprenta Talleres Stylo, 1950), p.13; Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.33; Cf. Laurens Ballard Perry, Juárez and Díaz: Machine Politics in Mexico (Chicago: Northern Illinois University Press, 1978), p.18 who cites numerous newspaper sources claiming that Dehesa was elected to a seat in the Mexican Congress. In fact it was Díaz who was elected.

21. Dehesa, "El General Mier y Teran", ATD; Rafael Tapía, Mi participación revolucionaria (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepetl, 1967), p.xii, writes: "Dehesa became the leader of the group known as the pure tuxtepecanos (tuxtepecanos netos)." Exactly what this term meant is not quite clear.

22. Dehesa, "De mis recuerdos", ATD.

23. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.1., p.816.

24. Ibid., p.770; Parkes, A History of Mexico, p.285,

writes: "Ignacio Ramírez and Riva Palacio both felt that Díaz was the embodiment of Mexican democracy."

25. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.1., p.771.

26. Ibid., p.772.

27. Ibid., p.774; Dehesa, "El General Mier y Teran", ATD. Dehesa's account appears to be incorrect in regard to the timing and motivation for the revolt. He writes: "The presidential election looming on the horizon did not appear to be in Don Sebastian's favour, and the persistent Porfirians clung to Díaz's candidature, which, whatever one might say, was popular. The result of said elections was the election of Don Sebastian, and, considering it fraudulent, General Díaz decided to resort to arms." It was not the fraudulence that motivated Díaz, but Lerdo's intention to seek reelection.

28. Dehesa, "El General Mier y Teran", ATD; El Reproductor, 20.2.08.

29. Dehesa, "El General Mier y Teran", ATD.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid; El Reproductor, 20 Feb. 1908. Pérez, "Dehesa", p.13; Manuel B. Trens, Historia de Veracruz 8. vols. (Mexico City: no.pub., 1950), v.6., p.336. His date of 1874 is incorrect.

32. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.53.

33. Ibid., p.48.

34. Ibid., p.51; Pérez, Dehesa, p.13.

35. El Reproductor, 20 Feb. 1908.

36. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.8., pp.693-694.

37. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.47.

38. Ibid., pp.393-395.

39. Zilli, Historia sucinta, p.121; Dehesa, "El General Mier y Teran", ATD. The reference is to the episode which has never been cleared up concerning Díaz's telegram to Mier ordering him to "matalos en caliente" (kill them in hot blood). The guilt of the alleged plotters was never proven, and it seems that most, if not all, of them were innocent. See also Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.8., pp.468-69.

40. Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.121; Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.8., p.600.

41. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.8., pp.315-316. He was also one of the key players in the taking of Puebla from the French in 1867.

42. El Reproductor, 31 Dec. 1891; Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.103.

43. Ibid.; El Reproductor, 17 Dec. 1891. See also Zilli, Historia sucinta, Trens, Historia de Veracruz, and Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve historia, for discussions of Resamen's contributions to education in Mexico.

44. El Reproductor, 17 Dec. 1891.

45. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.103.

46. El Nacional, 17 Apr. 1892.

47. del Río to Dehesa, 16 Feb. 1891, ATD.

48. Pamphlet in L18:1783, CPD; Gob. L800:1, 1893, AGN.
49. Pamphlet in CPD, L17:3692. There is no direct evidence for the reason why Díaz approved of Dehesa's campaign. However, it has been suggested by one historian that Díaz wanted "a semblance of political activity" for the election in order to impress foreign countries. This assertion is plausible. See Walter N. Breyman, "The Científicos: Critics of the Díaz Regime, 1892-1903", Proceedings of the Arkansas Academy of Science, v.2 (1955), p.91-97.
50. Baranda to Dehesa, 31 Jan. 1892, ATD.
51. Dehesa to Díaz, 24 Feb. 1892, CPD, L17:2043; Martínez to Díaz, n.d., CPS, L17:2437.
52. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.442.
53. Dehesa to Díaz, 17 Mar. 1892, CPD, L17: 3699.
54. Castillo to Díaz, 9 Mar. 1892, CPD, L17:3654.
55. Dehesa to Díaz, 17 Mar. 1892, CPD, L17:3799; El Monitor Republicana, 20 Mar. 1892.
56. Leví to Díaz, 21 Mar. 1892, CPD, L17:4028.
57. El Monitor Republicana, 30 Mar. 1892.
58. Díaz to Leví, 20 Mar. 1892, L17:4030, CPD.
59. Díaz to Dehesa, 18 Mar. 1892, CPD, L17:5499.
60. Enríquez to Díaz, 27 Mar. 1892, CPD, L17:3759. Camilo Enríquez was the nephew of the late governor. He was reminding the President of his late uncle's loyalty and asking him for protection as well as a job.
61. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 Mar. 1892, L17:5509.
62. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.442.
63. El Monitor Republicano, 30 Mar. 1892.
64. Manuel Leví was replaced by Aleandro Alcolea, a wealthy and influential Veracruzán, on 1 April 1892. Leví to Díaz, 28 Mar. 1892, CPD; El Monitor Republicano, 30 Mar. 1892.
65. L17. Cajas 10 & 11; also Dehesa to Díaz, 15.4.92, L17:5505-07, CPD; Canseco to Díaz, 20.4.92, L17:5404, CPD, informing the President of his nomination as jefe político on Dehesa's recommendation.
66. Díaz to Dehesa, 12.4.92, L17:5492, CPD.
67. Dehesa to Díaz, 1.5.92, CPD, L17:7204.
68. Díaz to Dehesa, 4.5.92, CPD, L17:7206.
69. Dehesa to Díaz, 27 Apr. 1892, CPD, L17:7202; Díaz to Dehesa, 4 May 1892, CPD, L17:7203.
70. Various to Dehesa, 5 Apr. 1892, CPD, L17:5504.
71. Departamento de Recopilación de Leyes del Estado de Veracruz Llave, Leyes, Decretos y Circulares del Estado de Veracruz-Llave (Xalapa-Enriquez: Imprenta del Gobierno del Estado, 1893), p.142; Leonardo Pasquel, Cronología ilustrada de Xalapa, 1178-1911, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepétl, 1978), v.1., p.104.
72. Letter to the Editor from "Club Liberal", Veracruz, 10 Dec. 1892, in El Diario del Hogar, 14 Dec. 1892, Dehesa to Editor, El Diario del Hogar, 27 Dec. 1892.

73. "Leyes y Decretos" (1893), p.207ff. His salary was now 6000 pesos; Mateo Podan, Don Porfirio y sus tiempos 2 vols. (Mexico City: La Prensa, 1940), v.2., p.10, describes him as one of Mexico's millionaires.

74. Francisco Bulnes, El verdadero Díaz y la revolución (Mexico City: Gómez de la Puente, 1920), p.167. This vituperous writer accused Dehesa of not having a penny before 1876, but having "acquired, saved or squandered 1.2 million pesos" since. See also Heather Fowler-Salamini, Movilación campesina en Veracruz (1920-38) (Mexico City: Siglo veintiuno editores, 1979), p.22, who accuses Dehesa of dealing himself and his friends parcels of "principally" public lands. Unfortunately when checking her sources the cited references were not found. Elena Azaola Garrido, Rebelión y derrota del magonismo agrario (Mexico City: Fondo de cultura económica, 1982), p.69, merely repeats Fowler-Salamini's assertions.

75. Interview with Señorita Elisa Aguirre, intimate friend of the Dehesa family, 5 Mar. 1984, Xalapa, Veracruz; M.Arroyo and Sons, Commission agents in Perote, to Dehesa, 24 Jan. 1900, ATD. The ATD contains no information about Dehesa's wife.

76. Fowler-Salamini, Movilación, p.22 There is more than an error here. For example, the references to Sodi de Pallares, pp.36, 132, have nothing to do with land questions. The citation in the Comisión Agraria Mixta (hereafter cited as CAM) also needs more careful documentation as some of the material here are reports by peasants living long after the events they claimed occurred. Nevertheless, evidence in CAM, File #50, Misantla, did not reveal any charges that Dehesa had appropriated, or availed himself of ejidal land.

77. Díaz to Dehesa, 16 Aug. 1893, CPD, L18:12095.

78. Bienes Nacionalizadas, Gob. C587, Exp.186, 1/712, Archivo General de la Nación (hereafter cited as AGN).

79. Ibid. The Mexican measure here is cited as 4 million "de varas cuadradas" (square yards). 1 acre= 4840 sq. yds.

80. Gutiérrez to Dehesa, 16 Mar. 1891, ATD, File #33, D107.

81. Bienes Nacionalizadas, loc.cit.

82. He was in fact reimbursed, but with less than he had paid, since payment had been made with government bonds which had by that date been discounted. He received 225 pesos for 750 pesos. Bienes Nacionalizadas, Gob. C587, Exp.186, 1/173-74.

83. Dehesa to Díaz, 20 Aug. 1893, CPD, L18:12100, see also letter to La Patria, signed by residents of Juchique de Ferrer, confirming Dehesa's action, 24 Sep. 1901; AGN, Bienes Nacionalizadas, Gob. C587, Exp 186; CAM, "Misantla", Exp. 563 "Plan de las Hayas", p.102.

84. "Traslación de dominio", Decree #10, 9 June 1891, sgd. Enríquez, CPD, L18:12103.

85. Memorandum, 20 Aug. 1893, CPD, L18:12101; La Patria, 24 Sep. 1901.

86. La Patria, 24 Sep. 1901, Cf also Joaquín Maria Rodríguez, Apuntes sobre el canton de Xalapa, estado de Veracruz, Mexico (Xalapa: Imprenta veracruzana de la viuda y hijos de Ruíz, 1895), pp.38-39. Work on the road was begun in 1894.

87. Díaz to Dehesa, 16 Aug. 1893, CPD, L18:12095.

88. Dehesa to Díaz, 20 Aug. 1893, CPD, L18:12101.

89. Gobernación, Veracruz to Gobernación, Mexico City, various dates, CPD, L23:8614-8617.

90. Macín to Dehesa, 7 Dec. 1891, ATD.

91. Macín to Dehesa, 16 Jan. 1892, ATD.

92. Dehesa to Ramírez, 19 Jan. 1892, ATD; Dehesa to Mendez, 19 Jan. 1892, ATD.

93. Ramírez to Dehesa, 21 Jan. 1892, ATD.

94. See Chapter VI for a discussion of the land question.

95. Ortega to Dehesa, 30 Mar. 1901, asking permission to grow some sugar cane on Dehesa's land, which was granted; Dehesa to Ortega, 2 Apr. 1901, ATD.

96. Arroyo and Sons to, 6 Sep. 1901, 12 Sep, 1901, 12 Oct. 1901, ATD. These are remittances for money from a Mr. King who was cutting lumber. In February, 1901, King had entered into a contract with Dehesa to cut 23,000 trees over a three-year period at a price of two pesos each, and with a deposit of 5000 pesos. Arroyo to Dehesa, 15 Feb. 1901, 18 Feb. 1901, 22 (May, 1901, ATD; deed of sale of Paso de la Milpa, 21 Dec. 1932, to José Calagáry León, ATD.

97. This estate was mentioned in a letter from G.M. Navarro to W.O. Taylor, of the D.W. Johnson Co., Mexico, 29 Aug. 1922, ATD.

98. "Misantla", Exps. 50, 3837, CAM. The Misantla properties were the subject of a claim by the village ejido after the Revolution. They had been first sold by President Victoria Guadalupe to the town council in 1845, had passed through various private hands until they were acquired by Dehesa and his son, Raúl, from the heirs of José Prado, Exp. 50, pp.10, 472-478. Despite Dehesa's argument that the lands had never been a part of an ejido, they were confiscated in 1925. Other properties in Colipa were acquired in 1904 and 1910, Lavallo to Huerta, 5 Mar. 1952, Exp.3837. These were also confiscated in part: of 1688 hectares, Raúl Dehesa was left with 361, but 532 were later returned to him, restitution document, 12 July 1964, Exp. 3837, CAM.

99. The house was later demolished and is the cite of the present Xalapa Town Hall. However, the stone stairs and garden at the back of the house have been preserved in their original state.

100. Dehesa to Díaz, 28 May 1894, CPD, L19:8409.

101. El Diario del Hogar, 16 May 1894.

102. El Partido Liberal, 28 June 1894.

103. I was not able to ascertain many facts about the

family. These are absent in Dehesa's biography as well.

104. See Chapter V for a discussion of Dehesa's political involvement after 1911. Peter V. Henderson, Félix Díaz, the Porfirians and the Mexican Revolution (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1981), p.66, believes that Dehesa was a party to the Félix Díaz conspiracy. This has never been substantiated and vehemently denied by Dehesa.

105. Sodi de Pallaes, Dehesa, p.280.

106. Ibid., pp.284-285.

CHAPTER III

DEHESA AND STATE POLITICS: 1892-1900

Teodoro Dehesa was a practical politician not a theoretician of politics. Nevertheless, he was, generally speaking, a product of the "liberal" period in Mexican history in which he grew up.¹ Early in his life he appears to have been unable to understand the benevolent attitudes of some of his compatriots toward the French-imposed imperium of Maximilian Hapsburg.² Out of this incipient nationalism was born a sympathy for General Porfirio Díaz who, in the next years, did so much to rid the country of the hated foreign rulers.³ A second characteristic of Dehesa's political approach was the very strong trait of personal loyalty which carried over into his relationship with Díaz. This adhesion to the President continued unabated until the latter's death many years later in Paris.⁴ This raises the apparent paradox between Dehesa's political liberalism and his unequivocal support for Díaz, especially during times of crisis, for he has been described by almost all of his contemporaries, not to speak of historians, as one of the most liberal, progressive and independent Governors, who enjoyed tremendous popularity throughout

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Mexico. One of the reasons for his popularity was his
determination to always speak his mind, but also his stance
against the group which had come to be known as the
Científicos.⁶ This group had inaugurated the change in
Mexican liberalism in 1892 with the foundation of the Unión
Liberal.⁷ However, Dehesa continued to adhere to the ideas
of the tuxtepecanos netos, the anti-reelectionists who had
supported Díaz in the revolt of 1876.⁸ Yet, Dehesa believed
as strongly in the policy of order and material development
as the Científicos, although his methods, had he had the
influence,⁹ might well have been very different.

On assuming the office of Governor in 1892, Dehesa
found himself confronted with the task of having to
consolidate his victory by ensuring the support that would
enable him to continue in office.¹⁰ This was made difficult
by two factors. First, shortly after taking office he was
asked by the President to return to the Customs House in
Veracruz, for what specific reason, the records do not
indicate clearly. Second, his political enemies, the
Enriquistas, continued to foment opposition to his
administration. This internecine struggle had already
become apparent shortly after Enríquez's death. Much of it
had to do with the jefe político of Misantla, Ignacio
Betancourt, who seems to have been genuinely disliked by
the people there.¹¹ More circumspect opponents like José E.
Hernández, Inspector General of Administration, wrote to
Díaz asking for a transfer to another State so as not to be
accused of creating difficulties for the new

administration.

It took Dehesa almost two terms in office to acquire the political base that allowed him the security of remaining in office undisturbed. By 1900 he had isolated and neutralized the political opposition in Veracruz and could turn his attention to federal politics where he was to play an increasingly important role. Dehesa dealt with his political opposition in many ways, but above all he tried to maintain as close a position to the President as possible. Early in his Governorship, he made the acquaintance of young Felix Díaz, the President's nephew, who had been sent to serve on the Geographic Exploration Commission, charting sections of Veracruz until 1901. The young army engineer was introduced to the cream of Veracruz society where he met Isabella Alcolea, daughter of the former interim Governor, and married her in 1895. Dehesa seized the opportunity by cultivating the friendship of young Díaz, who was reputed to be favoured by the President even over his own son. Eventually Dehesa recommended him as a representative for Veracruz in the Chamber of Deputies in Mexico City. ¹³ A further opportunity to gain the ear of the President, was through another nephew, Ignacio Muñoz. In October 1892, he had graduated from university as an engineer with top marks and had ¹⁴ petitioned his uncle for a job as inspector of railways. Díaz subsequently wrote Dehesa the next year indicating that Muñoz had made study of a land division in Tuxpam and asked

Dehesa to examine it. But Dehesa must already have been contacted by the young engineer, because he replied that he had already done so and had forwarded the recommendation to the appropriate authorities. Thus began an intimate friendship between the Governor and the engineer, and Muñoz was used frequently as a courier for Dehesa. Some years later Dehesa asked Díaz to see that his nephew was elected to the Chamber of Deputies as well, which request was granted. However, there was a limit to what Díaz was prepared to do for this nephew, as a request by Dehesa years later to get him elected as President of the Chamber was denied. There was also a limit as to what concessions Dehesa would make for him, as a request by Muñoz in 1909 to open a Pelote club in Veracruz was turned down as not being prudent at the time. However, Muñoz's friendship proved to be very valuable to Dehesa who not only used him as a courier to the President but found him an invaluable assistant in the difficult work of surveying and distributing land in the countryside. Muñoz's integrity and diplomacy in dealing with the Indians smoothed many a difficult situation, besides, he was able to keep Dehesa informed of conditions and attitudes in rural areas.

In January 1893, it was rumoured in El Nacional that Dehesa "... was to return to the Maritime Customs in Veracruz which he had run so well for the last four years." The paper went on to reassure its readers that this was only a temporary appointment and that no new election would take place. Julian Herrera was chosen as

interim Governor and was duly sworn in on February 4,
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1893. A few weeks later Dehesa arrived in Mexico City to
confer with Díaz, Matias Romero, Minister of Development
and his assistant, José Yves Limantour. 22 The reason was the
serious problem of financing the country, for which Romero,
who had been Ambassador to the United States, had been
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summoned home. The magnitude of the floating debt, the
depreciation in the price of silver and bad harvests both
in 1891 and 1892 were reasons for the financial crisis. A
decrease in the value of the peso, thus increasing the cost
of debt servicing, was a factor which was causing near
public panic and invited strict measures if the public
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accounts were to be balanced. Dehesa was therefore sent
back to the Customs at Veracruz to ensure that every penny
accruing to the government found its way to the Treasury.
In April he telegraphed the customs collection for March,
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which had amounted to 704,045 pesos. In the same telegram
he spoke of "... almost having finished the little work of
which we spoke," as well as trying to solve the complex
question of replacing the duties on imported textiles
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caused by the increase in local textile production.
Furthermore, Dehesa made other suggestions for reducing the
federal budget. At his behest the State Legislature of
Veracruz proposed that the State cover all the emoluments
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of their Senators and Deputies in the Mexican Congress.
One year later he forwarded a plan to Díaz whereby the
salaries of members of the geographical commission

surveying in Veracruz would be reduced and replaced with
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the issue of food and other small items.

In the meantime, however, Dehesa's secondment to
the Custom's House was causing some political problems. In
February, 1893, the head of the State police Colonel
Gaudencio Llave, as well as six State deputies in the
legislature, resigned because they would not work with the
interim Governor, Herrera, who was accused of favouring
people from his own area, the Veracruzana Huasteca, with
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jobs. One Mexico City paper even questioned the
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constitutionality of Dehesa's secondment. Part of the
problem was that Veracruz had had six Governors in one
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year. The other problem was that with Dehesa away, the
way was open for those who opposed him, or who wanted to
fulminate against him in the hope of toppling him. For
example, the head of the Boys' School No. 1, Manuel
Betancourt, owner of the weekly Enriquista paper, El
Espectador, began printing defamatory articles against the
State government. Dehesa correctly attributed their source
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as former employees of Enríquez.

The President advised Herrera and Dehesa to see that all
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protection and support were withdrawn from Betancourt.
Dehesa, however, whose tactic was not to wield the big
stick if possible, tried to combat the slanders through
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another newspaper. This was not easy as the accusations
laid by El Espectador were of so general a nature that one
could not really bring any facts to bear in refutation. El
Espectador charged:

Old laws need revision, economic problems demand solution, old anxieties demand rectification through the justice system, public instruction lies in a dormant State, and agriculture, industry and commerce solicit the earnest intervention of the State.³⁵

Commenting, El Nacional remarked that one could get the impression that all was rotten in the State of Veracruz. Since the previous Enríquez administration had done nothing in eight years, the charges could only have been motivated by political passion.³⁶ Nevertheless the attacks continued, and El Nacional was soon to recognize the strategy that the Enriquista forces were employing. Their basic motivation was fear of losing jobs to Dehesa supporters. Many of the people in the present administration were natives of the Huasteca, and since there had been considerable nepotism, they were afraid of a clean sweep now that Dehesa was Governor.³⁷ There were grounds for their fears. Although there had been some progress under Enríquez, there had been corruption especially in regard to the Treasury. As the newspaper pointed out, that was in far better shape than previously: 4603 pesos had been left at the change-over, but since then, over 101,320 pesos had been paid as debts accrued by the previous administration. After covering all expenses of the last financial year, there were still 18,590 pesos left as a surplus.³⁸ Obviously, this was a result of Dehesa's careful supervision and he would need his own supporters in places like the Treasury to ensure their efficient operation. It was in the nature of the system that he could never leave the followers of another

Governor in positions of responsibility.

Such was the incentive to try and gain or retain a coveted position in the State government that the opposition charges continued, although prominent citizens in Veracruz and Xalapa now rose to the defense of Dehesa. Nevertheless, he was obliged to return to the capital and assume the Governorship in order to still the heady waters of State politics. Besides the opposition from the Enriquistas there were other factions which had to be dealt with. The problem was difficult since they all could legitimately claim to be supporters of the President. There were, of course, the Enriquistas, the followers of ex-Governor Castillo and those who still supported the old Porfirian general of "matalos en caliente" fame, General Mier y Teran. They had all used the circumstance of an interim Governor at the onset of a new administration and Dehesa's absence to try and bring about his downfall. In doing so they had misjudged both Dehesa's capacity for strong measures, and his support by the President.

The State government had hitherto allowed all newspapers in the State to use the government printery in Xalapa to publish their papers at a nominal fee. Now Dehesa decided to raise the price of printing to such a level that Betancourt, for example, would not be able to afford the cost. Optimistically, Dehesa reported to the President that the State was no longer divided politically since the Governors and the governed were working for one end, namely, the continued progress of the State. With

Dehesa's resumption of power things appeared to be returning to normal, and one month later El Nacional commented that agriculture was again forging ahead, there being even a demand for agricultural workers in the State.⁴²

However, political life in the State did not remain tranquil for very long. Already in March of the following year rumours of Dehesa's resignation began to circulate. An old enmity between the head of the State police, Colonel Gaudencio Llave, and the Minister of the Interior, Julian Herrera (the interim Governor), had flared up, and Dehesa's enemies felt they could take this as a reason for demanding the Governor's resignation.⁴³ However, their reading of political affairs was quite wrong. Dehesa was personally popular in the State and even the Mexico City opposition daily, El Diario del Hogar, confirmed this by printing a straw poll which put Dehesa ahead of both his Secretary of the Treasury, Juan Chazaro Soler, and the military commander of the Veracruz district, (another close friend of the President),⁴⁴ Colonel Rosalino Martínez. For the anniversary of his first year as Governor the "Circle Dehesa" organized a huge banquet and ball in Xalapa which was very well attended.⁴⁵ And El Nacional continued to report on the fiscal progress of the country due to Dehesa's work at the Customs-- for the month of December⁴⁶ the tax intake had risen to 702,585 pesos.

Already, in 1894, preparations for the presidential

election in 1896 had begun. Efforts were being made to ensure the acceptance of Díaz's reelection. There must have been some doubt as to how this would be received by the Mexican electorate, for steps were taken by the ruling group under Romero Rubio to ensure that no chink appeared in the armour of Díaz supporters. He thus wrote to Dehesa informing the Governor of the plans and asking for a show

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of solidarity. Early in 1895, Dehesa began preparations for the campaign in Veracruz. The town councils were organized to produce letters of confidence acclaiming Díaz and requesting his renewed candidacy for the presidency.

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Of course there was opposition to Dehesa's plans to have himself drafted at the same time. The most formidable opposition came from Colonel Rosalino Martínez, commander of military forces in Veracruz, who, it was

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rumoured, was to be the next Governor. Martínez had probably misread the political indicators and misjudged both his and Dehesa's influence and friendship with the President, for he was sent a very curt order for himself and his subordinates to refrain from mixing in Veracruz

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politics. Other voices, however, were emphatic in their support and praise of Dehesa. El Reproductor of Orizaba

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called him a "modest and proven citizen." El Nacional printed a letter by a delegate to the first Agricultural Congress currently taking place in Veracruz:

We can only praise his good and honest administration, including his efforts to provide good drinking water in Jalapa.

His government is not only honest and efficient, but is characterized by its openness and frankness....

Dehesa is young, possesses good ways, is straightforward, persuasive in his words and has lots of energy. He is surrounded by people who like him and are totally loyal in his government.

The State treasury is flourishing and has a respectable, real balance.⁵²

El Reprodutor unabashedly called for the reelection of the two men who were most important for Veracruz--Díaz and Dehesa-- heaping praise on the latter for furthering "... the moral and organic sections of the State, and also public instruction and material growth."⁵³

As the election year opened, campaigning became more marked. Clubs were founded in every Canton to secure the election of the Díaz-Dehesa team.⁵⁴ Dehesa organized a trip to the old Veracruzan capital, Orizaba, where he inaugurated the new electric service in the Pedro Díez Theatre and the town band-stand, and attended an artistic evening in the large Grand Theatre Llave.⁵⁵ One week later the President and his wife, accompanied by a large entourage, journeyed to Veracruz where they stayed in Dehesa's house. Warships in the port gave a twenty-one gun salute, and after festivities, the party travelled to Tlacotalpam.⁵⁶ There they visited the President's ranch, La Candelaria, where he had lived after the revolt of La Noria.⁵⁷

The visit reminded others, however, of previous political battles and principles, especially of Díaz's fight against Lerdo de Tejada.⁵⁸ So as to avoid the accusation that the President was disregarding past principles, the Mexican Constitution was duly amended to make the

President, on taking the oath of office, swear to carry out the Reform Laws and to be loyal to the Constitution of

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1857. It was now obvious who was the President's choice for Governor. The opposition El Diario del Hogar lamented:

For a moment we had hoped that there would be effective suffrage in the next elections. But there is no doubt now that the next Governor will be Teodoro Dehesa.60

And El Monitor Republicano (Mexico City) charged:

Dehesa has been reelected. That is to say, he has been nominated again by the chief executive. Under his administration the laws against gambling have been infringed, and the Reform Laws ignored, and nothing has been accomplished in this State for lack of initiative and energy.61

During the actual election, the paper thundered, a citizen had appeared at one of the voting tables demanding his ballot paper, only to be told that there was no election officer there. It would have been better, the paper concluded, to spend the money in some beneficial way rather than wasting it on ballots.62 Notwithstanding the outbreak in June of the revolt by Indians at Papantla, the President and Governor were duly reelected.63

Despite his victory, and the death of his most committed political opponent, Manuel Betancourt, in 1896, Dehesa's political troubles were not over.64 In fact, he was now about to face the most serious challenge to his political career-- lack of trust by the President, who felt it necessary to have one of his under-cover agents,65 Heriberto Barrón, go to Xalapa to spy on Dehesa. There were many reasons for Díaz's lack of trust, but the main one was the suspicion that his friend was assembling a power base

in Veracruz which was hostile to Díaz himself, and to the cause of reelection. Barrón arrived in Veracruz sometime in February, 1899, and obtained a minor post in the Treasury, at the same time ingratiating himself into the circle of Dehesistas involved in the production of the government paper El Orden, whose editor was the irascible Veracruzian poet and friend of Dehesa, Díaz Mirón.

The President was also concerned by a rabid press campaign that had been launched against Dehesa and the State government at the beginning of 1899. The charges were again not concrete, but spoke of a general malaise in Veracruz and abuses by the government, with hints that the Governor was helping himself to State funds. Barrón's reports fed the President's suspicions and sometimes verged on the ridiculous. For example, he reported on the conversation he had had with a minor employee in the State Treasury. This person had remarked that if bookkeeping were not done in the strictest manner that thousands of pesos of tax money could disappear without a trace. This obvious truism was reported by Barrón evidently to make Díaz feel that indeed there was corruption in the government. More damaging to Dehesa, however, was Barrón's opinion that his earlier suspicion that the Governor himself was simulating an opposition to his own government, was correct! News of other opposition also came from a young man employed in the gendarmery, a former journalist, who had been allegedly recruited by General Rosalino Martínez to set up a paper in

Minatitlán, where he would direct open letters to the
President demonstrating abuses and deficiencies. ⁶⁹ Reported
also, but under the heading "Trivialities", was the
reception of Dehesa's brother, Francisco, in Sayula, Canton
of Acayucan, by over one thousand Indians who met him with
a great demonstration of support. Francisco Dehesa was
their lawyer and had been helping them with their
registration of titles and in other ways, since feverish
survey activity was taking place there. ⁷⁰ The intention of
these reports was to demonstrate to the President that
Dehesa's administration had engendered all species of
opposition due to his mishandling of State affairs.

In order to strengthen his case against Dehesa,
Barrón also joined the local literary society, "Díaz Mirón",
as well as a workers' mutualist society. In both he claimed
to be well received and applauded when he spoke with warmth
about the President. ⁷¹ Díaz was obviously concerned about
his own popularity as well as the loyalty of even his most
trusted friends! This is easier to understand when one
notes the vitriolic attacks by various groups and factions
on each other, for the purpose of obtaining whatever share
of power they could, and all accompanied by fervent
incantations of loyalty to the President. Barrón, however,
failed to turn up one shred of evidence of any wrongdoing
on Dehesa's part. His reports do show, however, the
feverish underground political activities that seem to have
been common during the Porfiriato.

The furious power struggle in Veracruz between

Dehesa and his political opposition unnerved the President who ordered Barrón to get to the bottom of it. In doing so, Barrón uncovered the subtlety and innovation that Dehesa used in treating with enemies. The report also showed Dehesa's penchant for independence in his bid to govern Veracruz according to its own traditions and with as little interference as possible from the central government, without, however, undermining Díaz's leadership in any way. The Governor had already been preparing his plans for countering the opposition. The first person to be exposed by the Governor was the editor of El Clarín, Enrique González Llorca.⁷² But he was jailed, not for publishing articles against the government, but because of drunk and disorderly conduct in Coatepec, a small town near the capital, Xalapa. After drinking heavily with two prostitutes in a hotel, he had drawn a pistol and threatened one of them. The entire correspondence between the jefe político, Dehesa and Llorca was published in the official government gazette.⁷³ In addition he was also charged with reproducing in El Clarín a defamatory article first printed in another paper, El Estado de Veracruz.⁷⁴ It had accused Dehesa of having completely neglected social obligations, for example, "... to widows, orphans and women in need," which had caused the loss of any sympathy or confidence he may have enjoyed. The article ended with the clear statement that it was the will of all Veracruzans that Dehesa not be returned as Governor.⁷⁵ As a

consequence, another editor of El Clarín, who was also the director of the Cantonal Secondary Teachers' Training School, Prof. D. Luis Jiménez, was fired and sent to jail, the scholarship of a student was revoked, and the archives and correspondence of El Clarín seized. Also, another paper, La Voz Popular, was charged by the authorities. These events were reported to have been the topic of the day. In a public ceremony at the Normal School in Xalapa in memory of the deceased Governor Enríquez, a number of hostile references were made to the Dehesa administration. In all, six men were affected by the government measures: three were imprisoned, two were fired from their positions, and one went into hiding. Nevertheless, the opposition continued. It seems as if every effort was being made to discredit Dehesa. Even the appointment of people who were openly religious was also the basis for criticism.

The uproar reached newspapers in Mexico City where both pro- and anti- Dehesa partisans entered the fray. La Patria, published by the well-known journalist, Ireneo Paz, and generally favourable to Dehesa, supported the arrest of the editor of El Estado de Veracruz, Filomeno Mata, who, in turn, was being defended by El Paladín. La Patria's editor claimed to have read every editorial in Mata's paper, accusing it of being "... dedicated exclusively to injuring the government of Veracruz, and giving exaggerated praise to General Julio M. Cervantes, surely without his knowledge or authorization." There was nothing, the paper continued, that was specific and could justify the

accusations against Dehesa's government, and therefore there was no other recourse for the authorities than to use the Penal Code. El Diario del Hogar, another anti-government paper, charged that Mata was not the writer of the articles, even though he was an anti-reelectionist, a point with which La Patria could not agree. Dehesa was also accused of trying to foster a personality cult by naming a hospital in Córdoba after himself in 1897. Citing government documents, La Patria insisted that Dehesa had, in fact, refused such an honour, but that the town council had unanimously voted to use his name.

From Xalapa the State government took further measures. To counter the opposition a new pro-Dehesa newspaper, El Orden, was founded, with the poet, Díaz Mirón, as managing editor.⁸⁴ Now Dehesa's friends began to increase their public manifestations of support. From Huatusco came a letter in La Patria purporting to expose the opposition:

We must praise La Patria for its noble support of Teodoro Dehesa. In this city the people who are associated with the attacks on him include: someone who was prevented from running an illegal lottery; a pen-pusher (tinterillo) who was upset over the same business; and an idiot. Another was an employee of El Monitor Veracruzana who was in prison, then tried to get a job with the Ministry of Finance and was turned down.⁸⁵

As the smear campaign continued with its "perversities and calumnies" carefully and reasonably answered by El Orden, it was becoming clearer that mere opposition to the pork barrel was not the only motivation. Dehesa was encountering hefty opposition over

his attempt at reelection from some of his erstwhile
supporters as well as from the existing opposition. This⁸⁷
was not illogical in view of Dehesa's former stance on the
question. There must have been many people who supported
his former position and who now felt cheated. Obviously
these supporters, who had expected and even approved of
reelection in the President's case, had expected that the
same principle would not be extended to the States. It was
also obvious that they had completely misread the
intentions of the Díaz regime which had not distanced itself
formally from the original programme of Tuxtepec.

Names were being thrust forward as candidates in
the coming election. Even Dehesa's own high officials like
Dr. Manuel Leví, the Secretary of the Treasury, were being⁸⁸
touted for the Governorship, against their will.

Politically obscure people also found their names being put
forward.⁸⁹ But the most serious alleged candidate was the
former Governor, Apolinar Castillo, the appearance of whose
name made the population feel that Dehesa had

lost favour with Díaz.⁹⁰ The call went out that for his
own dignity and that of the government he should allow the
election to be held in complete freedom and cease the
repression of the opposition press. A delegation was sent
to the President asking for Dehesa's removal, a fact which
led many people to believe that Dehesa's political enemies,
the Científicos, were behind the campaign.⁹¹ Díaz appears to
have been extremely circumspect in his deliberations. His

correspondence with Dehesa was kept to a minimum and was
couched in utterly formal terms. ⁹² Still, he held his hand.

With the appearance that he still had the President's
confidence, Dehesa's opposition seemed to dwindle,

confining itself to a few swipes at Díaz Mirón. ⁹³ Public
opposition disappeared by the beginning of June, 1899. ⁹⁴

Even former enemies decided that enough was enough. From a
jail cell in Belem prison, Ramón Mena, one of the writers
for El Estado de Veracruz, wrote to Dehesa regretting the
injustices that had been committed. ⁹⁵ Trumpeted El

Reproductor:

The majority of charges had to do with education,
that Dehesa had not devoted sufficient time nor
resources to this area. This is absurd, since no
other Governor has devoted such sums to improving
public education. The government has succeeded in
seeing that in the 183 municipalities of the State, the
teachers are properly paid, the schools equipped with
tables and other materials, and that they are housed in
proper buildings. ⁹⁶

Insinuations that there was corruption in the Treasury also
lacked any substance whatsoever. ⁹⁷

Now that Dehesa had weathered the storm, Barrón
again alleged that he may have been the source of it
himself, especially the newspaper campaign. Barrón conceded,
in his report to the President, that his own statement was
only conjecture, but that there had been some heavy
evidence which corroborated his thoughts. ⁹⁸ Dehesa's plan,
he argued, was to aid in the foundation of those
newspapers, in order to set "... mousetrap into which the
opposition would fall and thus snare easily all his
opponents." ⁹⁹ In the first case, he continued, concerning

the first defamatory article printed in El Estado de Veracruz, the government had adopted a very passive attitude, thus encouraging other papers to reprint it. Secondly, the young reporter, Fellez Neira, who had been recommended to found a paper in Minatitlán by Joaquin Jara Díaz, had been encouraged in this by Dehesa. Further arguments were advanced by Barrón a few months later when he reported that he was convinced that the entire business had been instigated by Dehesa. He called the President's attention to what he considered Dehesa's most serious commission, a series of actions which amounted to resistance of federal policies, and the silencing of voices who supported the central government:

It is sad, in effect, for those who are your ardent followers and submissive servants, not to be able to proclaim their convictions in a loud voice for fear of offending Mr. Dehesa. Here, as in other parts of the country you have many loyal and devoted friends, but they are very careful not to demonstrate this openly for fear of incurring official displeasure.

Barrón continued by citing his "proof." The editor of El Clarín had hardly been set free when he returned to his old job as head of the Cantonal school. Appearances were saved by naming his brother as head, but it was Jiménez who was really in charge and who received the salary. The printer, Augustín Ruíz, too, was employed by El Orden and given a wage of fifty pesos. If this were not bad enough, Barrón remonstrated, Dehesa had shown considerable ill-will to many friends and appointees of Díaz. For example, General Martínez had been the object of constant hostility, and

Javier Arranoíz, the new Administrator of the Customs in Veracruz, was being constantly snubbed by Dehesa. The son of the previous Governor and even Enrique Rebsamen, the outstanding educator who had made Mexico his home and contributed greatly to teacher training, had both been the victims of hostility. ¹⁰³ Barrón's arguments were just that. They certainly did not constitute evidence. Even so, the arguments were too vaguely substantiated, if at all, to have been an indictment of Dehesa. Yet they did contain a kernel of truth, twisted, however, to give a justification to Barrón's enterprise. All of the men he had cited as being the victims of Dehesa's "hostility" were supporters and friends of the President's. This did not prevent them from jockeying for more power or better positions within the system. It did not stop them from forming factions to represent this or that interest, or using all the political tactics they could muster against their opponents. General Martínez, for example, was an implacable enemy of Dehesa. At one point he had had to be reminded by the President not to mix in Veracruz politics. ¹⁰⁴ Both Rebsamen and the late Governor's son had been supporters of the previous administration. Rebsamen was, according to the President, much put out by not being able to name Manuel Betancourt as his successor. ¹⁰⁵ Dehesa was thus obviously quite within his rights to resist this opposition and to try to neutralize it, in order to maintain his position.

The problem with Barrón's memorandum, then, is the accusation that Dehesa deliberately set up the opposition

press to be used as a trap for his enemies. It is a far-fetched conjecture because the campaign might easily have backfired. Far more reasonable is the explanation that Dehesa genuinely did not want to foster a servile press, which in any case was against Veracruzán traditions, but that he was forced to take action so as not to appear weak, when the freedom of the press was abused. His reemployment of Ruíz and Jiménez was also an example, not of his having fostered the opposition, but of the political shrewdness and lack of vindictiveness for which he was known. Dehesa was absolutely loyal to the President, but he was not a puppet. He was highly intelligent, had an iron will and always tried to do what he thought was right. If this meant opposing policies that emanated from Mexico City, then he was quite capable of opposing, although he tried not to do so openly.

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Díaz must have been aware of this for, although he used a spy to try to get at the truth, he cannot have believed all that Barrón wrote. Besides, he could not have been unaware himself of the rampant factionalism and realities of Mexican politics. There was, however, another reason for the strained relations between the two men, which had nothing to do with politics in the strict sense.

This concerned lands in the Soteapan near the town of Acayucan, which were inhabited by Popolucan Indians. A vast portion of the lands in question had come into the possession of Romero Rubio, the President's father-in-law,

in the early 1890's. He had died in 1896 and his daughter, Carmen, the President's wife, was one of his main inheritors. The question of the legality of ownership was in considerable doubt, however, and the litigation involved in the settling of the will dragged on until the turn of the century. Díaz had asked Dehesa in 1896 to "... make sure that in the settlement of the estate the Town Council (Ayuntamiento) respects the right of the will."¹⁰⁸

Meanwhile, Francisco Dehesa, the Governor's brother, had taken on the task of representing some of the Popolucas in their struggle to retain land which had been declared baldio (common land) and was being surveyed for distribution to whoever might be lucky enough to have it adjudicated to them.¹⁰⁹ The actual personal interest of the Dehesas, if any, is difficult to assess. Barrón, who was never too concrete in his accusations, claimed that the Dehesas were only using the natives as a screen to further their own private interests, although he did not specify exactly what these were:

Superficially they appear as useful, honourable and good characters in order to secure your approbation; but, at the same time, stealthily, they conclude immoral and underhanded agreements in order to make an illegal profit....

The way they proceed is to choose some young and inexperienced engineer who has your confidence, who, after he has surveyed the lands and titles and remitted the facts, turns over the files which are often hidden. When the survey is completed, the Indians then have been despoiled totally or in part of their lands, by malicious contracts and immoral operations.¹¹⁰

Barrón did not say specifically what "malicious contracts" the Dehesas had entered into or devised. But his

accusations were supported by two men who had vast landholdings in the area, one of which bordered on Dehesa's property. It is quite plausible that both men, Juan Chazaro Soler and Isidro Montera, would write to Díaz complaining of Francisco Dehesa's actions in the Soteapan, which they feared might endanger their own property. Francisco Dehesa maintained that his only interest in Sayula was to install

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a rice mill on his estate. He denied that any of his actions would interfere with the Chazaro Soler estates, that the complaints were only to make trouble for his brother, and that he had only helped those Indians who had titles to their land. Nevertheless, he promised the President that he would renounce his sponsorship of

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them.

In the case of Montera, the fear was probably about having titles examined that might not have been in order.

Wrote the engineer in charge of the surveying operation,

Ignacio Muñoz:

Regarding the business of Montera, whose lands border on Dehesa's, what fear would he have if he has titles to them? Dehesa is not afraid to have the titles examined by a competent authority. 113

One other person put his finger on the real fears of all against the help the Dehesas were giving the Indians. The President had written an old friend living in the area who answered:

The matters to which you refer are undeniable. The business that Francisco Dehesa is conducting in the municipal council of Sayula, in the delicate question of lands, is censurable and degrading for this gentleman. He has sown discord among the gullible Indians through incorrect deeds, perhaps because he

believes himself protected by doing so, but without considering that much later they could be the cause of serious conflicts (my italics).¹¹⁴

The Governor countered by speaking with another person who had written to Díaz about the Monterera business. This man believed that Monterera was moved by his own interests, perhaps not legitimate, and that he had been influenced by people who were trying to damage Dehesa politically.¹¹⁵

This source of information was José D. Zamora, head of the Supreme Court of Veracruz, who wrote that Monterera, an old shyster (tinterillo) from Acayucan, under the tutelage of Chazaro Soler, was the troublemaker, and that it would be necessary to send a proper magistrate there to keep order, although, in view of the yellow fever epidemic, this would be difficult.¹¹⁶

Díaz seemed to accept Dehesa's and Zamora's explanations, and asked only that Muñoz not be hindered in carrying out his work in Sayula, and later that Dehesa try to smooth things over with Monterera, both of which Dehesa promised to do.¹¹⁷ The Monterera business was cleared up to most of the participants' satisfaction, it seems. However, the Dehesa attempt to help the Indians of Sayula had been quashed by the President who had been wary of upsetting major landowners in the area. Actually there were more powerful interests at work which are discussed in Chapter V.

The year 1900 was, of course, an election year, and the opposition in Veracruz lost no time in trying to organise a candidate with whom to oppose Dehesa. The candidate was again Apolinar Castillo, the former Governor,

around whom the entire opposition seemed to have
118
coalesced. His candidacy was officially announced with
the formation of the "Club Apolinar Castillo" in May of
119
that year. It seems however, that Castillo's name was
being used without his permission, or so he claimed.
Castillo wrote to the President complaining that Dehesa
refused to understand or accept that he (Castillo) was not
a part of any opposition to Dehesa. Castillo also could not
120
understand why the media was attacking him. Dehesa's
response was quite sharp as he replied that it was Castillo
himself who had organised the opposition. Nevertheless he
assured the President that he would call off the attacks on
121
Castillo. El Estado de Veracruz, under the newly
released Ramón Mena, also ventured into the fray although
somewhat cautiously, endorsing Díaz for President but
calling for a change of Governor: it also bemoaned the
renunciation of Castillo's candidacy which by this time had
122
been announced. Castillo himself had thought it
advisable to disclaim his candidacy to the President
complaining again that he was not behind the opposition to
123
Dehesa nor did he desire the Governorship of the State.
Dehesa was not without his own support and a group of
prominent citizens in San Andrés Tuxtla wrote the President
denouncing the so-called commission that had been to see
him asking for Dehesa's resignation. They rejected the
124
claim that people wanted to get rid of Dehesa.
With his successful election in 1900 Dehesa ended the

period of opposition. He had weathered the most formidable political opposition that he was to encounter in his own State, and had won the battle against the adherence to the principle of anti-reelectionism. Not only did he enjoy considerable support in Veracruz, but at his disposal was a political propaganda weapon which was undeniably supreme: who could oppose him successfully on the grounds of the principles of Tuxtepec, and at the same time support the President who was the embodiment of the infraction of that principle? As long as he was loyal to Díaz, and kept affairs reasonably in line in Veracruz, the President would be loathe to remove him even if Dehesa, from time to time, did not follow the policies of the central government. On the other hand, opposition to central policy, seemingly in the hands of the Científicos, was well within Díaz's scheme of things, for his policy was never to allow any faction to gain complete control over the government which he had come to see as his own patrimony. His inability to successfully carry out his intentions, would bring Dehesa increasingly onto the federal scene as a political counterweight against that powerful group.

CHAPTER III

NOTES

1. Leopoldo Zea, Positivism in Mexico (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974), p. xiii. Liberalism here means "a philosophy to replace the one that had introduced into colonial Mexico habits of subordination and servitude." It was expressed in the Constitution of 1857 and the Reform Laws passed under Juárez, which tried to do away with the influence of the Church, introduced the secularization of Church property and the division of communal lands into privately owned plots.

2. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p. 11.

3. Ibid, p. 11.

4. Pérez, Dehesa, p. 11.

5. Valadez, El porfirismo, v. 1., p. 133; See also Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v. 9., pp. 491, 493, who writes, "At the beginning of 1910 there was not one Governor who could have been called popular or loved in his State with the possible exception of Teodoro Dehesa."

6. See Chapter VII for a discussion of the Científicos.

7. Zea, Positivism, p. xiv; Cf. Perry, Machine Politics, p. 351.

8. Pasquel, Rafael Tapia, p. xii; Cf. Michael C. Meyer and William L. Sherman, The Course of Mexican History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 414, and Parkes, A History of Mexico, p. 312, who both use the term 'jacobins.' This seems an inappropriate and misleading term, although Dehesa did represent a more liberal attitude.

9. See Chapter VI for a discussion of his attitude toward workers and their organization.

10. Dehesa to Díaz, 24 Nov. 1892, CPD, L17:17027. Dehesa picked Juan Chazaro Soler, a trusted friend and wealthy landowner and businessman to be his State treasurer, and Leandro Alcolea to be the Secretary of State.

11. El Monitor Republicano, 30 Apr. 1892. He was replaced shortly thereafter, El Monitor Republicano, 19 Jan. 1893.

12. José Hernandez to Díaz, 29 Oct. 1892, CPD, L17:17261.

13. Peter V. Henderson, Félix Díaz, p. 4; Luis Licéaga,

- Félix Díaz (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, 1958), p.14.
14. Muñoz to Díaz, 28 Oct. 1892, CPD, L17:17492.
 15. Díaz to Dehesa, 19 May 1893, CPD, L18:6673; Dehesa to Díaz, 23 May 1893, CPD, L18:6688.
 16. Dehesa to Díaz, 12 May 1906, CPD, L31:5216; Díaz to Dehesa, 15 May 1906, CPD, L31:5219.
 17. Dehesa to Díaz, 24 Sep. 1898, CPD, L23:13113; Díaz to Dehesa, 27 Sep. 1898, CPD, L23:13114.
 18. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 Mar. 1909, ATD, File #14; Díaz to Dehesa, 23 Mar. 1909, ATD, File #14; Uruchurtu to Dehesa, 23 Mar. 1909, ATD, File #14; Dehesa to Uruchurtu, 25 Mar. 1909, ATD, File #14; Francisco Dehesa to Dehesa, 23 Mar. 1909, ATD, File #14; Dehesa to Francisco Dehesa, 25 Mar. 1909, ATD, File #14; Francisco Dehesa to Dehesa, 6 June 1909, ATD, File #14; Dehesa to Francisco Dehesa, 8 June 1909, ATD, File #14; Dehesa to Muñoz, 8 June 1909, ATD, File #4.
 19. Muñoz to Dehesa, 1 June 1909, ATD, File #14; Dehesa to Muñoz, 8 June 1909, ATD, File #14; Díaz to Dehesa, 9 June 1909, File #4.
 20. El Nacional, 25 Jan. 1893.
 21. Ibid., 4 Feb 1893.
 22. Ibid., 24 Feb. 1893; see also Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.396.
 23. Kenneth S. Cott, "Porfirian Investment Policies 1876-1910" (Ph.D dissertation, Michigan State University, 1982.), p.255; Jan Bazant, A Concise History of Mexico from Hidalgo to Cárdenas, 1805-1940 (London, Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp.140-141.
 24. Gloria Peralta Zamora, "La Hacienda pública" in Historia Moderna de Mexico: La vida económica, ed. Daniel Cosío Villegas, 9 vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Hermes, 1965), v.8, p.255; Cott, Porfirian Investment Policies, 256; Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.332.
 25. Dehesa to Díaz, 1 Apr. 1893, CPD, L18:4680.
 26. Ibid., The "little work" of which Dehesa spoke must remain a mystery, although it probably refers to the collection of customs' duties. Díaz's answer was to let him know when Dehesa had finished the "interesting work which is so urgent." Díaz to Dehesa, no date, CPD, L18:4682. See Preface for a discussion of Díaz's reticence to commit himself on paper. The rapid development of the textile industry caused a temporary shortfall in customs' receipts as imported products were replaced by locally manufactured ones. See Chapter VI for a discussion of the textile industry.
 27. Dehesa to Díaz, 21 Feb. 1893, CPD, L19:1998. Dehesa wrote: "When it is a matter of helping the central government this State will be in the first ranks." He also included a copy of State decree #76, 18.12.93, Art. 1, instituting a 2% tax on land transactions; El Partido Liberal 25 Oct. 1893; Zamora, "La hacienda pública".
 28. Dehesa to Díaz, 7 Sep. 1894, CPD, L19:11354-56.
 29. El Diario del Hogar, 1 Feb. 1893; 15 Feb. 1893.
 30. Ibid., 15 Feb. 1893.

31. Ibid., 15 Feb. 1893.
32. Dehesa to Díaz, 30 Mar. 1893, CPD, L18:4670.
33. Díaz to Dehesa, 3 Apr. 1893, CPD, L18:4672.
34. La Voz de la Verdad, 9 Apr. 1893.
35. El Espectador reprinted in El Nacional, 14 Apr. 1893.
36. Ibid., 14 Apr. 1893.
37. El Nacional, 26 Apr. 1893.
38. Ibid., 26 Apr. 1893.
39. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 May 1893, CPD, L18:6692, El Nacional, 5 May 1893.
40. El Nacional, 14 June 1893.
41. Dehesa to Díaz, 8 July 1893, CPD, L18:9732.
42. El Nacional, 2 Aug. 1893.
43. El Partido Liberal, 2 Mar. 1894; El Nacional, 7 Mar. 1894.
44. El Diario del Hogar, 19 Apr. 1893. - Dehesa received 60 votes, Chazaro Soler, 53, Martínez, 20, Juan Betancourt, 6. The poll was conducted by La Crónica Mercantil.
45. El Nacional, 30 Nov. 1893.
46. El Nacional, 6 Jan. 1893.
47. Rubio to Dehesa, 20 Apr. 1894, CPD, L19:6720. In view of Dehesa's actions, Rubio's remarks that he "... did not want you to be the only one to resist our programme, even in form," seems ironic. The remarks are not meant to suggest that Dehesa was not supporting Díaz, but showed the annoyance over his not wanting to be involved in any actions of that group.
48. AGN, Gob. L:545, Exp.1, 1895.
49. El Diario del Hogar, 5 June 1895.
50. Dehesa to Díaz, 27 Aug. 1895, CPD, L20:12302, thanking the President for taking the necessary steps.
51. El Reproductor, 14 Nov. 1895.
52. El Nacional, 6 Aug. 1895, signed Carlos B. Gómez.
53. El Reproductor, 14 Nov. 1895.
54. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.442.
55. El Reproductor, 5 Jan. 1896; El Nacional, 14 Jan. 1896.
56. El Monitor Republicano, 17 Jan. 1896; El Nacional, 14 Jan 1896.
57. El Monitor Republicano, 29 Jan. 1896; Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.377. The charge that Díaz encouraged a personality cult may be arguable, but the purpose of the trip was doubtless part of the 1896 election campaign. An amusing incident occurred during the visit. Dehesa is reputed to have offered 1000 pesos toward the building of a theatre, forcing Carmelita Díaz to pledge 500 pesos.
58. El Boazeo, no date, reprinted in El Monitor Republicano, 10 Feb. 1896.
59. AGN, Gob. L:1666, Sec. 1a, #177, April 1896. The revised article in question was #83.
60. El Diario del Hogar, 21 July 1896.

61. El Monitor Republicano, 30 July 1896.

62. El Monitor Republicano, 10 July 1896.

63. Secretary of Interior to Secretary of State, Veracruz, AGN, Gob.L:1666, Sec.1a, #36., AGN. This document reported that all 640 electoral votes in the Federal District went to Díaz. The bloody rebellion in Papantla appears not to have had any adverse effect on Dehesa's campaign. It may even have helped. Because the rebellion is intimately connected with the land question, it is discussed in Chapter V.

64. El Nacional, 1 June 1896; El Cosmopolita, 29 May 1895; La Patria, 3 Jan. 1899. Betancourt, who was an opponent of Dehesa and an enemy of the head of the State police, Colonel Guadencio Llave, was shot and killed in Coatepec, near Xalapa, by Joaquín Díaz Jara, editor of La Voz del Obrero, ostensibly because Betancourt had successfully blocked the printing of his paper.

65. Barrón to Díaz, various reports, CPD, L24:4520 et. seq.; Florencio Barrera Fuentes, Historia de la revolución mexicana: la etapa precursora (Mexico City: Biblioteca Institucional de los Estados, 1955), pp.101-104. Barrón was used as a spy and agent provocateur on numerous occasions. He was the instigator of the closing of the Club Arriaga and jailing of the Junta Directoria of the Liberal Party in 1902.

66. El Reproductor, 16 Mar. 1899. This was an answer to charges made in a small paper, El Correo.

67. Memorandum from Barrón, 10 Mar. 1899, CPD, L24:3984-85.

68. Ibid., CPD, L24:3985-86. A young writer, Enrique Llorca, had apparently confided to the jailed editor of El Clarín, Jara Díaz, that he had been given 100 pesos by Díaz Mirón before the publication of one of the issues.

69. Idem.

70. Ibid., CPD, L24:3987. These were the same Indians who took part in the Acayucan revolt in 1906. Some of these lands had been acquired by Romero Rubio, which was one of the reasons for the general discontent which led to the revolt. See Chapter VI.

71. Idem.

72. Barrón to Díaz, 21 Mar. 1899, CPD, L24:3975.

73. Periodico Oficial del estado de Veracruz-Llave, 21 Mar. 1899, CPD, L24:3974. He was arrested and charged under the Penal Code for drunken behaviour with two prostitutes in a hotel and for drawing a pistol and threatening one of the women.

74. Barrón to Díaz, CPD, loc.cit.

75. El Estado de Veracruz, 12 Mar. 1899, CPD, L24:3972.

76. Barrón to Díaz, 22 Mar. 1899, CPD, L24:3978-79.

77. Ibid., CPD, L24:3980-81.

78. Barrón to Díaz, 23 Mar. 1899, CPD, L24:3982-93.

79. Letter from Joaquín Castro to El Correo Huatusco stating that "Both Díaz and Dehesa have preferred talent in their governments, and this is the reason why there are

people in them who believe in God and others who don't," in El Reproductor, 30 Mar. 1899.

80. La Patria, 6 Apr. 1899.

81. La Patria, 6 Apr. 1899; Barrón to Díaz, 14 Apr. 1899,

CPD, L24:4522. El Estado printed a biography of General Cervantes.

82. La Patria, 8 Apr. 1899.

83. La Patria, 11 Apr. 1899.

84. Barrón to Díaz, 14 Apr. 1899, CPD, L24:4520-22. The publication of this little paper was also not without its problems. Barrón maintains that Dehesa was a meticulous man who apparently corrected all the articles written by the editors and who carefully chose their contents. However, Díaz Mirón threw them all out, called them stupid, and wrote his own.

85. L. Hernandez Loyo to the editor, 12 Apr. 1899, in La Patria, 18 Apr. 1899.

86. La Patria, 13 May 1899; 19 May 1899.

87. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.442.

88. Leví to editor, La Voz Popular, reprinted in La Patria, 9 May 1899, expressing surprise at seeing his name entered and renouncing any interest in running.

89. Severiano Galicia to Dehesa, 30 May 1899, CPD, L24:8708,

8710, indicating that people had written to him asking that he run, but that he had declined.

90. Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, p.442.

91. Ibid., p.443.

92. Díaz to Dehesa, 6 Apr. 1899, CPD, L24:5231.

93. La Patria, 1 June 1899.

94. La Patria, 8 June 1899.

95. El Reproductor, 22 June 1899; La Patria, 23 June 1899.

96. El Reproductor, 6 July 1899.

97. La Patria, 9 June 1899. Indeed Barrón's later memoranda contain no follow-up to his first accusation.

98. Barrón to Díaz, 22 Mar. 1899, CPD, L24:3979-81.

99. Ibid., CPD, L24:3979.

100. Ibid., CPD, L24:39980.

101. Ibid., 30 June 1899, CPD, L24:9073-74.

102. Ibid., CPD, L24:9072.

103. Ibid., CPD, L24:9073-76.

104. See note #50.

105. Herrera to Díaz, 13 Apr. 1893, CPD, L18:5056; Díaz to Herrera, 17 Apr. 1893, CPD, L18:5057. There is quite a lot of correspondence between Rebsamen and Díaz about the Normal School in Xalapa, which the former claimed was not being run properly after his secondment to Guanajuato.

106. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, pp.167-168.

107. This is the general area of the revolt of 1906.

108. Díaz to Dehesa, 10 June 1896, CPD, L21:9928.

109. Barrón to Díaz, 12 July, 1899, CPD, L24:9064.

See Chapter VI for a discussion of the land question.

110. Idem., CPD, L24:9065-67.
111. Francisco Dehesa to Díaz, 29 May 1899, CPD, L24:6382-86.
112. Dehesa to Díaz, 25 May 1899, CPD, L24:6392.
113. Muñoz to Díaz, 29 July, 1899, CPD, L24:11913-17.
114. Nestor Miranda to Díaz, 7 Aug. 1899, CPD, L24:11837.
115. Dehesa to Díaz, 7 Oct. 1899, CPD, L24:14294.
116. Zamora to Díaz, 7 Oct. 1899, CPD, L24:14546-47.
117. Díaz to Dehesa, 21 Oct. 1899, CPD, L24:15289; Dehesa to Díaz, 28 Oct. 1899, CPD, L24:15281; Muñoz to Díaz, 11 Nov. 1899, CPD, L24:15864; Díaz to Dehesa, 3 Nov. 1899, CPD, L24:16513; Dehesa to Díaz, 7 Nov. 1899, CPD, L24:16506.
118. El Orden, 29 Apr. 1899, CPD, L25 C10, no number; Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna, v.9., p.442.
119. Club Apolinar Castillo to Díaz, 24 May 1900, CPD, L25:5239.
120. Díaz to Dehesa, 4 May 1900, CPD, L25:6069.
121. Dehesa to Díaz, 13 May 1900, CPD, L25:6054.
122. El Estado de Veracruz, 3 June 1900, CPD, L25:7008.
123. Castillo to Díaz, 20 June 1900, CPD, L25:7799.
124. Citizens of San Andrés Tuxtla to Díaz, 22 June 1900, CPD, L25:7909-13, CPD.
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CHAPTER IV

"MENOS POLITICA Y MAS ADMINISTRACION"¹

On taking over the governorship in December, 1892, Dehesa was faced with the problem of the loose and inefficient administrative methods under which the State had been run, and an ancient system of taxation which was open to corruption of every sort and which was in drastic need of modernisation.² Unfortunately, implementation of new methods was delayed until Dehesa could return from the Customs in Veracruz. On his return in June, 1893, he set about the task of administrative and tax reforms. Because of the opposition from loyal supporters of the previous Governor, he was first forced to replace some employees with people he could trust.³ He then set about revising the tax structure in the interest of both efficiency and justice. Personal taxes were lowered or removed altogether and, beginning in 1894, were used solely to fund the Municipalities.⁴ Other small but burdensome taxes, such as the tax on the notarisation of signatures and the acquisition of professional titles, were done away with altogether.⁵ At the same time, direct taxes on commerce and industry were raised, which caused some resistance until

there was a general acceptance of a central tax system. In fact, the basis of Dehesa's fiscal policy was to reduce the taxes on small farmers and businessmen, and shift a proportionate burden to those of greater means. Not infrequently, large landowners would turn to the President in their quest for a lowering of taxes, which Dehesa usually refused to do. This general reduction of taxes might have had the effect of leaving the State treasury in a bad position, especially during the depression years, 1892-94, but, in fact, the opposite was the case. In the first two years of Dehesa's administration considerable progress was made in the State's financial administration and, in particular, the efficient collection of taxes. With the simplification of the tax-collection system and the rationalisation of taxes for each level of the State government, the tax intake actually increased. Despite the financial crisis, Veracruz was able to cover its expenses. In addition, with the increase in agricultural and industrial production, especially with the speed-up in land distribution, the State treasury began to balance its budget and achieved a surplus which was to be characteristic of Dehesa's governorship. He also forced his example on lower administrative levels. The Municipality of Veracruz, for example, was in an especially bad financial condition. However, by convincing it to consolidate its financial debt, and to adopt measures to oversee expenditures, Dehesa was able to achieve a considerable reduction in that debt in one year.

Inadvertently, the new system had its growing pains. Because personal taxes were intended for the Municipalities, the cities were forced to be diligent. At times, however, they were overly diligent, and earned the opprobrium of the citizenry. In January, 1893, factory owners were ordered not to employ anyone who had not presented their cards proving that their personal taxes had been paid. Certain operators from factories in Orizaba were even jailed for a short period.¹¹ In March, 1895, it was reported that up to 300 people, businessmen and artisans as well as factory workers in Orizaba, had spent one night in jail because they owed back taxes. The jefe político of Orizaba, Angel Prieto, denied that they were jailed for this reason, but for vagrancy. However, his methods seem to have borne some fruit as much of the back taxes were collected.¹²

With the increase in the tax intake and in view of the healthy financial position of the State, Dehesa was able to suggest to Díaz, after receiving ratification by the State Legislature, that Veracruz pay the salaries of its Deputies elected to the Mexican Congress, at least until the depression had passed.¹³ Such was the success of the financial administration too, that an emergency fund could be set up in 1895.¹⁴ In that year too, the intent to abolish the ancient alcabalas, a mixture of sales and intra-State taxes, was announced by the federal government. Almost immediately the State Legislature approved the

project, although there was considerable resistance in the rest of Mexico, and in Veracruz as well. ¹⁵ Many people felt that there would be a problem replacing the income generated by the alcabalas. El Reproductor gloomily predicted that sugar and wheat would surely suffer, and that commerce and industry in general would be adversely affected. It added that there would be a problem replacing them since the new laws on personal taxes destined for the Municipalities were already in trouble. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, fiscal disaster did not overtake Veracruz. During the next two years the State achieved a healthy surplus of 185,961 pesos, and even introduced a law exempting all factories set up during that year from State taxes for a two-year ¹⁷ period.

Much of the increase in State revenue was due to the new land taxes, which were not very popular with landowners. They would frequently complain to the President, who would then ask Dehesa to lower the land taxes. Dehesa promised to equalize some taxes which appeared to be a little heavy. However, he resisted attempts by the President on behalf of those who wanted either a drastic lowering, or entire removal of taxes. He stood by his subordinates and only agreed to investigate mistakes. When the President sent him the request of a U.S. company that complained that they had not expected an increase for ten years, Dehesa replied that only their coffee and tobacco products were subject to taxes, and, besides he "... could not ensure anyone that over a ten

year period taxes remain the same."

Another administrative measure was the rationalisation of local government. Some areas were removed from a particular Municipality and added to others whose tax base was too small, despite the protests of citizens.¹⁹ Also, corrupt local officials were removed from office and even jailed as an example to others. Sometimes the reason was petty corruption, although some officials committed grave offences such as maltreating prisoners by putting them in animal cages and leaving them in the open at night. Dehesa was particularly careful to see that such employees of the State were quickly replaced.²⁰

By 1899, Veracruz was in such a healthy financial position that foreign bankers from the United States were writing to offer their financial services in the purchase of State bonds for the construction of a telegraph network as well as the drainage and sanitation schemes for the port of Veracruz.²¹ In Mexico too, Veracruz was attracting attention. For one newspaper, La Patria, it was the model of a properly administered State, a condition it attributed solely to the Governor and his methods: inspectors had been hired to audit local governments; other civil servants had been engaged and were being well paid; and all of this had contributed to balanced budgets in the Municipalities, a reduction of taxes and a surplus in the State treasury.²²

The preoccupation with sound fiscal administration did not mean neglect of other sectors. Dehesa realised that

if the State were to flourish, all sectors would have to be developed simultaneously, and the Treasury was only a means. If both agriculture and industry were to grow, a vigorous transportation and communications policy would have to be developed. The translation of this policy was in the building of connecting lines from remote areas to existing railways. By the time Dehesa took office in 1892, a number of railways connected the main cities in Veracruz. The first one had been the Mexican Railway, completed in 1873, between Veracruz and Mexico City. A second connection to Mexico City which went on to Acapulco, the Interoceanic, had been completed in 1891.²³ In 1894, the Tehuantepec Railway, with 140 kilometers of line in Veracruz, was added.²⁴ To these, smaller branch lines from minor towns were added. A rail link from the important southern town of San Andrés Tuxtla was begun which would eventually connect with the Tehuantepec. As another example, one of the most backward and remote regions in the State, Misantla, was given an outlet for its agricultural products by a connection to the Interoceanic Railway in 1894.²⁵ Telegraph lines were a necessary accompaniment to railways but also a necessary adjunct for modern government, and in his report to the Legislature in 1894, Dehesa could also report that lines now connected each cantonal office with their respective Municipalities.²⁶

Dehesa tried to obtain concessions and subsidies for small local lines connecting various towns, which was not always successful.²⁷ At the same time he kept a close

watch on fares, asking the President to order reductions
when he thought they were too high.²⁸ Dehesa did not really
have any preferences as to who built the railways, and
revealed no prejudice in favour of foreigners. In 1899, he
entered into a contract with the firm of Stewart and
Frisbie for the construction of a branch line into the
Huatusco, but although Díaz asked him to reconsider in
favour of a Mexican friend, Dehesa replied that he could
not have a contract with two firms at the same time.²⁹
Whoever came first was served in the same way, for as
Dehesa explained to the President, all the State was really
interested in besides the obvious economic benefits, were
the taxes paid by the railway companies.³⁰ When a company
balked at paying taxes, as was the case with the
Interoceanic in 1896, Dehesa brought all pressure to bear
on them, usually with success.³¹ He was also sparing with
State subsidies, as was the case with the Xalapa-Teocelo
Railway, inaugurated in 1898.³² When John Frisbie requested
that he continue the State subsidy because the railway had
never been able to declare a dividend, Dehesa replied that
it would continue for one year, but asked that the
passenger and freight rates, which had recently been
raised, be lowered again.³³ On the other hand, in 1899,
Dehesa granted an operating subsidy to the Veracruz al
Pacífico Railway with the object of facilitating the
exportation of tropical fruits.³⁴ A Mexican capitalist,
Pablo Martínez del Río, was also given financial help in

constructing a line linking the important centre of Tierra Blanca with Veracruz between 1901 and 1904.

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The development of the railways in Veracruz was not without its humorous side. Banks and businesses in the port city were in the habit of sending their cash deposits to Mexico City by the night train of the Mexican Railway. When the jefe politico pointed to the danger of robbery since there were no guards on the night trains, Dehesa wrote to the President requesting some. Díaz replied that it was not possible to post a night guard on those trains, and in any case to do so would demonstrate a lack of confidence in public security! Instead, he suggested that the banks limit their remittances to one day per week at which time he

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would post a guard.

Railways were a means to an end. Their importance lay in providing an opportunity for Veracruz products to find their way to market. But Dehesa employed other measures to stimulate agriculture. He instituted a system of rationalizing and reducing taxes on lands where the most

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difficult or sensitive crops were grown. The other big thrust in agriculture was to expedite the subdivision of communal and State lands, with the granting of individual titles, so as to promote the growth of a middle

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peasantry. The result of protecting certain crops, redistributing land and increasing market possibilities through railway construction, was the steady progress of agriculture in the State. One difficult problem, which was also an indicator of this trend, was the shortage of

manpower. Although Veracruzán agricultural development attracted workers from other states, there were still not enough to go around, especially in areas like the Canton of Córdoba, which was badly affected by yellow fever.

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Dehesa's efforts to counteract this deficiency by founding colonies met with little positive result. The large landowners did not respond to his appeal to sell off some of their large holdings to colonists, and the latter, with the exception of a few Italians, did not materialise, as had been hoped by the federal and State governments. The lack of influx of foreign colonists was more than made up by internal migration, which, between 1900 and 1910, produced a 65 percent increase in the number of tenancies in the State, with a corresponding 500 percent increase in rents. Landholding patterns also show interesting statistics. While there was a decline in the number of small ranches and an increase in large holdings at the national level, the opposite was true for Veracruz which had a three-fold increase in smaller properties.

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Dehesa's fiscal as well as agricultural policies were carefully constructed to yield the greatest development of the State in which he held the gubernatorial mandate. Yet, unlike his enemies, the Científicos, Dehesa saw this development not in purely economic, but also in human terms; hence his attempt to foster a small landowning class, but also his concern for the landless classes. In 1893 he wrote the President asking for the immediate "...

execution of permits to import corn for a determined period in order that the poor and numerous class of this country not be burdened with having to pay more for their food." ⁴³
This request was repeated in 1897, and again in 1901, with the explanation that a shortage of corn was causing speculation which was driving up prices. ⁴⁴

In the field of education and culture Dehesa also made significant contributions as Governor. Not formally educated himself, he showed great interest in educational and cultural matters. Before becoming Governor and while he was at the Customs, he helped finance the first archeological expedition to Zempoala to study the Totonac culture. ⁴⁵ Around this same time he was involved in the publication of a Nahuatl document which was given the name Códice Dehesa and presented at a meeting of the Junta Mexicana in commemoration of the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America. ⁴⁶ He was also an avid collector of artifacts, lending them out for study to archeologists. ⁴⁷

Dehesa's efforts in the sector of public education may be judged by the amount of public funds spent in improving it. He was the first Governor to spend one-third of his tax intake on public education. ⁴⁸ In October 1892, just prior to his inauguration, but because of his influence, the State government assumed the right to grant scholarships by ordering every Canton to propose one scholar each for the prestigious Normal School in Xalapa. ⁴⁹
In his first two years in office State funds were made

available to those poorer Municipalities that could not
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support their public schools.

Dehesa inherited an educational establishment which
already was envied in many Mexican states. Veracruz boasted
a Normal School under the leadership of the Swiss educator,
Enrique Rebsamen, which had been inaugurated by Dehesa's
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predecessor. This teacher-training academy had become a
model for many of the Mexican states, and Rebsamen himself
was invited by Justo Sierra to set up a similar system for
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the Federal District. It was also the focal point of an

educational system which was centred in the main cities. At
Dehesa's inauguration there were university preparatory
secondary schools in Córdoba, Veracruz, and Xalapa, besides
primary schools in each of the cantonal capitals. Rural
schools did not exist and the majority of children of
peasants and workers never went to school. Such conditions
were tolerated by Dehesa who saw his own work to be the

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furthering of education in the urban centres. It was here
that he received his political support and it was here that
he would obviously concentrate educational efforts. Lack of
resources was also one of the problems with taking
education to the countryside. To alleviate the lack of
public funds for education, Dehesa allowed the Roman
Catholic Church to gradually reenter the field, although
this was forbidden by the Constitution. It was a policy

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which earned him much criticism. He also allowed priests
to teach in the public schools. Although he has been

accused of breaking the Reform Laws, this decision was a practical one, and not evidence of any intention on his part to strengthen the role of the Church in education. 55

Another important contribution to education was the expansion of existing libraries. The secondary school in Xalapa had a library of only 1242 volumes. Dehesa launched a public campaign to raise funds for books, and solicited books from authors. The State public library in Veracruz was also expanded as well as those in the secondary schools in Orizaba and the Normal School in Xalapa. 56 Students from this school were sent to the United States and Canada to broaden their experience and to practise their English. 57 Scholarships were founded, some of which were directly donated by the Governor out of his own pocket, to enable bright but poor children, especially those from rural areas, including Indians, to study in Xalapa, Orizaba and Veracruz, in order to gain the coveted matriculation for one of the professional schools. 58

Although the first rural schools were opened in 1903 and the State spent a significant proportion of its budget on education, it was only a small group of people who benefitted. The often reiterated claim that Veracruz was the most progressive State in the field of education, or that Dehesa did so much for education, must be viewed in context. 59 Certainly Veracruz was no backwater in this area when compared with the other Mexican states, but it was no outstanding leader either. In Mexico between 1878 and 1910 the number of secondary schools remained almost constant,

59 and 60 respectively. In Veracruz the number decreased from 13 to 9.⁶⁰ The total number of illiterates in Mexico declined during this period from 64.08 percent to 49.72 percent, while in Veracruz the numbers declined from 67.53 percent to 51.66 percent.⁶¹ Similarly, there was no great difference between the number of children receiving schooling in Mexico and in Veracruz. According to one paper Mexico extended education to about one-thirtieth of its population, while a similar calculation for Veracruz reveals only a slightly higher figure of one-twenty-fifth.⁶²

Why then, do local Veracruz historians make such grandiose claims for Dehesa. Even opponents such as Melgarejo Vivanco writes that in 1902 Dehesa "... could boast of 477 boy's schools, 162 girl's schools, and 113 co-ed establishments."⁶³ The reason is probably the bias of these historians, oriented toward an urban culture with European overtones, and their positive feelings toward the Governor who converted Xalapa into a mecca for those who saw haute culture as the proper responsibility of a good Governor. In 1894, two years after being elected, Dehesa founded an academy of painting in Orizaba, which was later moved to Xalapa. Talented students were given scholarships--among them, the very famous painter of the Mexican Revolution, Diego Rivera, who was sent to study in Spain and then in Paris.⁶⁴ Private music schools were also subsidized and scholarships awarded for study in other

areas of the arts. Dehesa's patronage was extended to a
number of persons regardless of race, class or creed.⁶⁵
Even the artisanal crafts were furthered. A tailor, Arturo
Bretón, was sent to Paris to receive further training in
order that Xalapenians would not find it necessary to have
their orders filled in Mexico City. And an illiterate
Indian, known for the beauty of his poetic compositions,
was given a personal scholarship by the Governor so that he
could proceed to the senior secondary school. He eventually
graduated from university as a lawyer and was elected to
the State Legislature during Madero's presidency.⁶⁶ The
names of the various artists, poets and writers who were
given help by Dehesa are too numerous to mention. In the
eyes of many people he transformed Xalapa into the "Athens"
of Mexico, to use the words of one local historian.⁶⁷

Education in the rest of the State, however,
suffered in comparison. An examination of expenditures in
the education budget serves to illustrate the point. Of a
total of 368,885 pesos allocated to education in 1899, 16.2
percent went to the four senior secondary schools in the
State.⁶⁸ The rest of the budget was divided between the
remaining six hundred and seventy-three schools in the
State. Naturally there were complaints. Citizens of Orizaba
complained that there was only one library in that city,
and that it was out of reach of workers because it was
housed in the senior secondary school.⁶⁹ A local paper in
the same town charged that a town of 40,000 citizens should
have double the number of schools-- there were only nine

elementary and one secondary school. Some of the buildings, it added, were unhygienic and overcrowded, some teachers having to deal with more than seventy children.⁷⁰ When citizens of Boca del Río, a small town in the north of the State, complained to the President, Dehesa assured him that "... education is well looked after there, with one boy's and one girl's school."⁷¹

In 1897, realising the variety of methods and philosophies existing in the various secondary-preparatory schools, the federal government began to think about centralizing control over public education, which, however, could not be immediately implemented.⁷² The problem was the lack of uniformity of standards throughout the republic, which was evident even within the State. In 1897 citizens wrote to the President complaining that the schools were not being very "liberal." This had to do with admission's policy rather than philosophy. Dehesa was forced to prepare a list of grades submitted by various students from the cantonal schools explaining to the President that to gain admission students had to have demonstrated the necessary background. Nevertheless, it was decided that certain reforms ought to be carried out, which resulted in the passage of Law #49, personally drawn up by the secretary of government, Silvestre Moreno Cora. He took as his example the curriculum of the secondary-preparatory school in Mexico City which, it was said, had the most advanced pedagogical methods.⁷³ Still, philosophical differences

continued to exist in the schools, although teaching methods were standardized. The same was done with the Normal School which was being reformed under the watchful eye of its previous director, Enrique Rebsamen. ⁷⁴

Meanwhile, the curriculum of the secondary-preparatory was expanded to include studies in jurisprudence. This school was actually the beginning of the later Law School, the first faculty of the University of Veracruz, which has its main campus located at Xalapa. ⁷⁵

In 1902, the State was requested by the President to study the report of a commission on reform of the primary area in order to bring about uniformity of standards and even subjects. The result of this was the initiation of a gradual reform of the system. ⁷⁶ An example of the kind of problem which could result from the lack of uniformity occurred with students from the secondary area who were trying to gain matriculation to professional schools in Mexico City. The problem was that in Veracruz, physics, chemistry and biology were taught concurrently, rather than separately, whereas the tertiary sector wanted to see individual marks for these subjects. Dehesa had to ask the President to intervene and Veracruz was exempted from the requirement for one year. ⁷⁷ In 1907, instruction in the secondary-preparatory was finally changed to coincide with that of the schools in the national capital, and a secondary school for girls, which included in its curriculum the lives of famous women, was opened. ⁷⁸

In the area of health, Dehesa was confronted with

extreme problems, some of them inherited from the previous administration, for which no easy or quick solutions were possible. Three areas, all of which interacted and which can properly be subsumed under this category, can be discerned. The first was the outbreak of serious epidemics-- cholera and yellow fever. The others were the lack of pure drinking water in many communities, including the capital and the port city, and the lack of sanitation, especially in the port, which allowed the diseases to flourish for many years. Only slowly was there a realisation that the lack of hygiene and public sanitation influenced or abetted the spread of these diseases, and also that mosquitoes, which bred and thrived on stagnant water, were a probable carrier of the dreaded "black vomit" or yellow fever. When Dehesa took office, the cholera was already so widespread that those who could afford it had left Veracruz and Córdoba for the safer region of Orizaba. The federal government had already begun to allocate some resources to combat the spread of that disease. The introduction of drinking water to various communities was begun, first in Xalapa, where it was completed while Dehesa was still on secondment to the Customs House, in 1893. It was then extended to small communities which were in the vicinity of the capital. However, in 1895, clean water was still not available in the large city of Orizaba, which complained bitterly.

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By 1893, the number of victims of yellow fever

increased dramatically, and doctors had no idea of what to do about it. The situation in Córdoba was especially bad.⁸³ In January 1895, Dehesa had to request that the San José barracks in Xalapa be ceded temporarily to the State for use as a hospital, which the President grudgingly agreed to.⁸⁴ In March the Mexican Congress approved an increase of taxes to allow the President to implement the new Sanitary Code, and in August, Dehesa ordered the head of Public Health in the State to conduct a study of the port city with a view to receiving general recommendations regarding sanitation and hygiene.⁸⁵ In addition, the noted Veracruzán doctor, Gregorio Mendizabal, who had been appointed to draft a new State sanitary law, was named as a delegate to a congress of scientists, to be held in Denver, Colorado, in October. By December, Dr. Escobar, head of Public Health, had submitted his report which recommended the introduction of clean drinking water and a drastic improvement in sanitation in the port. Unfortunately, because of lack of funds, as well as the difficulty with finding the right contractors, Dehesa reported that nothing could be done until the following year.⁸⁶ However, a subsidy was given to Córdoba for the purpose of installing a water works, and the flow of water to Xalapa was increased.⁸⁷

In January of 1896 the President himself visited the port to see what progress had been made. El Monitor Republicano complained that the lack of hygiene was the worst aspect of the city that first greeted foreigners

coming to Mexico, and that the local city council sat
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around debating while nothing was done. Díaz's
visit had an effect because the President took the matter
out of the hands of the council and himself began searching
for a firm of contractors capable of doing the job. On his
request the engineering firm of Gibbs of London sent out a
representative to confer with Dr. Escobar. Díaz further
urged Dehesa to activate the Gibbs-Escobar proposal through
the concurrence of the council, and felt that only lack of
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funds would now hold up the project. Dehesa agreed that
Gibbs was a competent firm, and began to arrange for
finances with the English firm of Glyn, Mills, Currie and
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Co., and the Banco Nacional of Mexico. One month later,
however, Dehesa was still studying the matter. He was
either not convinced that the firm in question was as
competent as he would have liked, or he was being
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influenced from another quarter. Actually Dehesa,
perfectionist that he was, wanted to have the work done by
S. Pearson and Son, who were already busy in Veracruz city
modernising the harbour facilities. That firm enjoyed an
enviable reputation in Mexico, not only because of the
quality of its work, but also because it adhered strictly
to its contracts. Work in the harbour was proceeding on
schedule and many people were impressed with the way in
which the contract conditions were being met. Pearson's
company had arranged for drinking water to be carried to
each encampment of workers, and the entire project was

bathed in electric light at night so as to allow for
completion on schedule.⁹² In August, Pearson had presented
a project to the Veracruz government for cleaning up the
city. El Nacional warned the city government about dragging
its feet, and the President was displaying a nervous
impatience.⁹³ He complained to Dehesa that while public
health was worsening daily, the Municipality only seemed to
want to establish more hospitals.⁹⁴ The next day he wrote
again to the Governor threatening to close the port "...
because of people having to go to their death."⁹⁵ Dehesa
caustically replied with a set of statistics that showed
that in fact there were 134 fewer deaths in 1896 than the
previous year.⁹⁶ The next day he submitted his own
conclusion that he did not believe there was anyone better
to do the job than Pearson and Son.⁹⁷ While the question of
whom to award the contract to, and which level of
government would bear the costs, was occupying all three
levels of government, and, of course, delaying the urgent
clean-up of the city, Dehesa continued to sponsor
scientists who were working quietly in Mexico City at
trying to understand the causes and remedies for the
various diseases.⁹⁸

Meanwhile the Municipality had rejected the
President's suggestion of working with Gibbs and Co. and
Díaz urged Dehesa to approve the credit for the works and to
go to Veracruz and confer with the local officials.⁹⁹ The
municipal debate lasted a few months, and it was not until
November that Dehesa could send their resolution to the

President which asked for full federal funding for the port
drainage scheme. ¹⁰⁰ Matters were further complicated the

following year when a Mexican corporation presented plans
to the Municipality and made a very serious bid for the
contract, including the publication of its proposals in a
newspaper. ¹⁰¹

Dehesa was convinced that the principal cause
of the continuation of yellow fever was the inadequate
drainage in the port city, caused by heavy rains the
previous year, as well as the shifting of sand banks which
had caused the retention of brackish water. He was also
convinced that only one plan, carried out with concerted
effort, would produce the necessary drainage for the city,
and therefore balked at dividing up the contracts for these
works. He also blamed the Municipality for the delay in
reaching a decision. These conclusions were presented to
the President in January, 1899, and finally accepted. The
contract for drainage was thus awarded to Pearson and

¹⁰²
Son. In the meantime the President suggested that the
municipal council force all citizens to clean up the street
in front of their house and place their garbage in such a
way that it could be efficiently removed by the sanitation

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department.

The catalyst for action, however, was the first
serious outbreak of yellow fever in epidemic proportions.
This occurred in August 1899, and caused virtual panic. The
outbreak in the port city was transmitted by one traveller
to Orizaba. In the meantime the Pan American Health

Congress in Havana concluded that the mosquito was the carrier of both yellow fever and malaria and immediate measures were ordered to achieve its containment. Also the State ordered isolation of the sick and the burning of all clothes and materials that had been in contact with them. These measures had been previously used in Mexico City against typhus, measles and scarlet fever, and had proven successful. ¹⁰⁴ In December, all citizens were ordered to

clean out their latrines, patios, and gutters, to sweep the streets in front of their house, and, if they had running water, to open their faucets at seven o'clock so as to wash out the gutters. ¹⁰⁵ To these were added other precautionary

measures such as total disinfection of all houses and places that had harboured the sick, and the painting of walls with lime. ¹⁰⁶ What had so terrified the authorities

was that the fever, which was considered tropical, could be spread so easily to upland and mountainous areas such as Orizaba. ¹⁰⁷

By June the death toll was mounting. Veracruz city reported ten new cases in a three-day period in May, and six deaths. In the south Coatzacoalcos (Puerto Mexico) was also being affected, as were other areas along the coast. ¹⁰⁸

In March, 1900, the Veracruz Municipality appeared at last to undertake some action, naming Ignacio Muñoz and one of the State Senators to negotiate a loan for the city in order to begin a clean-up. ¹⁰⁹ Such was the state of near

panic that even a request from the President, who had interceded for a friend who wanted her husband's body

exhumed and removed to Mexico City for reburial, was

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denied. Yet the matter continued without resolution. In

July Díaz had recommended that Dehesa give the

corresponding instructions that a Doctor Angel Bellinzanghi
be authorised to carry out experiments against yellow

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fever. Unfortunately the serum produced by the doctor

did not appear to have any effect against the fever, and it
continued to spread in epidemic proportions to other parts

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of the State. The President continued to exert pressure,

sending yet another of his friends, Senator Genero Raigosa,
to Dehesa, in order to work out the terms and conditions

under which payment for the installation of proper sanitary
works in Veracruz would proceed. By the end of June, and

after considerable bargaining by Dehesa, it appeared that
an agreement equitable to both the federal government and

113
the Municipality of Veracruz had been reached. In

December the contract was finally awarded to Pearson and
Son who were charged with providing drinking water from the

Jamapa river, constructing the necessary holding tanks and
filters along the way. The contract also envisaged the

construction of a proper drainage system for the city,

which, together with the water works would cost almost four
114
million pesos.

By March of 1902 it seemed as if the fever had had
its day. Only two attacks had occurred in the previous

115
fortnight. But new ways were ever being sought to

assuage the dreaded disease. Dr. Liceaga of the capital put

forward a number of solutions, the most important of which was the idea that probably mosquitoes were the carriers of the disease, and therefore, infected patients should be rigorously isolated in special wards which were mosquito-free. Why this solution was suggested two years after the findings of the Pan American Congress, is a mystery. The measures were already being implemented in military hospitals and Díaz requested Dehesa to see that the Municipality of Veracruz begin doing the same. ¹¹⁶ Isolation wards were set up immediately. Dehesa even made a contribution of 500 pesos a month to keep the necessary ¹¹⁷ personnel. In the meantime a scientific team under Professor Beyer of Tulane University had been invited to study the disease, concluding its report in October that ¹¹⁸ affirmed that mosquitoes were indeed the carriers. In that same month, the second, and most serious outbreak occurred. Within a seventy-day period 648 cases appeared, and 260 deaths resulted, more than double the first outbreak. But there were significant differences between the two. The second epidemic took hold before the authorities could implement the new measures and appeared with great intensity. Despite this, and probably due to the new methods of isolation which were immediately implemented, the disease appeared to be in retrogression. In December there were only four cases in Orizaba and these ¹¹⁹ had entered the convalescence period.

Yet the yellow fever had not yet run its course. It was to strike again in Orizaba with an even greater force.

In August 1903, the first cases began to appear, and before it abated in December, 725 people had been affected and there had been 323 deaths.¹²⁰ In Veracruz the epidemic had continued and the government opened another special campaign against it in June. Dehesa now promised that his government would bear the costs but was counting on the cooperation of the federal government which he hoped would pay Dr. Liceaga's salary.¹²¹ Strict isolation was ordered, including the burning of some homes that had harboured cases, and patients with other diseases such as cholera, measles, typhoid and scarlet fever, were ordered not to be removed but to be treated in their homes.¹²² The campaign against the mosquito was also continued.

While these efforts were underway, Dehesa's enemies in Mexico City did not hesitate to use the opportunity to try and squelch their outspoken opponent. The suggestion was made to the President that since federal money was being used to extend the port work that the port city ought to be federalised, a move that would have rendered Dehesa's influence quite negligible owing to the city's strategic location. His advice to the President was to "barricade yourself" behind the Constitution as the proposal was both morally and legally unrealisable.¹²³ In January, contracts were also entered into for the provision of drinking water and proper drainage in Orizaba and Córdoba.¹²⁴ And by March the port works in Veracruz had been completed and were inaugurated.¹²⁵ The fever, however, continued. It pressed

its attack on the towns along the coast, although each month there were fewer cases. There was a significant problem in enforcing health measures in the Cantons and small towns far away from the capital, where local government tended to be more lax. ¹²⁶ But the number of cases continued to decline, and La Patria of Mexico City could boast a little that Mexico's measures seemed to have been more effective than those in New Orleans where the Louisiana government seemed impotent to stop the spread of yellow fever. ¹²⁷ Indeed the statistics showed only thirty-eight new cases reported for the first half of 1905, as against eighty-three for the same period the previous year. In Veracruz there had been no new cases and the sanitary brigades were being discontinued in some areas. ¹²⁸

Of all the important tasks that were carried out during Dehesa's governorship in the realm of public projects, the extension and modernisation of the port facilities at Veracruz must rank highest. The harbour had become limited due to the increased size of ships and the lower draught they carried, but it had also been filling up over the years with silt from various rivers and streams, as well as the action of waves during the season when the norteño, or north-east wind, drove the silt back into the harbour. It was generally recognised that it would be necessary to limit this action by building a dike in the north-east quadrant and dredging the harbour. Because of the slow progress of the port works, a contract had been given to Augustín Cerdán in 1887, but only the dike had been

completed. Secondly, there was only one wharf to accommodate the growing mercantile traffic and this was owned by the Ferrocarril Mexicano.

In 1895 a contract was awarded to S. Pearson and Son.¹²⁹ The company's contract called for the building of a protected harbour facility, with wharves and jetties that could accommodate ten of the largest steamers in the world at one time. The facility was to be surrounded by three breakwaters, allowing an opening of two hundred and sixty metres. The company was to begin dredging immediately and continue for a period of eight months to remove four thousand cubic metres of sand daily. Within four years they were to have completed sufficient wharfage to accommodate six ships.¹³⁰

Pearson and Son set to work immediately. By March 1896 a branch line from Veracruz to Laguna de los Cocos had been constructed to bring the thousands of tons of stone that would be required.¹³¹ Another dredge was built in England and sailed to Veracruz. It was the largest in the world.¹³² The company also set up its own water and light facilities to enable work to be carried on at night. In August, El Monitor Republicano commented that as far as it could see, the company was working to the letter of its contract and on schedule.¹³³ Its observations were to prove correct. By January 1897, the space between the northern dike of Los Hornos and the waterfront had been joined and trains began traversing it carrying stones to reinforce the

entire structure. Even the usually hostile opposition paper, El Español (Mexico City- in 1900 the paper was renamed El Paladín), had to agree that the work was going ahead as planned, that the breakwater was serving its purpose, and that the large wharf would be completed in six months. ¹³⁵

One year later all the wharves were ready for traffic, the harbour basin had been dredged, and the great plaza, with government buildings, was being commenced on ground that had been reclaimed from the sea. ¹³⁶

In March 1902, the new port facilities were officially inaugurated by the President, together with a gathering of dignitaries such as the port had rarely seen. Later commentators, even historians known for their acerbic criticism of the Díaz regime, have agreed that the contract was completely honoured, and furthermore, that it had been executed without the customary signs of corruption, and at a price that must be considered reasonable for its time. ¹³⁷

To complete the modernisation of the port city, another project was begun in that year to bring fresh water to the inhabitants. This contract was completed in 1904 and supplied a total of two hundred and twenty-five litres of water to each inhabitant. ¹³⁸

Paving of the city streets was also begun together with the construction of permanent gutters to carry off the rain water during the heavy rain season. ¹³⁹ By 1908 most of this work had been completed.

Xalapa, the State capital, also had its streets paved with cobble stones during this period and to add to the beautification of that city, Dehesa donated over five

thousand pesos for the sculpture of Benito Juárez, which still stands in the park opposite the site of his former

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house. Nor were the other sizable cities of Veracruz neglected. Electric lights for their city streets and public buildings were installed by 1901.
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Material development was one aspect of the State's business and here Dehesa earned the applause of his fellow citizens, especially from his work in modernising the cities. Education and culture were two elements of social life which also received approbation. But there were other sectors in which the State government was not able to act effectively, assuming that the will was there. One of these was the serious problem of gambling which affected the entire country. It was considered a serious vice in Mexico, second only to drinking, and was generally held to be the chief cause of crimes against property.
142
The problem was widespread throughout Mexico and attempts to suppress it met with very little success. One report suggested that children learned to play cards before they could read or write! Many debates were held in the Chamber of Deputies on the best ways to regulate the various games of chance, but they came to very little. One of the reasons for this was the large revenue intake from gambling houses which was a boon to the government.
143

Veracruz was no different from other states and gambling there was the topic of many complaints against the government and the Governor. The Científicos used every

opportunity including this, to embarrass Dehesa and undermine his connection with the President. Yet, it appears that Dehesa and his subordinates did try, if not to extirpate the practise, then at least to hold it within reasonable limits. ¹⁴⁴ That this policy would not please

everyone is obvious. There was perhaps no policy which would have. Besides, Dehesa would have kept in mind that gambling was indeed a form of recreation especially for the poorer classes who had few other pleasures in their materially basic existence. Frequently the gambling law of 1851 was posted clearly in cities to remind citizens of the prohibition against games of chance. ¹⁴⁵ El Diario del Hogar

observed in 1897 that gambling was being carried on in a house on the Paseo de San Juan in Veracruz City in full view of everyone. The reason, the newspaper asserted was that the police and authorities were busy on their farms. There was much vagrancy, no schools, no authority and frequent misdeeds. The death of one of the gamblers by strangulation, it hoped, would be the cue for the

¹⁴⁶ government to do something. Whether action was taken or not, could not be determined.

However, what is clear, is that gambling was not suppressed in the long run. In 1901, El Paladín reported that gambling was at an all time high in San Juan Evangelista, Canton of Acayucan, and that the gambling house there displayed a large picture of Governor

¹⁴⁷ Dehesa. Such were the complaints that the President wrote Dehesa asking for an explanation. Dehesa replied that

he was an enemy of the vice, but reminded the President that one way of controlling it might be to ban the importation of playing cards, punish infractions severely and consider playing cards as counterfeit money. ¹⁴⁸ The federal government was not about to take such drastic action. The reports and complaints continued, the main attack coming from El Paladín. In May it charged that there was a "scandalous toleration of gambling" in the port of Veracruz, where a printed notice had been circulated among the inhabitants inviting them to two cafés where they were assured there would be no interference from the authorities. ¹⁴⁹ The next month it devoted its front page editorial to asking who was really running Veracruz, the Governor or his friend, Díaz Mirón, who had received Dehesa's protection after being released from jail on a murder charge. ¹⁵⁰ In March the paper reported that the two main shareholders in these gambling emporia, one of them the poet, had agreed to close the halls until the President had returned to Mexico City after inaugurating the port works. ¹⁵¹

With the serious increase in gambling and the many complaints he was receiving from the President, Dehesa resolved to do a little house cleaning, removing various local officials from their posts, an action which was ¹⁵² applauded by El Paladín. Unfortunately his efforts did not satisfy his critics. Shortly after this, Díaz received a letter of complaint from several businessmen in Orizaba.

Specifically they were against the festivals called "Polacas" and "Rifas de Navidad" (Christmas raffles) which started at Christmas and lasted for three months. The results, they claimed, were bad for business, besides they affected the morals of the community and were allowed by the municipal council. Dehesa's answer was that he had ordered the jefe político to suspend the lotteries, adding sarcastically that they had been traditional "... since time immemorial as a welcome diversion with which Orizaban society passed the winter nights." In May the President again wrote that he had received complaints of gambling in Minatitlán, this time with the added accusation that Dehesa was personally involved, receiving 18,000 pesos annually from the proceeds, a charge which he denied.

Later that month the President urged that the Governor act with the utmost severity to put an end to gambling in Orizaba, specifically in the town of Nogales, where the authorities were involved. That same day Dehesa received a letter from the Minister of the Interior, Ramón Corral, advising Dehesa that the continued tolerance toward gambling in the State could be prejudicial to him. Corral was considered one of the Científicos and Dehesa's answer demonstrates not only his dislike of the Minister but his contempt for the group. His brief reply indicated that he had already communicated with the President. To Díaz he wrote that he had given strict orders to the jefe político to suppress gambling in the Canton. Further, he asked the President to speak with the Minister:

As the worthy gentleman,, Don Ramón Corral, does not know me as you do, I would appreciate if you consider it opportune and prudent, that you acquaint him with my mode of being and my way of working. It is possible that the said gentleman, because of a lack of information about me, could make an erroneous judgement, supposing that I am one of those speculators who abuse their position in the government for personal gain, but you well know that in no circumstances have I proceeded incorrectly. 155

Díaz's reply was to thank Dehesa for the efficacy with which he had dealt with his recommendation and to assure him that he would speak with Corral about Dehesa's background as a good patriot and an old and excellent friend. 156

Gambling could not be and never was completely suppressed. It was too firmly a part of the Mexican social fabric to be extirpated. It was also a symptom much more than it was a cause of any anti-social behaviour. The real cause behind its existence was the materially poor lives that most of the Mexican peasants and workers led. In Veracruz, this situation of growing frustration and the rising consciousness that a people could and should expect more from the society in which they lived, was to lead to serious disturbances, the one a peasant revolt, the other a labour dispute, both of which had far-reaching consequences for the Porfirian regime.

CHAPTER IV

NOTES

1. "Less Politics and more Administration." The slogan was commonly used throughout the Porfiriato to characterize the general thrust of the regime.
2. Teodoro Dehesa, Memoria, 1892-94 (Xalapa: Imprenta del Gobierno, 1894), p.4.
3. El Nacional, 14 June 1893, 2 Aug. 1893; Governor's Report to the Legislature in El Reproductor, 26 Sep. 1895.
4. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.59; El Reproductor, 19 Dec. 1893.
5. Governor's Interim Report to the Legislature in El Partido Liberal, 17 July 1894.
6. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.60.
7. El Reproductor, 14 June 1900.
8. Díaz to Dehesa, 15 Dec. 1899, CPD, L24:597.
9. El Partido Liberal, 10 Mar. 1894.
10. Dehesa, Memoria, 1892-94, p.6; Pérez, Dehesa p.18, remarks that Veracruz was able to pay off its considerable debt of over one million pesos by 1911, despite spending huge sums on port works and the improvement of water, drainage and sewage services; El Cosmopolita, 5 May 1897.
11. El Monitor Republicano, 4 Jan. 1893.
12. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.59; El Nacional, 13 Mar. 1895, 21 Mar. 1895.
13. See Chapter III, p.58.
14. El Nacional, 6 July 1895; Valadez, El Porfiriato, v.2., p.133; William P. Glade, The Latin American Economies: A Study of their Institutional Evolution (New York: Van Nostrand, 1969), p.335.
15. Carlos Díaz Dufoo, Limantour (Mexico City: Eusebio Gómez de la Puente, 1910), pp.76-77; El Reproductor, 21 Nov. 1895, 19 Dec. 1895; Gloria Peralta Zamora, "La Hacienda Pública" pp.904-908; Ciro Cardoso's assertion that their removal "was a mortal blow to the autonomous budget income of the states" does not seem to apply to Veracruz. See Ciro F.S. Cardoso and Francisco G. Hermosillo, La Clase Obrera en la historia de Mexico, vol. 3 De la dictadura porfirista a los tiempos libertarios (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno, p.1980), p.73.
16. El Reproductor, 19 Dec. 1895.
17. El Reproductor, 17 June 1897. Decree #8, Art.1,

4.6.97, specifically exempted cork factories from taxes, and all others from taxes for a two-year period.

18. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 Sep. 1900, CPD, L25:11614; Dehesa to Díaz, 3 Jan. 1903, CPD, L28:962; Díaz to Dehesa 16 July 1904, CPD, L29:8845; Dehesa to Díaz, 23 July 1904, CPD, L29:8832.

19. Dehesa to Díaz, 1 Feb. 1897, CPD, L22:1794.

20. El Nacional, 6 June 1893, 6 July 1895; El Reproductor, 26 Sep. 1895; El Cosmopolita, 7 Mar. 1897; El Diario, 5 May 1910.

21. El Reproductor, 13 Apr. 1899.

22. La Patria, 17 June 1905, 8 July 1905, 5 Dec. 1906.

23. John H. Coatsworth, Growth Against Development: The Economic Impact of Railroads in Porfirian Mexico (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1981), pp.32-35; Moisés de la Peña, Veracruz Económico, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Gobierno del estado de Veracruz, 1946), v. 2, p.277.

24. de la Peña, Veracruz Económico, v.2., p.277. For a discussion of the Tehuantepec fiasco see Edward B. Glick, "The Tehuantepec Railroad: Mexico's White Elephant," Pacific Historic Review 22:4 (November, 1953): 373-382.

25. El Foro, 1 July 1892; El Nacional, 22 May 1894; El Partido Liberal, 17 July 1894.

26. El Partido Liberal, 17 July 1894.

27. Dehesa to Díaz, 12 Aug. 1893, CPD, L18:12087-88; Díaz to Dehesa, 12 Aug. 1893, CPD, L18:12090; Dehesa to Díaz, 19 Jan. 1897, CPD, L22:1735.

28. Díaz to Dehesa, 4 Nov. 1895, CPD, L20:15992.

29. Dehesa to Díaz, 7 Feb. 1899, CPD, L24:2540; Díaz to Dehesa, 10 July 1899, CPD, L24:10355; Dehesa to Díaz, 14 July 1899, CPD, L24:10350.

30. Dehesa to Díaz, 11 July 1901, CPD, L26:7116; El Diario del Hogar, 5 Jan. 1897; Dehesa to Díaz, 21 Sep. 1902, CPD, L26:10189; Dehesa to Díaz, 20 Oct. 1904, CPD, L36:14149.

31. Dehesa to Díaz, 3 June 1896, CPD, L21:9940-42; José Pagés to Dehesa, 3 Sep. 1896, CPD, L21:15084; Dehesa to Díaz, 23 Sep. 1896, CPD, L21:15072-74.

32. Dehesa to Díaz, 14 Apr. 1898, CPD, L23:4723; El Cosmopolita, 1 May 1898.

33. John Frisbie to Dehesa, 9 Feb. 1905, ATD; Dehesa to Frisbie, 18 Apr. 1905, ATD; Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve Historia, p.187.

34. El Reproductor, 6 July 1899.

35. Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve Historia, p.188.

36. Dehesa to Díaz, 16 July 1901, CPD, L18:7105-06; Díaz to Dehesa, 19 July 1901, CPD, L18:7101.

37. El Reproductor, 14 June, 1900.

38. Dehesa, Memoria, 1892-94, p.30.

39. El Nacional, 2 Aug. 1893.

40. Dehesa, Memoria, 1892-94, p.8. For a discussion of colonisation attempts in Veracruz see Moisés González Navarro, La colonización en Mexico, 1877-1910 (Mexico City: Talleres de Impresión de Estampilla y Valores, 1960). Of

2606 Italians who were settled in Minatitlán in 1881, only 217 remained in 1908. Their land was gradually occupied by Mexicans. *Ibid.*, p.112.

41. Octavio García Mundo, El Movimiento inquilinario de Veracruz (Mexico City: S.E.P., 1976), p.9.

42. Mexico, Ministerio de Justicia, Fomento y Instrucción Pública, Estadísticas de la Sección de Fomento (Mexico City, 1917), p.158.

43. Dehesa to Díaz, 10 Mar. 1893, CPD, L18:3214.

44. Dehesa to Díaz, 27 Mar. 1897, CPD, L22:3670; Dehesa to Díaz, 31 July 1901, CPD, L22:8498.

45. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, pp.69-70. Dehesa's grand-daughter's house in Xalapa still contains some of the large collection of Totonac artifacts he collected. The great majority of these were given to the Anthropological Museum in Mexico City, where unfortunately their source is no longer acknowledged. See Pérez, Dehesa, p.19; Dr. Nicolás León to Dehesa, 3 Apr. 1905, ATD.

46. Rafael de Zayas Enriquez, Los estados unidos Mexicanos, sus progresos en veinte años de paz, 1877-1897: estudio histórico y estadístico, fundado en los actos oficiales más recientes y completos (Mexico City: Siglo diez y nueve, 1897), p.208.

47. Dehesa to Díaz, 1 Oct. 1895, CPD, L20:14437; Díaz to Dehesa, 1 Oct. 1895, CPD, L20:14439; El Nacional, 30 July 1896.

48. Valades, El Porfirismo, v.2., p.133.

49. Zilli, Historia sucinta, p.62.

50. El Partido Liberal, 17 July 1894.

51. Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve Historia, p.183; Pérez, Dehesa, p.19.

52. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.71.

53. Ibid., p.82. The inauguration of the new building for the Senior Secondary School in Xalapa was attended by the minister of Justice and Education, Joaquín Baranda and many dignitaries. El Imparcial, 29 Mar. 1901; Leonardo Pasquel, Cronología Ilustrada de Xalapa, 1178-1911, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepetl, 1978), v.1., p.117.

54. Moisés González Navarro, Historia Moderna de Mexico: El Porfiriato :La vida social (Mexico City: Editorial Hermes, 1957), p.561.

55. El Monitor Republicano, 4 Feb. 1896; John B. Williams, "Church and State in Veracruz, 1840-1940" (PhD. dissertation, St. Louis University, 1971), p.23. Trained teachers were difficult to obtain. See Dehesa's request for an army captain to teach "analysis, physics and cosmography" and the President's refusal because of the "shortage of trained personnel," in Dehesa to Díaz, 26 Dec. 1905, ATD; Díaz to Dehesa, 29 Dec. 1905, ATD, File #16.

56. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, pp.82-83.

57. El Reproductor, 10 May 1900.

58. La Patria, 17 June 1905; Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.85; Pérez, Dehesa, p.19; Dehesa to Díaz, 7 Jan. 1903, CPD,

L28:969.

59. González Navarro, La vida social, p.675. Sodi de Pallares,

Trens, Pérez and Pasquel are the local historians who have been most consistent in this claim. However, newspapers of the time were also quite consistent in their praise of Dehesa's educational efforts. See El Reproductor, 24 Sep. 1908; La Patria, 17 June 1905.

60. Secretario de Economía, Estadísticas sociales del porfiriato, 1877-1910 (Mexico City, 1956), pp.47-49. Yet, Veracruz spent more than twice as much as the federal government on education- 12 percent as against 7 percent in 1910. See González Navarro, La vida social, p.674.

61. Secretario de Fomento, Estadísticas, pp.125-127.

62. El Monitor Republicano, 30 Jan. 1896.

63. Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve Historia, p.183.

64. Ibid.; Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, pp.76-77; El Nacional, 8 June 1895.

65. Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve Historia, pp.77-78.

66. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, pp.77-78.

67. Leonardo Pasquel, Xalapa en su etapa ateniense (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepetl, 1976). The visit of the famous poet Ruben Dario to Xalapa as a personal guest of Dehesa in 1910 was given much publicity. El Diario, 8 Sep. 1910.

68. Trens, Historia de Veracruz, v.8, pp.342-343.

69. El Paladín, 2 May 1901.

70. El Reproductor, 9 Feb. 1905.

71. Dehesa to Díaz, 6 July 1907, CPD, L32:7692.

72. El Reproductor, 4 Mar. 1897.

73. Díaz to Dehesa, 5 Apr. 1897, CPD, L22:7084; Dehesa to Díaz, 5 July 1897, CPD, L22:8919; Trens, Historia de Veracruz, p.342; de la Peña, Veracruz económico, p.294.

74. Dehesa to Díaz, 27 Nov. 1897, CPD, L22:14587-88.

75. de la Peña, Veracruz económico, p.296.

76. Dehesa to Díaz, 4 Feb. 1902, CPD, L27:2039-40.

77. Dehesa to Díaz, 11 Dec. 1905, ATD; Díaz to Dehesa, 25 Dec. 1905, ATD, File #16, Dehesa to Díaz, 11 Dec. 1905, CPD, L30:17025-28.

78. Trens, Historia de Veracruz, p.344; Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve historia, p.183; Veracruz, Leyes, decretos y circulares, pp. 48-55.

79. El Nacional, 6 June 1893.

80. Romero Rubio to Sec. Interior, Veracruz, 7 Nov. 1892, advising of the approval of a grant for 50,000 pesos; Consejo Superior de Salubridad to Sec. Interior, advising that the cost of three disinfecting stoves for the port would be 32,161 pesos; Matias Romero to Sec. Interior, 19 Dec. 1892, advising that the President had approved the cost of the stoves, in AGN, R:Gob., Sec 1a, L:1666, #18.

81. El Nacional, 22 May 1894; El Reproductor, 6 Sep. 1895.

82. ElReproductor, 1 Aug. 1895.

83. Dehesa to Díaz, 2 June 1893, CPD, L18:7631; El Nacional,

28 June 1893.

84. Dehesa to Díaz, 15 Jan. 1895, CPD, L20:1417; Díaz to Dehesa, 15 Jan. 1895, CPD, L20:1417-18.
85. AGN, R:Gob., Sec.1a, Leg.1666, #157, March 1895; Dehesa to Díaz, 24 Aug. 1895, CPD, L20 C26.
86. Dehesa to Díaz, 10 Dec. 1895, CPD, L20:19175.
87. El Reproductor, 26 Sep. 1895.
88. El Monitor Republicano, 16 Jan. 1896.
89. Díaz to Dehesa, 12 May 1896, CPD, L21:6952.
90. Dehesa to Díaz, 10 June 1896, CPD, L21:9915.
91. Dehesa to Díaz, 13 July 1896, CPD, L21 C25.
92. El Monitor Republicano, 14 Aug. 1896.
93. El Nacional, 20 July 1896.
94. Díaz to Dehesa, 22 Oct. 1896, CPD, L21:17344.
95. Díaz to Dehesa, 23 Oct. 1896, CPD, L21:17343.
96. From January to August, 1895, there were 153

deaths

compared to 19 in 1896. Dehesa to Díaz, 28 Oct. 1896, CPD, L21:17318.

97. Dehesa to Díaz, 29 Oct. 1896, CPD, L21:17315.
98. Dehesa to Díaz, 26 June 1896, CPD, L22 C15.
99. Díaz to Dehesa, 11 Feb. 1897, CPD, L22:1772;

Dehesa

to Díaz, 28 Feb. 1897, CPD, L22:3710.

100. Dehesa to Díaz, 26 Nov. 1897, CPD, L22:14581.
101. El Cosmopolita, 10 Apr. 1898.
102. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 Jan. 1899, CPD, L24:1124-29.
103. Díaz to Dehesa, 28 Jan. 1899, CPD, L24:1130.
104. El Reproductor, 24 Aug. 1899.
105. El Reproductor, 28 Dec. 1899.
106. El Reproductor, 29 Mar. 1900.
107. González Navarro, La vida social, p.64.
108. El Español, 1 June 1900.
109. Dehesa to Díaz, 12 Mar. 1900, CPD, L25:2454. One Chicago company, Geo. D. Cook and Co., even wrote to Dehesa offering to buy any bonds the State would issue for the purpose.

110. Díaz to Dehesa, 15 Nov. 1900, ATD, File #10; Dehesa to Díaz, 18 Nov. ATD, File #10.

111. Dehesa to Díaz, 11 July 1900, CPD, L25:8762.
112. El Reproductor, 4 Oct. 1900.
113. Dehesa to Díaz, 4 May 1901, CPD, L26:4016; Dehesa to Díaz, 17 June 1901, CPD, L26:5183; Díaz to Dehesa, 20 June 1901, CPD; Dehesa to Díaz, 20 June 1901, ATD, File #30.

114. El Imparcial, 12 Oct. 1901. The exact cost was 3,964,493.94 pesos.

115. Dehesa to Díaz, 1 Mar. 1902, ATD, File #3.

116. Dehesa to Manuel González Cosío, 10 May 1902, CPD, L27:5121;

Díaz to Dehesa, 10 May 1902, CPD, L27:5155.

117. Dehesa to Licéaga, 12 May 1902, CPD, L27:5133-34.

118. El Reproductor, 2 Oct. 1902.

119. El Reproductor, 23.10.02, 4 Dec. 1902.

120. El Reproductor, 3 Dec. 1903.
121. Dehesa to Díaz, 6 June 1903, CPD, L28:8549; Díaz to Dehesa, 9 July 1903, CPD, L22:9904; Dehesa to Díaz, 6 June 1903, ATD, File #1.
122. El Reproductor, 26 Nov. 1903, 3 Dec. 1903.
123. Dehesa to Díaz, 27 Jan. 1904, CPD, L29:1220.
124. Dehesa to Díaz, 11 Jan. 1904, CPD, L29 C1; Díaz to Dehesa, 21 Jan. 1904, CPD, L29:75.
125. La Patria, 1 Mar 1904; Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve Historia, p.185.
126. Díaz to Dehesa, 4 Jan 1905, CPD, L30:462; Eliezer Espinosa to jefes políticos of Veracruz, Acayucan and Minatitlán, 13 Jan. 1905, CPD, L30:437; Dehesa to Díaz, 13 Jan. 1905, CPD, L30:435; Díaz to Dehesa, 4 Jan. 1905; Dehesa to Díaz, 13 Jan. 1905, CPD, File #11.
127. La Patria, 5 Aug. 1905.
128. Reports dated 22 Aug. 1905, and 1 Apr. 1906, AGN, Gob. 1a, 905 (?) 1.
129. Antonio Manero, El antiguo regimen y la revolución (Mexico City: no. pub., 1911), pp.47-48; Zayas Enriquez, Los estados unidos Mexicanos, p.196; Pablo Macedo, La evolución mercantil: comunicaciones y obras públicas: la hacienda pública (Mexico City: J.Ballesca y Cia., 1905), p.246; Valades, El Porfirismo, v.1., p.314; El Partido Liberal, 15 June 1894.
130. El Nacional, 9 May 1895.
131. El Monitor Republicano, 25 Mar. 1896; El Nacional, 20 July 1896.
132. El Monitor Republicano, 4. Mar. 1896.
133. El Monitor Republicano, 14 Aug. 1896.
134. El Diario del Hogar, 21 Jan. 1897.
135. El Español, 21 June 1900.
136. El Imparcial, 11 Feb. 1901.
137. El Reproductor, 13 Mar. 1902; Trens, Historia de Veracruz, p.360; Edward I. Bell, The Political Shame of Mexico (New York: McBride, Nast and Co., 1914), p.26.
138. Trens, Historia de Veracruz, pp.360-61.
139. Dehesa to Díaz, 6 June 1905, CPD, L30:9265; Dehesa to Díaz, 12 Oct. 1908, CPD, L33:13929; Trens, Historia de Veracruz, p.362.
140. Dehesa to Díaz, 16 May 1905, ATD, File #16; La Patria, 20 Sep. 1905.
141. Dehesa to Díaz, 5 Jan. 1899, CPD, L24:1146-47; Díaz to Dehesa, 1 Sep. 1899, CPD, L24:13735; El Reproductor, 20 June 1901.
142. González Navarro, La vida social, p.416.
143. Ibid., pp.430-32.
144. El Diario del Hogar, 22 May 1895.
145. El Reproductor, 12 Dec. 1895.
146. El Diario del Hogar, 19 Jan. 1897.
147. El Paladín, 10 Jan. 1901.
148. Dehesa to Díaz, 30 Apr. 1901, CPD, L26:4027-28.
149. El Paladín, 23 May 1901.
150. El Paladín, 6 June 1901.
151. El Paladín, 13 Mar. 1902.

152. El Paladín, 9 Jan. 1902.
153. Díaz to Dehesa, 15 Jan. 1902, CPD, L27:311;
Dehesa to Díaz, 24 Jan. 1892, CPD, L27:321; Díaz to Dehesa,
15 Jan. 1902; Dehesa to Díaz, 24 Jan. 1902, ATD, File #3.
154. Díaz to Dehesa, 14 May 1902, CPD, L27:5144;
Dehesa to Díaz, 16 May 1902, CPD, L27:5112.
155. Díaz to Dehesa, 23 May 1903, ATD, File #1;
Corral to Dehesa, 23 May 1903, ATD, File #1; Dehesa to
Corral, 27 May 1903, ATD, File #1; Dehesa to Díaz, 27 May
1903, ATD, File #1.
156. Díaz to Dehesa, 31 May 1903, ATD, File #1.
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CHAPTER V

THE LAND QUESTION IN VERACRUZ: PAPANTLA AND ACAYUCAN.

In the summer of 1906, a serious uprising occurred in the Soteapan region of Veracruz, Canton of Acayucan. Although the uprising has received recognition by local historians as "the precursor of the Mexican Revolution,"¹ its importance has not been generally acknowledged. The uprising was engineered by the Veracruzian organizer of the Partido Liberal Mexicano, Hilario Salas, who had allied urban revolutionaries with Popolucan Indians who were attempting to regain land that had been acquired by President Díaz's father-in-law, Romero Rubio. This was not the first armed uprising the State had witnessed over land disputes. In August, 1865, in Misantla, there had been a revolt of Totonac Indians against the Mexicans called derisively "the men of reason" (gente de razón). The motivation had been similar: protest against the despoliation of traditional lands as well as the forced commutation of these lands from communal to private property. The government had then ordered the armed forces "... not to leave one seed of the Totonac Indians in Misantla." Indians who fled were pursued into the mountains

and ruthlessly slaughtered. The native element in this
region of Veracruz disappeared forever. ² An equally serious
uprising occurred some years later in 1891 when another
Totonac group protested against their loss of land in
Papantla. The source of both these uprisings had been the
implementation of the Reform Laws passed during the
presidencies of Juárez and Lerdo de Tejada. Because no
satisfactory way of explaining the government's policy had
been found, and because the native population of Veracruz
continued to distrust the government's policy of dividing
traditional lands into individual holdings, the Totonacs
rebelled again in 1896.

This chapter will examine the two uprisings which
occurred during Dehesa's governorship, Papantla in 1896 and
Acayucan in 1906. Both are evidence of the problem of
trying to modernize Mexico at the turn of the century.
These two land disputes were symptomatic of land problems
during the Porfiriato. They reveal the complexity of trying
to reconcile modern ideas of development in the late
nineteenth century with the older native traditions of
Mexico. They also mirror one of the central truths about
the Porfiriato which has never been stressed-- that behind
the President was a nation of Mexicans determined to enrich
themselves at the expense of the native element, an
intention that the autocratic regime could not contain.

The handling of these land problems was another
matter. It displayed clearly the sharp differences of

approach between the methods and policies of Governor Dehesa, and at times President Díaz himself, as against the group known as the Científicos. Whereas Dehesa believed that modern Mexico needed private property and small farmers as a basis for its prosperity and tried patiently to explain this to the Indians, the Científicos wanted to proceed as rapidly as possible. There were two reasons for this. On the one hand they wanted to expedite the process of modernization, and on the other, they were not squeamish of seeing Indians defrauded of their land since, in their minds, the Indians were a backward element anyway. Dehesa was aware of this and therefore tried to proceed slowly in an attempt to explain to the Indians the benefits of private property and also to ensure that proper titles were issued so that the Indians would not lose their individual plots. His attempt to proceed in this manner is attested to by the fact that the State laws calling for the reduction to private property were postponed every year up to the Revolution.

Dehesa tried to proceed as justly and honestly in Acayucan as in Papantla. However, Acayucan was a different case for two reasons. First, the lands in dispute by the Popolucan Indians were situated near the Tehuantepec Isthmus. The President, recognizing their strategic and economic value, had fears of a takeover of these lands by the United States. Secondly, his father-in-law had acquired them earlier and Díaz wanted to ensure that this part of the inheritance was kept intact for his family. The Popolucans

were therefore ready for assistance by any group that would promise to aid them in retaining their traditional lands. The group that did so was the Mexican Liberal Party (PLM) which organised and armed the Popolucans. The intention of the PLM, however, was not merely to help the Indians regain their lands. It was to overthrow the Díaz regime. Not only Indians, but PLM members in Veracruz and their supporters were involved. Acayucan, therefore, has the added significance that it was the first serious attempt at violent solution to the problems created during the Porfiriato.

The entire land question during the Porfiriato has been the subject of endless debate and the issue is not yet settled. There is general agreement that the Reform Laws, in particular the Lerdo Law of June, 1856, had, as a consequence, the transference of Indian communal lands throughout Mexico to private individuals. Some of the recipients were the Indians themselves. However, there has been no agreement as to how much land was retained by the native groups. Neither has the role of the President been clarified. He has been variously described as the chief agent behind the despoliation of lands, but also as a protector of Indian property. ³ The truth is probably closer to Stevens's assertion that Díaz, who was a respecter of property rights, did not wish to deprive the Indians of their land, but was limited in the power he had to prevent ⁴ his more avaricious countrymen from doing so. He was

especially limited by expectations and a modus operandi (which had become common during the presidency of Juárez and which was contrary to the spirit of the Reform Laws) of defrauding the Indians of their land wherever possible. The laws in question, the Lerdo Law of 1856 and its subsequent inclusion into the Constitution of 1857, prohibited religious communities from holding land which was not used for religious worship. These laws were then extended to include Indian ejido property. The ejidos were ordered to be subdivided and then allotted to individuals on the basis of one plot for each head of family. ⁵ Indeed, it has been pointed out, that the express aim of these Laws of Disamortization, as they have been called, was the creation of a solid middle class interested in peace and politics. In the process, however, the policy did not work out as planned, and the indigenous peoples were left to the mercy of their more numerous mestizo countrymen. ⁶ There was considerable naiveté on the part of the Mexican government in regard to its land policy. Sufficient means never existed for the communal ejido to enable individuals to purchase their plots or pay for the surveying fees, let alone hire lawyers to contest the well-funded, large-estate claimants who saw here an opportunity to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor Indian peasants. ⁷ The land problem was exacerbated in 1875 with the passage of the Colonization Law which allowed the President to approve of the immigration of foreigners. To facilitate immigration with land grants, survey companies were allowed to parcel

unused government lands (baldios), keeping one-third of all land surveyed as payment for their efforts. This law was modified in 1884 by limiting to 2500 hectares the amount of land any one company could obtain. On the other hand, any individual was allowed to "denounce" communal or public lands which he thought were not legally owned. The occupiers would then have to come up with titles proving ownership, or lose the land to the individual or company who had "denounced" it. The object of this law was again to attempt to create medium-sized farms and to try to avoid the monopolization of land by a few people. There was apparently sincerity behind the government's intentions. In 1889, President Díaz had issued a circular to officials warning them to be just and to ensure that "... the disinherited classes of the people were given land." 8 Governor Dehesa was also a fervent believer in this policy. As he pointed out to the President a few years later, in discussing the subdivision of lands in Chicontepec, there were many advantages to be obtained from land division accompanied by the issuance of individual titles. For one, it would prevent the encroachment of large landowners on Indian lands, once these were clearly marked off and in the possession of individuals; furthermore, there would be growth in agricultural production, and, as a consequence, a greater tax-intake for the State. Dehesa also believed that owning their own land would give peasants a chance to develop personally which could only be of benefit to

themselves and the State.

However, from the outset, this general land policy was faced with insurmountable difficulties. The laws were ineffective because the majority of the population who had a stake in land, and who had access to the necessary means, frustrated government efforts every step of the way. Because this was also the group, or class of people who supported the regime, it was almost impossible to take action against them. In 1893, the Survey Law was replaced by a new law which lifted the limit on the amount of land¹⁰ that the company could obtain. This law was reconfirmed a year later, but with an important addition. No longer were the survey companies required to populate the lands or even¹¹ have them properly marked off. This amendment was the real cause of the despoliation of Indian and peasant lands, which were already encircled by huge haciendas which were¹² often too powerful to be resisted. Powerful families like the Armentas in Misantla, Veracruz, or the Chazaro Solers in Acayucan, did as they pleased. So powerful were they, that despite the policies of the Mexican Revolution, including the return of ejido lands, these families still retain the vast proportion of land today that they accrued before and during the Porfiriato. Indeed it was not until 1931 that the ejido of Juchique de Ferrer, for example, was able to secure a return of some of its land. At that time, the Armenta family was forced to return 335¹³ hectares, a tiny percentage of their entire property. In addition, social factors were also responsible for the loss

of land. Indian groups who could not speak Spanish were obviously at a disadvantage. In 1885, in Veracruz, about one-third of the population, or 228,966 people, were classified as Indians. Even in 1946, just over ten percent of the State's population could still not speak the national language.¹⁴

The law outlawing communal landholding was reaffirmed in 1889, giving the communities just over two years in which to convert their lands into individual holdings. In 1893, communal rights were completely rescinded.¹⁵ Although the effects of this law were postponed in Veracruz where Governor Dehesa consistently extended its implementation every year until the Revolution, the individualization of land ownership created serious problems during the Porfiriato which were never resolved.¹⁶ While it can be argued that the Porfirian regime did not create the problems associated with landholding, it sanctioned passively the redistribution of land into the hands of large landowners and private companies, the result of which was the loss of small plots and farms by thousands or even hundreds of thousands of peasants and Indians.¹⁷ The myriad entanglements and conflicts resulting from disputes over boundaries and titles, or, for that matter, the lack of titles, resulted in decisions usually favourable to the large landowner.¹⁸ In some cases, too, an unscrupulous Governor could and would use his power to "denounce" and get control of Indian lands, as was

reputedly the case with Governor Mucio Martínez in Puebla. The President himself saw the danger in these illegal and immoral land seizures, and, in 1894, directed a letter to the Governor of San Luis Potosí, Carlos Díez Gutiérrez, pointing out that some States had adjudicated land to their peoples without cost, but that others, like Veracruz, Chiapas and San Luis Potosí had given lands to outsiders because of lack of demand, and this was causing bad feeling. The practice, he counselled, ought to be

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avoided. If President Díaz really believed that the regeneration of Mexico lay in the destruction of Indian communal organization and the disappearance of the Indians through absorption into the rest of the population, as some historians assert, his actions give the lie to his

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convictions. It was not uncommon in the Porfiriato for Indian delegations to journey to the capital in search of titles under the protection of Governors like Dehesa, as well as the President himself.

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Indeed it has been argued that the inconsistent handling of the land question was the main cause of rural uprisings which began in the 1850s and did not cease until the death of Emiliano Zapata in 1919. In 1901, Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution was amended to allow the existence of communal property. This was probably too late to be of much good. Moreover, it was impossible to effect a return of lands that had been improperly taken from the

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peasantry. In the last days of the Porfiriato, it was

even acknowledged that the monopolization of land had been the result of sheer neglect on the part of the government, and that only a thorough break-up (fraccionamiento) of large properties would ensure the creation of a middle class on which the economic and political equilibrium of the country could be based.

In Veracruz, much of this damage had occurred by 1892. The division of communal lands had almost been completed in the central and southern portions of the State, while just under two percent of the entire surface had been surveyed and distributed. Under the previous Governor, Enríquez, most of the land distribution and extinction of the Indian communities had taken place. What was left was conscientiously dealt with by Dehesa. Both governors based their actions on two circulars issued by the federal government: that of the Minister of Development (Fomento), Carlos Pacheco, issued during President Díaz's second term in office; and that issued by the Minister of the Interior (Gobernación), Romero Rubio, May 12, 1890. Ten years after the later circular, which ordered the immediate reduction of all communal lands into individual, privately-owned plots, Dehesa was the only Governor who had complied with it.

In the Canton of Papantla, for example, six hundred and forty-six titles were issued covering a total of eleven thousand three hundred hectares. The recipients were the Indians who had farmed this land communally.

These Totonac-Huasteco Indians had never been in agreement with the commutation of their land into private property and on more than one occasion had protested violently.

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The cause of opposition to private ownership was primarily a resistance to a foreign concept of land ownership.

However, the attempt by unscrupulous people to usurp these lands was another cause. The uprisings in Veracruz were never an expression of opposition to the Governor. Although it has been suggested that Dehesa used his office to enrich himself and his friends, no evidence seems to uphold this assertion. ³¹ Indeed, my own evidence suggests that Dehesa acquired his properties before he became Governor, and that he did what was possible to prevent the usurpation of lands.

Shortly after Dehesa took office in 1892, President Díaz sent an agent to Veracruz on a secret mission which concerned the despoliation of Indian lands. The interim Governor, Herrera, however, disclosed the agent's mission, and the latter was forced to seek Dehesa's help in conveying his report to the President. He had been spied on at every turn, he said, and prevented from carrying out his investigations regarding the outright theft of land from the Indians by various citizens of Huamantla. ³² The land question was fraught with such difficulties, and with opposition from so many quarters, that the Governor had to maintain the utmost vigilance. Dehesa tried to have the work of surveying and land division done by people who were diplomatic, honest, and completely trustworthy. When one of

his most trusted engineers was transferred to the Military College in Mexico City, Dehesa put up hefty resistance until Captain Luis Ulloa was returned to the State. The study that Ulloa had made of the various titles, Dehesa explained, was so complex, that this knowledge could not be easily transmitted to another individual. Ulloa was
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therefore allowed to remain in Veracruz.

Shortly after taking office in 1892, Dehesa asked the President for a suspension of the work of a survey company in the Canton of Chicontepepec which was surveying so-called unused land, even though it was clear that there was no public land left in that Canton. Furthermore, Dehesa explained, he had examined all the existing titles and had found them in order. He therefore asked the President to
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suspend the surveying work, and the President complied. The riots in Chicontepepec, which occurred in March 1892, are a good example of the complexity of the Mexican land question, not only in its legal dimension, but also in regard to the difficulty of reconciling problems when friends or supporters of the President were involved. The riots were the continuation of a small armed uprising by Otomí Indians of both Hidalgo and Veracruz States which had begun the previous September. Their leader, Antonio Granada, had convinced them that they had lost land under a recent division, and succeeded in leading them in an invasion of two Veracruzuan villages bordering on the State of Hidalgo. Granada had been apprehended then released, and

was again trying to stir up the Indians. In June, 1892, Dehesa wrote to the President asking him to use his influence with the Governor of Hidalgo in maintaining the borders of that State with Veracruz and with helping in the arrest of Granada. In addition, Dehesa felt that if the Hidalgan Governor were to enforce the State borders, it would end the dispute between their common friend, Julian Herrera, and the Indians who were claiming his land. The hacienda bordered on the village of San Pedrito, which was in the State of Hidalgo. Dehesa felt that if the President forced the Governor of Hidalgo to see that the borders which also coincided with the property line between the hacienda and the village were respected, that the matter would be resolved.

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On another occasion when it became obvious that a survey company was proceeding with work that was contrary to the wishes of the people of the village of Citlaltepec in the Canton of Ozuluama, Dehesa requested that the President forbid the company to continue its work. The request was granted. Dehesa's actions were always based on a strict interpretation of the laws. In 1894, a delegation of Indians complained to the President about a circular ordering the division and distribution of their lands. Díaz asked Dehesa to look into the matter, adding that, in his opinion, the land ought to be divided among the heads of families, which was the Governor's intention and practise anyway. Two years later, President Díaz again asked the Governor what the result had been because a

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citizen had informed him that the people of Cosamaloapan had had their lands expropriated. Dehesa then paid the man's way to Veracruz asking him to find the titles and present them. These were found and duly examined, and the man had to apologize, admitting that he had been wrong in his assertions.

No better example of the immense complexity of the land question and the emotions it generated can be found than in the question of the causes of the Papantla uprising of 1896. The Canton of Papantla, situated between Tuxpan to the north and Jalacingo to the south, contains one of the ancient peoples of Mexico, the Totonac-Huastecos. It was in this area that numerous uprisings against the central government in Mexico City, from the days of Moctezuma to the 19th century, had taken place. The Totonacs, with a population of some 85,000 in 1876, cultivated maize in forty-five villages in Veracruz. They were also occupied with the production of sugar and alcohol as well as craft industries. This was an extremely proud and independent people who had been struggling since 1813 against attempts to divide their communal lands for distribution to

individual owners. By 1876, much of their land had been divided into three large lots. Not all the inhabitants had even been beneficiaries of an individual plot since some of this land had been declared baldo, or public land, and had

been sold to other people. In the winter of 1890, surveyors appeared in the Papantla valley, which contained

20,000 Totonacs. They were ordered to leave by local Indian authorities. Faced with refusal the surveyors called in Rurales and Federal troops. An armed clash resulted in the Totonacs being repelled with untoward ferocity and cruelty. About 6000 Indians were reported to have been killed.⁴¹ One year later Governor Enríquez reported that "... public tranquility has been completely restored in Papantla and the Indians are now disposed to the subdivision of their lots."⁴² However, the resistance had been only temporarily crushed and the Indians continued to make plans for an uprising, collecting arms and gunpowder for the purpose.⁴³ Not until 1896, however, did the uprising occur.

In 1894, Veracruz authorities ordered the continuation of the subdivision of the remaining large lots and their distribution to heads of families.⁴⁴ Governor Dehesa expected that this would produce a marked increase in agricultural production because the lands had remained unproductive for a long time.⁴⁵ On the contrary, the renewed attempts at subdivision awoke the dormant hostility of the Totonacs of which Dehesa and the President were only too well aware. In September, 1894, Díaz warned Dehesa that something was happening in Papantla which he should investigate because it "would produce lamentable effects."⁴⁶ What the President was referring to was a mixture of old problems and new provocations which were apart from the hostility to the subdivision. The combination of these makes it very difficult for the historian to arrive at a clear picture. Nevertheless, it

seems as if the intricacy of these problems involved six different groups of people, all with differing interests and points of view: the federal government; the State government; the jefe político in Papantla; the surveyors of the Federal Geographic Commission; local businessmen; and the Totonac-Huasteco Indians. The latter, of course, desired only to be left alone to pursue their traditional way of life; the businessmen were interested in maintaining a dominating presence because of a small silver mine and the valuable vanilla crop produced in Papantla; the local authority and the surveyors led by General Victoriano Huerta wanted to hang onto their petty authority; the State government was interested in promoting agriculture but within the existing market system so as to increase its tax intake and further develop the State; and the federal government wanted to ensure the further development of the country for which, it thought, the elaboration of private property was essential.

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In July, 1892, Huerta complained that he was not receiving the cooperation of the jefe político, Lucido Cambas. President Díaz consequently asked Dehesa to undertake a comprehensive investigation, especially in regard to the advisability of proceeding with the subdivision of the Papantla lands. He pointed out that the local businessmen who were in control of the mine had succeeded in tricking and seducing the local authority into impeding the engineers's work, which, in his opinion, was

contrary to the interests of the Indians. With the use of the word, "interest", Díaz was obviously referring to his own conception of what that entailed, and certainly not the wishes of the Totonacs. Since his letter ended on a note of sarcasm, Dehesa was quick to point out that he, as well as the jefe político, shared the view of the President that the breakup of communal land was essential for the prosperity of the nation. Besides, he continued, he had given commensurate instructions to Cambas, which Huerta was

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very well aware of. The President was still not satisfied. He remained extremely agitated and was anxious

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for the subdivision to be settled peacefully. There was good reason for the President to worry. In 1892 and 1893, the nation's finances were at a low ebb and Díaz did not want to have to waste money on government surveyors nor have to expend more in a costly military campaign to pacify an angry Indian group. He was also becoming aware that there was more to the entire business than a petty power conflict between the jefe político and Huerta. He therefore asked Dehesa to hasten his search for solutions that would nullify the continuing intrigues. According to Huerta's account, it was Cambas who was hindering the progress of the subdivision. He maintained that the Indians had had nothing but praise for the surveyors' work, but that certain individuals had gone as far as to obstruct the work of the surveyors by insulting them at the work sites. These would shout insults and accusations that the surveyors had only been sent by the government to take away the

Indians' land. Díaz immediately referred the matter to the Governor for clarification, remarking that there were two or three Spaniards and Creoles who were known to be exploiting the Indians in the vanilla harvest. He included the jefe político in this, since he felt that there could be no other explanation for Cambas's behaviour. Again the President reminded Dehesa that he must do his utmost to avoid difficulties since the Indians were the absolute owners of their properties and also of their harvests and that they should not be exploited in any way by

middlemen. Dehesa countered that he did not think Cambas was the source of opposition to the surveying, but rather the businessmen who were interested in the vanilla crop. He therefore ordered Cambas to conduct an investigation.

Dehesa's answer appears to be plausible. There was no way of telling from the documents whether the jefe político was involved in defrauding the Indians. But it is obvious that, had he been implicated, he would have been removed immediately by the Governor, whose interest it was to ensure that the land subdivision went smoothly. On the other hand, it makes more sense to suspect the businessmen. They would have hindered the subdivision because it would have made their business dealings with a host of individual landowners much more difficult than dealing with the chief or head of the Totonacs. Indeed, Cambas's investigation revealed that there were two reasons for the delay in the subdivision-- first, the laxity of the engineers who had

been on the job for nine months and who had accomplished little; and second, a small group of people who had been advising the Indians to protest the subdivision. In addition, certain rancheros (small farmers) led by a notary public had asked the President to halt the subdivision. This same man had earlier notarized the contracts the farmers had signed with the engineers, but now wanted the contracts annulled because there had not been adequate legal representation. The reasons for this objection were fairly clear. The notary public was involved in a company mining silver in the area, and it was also in his interest not to have to deal with many individuals when negotiating leases. As if this were not sufficient to complicate matters, Cambas reported, a certain Mr. Tibucio had been planning an uprising by the Indians.

Shortly after Cambas had interviewed this man, a group of Totonacs had come to him claiming that he was to be ambushed that night. Since there was no other military or police personnel around, Cambas used them as guards. Simultaneously, a Juan Vidal reported that there had been a meeting of Indians for the purpose of collecting funds with which to finance an uprising. Both Tibucio and Vidal appeared to be working together which was very strange, Cambas thought, because Tibucio had been one of the initiators of the original subdivision. Nevertheless, Cambas continued, he was "hot on the trail" of the rebels and requested federal troops as a precaution.

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Cambas's report was, to say the least, confusing.

If, however, one utilizes Dehesa's suggestion that one of the sources of the discontent was business interests, then the report makes sense. The businessmen probably had been motivated to support the breakup of the communal lands in the hope that they would be able to "denounce" some of them as Sbaldios and thus obtain a portion for themselves. But having rediscovered the silver lodes, and realizing the potential profit to be made by having the Totonacs produce a vanilla crop which was increasingly in demand, it would have been in their interest to halt the subdivision and keep the Indian lands intact. The President, however, was nervous and unwilling to listen to complicated rational arguments. He preferred to listen to unfounded rumours, and accepted a report that one of the surveyors was at the root of the problems. He suggested that Dehesa have the man
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arrested. This Dehesa refused to do, and invited the Municipality to write a letter to the President clearing the man of all charges, including the one that stated he
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had been bribed by the local authorities.

For the next few months the work of subdivision went well and there were no incidents. Some of the large lots had been distributed although more remained to be
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subdivided. Governor Dehesa tried to continue to foster better relations with the Indians by requesting that the President order the release of those who had been consigned to the army punishment battalions for their part in the
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uprising of 1891. This Díaz agreed to do. The Governor

also commissioned a special agent, an engineer, to oversee the survey work in the Canton. This man reported in May that some Indians, who had previously been in the "rebel" camp, had changed their minds and had peacefully accepted their parcels of land.

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However, the President was still nervous. In a letter to the Governor, he suggested that, since the subdivision had met with such resistance, it might be better to stop it altogether and accept the fact that the Indians would live "... in slavery under the

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businessmen and Gachupinos (Spaniards)." He still believed that the difficulties were due to the jefe político and that he ought to be removed temporarily. He remarked:

I do not personally care whether the settlements are made one way or the other but I do not believe the Indians understand and appreciate the benefits of private ownership and, if they will not appreciate the favours granted why not allow them to live as they always have.⁶¹

The President, who always showed a short fuse when complicated matters were at hand, and whose patience seemed to favour short, quick solutions, apparently preferred that things take their "natural" course. This would have meant, as he clearly perceived, the exploitation of the Indians by the businessmen. Dehesa, however, wanted to avoid this for he was aware how more potentially dangerous this could be. He was not about to bow to the President's wishes when he thought he knew better. He felt that the Indians would be better off if they held clear titles to their land, but he wanted to do things his way. He did not want to conclude the subdivisions until every step had been taken to explain

carefully to the Indians what their rights and benefits would be. Dehesa felt that Cambas was the right person for this job and had no intention of replacing him.

The situation by September, 1894, was further complicated by a number of individuals who saw their opportunity to take advantage of the law on common lands by denouncing tracts of land that ran through the Indian holdings in Papantla. It came to the ears of the President, and he asked Dehesa to investigate. The jefe político's

investigation revealed that the lands in question had already been subdivided. On the request of the Governor, the President agreed that no lands in the village of

Papantla should be adjudicated to strangers, (i.e. those who had not been resident previously in the village), but only to the Indians. Still, there was an air of intrigue

surrounding the land question in the village and Governor Dehesa decided to investigate further. He summoned Juan Vidal, but was not able to glean much from the conversation. He then remembered that while he had been a Deputy in the State Legislature there had been two brothers named Vidal living in Papantla. One of these had been a friend of Simon Tibucio, whose influence among the Indians had been undermined by a common enemy, Manuel Pérez.

Dehesa consequently asked a friend who had knowledge of Papantla to draw up a report on Vidal. This report stated that Vidal was not well-liked by Papantlans or Indians because he had taken land from some neighbours without payment, had framed his own nephew as a "vanilla thief,"

was an enemy of his own brother, and was hated by the Indians for having divided their communal lands originally in the large lots. He had also exploited the Indians by paying them for vanilla at a reduced rate or not at all.⁶⁷ This Vidal had really been the person in charge of land distribution under the previous Governor. The distribution had been so badly conducted, that much correction was needed. Dehesa warned the President against giving too much credence to Vidal who had been sending in reports, and reiterated his belief that Cambas was the man for the job.⁶⁸

Dehesa was careful not to rely exclusively on Cambas's reports, especially as there was enmity between Cambas and Velez, the agent Dehesa had sent to report on the Canton. Indeed, Cambas accused Velez and his assistant of siding with the malcontents around Vidal, and even linked Velez to one of Dehesa's formidable political enemies, Juan Manuel Betancourt.⁶⁹ Betancourt was director of a boys' school, owner of the newspaper, El Espectador, and a leading member of the Enriquista group who were Dehesa's chief political opponents in Veracruz. Nevertheless, the independent report Dehesa had commissioned told in lurid details of centuries of wrongdoing against the Indians who had been given their land originally by the colonial government. But outsiders had moved onto the land exploiting its resources to the fullest, maltreating the Indians, without even bothering to

pay taxes on their operations. With the passage of the Reform Laws, the lands were divided into large lots, but without designating clearly who or what entity was the owner. This had been the first mistake. It had been followed by others, but most importantly by allotting some land to "men of reason" (Mexicans, Spaniards, Italians, Frenchmen, Americans), which was, of course, contrary to the Indians' best interest, and hardly legal. Then the State had demanded taxes from the new owners. In most cases the Indians had paid theirs, but the newcomers refused to do so. The Indians were further required to pay taxes to the State government for commissions, interpreters, and scribes, which benefited the middle class but was very costly for the Indians. They soon began to withhold their contributions altogether. Someone had told them that they should not have to pay taxes on land that was ancestrally theirs if they could produce their titles. This was very costly for the Indians and, since they could no longer afford to continue the search for titles and pay taxes at the same time, their land was declared baldio and soon sold to various "men of reason." Unscrupulous bureaucrats in Mexico City told the Indians that they should disregard the local authorities, which led to the first rebellion at the time when Vidal was jefe político. The Indians had thus come to resist any further subdivision of their land, because throughout they had been consistently the victims. The report went on to suggest that subdivision was indeed the answer to the present situation, but that the Indians ought

to be given clear titles and maps of their properties, not at their expense, and that federal troops ought to be stationed in Papantla to ensure public order. ⁷⁰ To validate the report Dehesa asked his friend and engineer, Ignacio Muñoz, the President's nephew, to go to Papantla and report. He further tried to make quite clear to the President the reason for the Indians' resistance to subdivision:

If the Indians resist the subdivision they are acting for the most part on instinct. Unfortunately mercenary speculation has been the usual means of subdividing lands.... The Indian living communally knows that he has something. With subdivision he knows he will lose what he has had and will be worse off. His ignorance is exploited and through unscrupulous means he ends up with nothing. This he does not perceive but he senses it, and therefore, remains opposed to any subdivision, the operations of which have been a gold mine for others.⁷¹

President Díaz accepted the report, recommending that its terms be implemented, although he suggested that it might be prudent to wait on Muñoz "whose impartiality is irrefutable." ⁷² By December, 1894, Muñoz's report was ready. As expected, it did not differ from the conclusion ⁷³ already drawn. Díaz was satisfied and did not see the ⁷⁴ necessity of sending a battalion to Papantla. By this time, too, most of the land in the Canton had been subdivided, including the Municipality of Papantla. There was still resistance in one or two places from Indians who were being instigated by "scribes" who wanted to make things as difficult as possible so they could make the most ⁷⁵ out of the situation.

Unfortunately, on the same day that this
correspondence was taking place, a horrible incident took
place in the Canton. A teacher had gone out to his ranch to
pay some Indians for a crop of vanilla, and because he
apparently did not pay them what they were owed, he was
ambushed on the way back, his head cut off, and his heart
removed and eaten.⁷⁶ The authorities did not appear to be
unduly alarmed since it was an isolated incident. In May,
1895, the jefe político journeyed to Mexico City to bring
the President up to date on the continuing subdivisions.⁷⁷

The difficulty in completing the subdivisions was
the sensitivity that had to be used in dealing with the
Indians. In spite of the Legislature's exhortation to
complete the subdivision as quickly as possible, Dehesa had
extended the deadline for completion each year by one year
until 1911.⁷⁸ For the same reason, he had replaced Huerta
with Muñoz, whom Dehesa felt he could trust.⁷⁹

Nevertheless, the unrest in the Canton was the result of
more than just the land question. The people there had been
neglected in other ways. El Monitor Republicano
(Mexico City), admittedly no friend of the Díaz regime,
reported that, in Papantla, there were no police, no
lights, no hospital, only a gathering-place for the sick,
no proper prisons but pig-sties, and no cantonal school but
a dilapidated building. Yet, under Muñoz, the subdivision
seemed to be going ahead according to schedule and would
probably be finished in a year.⁸⁰ The newspaper report was
not without substance, however. In March, 1896, a group of

Indians had a petition drawn up by the local authorities in which they expressed similar complaints. Reminding the President of the supplement to the plan of Tuxtepec, the plan of Palo Blanco, which had promised the Indians retention of their lands, they also pointed to "... the ambition of a great part of the capitalists of the village who are trying to appropriate our property." They added that the majority of villages in the municipality were without any schools, in order, they felt, "...to keep us in idiocy and therefore make it easier to exploit us." The petitioners made five requests of the President: to suspend the subdivision; to indicate to them what kind of crops would produce the best revenue for the State so they could plant them; to return their share certificates to the land that the rich in the village had taken through deception; to draw up and enter property titles in the national registry, and to give them possession of the large lots, and paying them for their work as well as paying for stamp duties and other State fees. ⁸¹ Dehesa asked Muñoz to report quickly on the state of affairs and sent him to Mexico City to speak with the President. Muñoz had been proceeding rapidly with the subdivision. Five large lots had been divided and eight hundred property titles had been distributed. He complained however, that there were constant meetings in the home of a man connected with Galicia--an engineer whom Dehesa charged with the responsibility for stirring up the Indians-- and of Indians

who appeared to be leaving the meetings in an agitated
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state. Despite the various agents and reports Dehesa
probably never realised the seriousness of the situation,
and that it would have been more prudent to leave the
subdivision for a later date. Certainly neither he nor
Muñoz were expecting what was about to happen.

On June 23, 1896, in Papantla, and on June 24, in
the smaller towns of Polutla and Arroyo Grande, 900
Totonacs rose up in arms and attacked the State authorities
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as well as other objects of their anger. In Papantla they
attacked the telegraph office and the jefatura
(headquarters of the jefe político), assassinated some
citizens and kept the town under siege for hours. Then they
turned toward the town of Cazonas, which they kept under
siege for two days. Other towns also came under attack
before federal forces could be brought up to relieve the
few State police who were being assisted by local citizens.
General Rosalino Martínez was dispatched from Mexico City
with the 23rd. Battalion. By the middle of July the
rebellion had been crushed and things began returning to
84
normal. Ringleaders, including the heads of some
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villages, were rounded up and executed. The objects of
the attacks allow one to penetrate a bit deeper into the
causes of the rebellion. One such object was definitely the
jefe político, who was apparently disliked because at some
point he had promised the Indians that their lands would
86
not be divided, then went back on his word. Other targets
of the revolt were the small farmers who were the middle-

men in the vanilla trade. One rich merchant in particular, Manuel Patino, was the object of anger, but his life was saved because he happened to be away in Tampico on business.

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There have been a number of theories on the cause of the revolt. El Diario del Hogar of Mexico City saw the main cause as the "...lamentable and legendary question of lands," and the many enemies that the jefe politico had

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made. Historians, too, have generally considered that the break up of communal property, and the many successful attempts at robbing the Indians of their land were the causes of this and other revolts by the native peoples.

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Dehesa himself had another and perfectly inadequate explanation. He saw the bad harvests in the north in 1895 and 1896 as well as the slow pace of subdivision which had kept the Indians in a State of expectation as the main causes, although he admitted that the State had not paid sufficient attention to the poorer classes in the

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preceeding years. His explanation might have included contributing factors for this particular revolt; but the truth is perhaps not as complicated. Some deeper causes were at the root of so many native rebellions, which were not confined to the State of Veracruz. Despite a general agreement that the rebellions were not political in nature, that is, that they were not directed against the President but a particular policy, their seriousness must be measured

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by their repetition alone. In Veracruz there were six

Totonac and four Popoluca rebellions in the nineteenth century. ⁹⁴ These Indians were rebeling both against an alien system of land-holding that would destroy their traditional culture, and against the practice of defrauding them of their inheritance by various means once this had been accomplished. Dehesa, blinded by his liberal theories of progress, should have seen that the State and federal governments did not have the means to withstand the common upper and middle class view that the native peoples were a source which could and should be exploited as a way of acquiring valuable land. Had he been able to realise this, his only conclusion would have been to halt the subdivisions. Yet, it is also fair to say that the policy did not have its origin in the Porfiriato, but long before.

Nevertheless, this policy was accelerated after Diaz came to power, especially in Veracruz. In his annual addresses to the State Legislature, Dehesa consistently ⁹⁵ reported on the rapid progress being made in this sector. And the consequences of the policy were also as spectacular as the rate of progress. In Veracruz by 1910 there were 65 people with estates of more than 10,000 hectares, and 116,000 rural families without any land at all. The census of 1910 listed 135 hacendados (estate owners with more than 1000 hectares) and 1801 rancheros (less than 1000 ⁹⁶ hectares.) Some estates had grown to an enormous size. In the Canton of Minatitlan the Hearst family had an estate of 116,000 hectares, Felipe Martell, 87,775, and the Mexican Tropical Planter Company, 50,000. In all, by 1910, six of

the largest landowners controlled more than 20 percent of
the land. ⁹⁷ That the situation was not as critical in
Veracruz as in some other Mexican states must have been
small comfort-- had it been known--for the Indians who were
witnessing both the destruction of their traditional way of
life and their livelihood. ⁹⁸ The claim that the Indians did
not have a political motive was a rationalisation of the
highest order. However, if the Totonacs had no political
motive in the sense of a clear political ideology; or at
least an idea of opposition to the Díaz regime, the
Popolucas of the Soteapan valley, Canton of Acayucan, who
revolted in 1906, certainly did.

This uprising in southern Veracruz, in the vicinity
of the town of Acayucan, was the second most serious one in
the State and far surpasses the revolt of the Totonacs in
both its intent and ferocity. This revolt, which some
historians have only described as a rebellion, was the
result of an alliance between the native Popolucan Indians
and middle and working class revolutionaries of the Mexican
Liberal Party, the anarcho-socialist party led by Ricardo
Flores Magón.

It was the first distinct shot in a melange of
peasant unrest and violent revolutionary activity which
initiated the chain of events that was to culminate in the
fall of President Díaz and his government in 1911. ⁹⁹ The
unrest was not spontaneous, as was the case in Papantla,
for the ground had been carefully prepared by the Liberal

Clubs which had sprung up all over Mexico since the founding in San Luis Potosí of the Liberal Club by Arriaga in 1901.

The first question for the historian in considering this event must be the factors that contributed to the formation of a relatively homogeneous army comprised mainly of Popoluca Indians. The rebellion, which is popularly known as the Acayucan revolt, occurred in the southern Cantons of Veracruz. The Tuxtlas, Acayucan and Minatitlán. The area under consideration contained some 19,418 square kilometers, or one quarter of the State, with a total population of 102,945 persons. The population density was 5.3 persons per square kilometer, less than half that of the entire State. ¹⁰⁰ It is an area of vast plains, traversed by a variety of rivers and streams, some of which, like the Papaloapan and Coatzacoalcos, are navigable for considerable distances, a factor which was of inestimable value in putting down the rebellion. ¹⁰¹ Of the population, 10,884 were listed as Popolucans in the census of 1900. ¹⁰² They have been described as "honourable, industrious and hospitable" and as having never enjoyed the protection of the government. The majority of these were to be found in the Municipality of Soteapan, Canton of Acayucan, where 65 percent of the population spoke the Popoluca language. ¹⁰³ The rest of the population consisted of peasants of mixed blood, most of whom worked in the tobacco industry, where physical maltreatment, the climate, and the infamous "enganche" (draft) system of recruiting

labour, contributed to a miserable existence and often
early death. ¹⁰⁴ With its forests of valuable woods, and
plains which were perfect for grazing cattle or planting
tobacco, the economic value of the area was inestimable and
had been recognised as far back as the Conquest. ¹⁰⁵

In addition, because of the proximity to the
Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the region possessed a strategic
value which was not lost on the Mexican government as well
as the United States. In 1871 a United States expedition
was sent to reconnoitre the territory as the possible site
of a canal connecting the two oceans. ¹⁰⁶ The Mexican
government however, had no intention of letting this
valuable territory fall under U.S. control-- a not
unimportant factor in the development of events which led
to the Acayucan rebellion.

More central to the question of causes of the
rebellion, nevertheless, was that in all three areas under
discussion, land had been gradually taken away from the
Indians and had passed under the control of three
families. ¹⁰⁷ In 1892 the hacienda Corral Nuevo passed into
the hands of the Chazaro Soler family, rich landowners and
friends of the President. ¹⁰⁸ The hacienda comprised an area
of 78,759 hectares, including eight cattle ranches which
had been consistently claimed by twenty-seven communities,
including that of Acayucan which had been asking for a
survey and eventual allotment of these ranches. Some years
earlier the Solers had given one ranch as a gift to an

Sejidos after locking the municipal aldermen in a church and allegedly threatening them to accept it as compensation.¹⁰⁹

After 1902, these Indians found common cause with those from other Municipalities, especially with the claimants against the estate of Díaz's father-in-law, Romero Rubio. Together they proceeded to present a common front to the State government. Governor Dehesa ordered an independent commission to look into the claims, but when it found in favour of the Indians, the owners of Corral Nuevo succeeded in obstructing the implementation by appealing directly to Dehesa who refused to allow a division of lands, because the commission chairman did not have any such authority. In 1903, he personally gave orders to the jefe político to disregard the findings of the

¹¹⁰ commission. However, in May, 1902, the Solers had succeeded in obtaining a legal decision in their favour which included the eight cattle ranches under dispute, as well as other "empty" lands. In 1904, the Soler hacienda had its boundaries clearly marked, but, because of the continued claims of the Indians the State government turned the matter over to the President for arbitration. One year later, in 1906, the well-known jurist Emilio Rabasa gave his decision which was against the Indian claims, because, he stated, these were without any proof of ownership. This was probably true as not all the native peoples in Mexico had formed communities or had had their land confirmed during the colonial period. It was therefore perfectly

legal, although unfair, to have declared these lands as "unused." Failing to have secured their livelihood by legal means the Indians saw rebellion as their last
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hope.

A similar case could be found in the municipality of Soteapan, Canton of Acayuacan, where the despoliation of land had been underway for decades, and where almost the entire Municipality had been gathered together under one huge estate owned by President Díaz's father-in-law, Romero
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Rubio. The conversion of these lands into private property had first begun in 1826. The major beneficiaries of the subdivision had not been the Indians, however, but
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the aldermen of the municipality and their associates. The reasons for this were manifold: the Indians had had no clear understanding of European land law; they were shy, kept to themselves and constantly displayed an attitude of hostility to strangers; the territory had been vastly underpopulated and no one, including the Indians knew
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exactly where their lands began or ended. In 1890, these lands had been declared SbaldiosS and adjudicated to Romero
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Rubio, to a total of 149,404 hectares. Rubio had died in 1895 and the lands had been left to his daughter Carmen
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Díaz, the President's wife. Rubio's death and the probation of the will had again opened up the question of land ownership, and the Indians had pressed their claims. At the same time, the President, on behalf of his wife, was pressing for a prompt settlement of the will. Díaz had

complained to Dehesa in 1897 that the appointment of a certain Ceballo to handle the probaton was unfortunate as "...he is the most terrible enemy of the terms of the will and regarding land negotiations."¹¹⁷

Indeed there had been much hostility to a settlement of the will in the way the Díaz family expected. Engineer Ignacio Muñoz complained to the federal government in 1901, that Rubio's lands had been invaded by groups of Indians led by one Ismael Loya, an engineer who had been involved in the subdivision of lands in the Municipality of Soteapan.¹¹⁸

Notwithstanding the presentation of the bills of sale for the properties dated 1889 by the family, Dehesa felt it necessary and advisable to call a conference of all the parties concerned in the State capital in 1902. The resulting resolution signed by the lawyers of the Rubio estate, the representative of the Municipality and the jefe político of Acayucan, recognised that eleven sitios (sites, equivalent to approx. 1700 hectares) out of a total of 19,476 hectares, were in fact the property of the Municipality.¹¹⁹

As a consequence Loya had to terminate the subdivision that had been initiated in 1896 and 1900. However, and most unfortunately, the lands were not subsequently made available to the Municipality and the Indians were left with absolutely nothing for their trouble.¹²⁰

The reason for this failure to implement the agreement soon became apparent. In an effort to offset the growing weight of United States investment in Mexico, Díaz

and the Científicos had decided to use the huge British
company of Sir Weetman Pearson. ¹²¹ Pearson had discovered

oil seepages at San Cristóbal in the southern States while
working on the Tehuantepec railroad, and had decided to
secure an option for the oil business. ¹²² Taxation rights

were ceded to the company although in January, 1903, a
lawyer for the company complained that his employees were
not enjoying the protection of the authorities in

¹²³ Minatitlán. The matter was more serious than this. Díaz
had reason to believe that neither Dehesa nor the local
jefe político were expediting the transfer of the Rubio
property to the Pearson company. In very sharp terms Díaz
wrote Dehesa:

Mr. Varela with whom I spoke on the business of
Acayucan has mentioned his belief that the authorities
are not very scrupulous in their duty of defending
property. In bringing this to your attention please
tell me if it is the authorities who do not obey you
or is it you who believe that the rights of the estate
of Romero Rubio are not well defined (my italics)
since I myself have no doubt about it. ¹²⁴

In replying Dehesa questioned the veracity of Díaz's source
of information. He also told the President clearly where
he thought legality took precedence over friendship,
remarked caustically:

The political authority no doubt renders me
obedience because if it didn't, the world would turn
in reverse. With respect to the Rubio will, I have
never examined it and thus my opinion would be rash,
either in favour of or against it.

In the other matter I limited myself, with all the
loyalty that distinguishes me, to support your
recommendations with all efficacy and nothing more
(my italics). ¹²⁵

In fact, the matter had become so delicate that the judge of the higher court of Acayucan decided to resign and had to be replaced. ¹²⁶ The matter was indeed delicate since it

involved huge tracts of land that were to be turned over to the Pearson company. ¹²⁷ In addition the company received State and federal concessions concerning sub-soil

rights. ¹²⁸ The entire matter had, of course, much more to do with raison d'etat than the rights of the Indians or the Rubio inheritance. At stake was what the President believed to be an attempt by the Americans to get hold of land in the Isthmus, and so to ultimately wrest political control of the area from Mexico. Pearson, was an invaluable help, since he was a British subject, in the attempt to forestall the Americans, or in what Díaz thought he saw as American foreign policy. Díaz therefore went out of his way to help Pearson, but at the same time made it appear that he was being totally neutral in any confrontation between Pearson ¹²⁹ and American companies.

However, Díaz was neither unaware nor unconcerned about the general state of his political opposition. He was becoming more aware of the political danger that was mounting with the increasing alienation of lands from the natives and Mexican peasants. ¹³⁰ In 1906 he secretly commissioned a supporter, Rafael Zayas Enriquez, to draw up a report on the general political involvement of labour and the extent of socialist agitation in the country. The report was submitted to him two weeks before the Acayucan

rebellion and revealed conditions that were truly alarming. The author cited unrest in every State, led by the middle classes against the Científico clique; it indicted the conditions under which peons and labourers were forced to live; and it pointed to growing socialist agitation, especially in Veracruz.

The reason for this increased political activity was attributable to the movement which the Flores Magón brothers had spawned. In 1901, a Liberal Congress had been held in San Luis Potosí on the initiative of Camilo Arriaga. Here the Magón brothers had played a leading role. In 1905 and 1906, a number of other "Liberal" clubs began to appear across the country. One important and active State was Veracruz, where local initiative was very strong. One of the first Veracruz clubs was founded by Hilario Salas and Cipriano Medina in Coatzacoalcos (Puerto Mexico) and was given the name "Valentín Gómez Farías Club." Another important Liberal centre was the "Vicente Guerrero Club" of Chinameca whose president was Margarito Nava and whose vice-president was Enrique Novoa. Both of these towns are in the south of Veracruz, the area under discussion. The membership of these clubs consisted of artisans, railroad mechanics and employees as well as small businessmen. Their aims were all similar: foment uprisings throughout the State and hasten the fall of the Díaz government. In the meantime the clubs worked assiduously to enlarge their membership and to denounce the regime. A newspaper, La Voz de Lerdo, was founded and public meetings were organised. By mid 1906,

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the two leading clubs had more than 1000 members. In a
public demonstration on March 21, 1906, Medina denounced
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the regime and was promptly arrested and imprisoned.

Consequently, Hilario Salas was commissioned by his
club to make contact with the Junta of the PLM in St.
Louis, Missouri, and to coordinate revolutionary activity
with them. Salas himself went to Missouri where he worked
on the draft of the PLM programme which was published and
clandestinely distributed throughout Mexico on July 1,

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1906. With the publication of this PLM Manifesto, which
called for a revolution and overthrow of the Díaz regime,
the Veracruz government began a systematic crackdown of the
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Clubs and imprisoned scores of their members. This had

the effect on the PLM leadership of the desire to
accelerate their plans for a revolution. By August 1906,
there were approximately forty clubs in Mexico allegedly
ready for an uprising. The PLM plan was to coordinate the
time of the uprisings making it difficult for the federal
forces to react. However there was a general understanding
that all groups were to begin their insurrection if there
were a second uprising at Cananea or if any one club began

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its uprising. Simultaneously, the government which had
been monitoring closely this development of the
insurrectionary movement, with the aid of the US and
Canadian authorities and the Pinkerton agency, ordered
reinforcements to Acayucan and other areas of suspected
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attacks. Early in June, President Díaz sent Dehesa a copy

of a newspaper the headline of which he considered an open call to rebellion and urged the Governor to proceed with "...all energy and activity against such a dangerous and transcendental business." ¹⁴³ Consequently in July, Dehesa ordered the jefe político, Santibañez, to close all the Liberal clubs. ¹⁴⁴ At the same time the government was keeping abreast of the PLM plans by intercepting their letters. In one of these, Novoa revealed that there were plans to start the rebellion on September 29. ¹⁴⁵ Ricardo Flores Magón also ordered the club in Coatzacoalcos to cease holding meetings so as not to attract the attention of the authorities. ¹⁴⁶ On September 3, he repeated the advice, reminding members that they must remain free in order to be able to take part in the uprising. Furthermore, they were asked not to waste precious money which could be used to buy arms. ¹⁴⁷ A week later he wrote to a friend in a Veracruz prison that it was only a matter of days before the uprising would begin. ¹⁴⁸ The Junta in St. Louis must not have been anticipating much resistance or perhaps they felt the regime would just wilt away after the first shot, because their lack of planning and careful preparation is obvious from reading the documents. Their naiveté is also apparent. No attempt was made to counteract the country's clandestine police apparatus. Letters were smuggled in and out of Mexico but passed through many hands. Obviously there was the possibility of infiltration by police spies. Yet, letters were written without code and in an absolutely

open manner. One would-be revolutionary wrote Magón that his club did not have sufficient arms and asked if there were any other rebels in his district that could be contacted. He also requested Magón to send some heavy guns so that they would be able to take Veracruz by land and sea!¹⁴⁹

Nevertheless, in isolated areas there was some planning. Under Praxedis Guerrero the forty-four guerrilla groups were alerted for a coordinated uprising. These were to take their cues from the attacks which would break out in three areas: from Texas across the border, led by Villareal and Juan Sarabia; in Chihuahua, led by P. Silva; and in Acayucan, Veracruz, led by Hilario Salas and Cándido Donato Padua.¹⁵⁰ However, the initial surprise was foiled by the government which got wind of the exact time of the attack on the northern town of Jiménez. Immediately the Junta contacted Salas in Veracruz advising him to do what he could in the situation, since the element of surprise had been lost. Salas therefore, with his thousand men in Acayucan, consisting of Mestizos and Popolucas,¹⁵¹ decided to attack immediately. Before he could launch his attack however, a force of about fifty men attacked the border town of Jiménez, continuing their harassment of the defenders for the next few days.¹⁵² Salas then decided to attack immediately. He divided his group into three units: Enrique Novoa was to attack the plaza at Minatitlán; Román Marín and Juan Alfonso, Puerto Mexico; and the third force,¹⁵³ commanded by Salas, was to attack the town of Acayucan.

Salas was the first to reach his objective. The attack on Acayucan began at 11 P.M. Sunday, September 30. During the fight Salas was shot in the stomach, and his troops, demoralised by this, retreated. Novoa meanwhile, advanced towards Chinameca, but with such delay that federal troops were able to reach the town first. Novoa's men then decided to rampage through the countryside instead, and attacked various haciendas and villages. ¹⁵⁴ The third group was delayed even longer because of differences between the leaders, and so Puerto Mexico was also fortified with fresh troops who arrived by sea. ¹⁵⁵ The rebels then took to the hills, and on October 4, Salas encountered the 25th. Battalion which badly mauled his troop. He himself was able to escape, but hundreds of his men, as well as many club members, were arrested and jailed. ¹⁵⁶ The expected general uprising failed to materialize and the government was able to contain and suppress the rebellion in a few days. Some rebels, including Salas and Padua, managed to escape to the hills, where they hid out until 1908 when they were joined by the famous Veracruz bandit, Santanon, and together began to forge plans for another revolution. ¹⁵⁷ Yet, there were still isolated attacks in various places the first week of October. These were mainly for the purpose of stealing money with which to escape or on which to survive while in hiding. ¹⁵⁸ These came to an end very quickly as the government continued to rush reinforcements to the area.

Although the press remained fairly muted about the events, no doubt because the government would not reveal

what had occurred, and President Díaz tried to explain away rumours of the attacks as being the result of mere local discontent, the government's actions reveal how seriously shaken it was. ¹⁵⁹ On October 8, an additional 150 soldiers from the 17th. Battalion were rushed to the area by train from Veracruz. At the same time, two gunboats, the Bravo and the Yucatan, were put on the alert for possible immediate departure. ¹⁶⁰ A special judge, Bullé Goyri was also seconded to take charge of interrogations but also to expedite convictions as well as the release of the many innocent people who had been apprehended. ¹⁶¹ On October 16, Goyri returned from Acayucan to Veracruz bringing some of the captured weapons, including a canon and gun carriage, and set about continuing his investigations among the prisoners who were being held in the infamous San Juan de Ulua fortress. ¹⁶² From San Andrés Tuxtla, the neighbouring Canton to the north, came a report from the jefe político that a group of people with "magonist" ideas and discontented with the mayor of Catemoco, emboldened by the rebellion at Acayucan, were under surveillance as he feared they might try to attack the jail. Dehesa prudently advised him not to take any hasty action. ¹⁶³ That same day the jefe político of Acayucan sent his own report to the President. Everything was proceeding harmoniously, he reported: there were sufficient horses, harnesses, provisions and telegraph connections and he was in constant contact with the army commanders. A number of people had

been apprehended and the three judges were interrogating them in an attempt to pinpoint the origins of the insurrection. He claimed that there was no political plan and no programme of action beyond the affair itself, and he assured the President that all the citizens who claimed to belong to the bourgeoisie were condemnatory of the affair. There was only one bit of bad news, he wrote: as troops left the village of Soteapan, they had to leave behind eleven wounded in the house of a lady who was attending their wounds. But sometime later a group of "savages" locked the house, set it on fire, and all that could be recovered were the charred remains of their comrades. According to Senties, the jefe político, outsiders as well as a few locals had been encouraging the illiterate masses with propaganda, reading them periodicals from the United States in order to find proselytes for their cause. The centre of the movement, it seemed, although he was not certain, had been the port city of Coatzacoalcos. He also thanked the President for removing the prisoners to San Juan de Ulua because he feared that there might be an epidemic if they remained in Acayucan.

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Now that the immediate danger of recurring violence seemed to be over, the government concentrated on trying to ascertain the causes, although the army was still trying to capture the few remaining and dangerous participants.

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Díaz himself thought that the cause might have been the cruelty of the jefe político. Judge J.M. Camacho, head of a special commission appointed by Dehesa to investigate the

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rebellion, thought he had found the reason:

In respect of the causes of the movement, I have discovered no others except the ambition and turbulence of a few perverse people without name or prestige, and the stupid credulity of the Indians, who were easily seduced with promises of a return of some land.¹⁶⁷

He included a letter from Enrique Novoa, alias Danton, to Ricardo Flores Magón dated September 26, 1906, giving the names of the main members of the junta organising the rebellion, and specifying September 29 as the date on which it would take place. This letter was what the authorities had been seeking because it gave unquestionable proof of the connection between the PLM and the occurrences at

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Acayucan. Consequently it is difficult to answer the question of why the President did not take the rebellion more seriously. He appeared, just as he would do in regard to the workers' unrest at Rio Blanco, to view the rebellion as an isolated incident in which the majority of the participants were really innocent seductees of some unscrupulous person, rather than participants in a movement to overthrow his government. The evidence that this had been a serious revolt, part of a comprehensive plan of revolution throughout the entire country, was

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overwhelming. Yet his actions in its wake were quite equivocal. For example, he cabled Dehesa on November 7 to arrest a certain José Pérez. Three days later the Minister of the Interior, Corral, sent Dehesa a list of names of people who had been implicated in the attack on Ciudad Juárez, saying that the President did not want them apprehended.

since their participation in the events had been minimal.

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Peréz's name was included. Nevertheless Dehesa knew

better and advised Corral sharply that a mistake had been

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made. He continued the search for Pérez, who in any case

had been implicated in the letter written by Novoa. Novoa

had written that Pérez had been seriously injured during an

attempt to blow up a bridge at Naranjo near Chinameca. On

Dehesa's insistence the President changed his mind and

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ordered Pérez arrested. This was easier said than

done, however, because no one knew what the man looked

like, except that he was white, tall, slim and about

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thirty-five years old! The jefe político of Córdoba was

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asked to try his luck, but as Pérez was not in his Canton he

requested permission to go to Jalisco and continue the

search. Unfortunately the man could not be found there

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either.

On November 22, the district judge in Veracruz sent Dehesa the code used by the PLM in their correspondence

with Novoa, and Dehesa was able to intensify his search for

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the remaining rebels. Three days later the special judge

in Acayucan wrote that he now had thirty-two prisoners who,

for the most part, had confessed and who had been

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convicted. He also requested further orders. On the

twenty-seventh, Díaz ordered the arrest of three more

citizens on suspicion, and the next day Dehesa was able to

report the capture of the two most wanted men, Enrique

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Novoa and Cristóbal Vásquez. By mid-December, Dehesa

considered that order had been restored and ordered the

auxiliary police paid and released from service. He also
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told Camacho to return to Veracruz.

Unavoidably some people had been arrested who had had nothing to do with the uprising. Some of these had been mistaken for others, either by virtue of their names or their appearances, while others had been denounced by neighbours. Yet others were the victims of old political scores. In the next months Dehesa tried to sort these out and arrange the release of those who had had nothing to do with the rebellion. He also invited a Mrs. Luisa Gilbert de Constantino of San Andrés Tuxtla to come to Xalapa to give him a deposition. On the night of October 12 there had been some disturbances in the city with cries of "death to Porfirio Díaz" and "Viva the PLM." The jefe político had become alarmed, maltreated the old mayor, and arrested the
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lady's husband and son, as well as some other people.

Rodolfo Reyes, a lawyer and son of the Minister of War, General Bernardo Reyes, was hired by one of these prisoners
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in Ulua to defend him and secure his release. Others

wrote directly to Dehesa, either on their own behalf, or on behalf of some friend whom they believed had been falsely arrested. In all cases Dehesa refused to intervene

personally but forwarded their complaints and letters to
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the presiding judge. In August of 1907, he also had

General Joaquín Maas, commandant of Ulua prison, send a list of all the prisoners from the Acayucan rebellion as well as
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the Rio Blanco riot to President Díaz.

At the same time, Dehesa, who was now convinced that the jefe politico was partly to blame for the events, secured his resignation and managed to put one of his own men in place. ¹⁸³ Ignacio Canseco was therefore sent to Acayucan along with express orders to submit a detailed report on the situation. Canseco's report was shocking. It confirmed Dehesa's worst fears. The report itself merits detailed consideration here as it is revealing of the corruption which could and did exist under the collusion of a corrupt jefe politico. Canseco found that the people of the Canton were, in general, docile, hard working and respectful of those in authority. However, he described the local officials as a band of thieves and robbers. In the central office of the jefe politico there was one Antonio Mateo Rodríguez, the municipal mayor, who, under the shadow of his office, was the leader of a gang of cattle thieves. His most intrepid member of the gang was the official receiver in the municipal government, Francisco Ortiz. Two or three days after taking office Canseco arrested two of this man's brothers in flagrante delicto and with a herd of stolen cattle. Two other brothers, one of whom was the sub-regent in the town assembly (subregidor) and the other, head of the town police, had the habit of cutting the wire fences of various properties at night. They would then introduce strange cattle into the fields, arrest the unsuspecting and innocent farmer, and fine him at least one hundred pesos before releasing him. The secretary to the jefe politico, Eduardo González, enjoying the complete

protection of his chief, used the jail as he saw fit. The municipal mayor of the town of Soconusco too, was the leader of the cattle thieves in his area. In Soteapan, the secretary to the mayor, Genaro Ambielle, exploited the unfortunate Indians mercilessly, assuring them that for one hundred or two hundred pesos they would not be molested. In addition to this he helped himself to their corn, sometimes using the police force for greater effect. In San Juan Evangelista there was another well-organised gang protected by the local mayor. In Texistepec, the leader of the thieves was the mayor, Alvaro Díaz, who, together with his three sons, devastated the local farms, keeping the cattle in his own fields where he sold them to the highest bidder. The information, Canseco concluded, was given to him by a majority of the people of these villages.

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Unfortunately, and for reasons which could not be ascertained, Canseco was not allowed to remain in his post for long. On September 29, 1907, a certain José Beltran wrote to Dehesa from Chapultepec Castle informing the Governor that since there was to be a change of jefe político in the Canton, he had been recommended for the job by Ignacio Muñoz as well as the President. The heavy hand of the President had obviously fallen on a subordinate who had taken his job too seriously. Dehesa's attempt at justice had again failed and he was left to answer Muñoz, not without a subtle hint of anger and frustration, that he could not send Beltran any papers since he did not know his

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address. What the President's reasons were for removing Canseco, not even taking the courtesy of asking for Dehesa's nominal approval, is a matter for conjecture. He certainly did not share Dehesa's views on the seriousness of the uprising. Neither did he agree that a scrupulous and diplomatic representative would be able to do very much to keep things quiet in the area. Perhaps he did not intend to take a more benevolent view of native land claims especially since raison d'état as well as his family's interests were involved.

Without question his views and his methods were completely different from the Governor's. When he wrote Dehesa in July asking for the Governor's intercession in the matter of a friend's claim for some land in a native village, Dehesa wrote both to the friend and the President saying that the matter was too trivial for his intervention and pointing out that it involved the native people who had just risen up in revolt!

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Dehesa was fearful of a repeat of the Acayucan rebellion and with good reason. He had

already attempted to aid the Indians, taking his brother

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Francisco's advice. Now his attempt to take some of the pressure off these people by ensuring impartial justice had been thwarted by the appointment of Beltran. One of the new jefe politico's first measures was to get rid of the people who had been in office and replace them with his own men. Unfortunately this housecleaning threw out good men as well as bad ones. On October 19, Francisco Dehesa wrote to

his brother:

Don Pedro Gómez, municipal mayor of Sayula came to see me yesterday saying that Beltran summoned him and asked for his resignation because he had been in office for six years and this was bad for the public interest. Gómez, to avoid the pressure answered that he would do so but came to me for council. I told him to go and recount the business to you and he will leave tonight.

With reference to his conduct, you know that privately and as mayor he is one of the best. He does not exploit anyone nor is he vengeful. 189

Thus, at an extraordinary, and illegal, session of the town council, Beltran had the mayor removed, and his own

brother, Marcelino, elected in his stead. 190 The blatant nepotism was obvious for all to see. Dehesa immediately dispatched Gómez to Mexico City and informed Ignacio Muñoz, asking him to see that the ex-mayor was able to see the

191 President. Explained Dehesa:

Only the Governor has the right to suspend or remove members of the town council.... We must believe that Beltran did this out of ignorance. Substituting his brother is also irregular as the mayor is chosen by popular election which is prescribed by law.... Gómez believes that the person behind his ouster is Isidro Montera who has some disputes with the people over land. I am sending you the President's telegramme, as well as letters from my brother. Gómez is no relation to Martín Gómez the cattle thief, and the letters I have included should prove this to the President. You know that I am no friend of villains who do not enjoy my benevolence whatsoever. 192

Dehesa was furious at the intervention of the jefe político and the support given him by the President who did not know what was going on but who accepted scandalous rumours rather than his Governor's reports. Unscrupulous persons had written to the President saying that the Dehesa's were protecting a man named Gómez who was a cattle thief. Díaz had

then cabled Dehesa who replied that he had no intention of releasing Martin Gómez, the cattle thief, that Pedro Gómez was a sane character, and that although he was a friend of Francisco's, his brother did not exert any influence on the Governor of Veracruz neither was he stirring up any trouble. ¹⁹³ In this correspondence relations between the

President and Governor Dehesa reached their lowest point. Díaz obviously did not accept Dehesa's explanations for he refused to see Gómez. ¹⁹⁴ The Governor, however, continued to receive complaints and reports from various citizens about the arbitrariness of Beltran's actions. Arbitrary his actions might have been, but there were some powerful forces supporting him. Apparently, Gómez had done everything in his power to save the municipal lands from being taken over by two powerful families, the Franyuttis and Chazaro Solers of the hacienda Corral Nuevo. ¹⁹⁵ Dehesa's hands, it seems, were tied, and there was not much he could do except extend his protection to the old mayor. ¹⁹⁶ Eventually,

however, he was able to convince the President that Beltran was not the man for this important and delicate Canton, literally begging Díaz to find him some other employment. ¹⁹⁷

Neither this land problem, nor any of the other ones which were beginning to appear by 1906-1907, received the kind of attention they merited. Therefore carefully thought-out solutions were not forthcoming. This lack of attention in government matters was all the result of a

condition which characterized the Porfiriato-- the reluctance or inability of the President, when faced with a problem which was complex, to take the necessary time to study it and then produce the necessary legislative or administrative solutions which would allay it. Quite the contrary, when President Díaz was faced with a complex issue, his general solution was to call in the army and suppress the people who had brought it out into the open. This was the way he dealt with Acayucan, and this was the way he would deal with the labour problems in the textile industry.

Dehesa, however, was correct in his assessment of the situation. The uprising at Acayucan was not the simple affair that the President would have liked to have believed. Mere rebellion can be described as "...overt opposition directed at particular laws, practices or individuals." ¹⁹⁸ It demands only specific changes. In this sense the outbreak at Acayucan cannot be considered as a rebellion. Acayucan involved an armed struggle which was informed by a coherent political ideology. The political movement that was armed with this ideology was not concerned with a mere redress of grievances. The PLM wanted the overthrow of the Díaz regime and its replacement with a government that would change the existing social order in Mexico. Unlike the programme enunciated by Madero in 1910, that of the PLM was radical and revolutionary. Furthermore, the men who led the attack at Acayucan fully expected that they would have initiated a general uprising throughout the

country. They were also ready to replace government and bureaucracy with their own people. In general as well as historical terminology, what occurred at Acayucan in 1906 was a revolutionary uprising.

When the uprising failed to be successful the survivors hid out in the countryside, and continued their training and planning, waiting for the proper moment to arrive. At the same time that Dehesa was trying to frustrate Beltran's collusion with the large landowners, these revolutionaries who had escaped, and others who were joining the movement, were making plans of how to achieve their main goal. Donato Padua and Hilario Salas, for example, were, in 1907, hiding out as fishermen in a small fishing village called Sontecomoapam. From there they would return to San Andrés Tuxtla to pick up their post. Towards the end of 1907 they changed their hiding place to the village of Caleria, even closer to the large town, where they cultivated tobacco. Returning to the mountains after being denounced, they were able to make contact with other members of the PLM including many workers who had fled Río Blanco after the massacre in January 1907. Here they entered into an historic pact with all the revolutionary forces in Veracruz, pledging to continue their struggle until the Díaz regime was overthrown. ¹ 199 Indeed, when Francisco Madero issued his call to arms two years later, they would be among the first to respond.

Acayucan then, cannot be considered a rebellion.

Madero's call to arms was only the addition of political moment to an already established revolutionary fact.

Acayucan, properly considered, was the beginning of the Mexican Revolution.

CHAPTER V

NOTES

1. Fowler-Salamini, Movilación, p.11; González Navarro, La Vida Social, p.244.
2. David Ramírez Lavoignet, Misantla (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepetl, 1959), p. 247-49.
3. John M. Hart, "Agrarian Precursors of the Mexican Revolution: The Development of an Ideology", The Americas 29 (October, 1972): 131-150; Friedrich Katz, "Labor Conditions on Haciendas in Porfirian Mexico: Some Trends and Tendencies", Hispanic American Historical Review 54 (February, 1974): 1-47; Stevens, "Agrarian Policy", 153-166; Helen Phipps, Some Aspects of the Landholding Question in Mexico: A Historical Study (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1925), pp.128-130. Cf. Jean Meyer, Problemas campesinas y revueltas agrarias, 1821-1910, (Mexico City: Secretaria de Educación Pública, 1973), p.225, who estimates that overall "...in Oaxaca, Jalisco, Veracruz, Morelos, Tlaxcala, part of Puebla and the Federal District, there were not a few rural communities that had kept their land." His estimate is that about 40% succeeded in doing so. Moisés González Navarro, "Tenencia de las tierras y población agrícola," Historia Mexicana 19 (July-Sep., 1969): 67-70, agrees that about 40% of the Indian villages in Central Mexico held onto their land.
4. Stevens, "Agrarian Policy", 153-166; Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, La revolución agraria del Sur y Emiliano Zapata su caudillo, (Mexico City: Ediciones "El Caballito", 1976), p.54, cites President Díaz's letter of September 10, 1889, warning officials to be just and ensure that the "disinherited classes of the people" were given land.
5. Blanche de Vore, "The Influence of Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama on the Agrarian Movement in Mexico" (PhD. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1963), pp.5-6; Díaz Soto y Gama, La revolución agraria, p.53; Marco Bellingeri and Isabel Gil Sanchez, "Las estructuras agrarias bajo el porfiriato" in Ciro Cardoso, ed., México en el siglo XIX: historia económica y de la estructura social (Mexico City: Editorial Nueva Imagen, S.A., 1930), p.315.
6. Carmen Blazquez, Miguel Lerdo y Tejada: un liberal veracruzano en la política nacional (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1978), pp.87-88.
7. John Hart, Anarchism and the Mexican Working Class,

- 1860-1931 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978), p.14.
8. Bellingeri and Sanchez, "Las estructuras agrarias", p.317.
 9. Dehesa to Díaz, 19 Sep. 1905, ATD, File # 11.
 10. Ministerio de Justicia, Fomento y Instrucción Pública, Sección de Fomento, Colección de Leyes, p.63.
 11. Winstano Luis Orozco, Legislación y jurisprudencia sobre Terrenos Baldíos 2 vols. (Mexico City: El Tiempo, 1895), p.576; El Nacional, 3 Apr. 1894.
 12. de Vore, "The Influence of Díaz Soto y Gama", p.10; Fernando González and José Covarrubias, El problema rural de Mexico (Mexico City: Secretario de Hacienda, 1917), p.89.
 13. CAM, "Juchique de Ferrer", #33, pp.1, 34-35; interview with Engineer Melgarejo y Vivanco (CAM), 8 March, 1984; CAM, "Juchique de Ferrer", #861.
 14. de la Peña, Veracruz económico, v.1., p.217.
 15. Romana Falcón, El agrarismo en Veracruz: la etapa radical (1928-35) (Mexico City: El Colegio de Mexico, 1977), p.28; Aston, Limantour, p.190.
 16. Leyes y Decretos (1894).
 17. Jesus Redondo Silva, "La cuestion agraria en el estado de Veracruz durante el siglo XIX" (PhD dissertation, Universidad Iberoamericana, 1971), p.23; Díaz Soto y Gama, La revolución agraria, p.23.
 18. Orozco, Legislación y jurisprudencia, v.1, p.658.
 19. Luis Lara y Prado, De Porfirio Díaz a Francisco Madero: la sucesión dictatorial de 1911 (New York, 1912). cited in Phipps, Some Aspects, p.116; Robert E. Quirk, The Mexican Revolution and the Catholic Church 1910-29 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), p.16.
 20. Díaz Soto y Gama, La revolución agraria, p.55; Stevens, "Agrarian Policy", pp.153-166.
 21. Tannenbaum's assertion that "... Díaz thought the regeneration of Mexico lay in the destruction of Indian communal organization" is over simplified. See Frank Tannenbaum, The Mexican Agrarian Revolution (Hamden, Conn.: Anchor Books, 1968, first published 1929), pp.14-15.
 22. Dehesa to Díaz, 10 June 1895, CPD, L20:10053.
 23. Hart, Anarchism, p.15.
 24. Aston, Limantour, p.190. This point has been consistently overlooked. See Stevens, "Agrarian Policy", pp.153-166.
 25. Oscar J. Braniff, "Observaciones sobre el fomento agrícola considerando como base para la ampliación del credito agrícola en Mexico" in Jesus Silva Herzog, ed., La cuestion de la tierra 1910-1911, 2 vols (Mexico City: Instituto Mexicano de Investigaciones Económicas, 1960), p.36. Braniff was a member of a commission studying the feasibility of founding an agricultural credit bank for loans to small farmers.
 26. Fowler-Salamini, Movilación, p.4; Bellingeri and Sanchez, "Las estructuras agrarias", p.316.
 27. Redondo Silva, "La cuestion agraria en el estado de Veracruz durante el siglo XI" (doctoral dissertation, Universidad Iberoamericana, 1971), p.22.

28. Trens, Historia de Veracruz, v.8, p.344.
29. Valadés, El Porfirismo, v.1, p.277.
30. The Totonacs were the descendants of those Indians who had allied themselves with Cortez against Moctezuma; Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve Historia, p.190.
31. Fowler-Salamini, Movilación, p.5. Azaola Garrido, Rebellión y derrota, p.69, merely repeats Salamini's assertion, giving no new evidence. The question will not be completely settled until the State archives are properly organized and in a condition for historians to use.
32. Eduardo Audiras to Díaz, 1 Nov. 1892, CPD, L17:16732.
33. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 Oct. 1900, CPD, L25:13294-95; Dehesa to Díaz, 22 Oct. 1900, ATD, File #30; Dehesa to Díaz, 27 Oct. 1900, ATD, File #30.
34. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 Dec. 1892, CPD, L17:19093.
35. Herrera was to be named interim governor of Veracruz when Dehesa returned to the Customs in the port. Dehesa to Díaz, 21 July 1892, CPD, L17:8937-40.
36. Dehesa to Díaz, 25 Feb. 1896, CPD, L21:1061; Díaz to Dehesa, 28 Feb. 1896, CPD, L21:1062.
37. Díaz to Dehesa, 27 Apr. 1894, CPD, L19:4881.
38. Díaz to Dehesa, 19 May 1896, CPD, L21:6931; Dehesa to Díaz, 30 May 1896, CPD, L21:9957-58.
39. Adolfo Chacon Caporal, El balance de la Reforma Agraria en el estado de Veracruz (Mexico City: UNAM, 1958), p.96; for details of the Olarte rebellion of 1836 see Jorge D. Flores, La Revolución de Olarte en Papantla, (1836-38) (Mexico City: Imprenta Mundial, 1938).
40. G. Vázquez Vela to CAM, 21 Nov. 1919, CAM, #14, "Papantla", pp.16-17.
41. Beals, Porfirio Díaz, pp.301-02; González Navarro, La Vida Social, p.204; Meyer, Problemas campesinas, p.24; Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve Historia, p.190.
42. Enriquez to Díaz, 4 Jan. 1892, CPD, L17:477.
43. Enriquez to Díaz, 9 Feb. 1892, CPD, L17:2070.
44. J. Bellesteros to CAM, 8 Oct. 1919, CAM, #14, "Papantla"; El Reproductor, 26 Sep., 1895.
45. A transcription of Dehesa's speech opening the new session of the Legislature is in El Reproductor, 26 Sep. 1895.
46. Díaz to Dehesa, 22 Sep. 1894, CPD, L19:14481.
47. This Huerta became President in 1913 after the murder of Madero and Suárez.
48. Díaz to Dehesa, 26 July 1892, CPD, L17:10453.
49. Díaz to Dehesa, 10 Aug. 1892, CPD, L12324.
50. Dehesa to Díaz, 18 Aug. 1892, CPD, L17:12338.
51. Díaz to Dehesa, 22 Aug. 1892, CPD, L17:12340.
52. Huerta to Díaz, 21 Nov. 1892, CPD, L17:17265.
53. Díaz to Dehesa, 29 Nov. 1892, CPD, L17:17026. A ranchero is a small farmer with less than 1000 hectares of land.
54. Dehesa to Díaz, 6 Dec. 1892, L17:19076; Cambas's report is in CPD, L17:19084-85.
55. Díaz to Dehesa, 27 Dec. 1892, CPD, L17:19089.

56. Dehesa to Minister of the Interior, 7 Nov. 1895, AGN, Gob 1a, L545:4.
57. Cambas to Herrera, 13 April 1893, CPD, L18:5066.
58. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 May 1893, CPD, L18:6690; Díaz to Dehesa, no date, CPD, L18:6691.
59. Dehesa to Díaz, 7 Mar. 1893, CPD, L18:7638; Veléz's report, 27 May 1893, CPD, L18:7639.
60. Díaz to Dehesa, 23 Sep. 1893, CPD, L18:13851.
61. Ibid.
62. Dehesa to Díaz, 14 Oct. 1893, CPD, L18:14552.
63. Díaz to Dehesa, 22 Sep. 1894, CPD, L19:14481; Dehesa to Díaz, 27 Sep. 1894, CPD, L19:14497.
64. Dehesa to Díaz, 28 Sep. 1894, CPD, L19:16119-20.
65. Díaz to Dehesa, 28.9.94, CPD, L19:16121.
66. Dehesa to Díaz, 7 Nov. 1894, CPD, L19:16961-62.
67. Mendizabal to Dehesa, no date, CPD, L19:16965-67.
68. Dehesa to Díaz, 7 Nov. 1894, CPD, L19:16962-63.
69. Cambas to Dehesa, 15 Nov. 1894, CPD, L19:17012-13.
70. Unsigned report to Dehesa, no date, CPD, L19:17015-36.
71. Dehesa to Díaz, 25 Nov. 1894, CPD, L19:17008-11.
72. Díaz to Dehesa, 26. Nov. 1894, CPD, L19:17037.
73. Dehesa to Díaz, 21 Dec. 1894, CPD, L19:20024.
74. Díaz to Dehesa, 22 Dec. 1894, CPD, L19:20025.
75. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 Dec. 1894, CPD, L19:20038; Dehesa, Memoria, 1892-94, pp.41-43.
76. El Diario del Hogar, 4 Jan. 1895.
77. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 May 1895, CPD, L20:10060.
78. State of Veracruz, Laws, Decrees and Circulars, 1892-1910; Idem, Laws, Decrees and Circulars, 1894, p.129.
79. Díaz to Dehesa, 19 May, 1896, CPD, L21:6931.
80. El Monitor Republicano, 23 Jan. 1896, 25 Feb. 1896.
81. Various to Díaz, 31 Mar. 1896, CPD, L21:5056-57; see also Gastón García Cantú, El pensamiento de la reacción mexicana: historia documental 1810-62 (Mexico City, Empreson Editoriales, 1965), pp.17-18.
82. Dehesa to Díaz, 16 May, 1896, CPD, L21:6936-37.
83. El Hijo de Ahuizote (Papantla), 28. June 1896; David Ramírez Lavoignet, Soteapan: Luchas agrarias (Jalapa: Seminario de Historia, Universidad Veracruzana, 1971), p.23.
84. El Monitor Republicano, 3 July 1896, 26 July, 1896.
85. Idem, 11 July, 1896.
86. Idem, 14 July, 1896.
87. El Diario del Hogar, 10 July, 1896.
88. El Monitor Republicano, 14 July, 1896.
89. El Diario del Hogar, 21 July, 1896.
90. Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve historia, p.190; Ramírez Lavoignet, Soteapan, p.23; González Navarro, La Vida Social, p.244.
91. Dehesa, Memoria, 1894-96, p.5; Dehesa to Díaz, 16 July 1896, CPDF, L21:12013.
92. In Veracruz there were six Totonac revolts in the

nineteenth century and four by the Popolucas of the south. See Letitia Reina Aoyama, Los rebelliones campesinas en Mexico, 1819-1906 (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1980), pp.325-59. Reina is not correct in attributing the lack of research into these peasant revolts to the lack of sources. These exist and therefore the reason must lie elsewhere.

93. Dehesa, Memoria 1894-96, p.14; El Nacional, 13 July 1896; El Monitor Republicano, 3 July 1896.

94. Reina Aoyama, loc.cit.

95. El Reproductor, 10 May 1900.

96. George McCutchen McBride, The Land Systems of Mexico (New York: Octagon Books, 1971), p.147.

97. Falcón, El agrarianismo en Veracruz, p.29.

98. Octavio A. Ochoa Contreras, "Cambios estructurales en la actividad del sector agrícola del Estado de Veracruz 1870-1900: causas y consecuencias" (PhD. dissertation, Universidad Veracruzana, 1974), pp.70-71.

99. Strictly speaking it was not THE first shot. This occurred on Sep. 26 in Jiménez, Coahuila, although with only thirty men and no clear declaration of intent this attack was of minor importance. Acayuacan must be considered the first seriously organised revolt. See Barrera Fuentes, Historia de la revolución mexicana, p.204. 100. These statistics are from Southworth, El estado de Veracruz-Llave, p.60.

101. Velasco, Geografía y estadística, p.10; Zilli, Historia sucinta, p.10.

102. Pérez Miliucía, Compendio de geografía, p.37. The Popolucas are the descendents of the ancient Olmec peoples.

103. Joaquín Arroniz, La costa de Sotavento (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepetl, 1961), pp.18-19; Ramírez Lavoignet, Soteapan: Luchas, p.49.

104. Medel, Historia de San Andrés Tuxtla, p.349.

105. The region under discussion remained in the hands of the Cortez family for about three hundred years. Azaola Garrido, Rebelión y derrota, p. 30.

106. Ibid, pp.32-33. For a discussion of the railroad see Glick, "The Tehuantepec Railroad", pp.373-82. The railroad was Mexico's unsuccessful attempt to compete with the Panama Canal.

107. See Azaola Garrido, Rebelión y derrota for a detailed history of the successive alienation of these lands into private hands over the preceding centuries.

108. Ibid, p.78; Leonardo Pasquel, La rebelión agraria de Acayuacan en 1906 (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepetl, 1976), p.13.

109. Azaola Garrido, Rebelión y derrota, p.78. Azaola's work is based primarily on information in the CAM archives in Xalapa. These files consist to a great extent of accounts given by peasants after the Revolution while attempting to benefit from the land reform. There is doubtless a great deal of truth to their accounts, but one cannot help thinking that there must be some embellishments if not distortions in them. Some of the pages in these files are numbered, others are not.

110. CAM, Exp. 35, pp.154-55 cited in Azaola Garrido, Rebelión y derrota, p.80.
111. Azaola Garrido, Rebelión y derrota, pp.80-81.
112. Ramírez Lavoignet, Soteapan: Luchas, p.49.
113. Ibid., pp.18,22.
114. Melgarejo Vivanco, interview with this historian who knows the region well, 12 Mar. 1984, Museo Antropológico, Xalapa, Veracruz; George McClelland Foster, A Primitive Mexican Economy (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), p.11; Ramírez Lavoignet, Soteapan: Luchas, p.18.
115. Azaola Garrido, Rebelión y derrota, p.92; Cf. Ramírez Lavoignet, Soteapan: Luchas, p.46, who gives the number as 120,035. Romero Rubio was then Minister of the Interior.
116. El Nacional, 4 Oct. 1895. Very few people apparently lamented his passing as he was an absolute materialist. See Ricardo García Granados, Historia de México desde la república en 1867 hasta la caída de Porfirio Díaz 4 vols, (Mexico City: A. Botas y hijos, 1912), v.2, p.271; El Monitor Republicano, 2 Jan. 1896.
117. Díaz to Dehesa, 9 Jan. 1897, CPD, L22:1065.
118. Ramírez Lavoignet, Soteapan: Luchas, p.38.
119. Ibid., pp.40-42.
120. Ibid., p.53.
121. Friedrich Katz, Deutschland, Díaz und die mexikanische Revolution: die deutsche politik in Mexico, 1870-1920 (Berlin: VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1964), p.66.
122. Peter Calvert, The Mexican Revolution 1910-14; the Diplomacy of Anglo-American Conflict (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp.23-24; El Estado de Veracruz, Leyes, Decretos y Circulares, 1904, pp.7-9. Decree #4, 13 Jan. 1903 ceded to Pearson all the taxation rights to certain properties in the Municipalities of Jáltipan, Minatitlán and Acayucan for twelve thousand pesos. Cf. Enrique Novoa to Ricardo Flores Magón, 26 Jan. 1906, AGN, Gob. 1a 906(8)1.52, p.29, who calls Pearson a snake and Dehesa a bandit because of this sale.
123. Díaz to Dehesa, 22 Jan. 1903, CPD, L28:951; Díaz to Dehesa, 22 Jan 1903, ATD, File #3.
124. Díaz to Dehesa, 2 Oct. 1903, ATD, File #30.
125. Dehesa to Díaz, 5 Oct. 1903, CPD, L28:13903-04; Dehesa to Díaz, 5 Oct. 1903, ATD, File #30.
126. Ibid.
127. CAM, Exp. 1432. This file contains a wealth of information on the transactions and the amount of land involved. In the Canton of Acayucan ca. 102,861 hectares were sold to Pearson and Co. See CAM, Exp. 29 for similar information on the Canton of Minatitlán.
128. Dehesa to Díaz, 5 Mar. 1906, CPD, L31:1859; Camara de Diputados de Mexico, Diario de Debates 1906 (Mexico City: Imprenta del Gobierno Federal, 1907), p.186 gives the details of the contract with Pearson regarding land expropriation rights.
129. John Body to Dehesa, 26 July, 1907, ATD; Cott,

"Porfirian Investment Policies", p.176. Ironically the PLM also thought the possibility existed. Novoa to Magón, 26 Jan. 1906, AGN, Gob. 1a 906(8) 1.52, p.40; see also Katz, Deutschland, Díaz, pp.64-70 for a discussion of this Mexican fear.

130. Stevens, "Agrarian Policy", pp.153-166. In 1901, Art. 27 of the Constitution of 1857 was revised to permit corporations to again hold land communally.

131. Zayas Enriquez, Porfirio Díaz, p.222ff.

132. James D. Cockroft, Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution 1900-13 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), p.92; Barrera Fuentes, Historia de la Revolución, p.21.

133. Ellen Howell Meyers, "The Mexican Liberal Party 1903-1910" (PhD. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1970), pp.99-100.

134. Ibid; C. Donato Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, 1906 en Veracruz: relación cronológica de las actividades del PLM en los ex-cantones de Acayucan, Minatitlán, San Andrés Tuxtla y Centro del país (Cuernavaca: no pub., 1936), p.5; Charles C. Cumberland, "Precursors of the Mexican Revolution of 1910", HAHR, 22 (Feb. 1942), pp. 344-356.

135. Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, p.84.ff.

136. Meyers, "Mexican Liberal Party", p.115.

137. Leafar Agetro, Las luchas proletariadas en Veracruz: historia y autocritica (Xalapa: Editorial Barricada, 1942), pp.25-26.

138. Meyers, "Mexican Liberal Party", p.100.

139. See CPD, L31:9325 for a copy of the newspaper Regeneración in which the party programme was printed.

140. Meyers, "Mexican Liberal Party", p.176; Agetro, Luchas proletariadas, p.26; Ward Sloan Albro III, "Ricardo Flores Magon: An Inquiry into the Origins of the Mexican Revolution 1910" (PhD. dissertation, University of Arizona, 1967), p.98.

141. Meyers, "Mexican Liberal Party", p.124. This reference is to the famous Cananea strike which began 1 June 1906.

142. Ramirez Lavoignet, Soteapan: Luchas, p.55; Cockroft, Intellectual Precursors, p.119ff; AGN, Gob. 1a 906. There is a considerable amount of material in this file on the PLM.

143. Díaz to Dehesa, 7 June 1906, ATD, File #32.

144. Ramirez Lavoignet, Soteapan: Luchas, p.55.

145. Novoa to Magón, 26 June 1906, ATD, File #C-33. This letter was sent from a "mountain near Chinameca."

146. Magón to R.F. Marín, 1 Sep. 1906, AGN, Gob. 1a 906(8) 1-52.

147. Magón to José Tolentino, no date, AGN, Gob. 1a 906(8) 1-52.

148. Magón to Alfonso Peniche, 14 Sep. 1906, AGN, Gob. 1a 906(8) 1-52. These incriminating letters were all sent by ordinary mail, which appears relatively naive in retrospect. Novoa, for example, remitted party dues to Magón by Wells Cargo Express!

149. Sixto to Magón, 19 June 1906, AGN, Gob 1a 906(8) 1-52.
150. Agetro, Luchas proletariadas, p.25; Hart, Anarchism, p.93; Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, p.5.
151. Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, pp.5-6. The general consensus is that the rebels numbered about one thousand. See also Meyers, "Mexican Liberal Party", p.143. The report from the Washington Times, 23 Sep. 1906, of 10,000 men seems to be highly exaggerated.
152. Meyers, "Mexican Liberal Party", p.143; Thompson to Secretary of State, Washington, D.C., 3 Oct. 1906, CPD, L31:13347-48; de Vore, The Influence of Díaz Soto y Gama, p.67; Agetro, Luchas proletariadas, p.26.
153. Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, p.8; González Sempé, Evolución política, p.234.
154. Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, loc. cit; Dehesa to Minister of Interior, 13 Oct. 1906, AGN, Gob. 1a 906(8) 1-52.
155. Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, pp.8-9.
156. Luis Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero mexicano, 4 vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Cuauhtémoc, 1964), p.144; Agetro, Luchas proletariadas, p.30; Barrera Fuentes, Historia de la Revolución, p.205; Meyers, "Mexican Liberal Party", p.151.
157. Medel, San Andrés Tuxtla, p.503; Hart, Anarchism, p.93; Barrera Fuentes, Historia de la Revolución, p.265. Many Indians fled the area. Their descendents had not returned even in the 1960's, making it difficult for the Agricultural Commission to return land to them. CAM, #1432.
158. Dehesa to Ministry of Interior, 17 Oct 1906, 30 Oct. 1906, AGN, Gob. 1a 906(8) 1-52; cf. Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, p.9, who attributes these to the lack of communication regarding what had transpired in other parts of the country.
159. Thompson to Secretary of State, Washington, D.C., 3 Oct. 1906, CPD, L31:13347. La Patria did not report the news; El Diario, 16 Nov. 1906 spoke of "some disorders"; El Dictámen (Veracruz), 2 Oct. 1906, said that the situation was not as grave as first believed. Unfortunately this attitude by contemporaries toward the Acayucan rebellion has been accepted as correct by many historians. For example, García Granados, Historia de México, v.2, does not mention it. Albro III, Ricardo Flores Magón, p.98, says that the reason it received so little publicity was that it took place deep inside Mexico instead of the border. This explanation is vague. The real reason is that since it took place deep inside the country it could be more easily hushed up!
160. El Dictámen, 8 Oct. 1906.
161. E. Novoa to Dehesa, 6 Oct.1906, CPD, L31:12347. This Novoa was a relative of the man who led the group against Minatitlán; Goyri to Minister of Interior, 10 Nov. 1906, AGN, Gob, 1a 906(8) 1-52.
162. El Diario, 16 Oct. 1906.
163. A. González to Dehesa, 17 Oct. 1906, ATD,

- C33:D107; Dehesa to González, 5 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
164. Senties to Díaz, 16 Oct. 1906, CPD, L31:12919-20; Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, p.11 asserts that it was widely believed that one of the leaders was poisoned on Senties's orders. Senties's claim of the danger of epidemic may not be at all a cover-up. I visited that jail in 1981 and it was still not the most edifying of places! He also probably feared attempts to engineer their release.
165. Novoa, Pérez, Salas and Padua were still at large. Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, p.11.
166. Díaz to Dehesa, 6 Oct. 1906, CPD, L31:13133.
167. Camacho to Dehesa, 2 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107; Camacho to Dehesa, 2 Nov. 1906, CPD, L31:15460. Not until the following year was this confirmed by the discovery of a letter from Hilario Salas to the PLM Junta in Missouri. Goyri to Díaz, 8 June 1908, CPD, L33:6947-48. #48 is a copy of Salas's letter.
168. Novoa to Magón, 26 Sep. 1906, CPD, L31:15460.
169. The PLM continued to recruit and send subversives to Veracruz immediately after the aborted uprising. Javien Lara to PLM Junta, Missouri, 22 Nov. 1906, AGN, Gob 1a 906(2) 11.
170. Díaz to Dehesa, 7 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107; Corral to Dehesa, 10 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
171. Dehesa to Corral, 10 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
172. Díaz to Dehesa, 23 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
173. Dehesa to Díaz, 23 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
174. Dehesa to Díaz, 23 Nov. 1906, CPD, L31:15508-09; Gómez to Dehesa, 5 Dec. 1906, ATD, C33:D107; Dehesa to Gómez, 5 Dec. 1906, ATD, C33:D107; Gómez to Dehesa, 11 Dec. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
175. District Judge (no name) to Dehesa, 22 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
176. Camacho to Dehesa, 25 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
177. Díaz to Dehesa, 27 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107; Dehesa to Díaz, 28 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
178. Dehesa to Rafael Fernandez, 19 Dec. 1906, ATD, C33:D107; Dehesa to Camacho, 18 Dec. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
179. Constantino to Dehesa, 2 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107; Dehesa to Constantino, 6 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33:D107.
180. Reyes to Dehesa, 3 Jan. 1907, ATD, File #32. The prisoner, Pedro Martínez, was sure that he had been the victim of mistaken identity.
181. Lino and Wilfrid Turcott to Dehesa, 30 May 1907, ATD, File #32; Dehesa to Turcotts, 1 June 1907, ATD, File #32; Luciano Rosaldo to Dehesa, 14 June 1907, ATD, File #32; Miguel Reyes Torres to Dehesa, 19 June 1907, ATD, File #32; Natalio Trujillo to Dehesa, 28 July 1907, File #32.
182. Maas to Díaz, 6 Aug. 1907, CPD, L32:8839. Unfortunately there is no evidence for the result of this correspondence.
183. Dehesa to Díaz, 25 Feb. 1907, CPD, L32:3548.
184. Canseco to Minister of Interior (Veracruz), 12 May 1907, CPD, L32:5317-18.

185. Beltran to Dehesa, 24 Sep. 1907, ATD, File #B26. This entire file is devoted to the correspondence concerning Beltrans nomination and subsequent actions. Canseco was active in other matters of justice too. in July 1907 he used his power to order the Manager of the Miller Plantation Co., George Anderson, to pay forty pesos owing to some plantation workers. After his removal the company unsuccessfully tried to get the government to reimburse them for the payment! Dehesa to Muñoz, 25 July 1907, CPD, L32:6892-95.

186. Dehesa to Muñoz, 27 Sep. 1907, ATD, File #B26.

187. Díaz to Dehesa, 23 July 1907, CPD, L32:7714; Dehesa to Montero, 25 July, 1907, CPD, L32:7725; Dehesa to Díaz, 25 July 1907, CPD, L32:7721.

188. See Ch. III for a discussion of Francisco Dehesa's attempts to help the Indians of Sayula.

189. Francisco Dehesa to Dehesa, 19 Oct. 1907, ATD, File #B26.

190. Beltran to Minister of Interior (Veracruz), 14 Oct. 1907, ATD, File #B26.

191. Dehesa to Muñoz, 21 Oct. 1907, ATD, File #B26.

192. Dehesa to Muñoz, 21 Oct. 1907, ATD, File #B26.

193. Dehesa to Díaz, 20 Oct. 1907, ATD, File #B26.

194. Francisco Dehesa to Dehesa, 26 Oct. 1907, ATD, File #B26.

195. Z. Cartas to Francisco Dehesa, 23 Oct. 1907, ATD, File #B26; Tomán Agramonte to Dehesa, 24 Oct. 1907, ATD, File #B26; Victoriano Lopez to Francisco Dehesa, 27 Oct. 1907, ATD, File #B26.

196. Gómez to Dehesa, 18 Nov. 1907, ATD, File #3; Dehesa to Gómez, 21 Nov. 1907, ATD, File #3.

197. Dehesa to Díaz, 7 July 1908, CPD, L33:9037-38.

198. Heinz Lubasz, "Introduction" in Revolutions in Modern European History ed. Heinz Lubasz (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1966), p. 4.

199. Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, pp.13-15.

CHAPTER VI

"NOT A MUTINY BUT A REVOLUTION":

THE RIO BLANCO LABOUR DISPUTE, 1906-07.

The unrest in the textile industry, which began at the end of 1906, and reached its culmination with the brutal massacre of hundreds of workers on January 7, 1907, at Río Blanco, Veracruz, was one of three events which were, in different ways, serious challenges to the Porfirian regime, and which showed the inability of the government to develop adequate measures for dealing with the rapid modernization of Mexico. These were the uprising at Acayucan, the strike at the Cananea copper mine, and the riot by angry workers at Río Blanco. The role of the Governor of Veracruz, Teodoro A. Dehesa, has been generally unacknowledged by historians. His sympathy for the workers and distaste for the methods of the capitalists was well-known in his State as well as the entire country. This fact, as well as his public condemnation of the Díaz regime after the massacre, contributed to the determination of a growing opposition and was a significant factor leading to the overthrow of the Díaz regime in 1911.

The name, Río Blanco, belongs to a small village

near the major city of Orizaba, located on the Río Blanco River, and about half-way between the port of Veracruz and Mexico City. Río Blanco was also the name given to one of the largest textile factories, situated on the outskirts of Orizaba, and owned by a group of Frenchmen, who had founded the Compañía Industrial de Orizaba (CIDOSA) in July, 1889.² The Río Blanco factory itself, which was one of the most modern textile plants in Mexico, and which accounted for fifteen percent of the total spindles and looms in Mexico, had been inaugurated on October 9, 1892.³

By the time that Teodoro A. Dehesa had been installed as Governor in that same year, the textile industry had already been in existence in Veracruz for over sixty years.⁴ Already by 1845, the State occupied third place in Mexico both in terms of the number of factories as well as spindles.⁵ These factories, which had initiated the Mexican industrial revolution, had been installed at Xalapa and Orizaba primarily because of the availability of water power from the rapidly descending rivers in those areas.⁶ The principal entrepreneurs in this development had been the Mexican state itself through the Banco de Avío and the small but vigorous French business community in Mexico.⁷ Their impact on the hitherto small and insignificant city of Orizaba, indeed on the entire State, had been considerable. In 1838, the largest spinning mill in Mexico, the Cocatapán factory, had been established in Orizaba stimulating the city to further industrial and urban

expansion. Whereas, in 1831, there had been only twenty-nine persons making a living by weaving cotton, a year after the factory had begun operation that number had risen to one hundred and sixty. The population of Orizaba likewise grew rapidly from 17,000 to 24,000 in the same period, while there was a significant increase in the numbers of skilled workers engaged in secondary and tertiary services.⁸ During the 1880's industrial expansion continued. Between 1887 and 1906 the population of the entire Canton of Orizaba almost doubled. By now the textile industry had expanded into the smaller towns around Orizaba itself, which contained important factories.⁹ The most important of these was the Río Blanco factory built in the little town which was no more than a suburb of Orizaba. It was considered the most modern textile factory in Mexico¹⁰ and certainly one of the most modern in the world. The Río Blanco factory was owned by the large conglomerate CIDOSA while the other textile factory in the area, Santa Rosa in Necoxtla, was owned by the Compañía Industrial Veracruzana¹¹ (CIV). The Veracruzana textile industry accounted for one-quarter of total sales in Mexico and almost one-fifth¹² (6000) of the entire textile work force. The two companies were controlled by French capital and connected with the name of Antonio Reynaud who was, at one and the same time, director and secretary of CIDOSA and president and treasurer of CIV.¹³

This dominance of foreign capital in one industry was

not at all an exception in Mexico during the Porfiriato. Much of the impetus of industrial development had come from foreign capital; indeed, it was the express policy of the government to allow such leadership in the manufacturing and other industrial areas that would produce a modernization of the Mexican economy. ¹⁴ This industrialization had the initial effect of raising the standard of living of industrial workers between 1877 and 1898 by some 15 percent, due in part to the great demand ¹⁵ for workers. However, after 1900, wages tended to fall back to the level of 1877, producing misery and discontent in this sector. ¹⁶ Wages aside, the conditions of work were also debilitating if not downright cruel. Workers were accustomed to a fourteen or fifteen-hour day beginning, in ¹⁷ the summer, at five-thirty in the morning. One and a half hours per day were allowed for breakfast and lunch. Notwithstanding the fact that working hours were similar in other countries, it was the bad conditions of work which so ¹⁸ incensed the Mexican worker. Salaries were also unacceptably low, barely sufficient to cover the cost of ¹⁹ food for a day. This already low wage could be further reduced by the arbitrary imposition of fines by ²⁰ supervisors, against which workers had little recourse. Among other grievances was the forcing of children to work, which was against the law, the lack of sufficient schools for workers' children, and the degrading demand that workers refrain from entertaining friends in their company

homes.

These conditions were not meekly accepted by the workers. During the entire Porfiriato there were some 250 strikes in the textile, tobacco, railway, mining and baking industries.²² Of these the largest number were in the textile industry and occurred after the turn of the century. There were good reasons for this escalation. A price inflation caused by the decline in the price of silver, the introduction of machinery which caused a reduction in the work force, and the 1907 Wall Street crisis which lowered the prices of henequen, cotton and minerals, all led to violent strikes in the last five years of the Porfiriato.²³ As early as 1891 in Nogales, another small town close to Orizaba, there had been a strike of textile workers.²⁴ In March, 1896, the El Destino tobacco factory in San Andres Tuxtla installed blankets in all the windows to keep out dust during a severe drought. The intense heat which ensued led to bitter complaints by the workers. And when the management refused to take down the blankets, a strike was called which eventually bankrupted the company.²⁵ In the same year, workers at the Río Blanco factory successfully resisted an attempt by management to increase the nightshift to a twelve-hour period.²⁶ The militancy and determination of workers was not lost on their national leaders, who, on a visit to Nogales factory in 1898, remarked on the "unpatriotic atmosphere" in the town where there were no flags flying

for the May 5 celebration. In 1903, again at the Río Blanco factory, the workers tried to resist the employment of a supervisor who had a bad reputation. Incensed that a strike had begun, not in protest over wages or hours of work, which he might have accepted, but to oppose the company's decision to hire a particular foreman, President Díaz ordered the jefe político of Orizaba to forcibly remove all the strikers from their homes if they refused to return

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to work. Dehesa, however, and his jefe político of Orizaba, Carlos Herrera (who was later fired because of his reputed sympathy with the workers on January 7, 1907), were intent on settling matters more expediently.

Their task was not made easier by the President's order nor by the intransigence of the company. On June 15, Herrera cabled Dehesa that he could have settled the matter of the supervisor if the owner of the company store had not wanted to punish workers by changing his price lists (raising some prices while lowering others) thus forcing

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some workers to seek employment elsewhere. However, two days later the strike fizzled out, due, it seems, more to lack of organization than anything else.

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In 1905, there were two further strikes in Veracruz which were settled by the Governor or Herrera, and which resulted in a victory for the workers. In October, the workers at El Valle Nacional, the tobacco factory in Xalapa, went on strike in opposition to some new and oppressive rules as well as to demand a 20 percent wage

raise. Through the personal intervention of Dehesa the demands were met by the company and the workers returned to work two days later. ³¹ At the San Gertrudis jute factory in Orizaba there was a strike the following month, again over arbitrary conditions and bad treatment meted out to one of the workers, which was satisfactorily settled after the ³² intervention of Carlos Herrera.

Despite these successes, conditions in general continued to worsen. Public opinion was becoming informed as newspaper editorials expressed their alarm and mortification at the treatment which the unprotected workers were forced to endure. In March, 1906, El Paladín reported, that in one department of the Río Blanco factory, a foreman had been hired who was behaving " like a Sultan", ³³ firing the females who refused his sexual advances. In May, at the intervention of Carlos Herrera, a supervisor was reprimanded by the factory management for having intentionally injured a worker. In addition, CIDOSA agreed to abolish the system of arbitrary fines in all their ³⁴ mills in the area. But in June, workers at the San Lorenzo factory walked off the job after opening the sluice gates of the hydraulic system and bringing the factory machinery to a halt. Their specific complaint was again the bad treatment at the hands of supervisors. Peacefully, it was reported, they sought out the factory manager, a Mr. Hartington, who listened courteously to their complaints, then arranged a meeting between the

workers and the foremen, at which Carlos Herrera was present. On this occasion too, the work stoppage was diplomatically handled, and, after being given some concessions, the workers returned to work that afternoon. 35
As they explained in a letter to El Paladín, the jefe político and the head of the union, José Neyra, had convinced Hartington to remove the fines. Yet, the company was still trying to find new ways of exploiting the workers, such as increasing the length of finished cloth by three metres and paying them the same for it. 36

The labour situation was becoming worse, as the President was already aware. He had had a friend and writer, Rafael de Zayas Enriquez, compile a report on the political situation in Mexico. This report was submitted on July 17, 1906. In mid-July Dehesa informed Díaz that he could expect strikes at any moment at the tobacco factory in Xalapa, because even though there was a moderate union in the factory, everything depended on moderate measures by the factory owners, who were, however, having to apply the strictest economy and who for some time had not been able to pay any dividends to the shareholders. 37
In November, the CIDOSA manager, Hartington, was warning the owners that they had better undertake a radical reform of production facilities, including working conditions, if they were to make the necessary improvements in efficiency so as to remain competitive. He could see, he wrote, that in three or four years factories in Mexico would be working a sixty-

hour week, and that the workers would be able to produce more if their hours were lessened and their wages increased, which would also result in a reduction of the labour force. What he was thinking of was how the factory, under the present conditions, would be able to accommodate the workers' demands and still remain in business. ³⁸ The previous June, Governor Dehesa and the President had been discussing the same problem in an attempt at avoiding a total confrontation between workers and management. Dehesa had then requisitioned reports from the various textile factories on the feasibility of reducing working hours from fifteen to twelve, while keeping remuneration at the same level. ³⁹ Unfortunately none of the factories had been able to give him a clear answer since most of them operated according to a piece-rate system. It is also doubtful whether any such solution to this industrial problem would have been possible at a time when the textile industry was beginning to feel the worst effects of the depression and when they had begun to accumulate a surplus of merchandise. ⁴⁰ Besides, the textile industry was now facing a labour movement that had begun to organise effectively, and which had a few successes to its credit.

The labour movement as such was not new to Mexico. It had distinct Mexican roots with a definite anarchist tinge which has been traced to the 1860's. ⁴¹ Up to the turn of the century, the Díaz government had managed to contain aggressive labour demands by successfully coopting the

leadership. However, because of the worsening economic situation, new leaders had begun to emerge, who were seeking in the radical anarchist ideas of the seventies and the propaganda of the newly formed Liberal Party (PLM) of the Magón brothers, an ideological justification for their demands. In Veracruz the first steps toward a workers'

organisation had been the formation of a Mutual Savings Society.⁴³ Sometime after the turn of the century, however,

a small group began to hold clandestine meetings in Orizaba with the purpose of proselytizing among the workers. They were Manuel Avila, José Neyra, two textile workers, the latter a friend of the instigator of the Liberal Clubs of 1900-1901, Camilo Arriaga, and José Rumbia, a Methodist

minister and teacher.⁴⁴ This small group was the initiator of the labour movement which began among Veracruz workers in 1903 and which gradually spread to other workers in Mexico, and was viewed with alarm by the government.⁴⁵ In

the spring of 1906, they organised a union called the Gran Círculo de Obreros Libre (GCOL) and named Avila and Neyra president and vice-president respectively.⁴⁶ Their

manifesto called for a return to the radical labour ideologies of the seventies and the organisation of all Mexican workers against capitalism and the Díaz

dictatorship.⁴⁷ A secret charter also called for relations with the militant anarchist Liberal Party (PLM).⁴⁸ Faced

with this almost open call to revolution which was being circulated by the union's newspaper, Revolución Social, the

President countered with repression. On June 14, 1906, eleven days after the first appearance of the newspaper in Orizaba, the jefe politico appeared with a group of Rurales to arrest the GCOL leaders during a secret meeting. Some of them were caught, but others were able to get away.⁵⁰ With the dispersal of the original leaders, the workers chose a moderate foreman from Río Blanco, José Morales, to be their next president. Morales immediately resigned his job so as to devote all his time to the union, and petitioned the State government for official recognition. He acknowledged the past mistakes of the GCOL and promised both to obey the law and support the government in the future. Because of Dehesa's insistence, Díaz was obliged to acquiesce in this new development, although he "grumpily" informed Dehesa that the Governor would be responsible for any illegalities committed by the union.⁵¹ Dehesa's recognition was formally accorded the union in September, an action which one noted historian has called a feat, because it gave the GCOL a status that no other labour organisation in Mexico had hitherto enjoyed.⁵²

Meanwhile an investigation into the activities of the former GCOL leaders was initiated. Dehesa commissioned Ramón Rocha, a friend and judge of the first district court in Orizaba, for the purpose. Rocha was charged with investigating not solely the perpetrators of seditious acts, but also the underlying causes of the workers' unrest. This was a clever move on Dehesa's part, and was

obviously intended to bring home to the federal government that not ideology, but concrete and specific issues, which could be redressed in a practical manner, were the real reasons behind the unrest. Rocha submitted a tentative report in July. He wrote:

Permit me, Governor, to indicate to you the motives that the workers allege are the causes of their discontent. These are the fines which are imposed without any reason as well as the bad treatment received at the hands of the foremen. The actual leaders of the GCOL who were said to be parents of the anarchist paper, are poor and ignorant men, who are well-intentioned and who, it appears, are only following philanthropic ends. They all believe themselves to be the victims of injustice. 53

Rocha's detailed report was presented in October. In it he tried to separate fact from fiction, especially the crop of rumours that had been circulating in regard to plans for an armed uprising by the workers. By careful investigation of all gun sales in the area, Rocha was able to ascertain that there had been no increase of these; nor had there been any increase in payments to pawn shops that would have pointed to some unusual activity. Secondly, he turned his attention to problems in the jute factory, which had been the result of a reduction in price of certain goods with a resulting reduction in wages. With the intervention of himself and Herrera, the company had come to an agreement with the workers. However the agreement had not been implemented and this had led to a strike which lasted one month, but without any violence or disorder whatsoever. Rocha also explained that he now met regularly with Morales, the GCOL

leader, and with Herrera, and that Morales understood that he would have to respect the constituted authority.

Nevertheless, Rocha warned, the workers would not stand for any violence from the foremen, which would completely transform this serene and tranquil group of workers. He reported, too, that he had gone out of his way to cultivate Morales's confidence and had succeeded, since the latter was coming to him regularly for advice. Rocha closed his report by assuring Dehesa that there was not the least cause for alarm in the Canton, and that things were

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improving daily. Díaz was obviously pleased, but especially with Rocha's efforts to get one of his own men into the GCOL as a spy for the purpose of keeping tabs on
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union activities.

Nevertheless, this attempt by the State government to coopt the GCOL or at least be able to know its intentions did not succeed. Within the GCOL there were factions, and one of these succeeded in November, 1906, in removing Morales from the presidency, and substituting a more militant worker Samuel A. Ramírez, who was reputedly a
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member of the PLM. The new leader's attitude was

expressed clearly in an aggressive letter he directed to the company manager, Hartington, demanding an end to
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various abuses. In a bid to regain the leadership of the union, Morales visited other GCOL leaders in Puebla. He was able to garner sufficient support and at a meeting in the
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Gorostiza Theatre in Orizaba he was reelected. This,

however, did not end dissension in the union, but when 700 to 800 workers gathered peacefully outside the jefe politico's office in Orizaba, they were told that they were free to elect whomever they pleased, but not Ramírez. ⁵⁹ The latter continued to find support, especially among the workers of the Santa Rosa factory and their local president and vice-president, Rafael Moreno and Manuel Juárez. ⁶⁰ This group was to be among those accused of the responsibility for the events of January 7, 1907.

To calm the workers, the factory manager at Río Blanco had written to Reynaud in November, pointing out the growing strength of the union, and recommending a reduction in the hours of work, which he felt would have the additional benefit of increasing productivity. In addition, he recommended the adoption of the European system of workers' committees in each factory which would be charged with representing their colleagues over grievances, and which would hopefully result in an end to the many ⁶¹ strikes. He was apparently ignored, possibly because it was too late anyway. The industrialists, grouped together under the umbrella organisation Centro Industrial Mexicano, had decided to try another route in an attempt to break the power of the union once and for all.

If the attitudes of both capitalists and workers were clear, what about the positions of the federal and State governments? The historiography, while generally acknowledging Dehesa's positive attempts at a solution to

the benefit of the workers, has been more critical of the President and the federal government. Certainly there is much ground for criticism, but the picture is not as some historians have suggested. On the contrary, it has been argued that Díaz was working secretly to improve the lot of the workers in the textile industry. ⁶² Nor was he necessarily bound to the implacably anti-labour policy of the Científicos, some of whom had substantial interests in the Río Blanco operation. ⁶³ However, he was concerned about alienating French capitalists whom he needed to offset the weight of United States' investments. ⁶⁴ This dilemma may explain the fact that orders from the Ministry of the Interior to arrest all persons "dangerous" to the government and to make copies of all messages relating to any workers' movement, while they may have been obeyed by some governors, were ignored by Dehesa, who continued to enjoy the confidence of the President. ⁶⁵ Indeed Dehesa, long an advocate of conciliatory labour policies, was convinced that an intransigent attitude on the part of the government would only confound and exacerbate the labour situation. ⁶⁶

Since 1896 he had been studying the labour problem. He had commissioned his secretary, the well-known legal consultant, Silvestre Moreno Cora, to draw up a labour code which had been promptly approved by the State Legislature then forwarded to Mexico City where, however, it was not even allowed to reach the floor of the Chamber of Deputies

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for debate. Dehesa's sympathies were well known. He had
clashed more than once with the factory owners in Orizaba,
suggesting that it was the owners' greed that was the
source of all the trouble. 68 Dehesa viewed the role of the
State as neutral in the struggle between workers and
owners, but he also tried to have the State play the role
of mediator, which often led to the peaceful settlement of
disputes. 69 Nevertheless, his penchant for justice and fair
play led him to take the side of the workers more often
than not. 70 During the Christmas of 1906, when the workers
of Orizaba and Puebla were locked out, he had the jefe
político 1 distribute beans, corn and money among them. 71
These workers, of course, were thankful for the support
from their government and sometimes expressed their
gratitude by letters to newspapers. But the President saw
things differently and was not pleased. He complained that
Herrera was too "complacent" towards the workers and that
they were "animated" by the thought that they could always
count on help from the State government. 72

It was also at Dehesa's behest that the President
struck a more conciliatory attitude in the aftermath of the
Cananea strike. In June, 1906, the President had written
Dehesa affirming the right of workers to withhold their
labour, a right which he publicized in his speech to the
Mexican Congress in September, 1906. 73 Meanwhile they were
both working to find some solution to the problems in
Orizaba. A request from the workers themselves directed to

the President asking for help with their problems resulted in Dehesa being invited to Mexico City where he advised Díaz in working out a new set of factory rules. ⁷⁴ These were supposed to be fair to both workers and management but while they attempted to get rid of some abuses, others were not addressed. For example, the Díaz-Dehesa formula required the company to post regular hours of work, which would have ended the frequent and spontaneous increase in working hours, which was often the case. Another measure was the regulation of grievance procedures and the arbitration of any fine over one peso by the jefe político. ⁷⁵

From what is known about Dehesa's attitude, he would probably have like more comprehensive and conciliatory rules, and it is probable that he was unable to convince the President, for he continued to quietly and discreetly investigate the situation of workers who had been transported to the army punishment battalion in Quintana Roo for having circulated "socialist" ideas. He also carried on his fight for better working conditions both with the President, and also with one of the richest and most powerful capitalists, Enrique Tron. ⁷⁶

Because of this attempt by both the President and the State Governor to investigate as well as regulate working conditions, the factory owners, it has been speculated, decided to form an organisation to represent their interests. In October, 1906, the Centro Industrial Mexicano was formed. Early in November, textile workers in

Puebla, a neighbouring State, presented a series of demands
77
to the companies regarding their working conditions.

These demands were discussed in Orizaba also, and workers
there began presenting their demands to the factory
management. On November 6, Herrera reported to Dehesa that
the manager of the Santa Rosa factory, Hartington, had
informed him that the workers' demands were so excessive
that the companies were going to close all their factories
78
in order to force the workers to accept their conditions.

Díaz, who was preoccupied with reputed plans for an uprising
by the PLM, wrote resignedly to Dehesa that there was
probably no other way to "achieve the conformity of the
workers." 79 On December 2, the CIM countered the workers'

demands by issuing their own set of revised factory
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regulations. Their motive was an attempt to break the
union so as to be able to lower wages because of the
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economic depression and a rise in the price of cotton.

The new rules fixed working hours between 6 a.m. and 8
p.m.; workers had to work the entire week without a break
to receive their week's wages; there were to be no
objections to the fines levied for defective work; and,
workers were forbidden to receive visitors in their

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homes. The new rules were humiliating, to say the least,
but also completely unacceptable, since fatigue, induced by
long working hours would make it impossible to avoid
mistakes. Three times management and workers met without
there being the slightest reduction of the onerous

conditions. Finally, on December 4, 1906, the GCOL with 6000 workers declared itself on strike against the thirty factories situated in the states of Puebla and Tlaxcala. ⁸³

The workers' position was published in the press, and even the government-supported paper, El Imparcial (Mexico City), not usually friendly to labour, called their demands entirely reasonable. ⁸⁴ These were: two rest periods of 45

minutes each for breakfast and lunch; that the Saturday working day end at 5:30 p.m.; that workers who lost work because their helpers were not available should not lose their pay; a suppression of the infamous tiendas de raya (company stores); half pay for accident victims; a 25 percent premium for the night shift; the establishment of a factory commission to rule on defective work; and no employment of children under the age of fourteen. ⁸⁵ El

Diario also commented that the demands were reasonable, and that some "respectable" factory owners wanted to concede them, but that this was difficult owing to the competition from cheaper cloth imports from the United States. ⁸⁶ In

order to explain the situation to their comrades, a delegation of workers from Puebla travelled to Orizaba on December 6. ⁸⁷ There the non-striking members of the GCOL

decided to help their comrades by contributing an additional sum of ten centavos per week to the strike fund. ⁸⁸ Despite the increase, however, the fund was

insufficient, and, in a short while, it became obvious that with no end in sight something else would have to be done.

Consequently Morales, in mid-December, cabled the President asking for his intervention to settle the Puebla and Tlaxcala strike. ⁸⁹ Díaz agreed, but the CIM refused the President's good offices. Apparently, management had already come to the decision, which had been earlier communicated to Carlos Herrera, to impose a lock-out throughout the entire industry. ⁹⁰ The tactic was clear. Deprive all the textile workers of their incomes and they would not be able to contribute to the strike fund which was supporting their striking comrades. According to labour historian Luis Araiza, a meeting had been held between representatives of CIM and the Minister of Finance, José Yves Limantour, himself a shareholder in the Moctezuma beer factory in Orizaba, in the National Palace at the end of December. There, Limantour reputedly told them that the best way to end the strike was through the tactic of a lock-out which had been successful in other countries. ⁹¹ Consequently, on Christmas Eve, when workers in Orizaba, Puebla and Tlaxcala arrived for work, the factory doors were shut. ⁹² Throughout the country, 30,000 workers were suddenly without an income for the Christmas of 1906.

The name Río Blanco Strike, which has been and continues to be used by some historians, is thus quite misleading. ⁹³ It is also easier to understand the anger of the Orizaba workers and their actions on January 7, 1907, when one takes into account that they had not been originally on strike. The subsequent massacre of workers on

that day, after order had been restored, must also be judged in light of this fact. The opprobrium that the Díaz regime earned, and which brought the usually patient Dehesa to the brink of resignation, was entirely justified. Although it had been Limantour who apparently advised the lock-out, Díaz, frightened by the prospect of revolution, had resignedly agreed to the plan.

On Christmas Day, Herrera cabled Dehesa telling him that union president Morales was requesting the President's intervention settle the strike and lock-out. ⁹⁴ The next day a delegation of workers left for Mexico City where they officially asked the President to intervene. In the meantime, citizens of Orizaba offered their help to the destitute workers. One hacienda owner offered work on his estate, some businessmen collected bread, meat and seeds for planting, while a doctor offered his services free. ⁹⁵ The press, even the official pro-government organs, had come down squarely on the side of the workers. El Reproductor warned that the lock-out would have no effect because the workers were firm in their demands. The writer also castigated the owners for the lock-out, hoped that the workers would give up their socialistic ideas, but demanded, in the name of progress, that the owners show more regard for their employees. ⁹⁶ El Diario commented that the workers' living conditions were bad, and that only the President's intervention, which the workers but not the owners had requested, would settle things. ⁹⁷ La Patria

called the situation "A Question of Stomach." The paper declared that this was the worst strike the country had ever experienced even though it was peaceful. The workers, it continued were firm in their demands because they were organised, and, in this way, wanted to become men! Some periodicals had claimed that the strike was politically motivated. This was not so, remonstrated La Patria of Mexico City:

All demands for justice are called socialism; the cry for hunger is called sedition; those that ask for clemency for the poor, or reproof of the avarice of the rich are called revolutionary, anti-government and anti-social. Why do we have to improve the lot of the rich who feed on the misery of the poor? Why do we not censure the money-lenders who demand twenty and thirty percent interest? We do not see the spectre of socialism but only tangible realities.⁹⁸

The reference to money lenders was aimed, of course, at one of the most iniquitous practices in the Porfiriato, the tienda de raya, which was itself responsible for much of the poverty of worker and peon alike. The anger of the workers against this institution was about to find violent expression.

The attitude of the press must have had some effect on the factory owners, for, on December 31, the CIM asked the President if he would intervene. ⁹⁹ Subsequently, the GCOL workers also voted to take the advice of their leaders ¹⁰⁰ and accept the President's arbitration unconditionally. His decision was announced on January 4, 1907, to a joint ¹⁰¹ assembly of GCOL and CIM representatives. It is worth citing the exact wording of the President's arbitration in

order to grasp its significance, since

this has received various interpretations:

1. Factories which have closed their doors in the states of Puebla Veracruz, Jalisco, Querétaro, Tlaxcala and the Federal District, will reopen on January 7, subject to regulations in existence at the time of closing, or which have been subsequently changed by the proprietors, and according to established custom.

2. Factory owners will continue the study which was undertaken prior to the strike, with the object of creating a uniform wage structure in all factories on the following bases:

I. Workers in the same district or region, where living conditions are similar, employed on the looms, will receive the same salary.

II. Other workers not included in the above class, including masters and foremen, will be paid according to their agreements with the factory administration.

III. The levelling of salaries will be made on the basis of the average of the highest salaries paid for work of a similar class.

IV. There will be established a system of bonuses, at the judgement of the administrator, to be paid to workers who produce more or better work.

3. Every worker will carry a book in which shall be entered comments regarding his conduct, work habits and aptitude.

4. The following improvements will be carried out:

I. The fines levied for bad work, or whatever others are included in the factory regulations, will be placed in a fund for the benefit of widows and orphans of workers.

II. Discounts for medical fees, religious fiestas, or for any other reason will be eliminated. Every factory will hire a doctor for its workers.

III. Workers will only be responsible for materials and tools which are broken through their fault, not for those which are worn out. This will be determined by the Administrator on reports from the foremen.

IV. Workers may receive visits from whomever they please but must regard the rules governing good order, morality and hygiene.

V. When a worker is fired for cause, he will have a period of six days in which to vacate the company house, unless the cause of his dismissal was the discovery of arms, when he shall leave the same day.

5. Workers with a grievance, should present the

matter personally and in writing to the factory administration, which would send a reply after fifteen days. The worker will be obliged to remain at work for this period, but could leave after receiving the answer, if he was not satisfied.

6. The factory will improve present schools and establish others in areas where they are lacking, without cost to the workers.

7. No children under seven years of age will be allowed to work, and older children only with the permission of their parents. These may only work part time so that they have time to finish their primary education.

8. Workers must accept the scrutiny of their journals and newspapers by the jefes políticos or their appointed representatives in order to avoid injurious statements, or the publication of subversive doctrines. Otherwise workers may write whatever they please in order to better their position.

9. Workers will not be allowed to strike, least of all wild-cat strikes, since article 5 has established a grievance procedure.¹⁰²

The laudo has, of course, been viewed in a number of different ways. Some historians have overlooked it or

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treated it as meaningless. For others it was an important milestone in Mexican labour history, since, in effect, it "negated the liberal principle" according to which economic matters were supposed to be self-

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regulating. Others have seen in the laudo a significant

victory for the workers since there were some concessions to earlier demands, and these were to be binding on the

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industrialists. Reports that the laudo was greeted by

the two GCOL leaders, Morales and Mendoza, with shouts of

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thanks to the President, could not be corroborated. Even

if this were so, however, the main point in understanding

the events which followed should be the reaction of the

rank and file to the document. In Puebla, the membership, packed into the Guerrero Theatre, reacted instantaneously against the laudo, which did not contain one article which conceded to the workers any amelioration of the conditions against which they had struck. ¹⁰⁷ Only by reminding them

that they had agreed to abide by the President's arbitration, and invoking their religious faith, as well as threatening to resign, did Mendoza succeed in calming them and getting them to agree to return to work the following morning. ¹⁰⁸ In Orizaba, the situation was, however, quite

different. There, the union president, Morales, was jeered and booed as he finished reading the laudo, apparently by the entire body of workers. Other speakers, among them Manuel Juárez, were cheered when they denounced both Morales and the laudo, remarking that "they were expected to accept conditions which were worse than they had been before."

Shouts of "death to Porfirio Díaz" and "down with the dictatorship" are supposed to have filled the room. Morales was obliged to leave the hall quickly in order to avoid the wrath of the workers. ¹⁰⁹

In retrospect, one must recognise that the laudo, far from being a "substantial victory" for the workers, was a substantial defeat. In coming to this decision, one can base one's judgement partially on the text of the document, which is so full of qualifications, but also concessions to the factory owners, that it is not difficult to understand why it angered the workers. For example, the only article,

2. IV, which allowed the workers to receive more pay through the bonus, was limited by the right of the administration to decide the amount arbitrarily. The hated system of fines remained, as did the long working hours, and, the main reason for the workers' impoverishment, the tienda de raya, was not even mentioned. It is this problem which is the key to understanding the disturbances at Río Blanco, and shows the lack of understanding by the regime for the workers' position. Another reason for judging the laudo so harshly was the vehement rejection of it by the workers, despite their by now almost destitute position. One must remember that the Puebla workers had been supported by the strike fund and additional payments from the Orizaba workers. The strike fund was thus exhausted by the time the lock-out occurred, and the Orizaban workers were totally without any means of support except for the grain that had been distributed by Herrera. ¹¹⁰ Dependent on credit from the company store to keep them alive between pay-checks, they were at the mercy of the "elements", for now credit was being refused. ¹¹¹ Still, many of them were wavering in regard to the order to resume work the next morning.

During Sunday night there were groups of workers milling about Orizaba, discussing the events, and it seems as if a majority of them had decided not to return to work. ¹¹² On Monday morning at 5:30 a.m. the factory whistles summoned the workers to work as usual. At Río Blanco some workers entered the factory to begin work, but

others remained outside the door discussing the events. Some also hindered others from entering. Accounts of what happened next differ. What is certain is that there was a discussion about the local company store, whose proprietor was the Frenchman, Victor Garcin, who had reputedly told his clerks not to give the workers anything, not even water.¹¹³ Garcin had an agreement with the factory owners and owned two other stores in Santa Rosa and Nogales as well, where he discounted the workers' chits by ten to twelve percent.¹¹⁴ After discussing for about three hours, a group of workers started toward the store where a frightened employee is said to have fired a shot.¹¹⁵ Whatever the pretext, the store was raided and set on fire. Due to a large tank of alcohol which exploded, the entire building was consumed in a short time.¹¹⁶ By this time the jefe político had arrived on the scene with the local gendarmery.¹¹⁷ Although one section of workers, who now numbered about 8000, listened to him, others were intent on continuing the rampage. With great presence of mind Herrera ordered his gendarmes not to shoot although he was bleeding from a facial wound caused by a stone someone had thrown.¹¹⁸

By about 9:00 a.m., everything was quiet and when members of the 13th Battalion arrived, Herrera had them posted around the mill.¹¹⁹ Some of the workers then decided to go to Santa Rosa and Nogales to set fire to Garcin's stores there. People from the villages joined the

procession which finally reached Nogales where one of Garcin's stores was burnt. On the way back to Río Blanco, the group of workers and villagers were surprised by a section of the 13th. Battalion under the command of Col. José María Villareal. The soldiers fired on the crowd of marchers killing some of them. The soldiers then marched to Santa Rosa where there was another encounter in which workers were shot and some soldiers injured. By about 4:00 p.m.

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calm had been restored. The district judge had arrived and was busy making out death certificates. Many workers had fled the town for the hills, afraid of reprisals. Then the disturbance broke out again. A small group of workers went looking for Morales to vent their anger on him. Not finding him, his house was set ablaze, causing the entire

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block to burn. Afterwards, there were a few isolated incidents, but, in general, with the departure of the workers for the hills, things were quiet in Orizaba and neighbouring towns that night. By 1:30 a.m. the next morning more troops had arrived, and by 7:00 a.m., Colonel Francisco Ruíz with the 24th Artillery Battalion,

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accompanied by General Rosalino Martínez, Under-Secretary for War, was in Orizaba. Immediately Carlos Herrera was
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replaced by Colonel Ruíz and ordered to return to Xalapa.

Subsequently a number of workers were rounded up and executed summarily, most of them in front of the burnt-out company store. How many people were killed in all has never been really ascertained. Although one historian has

estimated the number at between fifty and seventy, Mexicans believed at the time that hundreds of deaths had occurred. There were reports that box-cars loaded with bodies had been seen at the train station in Río Blanco. That these reports were probably untrue is not as significant as the fact that Mexicans believed the rumours.

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The reputation of the President and his government was seriously damaged by the lock-out and massacre of workers at Río Blanco. For many Mexicans, Río Blanco became the main symbol of an oppressive regime.

Dehesa was incensed by the brutal repression, as well as the summary executions which followed. He had resisted the replacement of Herrera by Ruíz for as long as he dared. Within the next few days, however, he undertook certain measures to ensure that both the President and the public were aware of the real course of events. Dehesa did not believe that Díaz was behind the brutal repression of the workers. On Friday, January 11, Herrera wrote him an official report of the events of the previous Monday, which Dehesa printed in the official State newspaper, Diario

Oficial, and also in El Dictámen of Veracruz and El Reproductor of Orizaba.

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The next day he wrote the President asking him to receive the bearer of a letter,

Carlos Herrera, "who desires to inform you of the

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disgraceful events at Río Blanco. Dehesa also sent Díaz a copy of the letter from district judge Rocha, giving his account of the incident and the reasons for the

riot.

According to Rocha, the lock-out had been the principal cause of the disturbances, which had coincided with a state of excitement among the workers caused by the squabbles over the union presidency. ¹²⁹ The squabble had been over personalities but also between the moderate line taken by Morales and the radical socialist one taken by Ramírez, and backed by the group which had been publishing ¹³⁰ La Revolución Social. For Dehesa, however, the root cause of all the disturbances was not socialist agitation but **the greed of the factory owners**, an opinion which he did not hesitate to make known. ¹³¹ The owners in turn, were equally determined to minimise Dehesa's influence. At the end of January, CIDOSA wrote to Yñigo Noriega, a rich Spaniard and friend of President Díaz, asking him to remonstrate with the President over Dehesa's attempts to remove Col. Ruíz and make him hand over the office of jefe político to the president of the city council of Orizaba, who, in their ¹³² opinion, "was a very weak man and a friend of Herrera." This Noriega had been quite happy to do despite a report from his brother that the accusations against Herrera were all slanders. ¹³³ Besides the greed of the industrialists, Dehesa laid the blame squarely on the shoulders of the government, without, however, specifying who he thought was responsible. A few days later Dehesa went to the capital to see the President, and told Díaz "with all clarity that the government had committed a grave error." ¹³⁴ In fact, he

listed a number of serious mistakes committed by the federal government. These were: the removal of Herrera from his post; the ordering of federal troops to the area, which the situation did not demand; sending a general with a bad reputation; trying to solve the problems by force of arms when more prudent measures were called for; and violating the territorial sovereignty of the State of Veracruz.

The President conceded that he had judged the situation precipitately and agreed to withdraw federal troops.

But when Díaz chided him with the comment that Dehesa was taking matters too seriously, that the events at Acayucan the previous September, and at Río Blanco were only mutinies, Dehesa replied:

No general, it is necessary that you accept reality and do not allow yourself to be deceived by the Científicos. *IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF A MUTINY; IT IS A QUESTION OF A REVOLUTION* (my italics).137

The misreading and mishandling of the situation had so angered Dehesa, that years later he was still so preoccupied with it that he asked Herrera, in 1929, to write another account of the disturbances and send it to him.

In fact, strong rumours were circulating that Dehesa had been so disgusted with the federal government's actions that he was considering handing in his resignation. The main reason cited was that he had not been consulted. Since there had also been no previous 'consultation' over Herrera's removal, it can be assumed that Dehesa's anger

was directed at the government over the summary executions which were carried out on the orders of either Col. Ruíz or

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Gen. Martínez. Dehesa had Herrera continue to gather evidence which indicated that some employees and managers, had themselves indicated which workers should be punished as ring-leaders. Many of these had then been shot.

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Because of Dehesa's vehement remonstrations the government decided to take some measures to alleviate the workers' conditions. Col. Ruíz ordered an end to the use of company store scrip and lowered the rent on workers'

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homes. Ruíz was then replaced with Miguel Gómez at the end of the month. In addition Dehesa interviewed Silvestre Moreno Cora-- the noted jurist who had drawn up his labour code in Xalapa-- on the events of December-January in Orizaba, sending his opinion to Díaz that Herrera's actions

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had been correct under the circumstances. Dehesa was still trying to impress on the President that force would have the opposite effect and should be avoided. On January 16, the day on which Dehesa had arrived in Mexico City, the Minister of the Interior, Ramón Corral, wrote Dehesa in Xalapa asking that particular care be taken in seeing that articles 4 and 7 of the laudo regarding hygiene, the employment of young children, as well as the establishment of schools be carried out under the vigilance of the State

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government. Dehesa sent the necessary instructions to Gómez, who reported that Tenango, Nogales and Santa Rosa had a sufficient number of schools with an increasing

enrollment. He also stated that he was being vigilant that young children were not being put to work contrary to the regulations.¹⁴⁵ Because he was expecting further trouble, Dehesa also asked the President to keep the 13th. Battalion¹⁴⁶ in Orizaba.

Nevertheless, the implementation of the laudo was not sufficient to prevent further strikes. It is amazing that the workers, after the massacre, in which 1571 of their comrades had either fled, been wounded or killed, continued to demonstrate for their rights with the use of the strike tactic.¹⁴⁷ In April, 1907, there were strikes in Xalapa, Nogales and Río Blanco as well as the jute factory in Orizaba.¹⁴⁸ The reasons for the strikes were the continuation of the pass-book system, the censorship of reading materials and, in general, the failure of CIDOC to comply with the regulations outlined in the laudo.¹⁴⁹ The company threatened to bring in 1500 scabs from Oaxaca and to throw the workers out of their houses if they did not return to work. This broke the strike, but not for long.¹⁵⁰ Despite the energetic intervention of the jefe político, who immediately arrested the instigators, dispatching them to forced labour camps in Quintana Roo, the workers tried another way out of their dilemma.¹⁵¹ On May 10, a group of workers from the Río Blanco factory wrote Dehesa:

We would like to inform you of the reasons for the bad will which exists here and which we do not think is caused by us. The factory has increased our working hours, has reimposed the old system of fines, the jefe político is helping them, and we are not to blame for more than the wish not to die of hunger. It

would take too long to enumerate the abuses which, under the protection of the jefe político, the company commits against us.

Anyone who complains is cited as rebellious, thrown into the militia, or threatened.

These reasons have prompted us to write you, who are our only help, and we beg you to come here, where you will see that your presence is absolutely necessary in order to arbitrate for us, who have security in your sense of justice.152

Shortly after this letter was written the workers were on strike, although this only lasted eight days. Eight days after their return to work, however, the strike was renewed. 153 This time Dehesa hastened to Río Blanco, where

he made a speech to the workers, explaining the theory of capital and labour, exhorting the workers to use official channels to air their grievances, and asking them to go back to work. 154 This they did, but they also drew up a list of requests which they presented to the Governor: at the top of this was the wish that children under fifteen be prohibited from working in a factory, because many of these men had had to work as children and therefore had no schooling; that a night school be established for them; that they be allowed to end work at 6:30 p.m. in order to be able to attend it; that they be allowed to make up this time on religious holidays; that a commission of workers be formed to handle grievances; and that the company do everything in its power to inhibit bad treatment at the hands of foremen and supervisors. 155

Before the laudo could be implemented, however, the workers walked off the job again. Enrique Tron complained to Dehesa that the strike had been fomented by

outsiders, since the new regulations were much the same as the previous ones only that they had been liberalised for the benefit of the workers. ¹⁵⁶ Dehesa's answer was that any

outside agitation would be severely dealt with, but that he would have to confer with Gómez about the advisability of Tron's request to throw those workers who refused

to return to work out of the company houses. ¹⁵⁷ Gómez's reply was unequivocal: both old and new regulations had stipulated that workers were to be given six days after being fired to vacate their homes; furthermore, there were reasons for believing that the workers at San Lorenzo,

Cerritos, and Cocolapám factories were going out on strike shortly and it would be prudent to refrain from acting so as not to worsen an already bad situation. ¹⁵⁸ Dehesa then

set to work to hammer out yet another set of rules with Enrique Tron, who was not well-disposed to any further liberalisation. Since the President was behind the project,

for the continuation of strikes across the country was making the government nervous, CIDOSA and Tron unwillingly accepted Dehesa's recommendations. ¹⁵⁹ These were: to raise

the minimum age for child labour to ten, three years above the minimum expressed in the laudo; that the maximum working hours for all employees be reduced to twelve hours per day; Sundays, national holidays, and the five religious holidays were days off, without pay; and an arbitration committee could be set up at a worker's request, with his right to agree on the arbitrator. In addition, the time

limit for vacating homes was raised to ten days; complaints had to be answered in eight, not fifteen days; foremen were prohibited from taking money from workers; workers were to be treated with moderation; factories with over one hundred workers would have to employ a physician; there would have to be an eight day notice for a change in wage scale; and, there was no mention of the hated passbooks.¹⁶⁰

These new regulations removed some of the abuses, and calmed the workers for a while. They were definitely better than the previous ones, especially the laudo, although they did not completely satisfy the workers. One advantage that Dehesa managed to secure for them was the definite removal of the fine of fifty centavos levied on workers who showed up without their assistants.¹⁶¹ Needless to say the labour situation was not solved. Grievances remained and strikes continued, and although there were minor successes, threats by management and the fear of being transported to Quintana Roo or going to jail kept these at a minimum.¹⁶²

The central government too, seems to have lost its faith in dealing with the labour problem after Cananea and Río Blanco,¹⁶³ and in the face of continuing unrest. The reasons are difficult to ascertain. Certainly it did not lack for energetic and sound advice. Not only were people like Dehesa and Bernardo Reyes insistent that the problem could be solved if the workers were treated with justice, but the government had access to all the reports and

comparisons from other countries, especially Europe, that it needed to make a comprehensive study of the situation and come up with a firm policy. ¹⁶⁴ Perhaps the government, that is, the President, was still too mesmerised by foreign capital, or by its ability to transform Mexico into a modern state, to pass laws for the protection of workers. Or perhaps the historian Katz is correct when he attributes the lack of action to the dilemma of keeping a counterweight to U.S. capital. Nevertheless, the lack of such laws certainly was an important factor in the unrest which eventually turned into revolution. ¹⁶⁵ Yet the labour situation was solvable. The majority of workers were not, as some historians have tried to argue, motivated by ideology, nor by a desire to overthrow the regime, but by bread and butter issues. ¹⁶⁶ Newspapers in Veracruz as well as in Mexico City were convinced that the workers were not striking because of ideological or political issues, but over significant but specific, single issues. ¹⁶⁷ More recent historical works have also tended to accept this view. ¹⁶⁸

Perhaps however, the best explanation why nothing was done, was that the regime was tired. The energy which Díaz had been able to show even in 1907 appeared to be slipping by 1908. In December 1907, a request from Dehesa that a complaint over back pay by some sugar workers in Naranjal be attended to by the President brought the tired response that Dehesa see "that the authorities of Naranjal

be a little more efficacious for the benefit of these poor people." ¹⁶⁹ Besides, the President was considering retiring, the Creelman interview had set off an unprecedented wave of intrigue and speculation, and the country was stirring after the more than thirty years of the dictatorship. Dehesa, for his part, was, after 1906, concerned with his bitter fight to remove the Científicos from their position of influence within the regime, even if it meant making a bid for the vice-presidency. He must have realised that with this group practically in control of the government he would have little or no influence himself on any policy.

The massacre at Río Blanco had discredited Díaz and the regime in the eyes of Mexicans, not only because of the brutal way things had been handled, but also because of the apparent inability of the government to devise any clear, long-term labour policy. Dehesa, as a clever and introspective individual, must have realised after he spoke to the President in January, 1907, what the future would hold. Yet, because of his personal loyalty to Díaz, and perhaps too because of his ambition, he did not react at Río Blanco with the full integrity that otherwise characterized his governorship. For his course of action could and should have been resignation. However, that was unthinkable for him. Perhaps he felt too, that he still had sufficient influence with the President to rescue the situation.

The events at Río Blanco, following so closely on the

heels of Acayucan and Cananea, were signs that the regime had run its course. How far Dehesa's almost open opposition egged on the workers, or other opposition to the regime, we can not even speculate. Without a doubt, such opposition from a respected political figure who was also a close friend of the President would not have been lost on those who followed political events closely. Dehesa now focussed his attention on the capital where he was tireless in his efforts to oppose the Científicos and to wrest the President away from the influence of this group, whom Dehesa considered to be leading Mexico into the abyss of revolution.

CHAPTER VI

NOTES

1. There is little agreement about the nomenclature for the events which culminate at Río Blanco on January 7, 1907. Most historians have used the word strike. This is misleading as the events of that day were not preceded by a strike, but by a company wide lock-out.

2. Anderson, "Textile Labour Movement", p.58.

3. Heriberto Peña Samaniego, Río Blanco: El gran círculo de obreros libres y los sucesos del 7 de enero de 1907 (Mexico City: Centro de Estudios Historicos del Movimiento Obrero Mexicano, 1975), p.12; Anderson, "Textile Labor Movement", p.58.

4. For the history of the textile industry see Keremitsis, La industria textil; Orozco and Florescano, Agricultura y industria.

5. Robert A. Potash, Mexican Government and Industrial Development in the Early Republic: The Banco de Avío (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1983), p.148; see also Chávez Orozco, Agricultura, p.278.

6. Chávez Orozco, Agricultura, pp.98-99; Potash, Banco de Avío, p.149.

7. Bernardo García Díaz, "Apuntes sobre la huelga de Río Blanco," Anuario II, Centro de Estudios Historicos, Universidad Veracruzana, (1981):183-207; Chávez Orozco, Agricultura, loc.cit.

8. Potash, Mexican Government, pp.155-156.

9. Anderson, "Textile Labor Movement", p.57; Chávez Orozco, p.279. The towns were Nogales, Necoxtla and Río Blanco.

10. El Reproductor, 12 Jan 1905. The inauguration of the factory was a national event attended by the President, ministers, and hosts of foreign dignitaries. See also Peña Samaniego, Río Blanco, p.12, and Anderson, "Textile Labor Movement", p.58.

11. Anderson, "Textile Labor Movement", p.59.

12. Ibid., pp.12-13.

13. Ibid., p.60.

14. Fernando Rosenzweig, "El desarrollo económico de México de 1877-1911", El Trimestre Económico 32 (July-Sep., 1965): 405-454; James Cockroft, André Gundar Frank and Dale

H. Johnson, Dependency and Underdevelopment: Latin America's Political Economy (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1972), p.69; Anderson, Textile Labour Movement, p.44; see also Cott, Porfirian Investment Policies, p.vi, who argues that "although the importance of promoting foreign investment was recognised, Porfirian development policies did not surrender the Mexican economy to foreign states."

15. In Veracruz, with the increased employment by the textile industry and the development of large estates, this was particularly the case. See La Patria, 17 Dec. 1902, 12 July 1905; Dehesa to Díaz, 21 Feb. 1899, CPD, L24:2531.

16. El Colegio de México, Estadísticas económicas del porfiriato: fuerza de trabajo y actividad económica por sectores (Mexico, 1965), pp.149-150; Rosenzweig "El desarrollo" has shown that mortality rates in Mexico actually increased after 1877. In that year Veracruz had a mortality rate of 8 per thousand which subsequently rose to 30 in the following year.

17. Jorge Basurto, El proletariado industrial en Mexico (1850-1950) (Mexico: UNAM, 1975), p.123; Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa p.126; Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.203.

18. Keremitsis, loc. cit.

19. Basurto, loc. cit. When the workers left the factory on Saturday afternoons with their pay they had to beg for credit at the company store, pledging the next week's pay in order to cover their purchases.

20. Basurto, loc. cit.; Keremitsis, La Industria textil, p.220; Anderson, Textile Labor Movement, p.218.

21. Moisés González Navarro, "La Huelga de Río Blanco", Historia Mexicana 6 (April-June, 1957): 510-533.

22. Idem. "Las huelgas textiles en el porfiriato", Historia Mexicana 6 (Oct.-Dec., 1956): 201-216; James D. Cockroft, Mexico: Class Formation, Capital Accumulation and the State (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983), p.94; Adolfo Gilly, La formación de la conciencia obrera en México (Xalapa: Universidad Veracruzana, 1979), p.6.

23. Basurto, El proletariado, pp.102-103.

24. Acevedo to Secretario de Gobierno, Veracruz, 21 Nov. 1891, CPD, L17:470.

25. Medel y Alvarado, Historia de San Andres Tuxtla, pp. 399-400.

26. Peña Samaniego, Río Blanco, p.19.

27. David Walker, "Porfirian Labor Politics: Working Class Organisation in Mexico City and Porfirio Díaz, 1876-1902" The Americas 37:3 (January, 1981): 257-289.

28. Díaz to Dehesa, 13 June 1903, ATD, C33 #D107.

29. Herrera to Dehesa, 15 June 1903, ATD, C33 #D107.

30. Peña Samaniego, Río Blanco, p.21; Dehesa to Díaz, 17 June 1903, ATD, C33 #D107.

31. Leonardo Pasquel, El conflicto obrero de Río Blanco en 1907 (Mexico: Editorial Citlaltepetl, 1976), p.120; Melgarejo Vivanco, p.192.

32. La Patria, 21 Nov. 1905.

33. El Paladín, 4 Mar. 1906.
34. Hart, Anarchism, p.105.
35. El Reproductor, 7 June 1906.
36. El Paladín, 23 Aug. 1906.
37. Zayas Enríquez, Porfirio Díaz, p.223; Dehesa to Díaz, 13 July 1906, CPD, L31:8718.
38. Hartington to Reynaud, 17 Nov. 1906, ATD, C33 D#107; El Reproductor, 20 Sep. 1906, 4 Oct. 1906, 1 Nov. 1906. In September the new manager of the jute factory ordered a reduction in workers' pay of five centavos per roll which caused a strike that lasted for six weeks and almost bankrupted the factory. The workers were able to sustain themselves with strike pay from the Unión Mexicana de Obreros which would have lasted for ten months. On November 1, they returned to work at their old pay rate.
39. Dehesa to various. 26 June 1906, CPD, L31:8659.
40. Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.219.
41. John Mason Hart, "Nineteenth Century Urban Labor Precursors of the Mexican Revolution: The Development of an Ideology," The Americas, 30 (January, 1974): 297-318.
42. Walker, "Porfirian Labor Politics;" José C. Valadés, Sobre los orígenes del movimiento obrero en México (Mexico: C.E.H.S.M.O., 1979), p.13.
43. Agetro, Las luchas proletariadas p.41; Aurelio González Sempé, Evolución política p.235. No exact date could be found for the founding of this society.
44. Bernardo García Díaz, "Apuntes;" Jean-Pierre Bastian, "Metodismo y clase obrero en el Porfiriato," Historia Mexicana 33:1 (Jul.-Sep., 1983): 39-71.
45. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.121.
46. García Díaz, "Apuntes," The union is hereafter cited as the GCOL.
47. Walker, "Porfirian Labor Politics."
48. Hart, Anarchism, p.103; Peña Samaniego, Río Blanco, p.26; Ward Sloan Albro III, "Ricardo Flores Magón: An Inquiry into the Origins of the Mexican Revolution 1910," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona, 1967), p.76.
49. The paper had, apparently, in a short time, been successful in stirring up the workers and causing short work stoppages. Dehesa to Díaz, 4 July 1906, CPD, L31:8668-70.
50. Hart, Anarchism, pp. 105-106; Anderson, Textile Labor Movement, p.93.
51. Hart, Anarchism, p.107.
52. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.721.
53. Dehesa to Díaz, 13 July 1906, includes the report from Ramón Rocha, CPD, L31:8704-08.
54. Rocha to Dehesa, 13 Oct. 1906, CPD, L31:13171-74.
55. Díaz to Dehesa, 23 Oct. 1906, CPD, L31:13175.
56. Rocha to Dehesa, report entitled "Breves apuntes relativos á los antecedentes de la cuestion obrera en Orizaba etc.," 10 Jan. 1907, CPD, L32:931-936.
57. Ramírez to Hartington, 23 Nov. 1906, CPD,

L31:16060.

58. Rocha's report. See #56.
59. Dehesa to Díaz, 14 Dec. 1906, CPD, L31:16056.
60. Rocha's report. See # 56.
61. Hartington to Reynaud, 17 Nov. 1906, CPD,

L31:16062-66.

62. Anderson, Textile Labor Movement, p.157; see Walker, "Porfirian Labor Politics," who argues against a stereotyped porfirian policy of "unrestrained violence and wickedness," and that neither the brutally repressive picture, nor the neutral laissez-faire one of the porfirian regime is correct. He also argues for continuity in labor politics from the Porfiriato through the Revolution.

63. Anderson, Textile Labor Movement, p.20; Friedrich Katz, Deutschland, Díaz und die mexikanische Revolution: Die deutsche Politik in Mexico 1870-1920, (Berlin: VEB Deutsche Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1964), p.169.

64. Ibid., pp. 42-43.

65. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, pp.125-126.

66. After the strike at Cananea, Dehesa sent one hundred pesos to the families of workers killed in the violence, Hart, Anarchism, p.209; Anderson, Textile Labor Movement, p.166; Luis Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero mexicano, 4 vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Cuauhtémoc, 1964), pp. 115, 121.

67. Pasquel, El conflicto, pp.29-30; Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, pp.72,132; Agustín Aragón, Porfirio Díaz, 2 vols (Mexico City: Editorial Intercontinental, 1962), v.2, pp.30-31. A search of the debates of the Chamber of Deputies did not reveal any discussion of such a law. It never reached the floor of the Chamber for discussion. This information came from Raúl Dehesa, the Governor's son and friend of Veracruz author Leonardo Pasquel. L. Pasquel, interview held in Mexico City, February, 1983.

68. Hart, Anarchism, p.209; Anderson, Textile Labor Movement, p.166.

69. Dehesa to Herrera, 28 Nov. 1906, CPD, L31:16061.

70. Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, p.115.

71. El Imparcial, 4 Jan. 1907.

72. El Imparcial, 30 Oct. 1906, Díaz to Dehesa, 12 Dec. 1906, CPD, L31:16025.

73. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.136; El Imparcial, 17 Sep. 1906.

74. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.133; El Cosmopolita, 24 June 1906.

75. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.139.

76. Dehesa to Díaz, 4 Aug. 1906; Dehesa to Tron, various dates, ATD.

77. Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.219.

78. Dehesa to Díaz, 6 Nov. 1906, CPD, L31:15455; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.733.

79. Díaz to Dehesa, 7 Nov. 1906, CPD, L31:15456.

80. Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, v.2,

p.103; Garcia Díaz, "Apuntes".

81. Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.219.

82. Basurto, El proletariado industrial, p.125.

83. Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, v.2,

p.104.

84. El Imparcial, 8 Dec. 1906.

85. Basurto, El proletariado industrial, p.125.

86. El Diario, 6 Dec. 1906.

87. Ibid.

88. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.149. The increase was from 15 to 25 centavos weekly.

89. El Imparcial, 16 Dec. 1906.

90. Dehesa to Díaz, 6 Nov. 1906, CPD, L31:15455.

91. Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, p.105; the date given, December 28, is not accepted by other historians. Dehesa, in his famous correspondence with Limantour after the fall of the regime, accused the government of advising the factory owners to take this measure. He did not accuse Limantour personally. See Dehesa to Limantour, 30 July 1911, ATD.

92. Rodney Dean Anderson, Outcasts in their own Land, p.144;

García Díaz, "Apuntes"; Walker, "Porfirian Labor Politics".

93. Cosío Villegas, La vida politica interior, p.331.

Cf. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.149; Walker, "Porfirian Labor Politics".

94. Dehesa to Díaz, 25 Dec. 1906, CPD, L31:16090.

95. El Diario, 27 Dec. 1906.

96. El Reproductor, 27 Dec. 1906.

97. El Diario, 28 Dec. 1906.

98. La Patria, 29 Dec. 1906.

99. Walker, "Porfirian Labor Politics".

100. Ibid.

101. Anderson, Outcasts, p.151.

102. Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, pp.108-110.

103. Anderson, Outcasts, p.151.

104. Cosío Villegas, La vida politica interior, pp.xxiii-xxiv.

105. Anderson, Outcasts, p.151, breaks with an earlier assessment of the laudo as "a substantial victory for the Mexican textile labor movement." Anderson, Textile Labor Movement, p.222. See also Walker, "Porfirian Labor Politics," who is much less sanguine about the laudo.

106. Anderson, Outcasts, p.151.

107. Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, pp.110-111; Basurto, El proletariado industrial, p.133.

108. Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, pp.110-111; Walker, "Porfirian Labor Politics".

109. Ibid., p.113; El Reproductor, 10 Jan. 1907, This Orizaban newspaper did not report the shouts, but documents the agitation of the workers and their total rejection of the laudo. Another historian claims that the workers voted to continue the strike, but as there was no strike to begin

with, this is questionable. No verification of this statement could be found. Armando List Arzubide, Apuntes sobre la prehistoria de la revolución, (Mexico City: no pub., 1958), p.93.

110. Walker, "Porfirian Labor Politics"; Basurto, El proletariado industrial, p.130.

111. Agetro, Las luchas proletariadas, p.43; El Diario, 11 Jan. 1907.

112. The following is based on the report by the local newspaper, El Reprodutor. Morales himself, in a letter to El Diario claims that he left the theatre because of the growing tumult against the laudo. El Diario, 11 Jan. 1907.

113. El Diario, 8 Jan. 1907.

114. Basurto, El proletariado industrial, p.134; Keremitsis, La industria textil, p.220; El Diario claims that he discounted up to 25 percent. El Diario, 10 Jan. 1907; El Reprodutor, 8 Jan. 1907.

115. Rocha to Dehesa, 7 Jan. 1907, CPD, L32:925; Anderson, Outcasts, p.157, lists other sources, mainly newspapers, who give the same account.

116. El Reprodutor, 10 Jan. 1907.

117. There is a picture printed in both Anderson, Outcasts, p. 158, and Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, v.2., p.114, showing a group of mounted men, presumably Rurales, quietly watching the store burn. Herrera later accused the Rurales of not doing anything to prevent the disturbances. El Dictámen, 14 Jan. 1907; El Reprodutor, 17 Jan. 1907.

118. El Reprodutor, 10 Jan. 1907; Peña Samaniego, Río Blanco, p.75.

119. Herrera's report to Dehesa was printed in El Reprodutor, 10 Jan. 1907. It was also printed in the official state paper, Periódico del Estado de Veracruz-Llave, 12 Jan. 1907.

120. El Reprodutor, 10 Jan. 1907.

121. Rocha to Dehesa, 7 Jan. 1907, CPD, L32:924; El Reprodutor, 10 Jan. 1907.

122. El Reprodutor, 10 Jan. 1907; List Azurbide, Apuntes sobre la prehistoria, p.94, estimates that some four thousand soldiers were mobilised.

123. El Reprodutor, 10 Jan. 1907. It has been asserted that Díaz sent Martínez because he was a political opponent of Dehesa. See Anderson, Outcasts, p.165. Others thought so as well. Unsigned to Dehesa, 25 Jan. 1907, ATD, C33 #D107.

124. Anderson, Outcasts, pp.163-165, contains the best account of the executions and the controversy surrounding the responsibility for their summary nature.

125. The telegrammes are contained in CPD, L66:109,111,133-36 &182.

126. El Dictámen, 14 Jan. 1907; El Reprodutor, 17 Jan.1907.

127. Dehesa to Díaz, 12 Jan. 1907, CPD, L32:928.

128. Dehesa to Díaz, 15 Jan. 1907, ATD, C33 #D107.
129. Rocha to Dehesa, 7 Jan. 1907, CPD, L32:925-925.
130. Report from Rocha to Gen. Martínez, no date, CPD, L32:933-36.
131. Pasquel, El conflicto, pp.29-30; Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.72, Aragón, Porfirio Díaz, v.2., pp.30-31.
132. CIDOSA to Yñigo Noriega, 31 Jan. 1907 Noriega to Díaz, 3 Feb. 1907, CPD, L32:2124-2127. Noriega was a rich Spanish industrialist and close friend of Díaz.
133. Benito Noriega to Yñigo Noriega, 14 Jan. 1907, ATD, C33 #D107.
134. Circulars #2 & #5, 16 Jan. 1907, 16 Feb. 1907, AGN, Gob. 1a 907(17)1; Anderson, Outcasts, p.147, is wrong when he says that Dehesa charged Limantour specifically with the blame. See Dehesa to Limantour, 30 Jul.11, ATD, C33 #D107 where Dehesa explained that he had not even mentioned Limantour's name in an interview with El Diario and that the newspaper had incorrectly quoted him. In fact he assured Limantour that he had no specific evidence of the former finance minister's culpability.
135. Manuel Trens, Historia de Veracruz, v.6, p.402.
136. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.154.
137. Abel Pérez, Teodoro A. Dehesa, p.14.
138. Herrera to Dehesa, 16 Oct.29, ATD, C33 #D107. There is agreement that Dehesa had nothing to do with the massacres. His positive role, and efforts to secure justice for the workers has received recognition among labour historians. See Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, pp.115, 121.
139. El Diario, 15 Jan. 1907. A copy of this newspaper article was found in Dehesa's papers, ATD, C33 #D107; Pasquel, Río Blanco, p.122.
140. For a discussion of the responsibility for the executions, see Anderson, Outcasts, p.164, who suggests that the evidence is clear, though not conclusive that Díaz himself was the source of the orders.
141. Herrera to Dehesa, 1 Mar. 1907. ATD, C33 #D107.
142. Ruíz to Díaz, 15 Jan. 1907, CPD, L32:419.
143. Dehesa to Díaz, 13 Jan. 1907, CPD, L32:937-38.
144. Corral to Dehesa 16 Jan. 1907; Dehesa to Corral, 20 Feb. 1907, ATD, C33 #D107.
145. Gómez to Dehesa, 22 Feb. 1907, ATD, C33 #D107.
146. Dehesa to Díaz, 19 Feb. 1907, CPD, L32:2266.
147. El Imparcial, 13 Jan. 1907.
148. González Navarro, "La huelga de Río Blanco."
149. Ibid.
150. Ibid.
151. García Díaz, "Apuntes".
152. Various to Dehesa, 10 May 1907, CPD, L32:5319-20.
153. El Tiempo, 26 May 1907, in AGN, Gob. 1a Revoltosos Magonistas, C 4, exp. 2.
154. Ideas Nuevas, #48, 24 May 1907, in CPD, L32:5222; AGN, Gob.1a-907(17) 1.

155. Various to Dehesa, 24 May 1907, CPD, L32:5216-17.
 156. Tron to Dehesa, 28 May 1907, CPD, L32:5218.
 157. Dehesa to Tron, 28 May 1907, CPD, L32:5219;
 Dehesa to Gómez, 28 May 1907, CPD, L32:5220.
 158. Gómez to Dehesa, 28 May 1907, CPD, L32:5221.
 159. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, pp.737-38; Anderson, Outcasts, p.207.
 160. Anderson, Outcasts, pp.207-08; Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.158.
 161. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, pp.159-160
 162. Basurto, El Proletariado industrial, p.139;
 González Navarro, "Río Blanco"; Anderson, Outcasts, p.210.
 163. Anderson, Outcasts, p.213.
 164. Secretary of State to Ministry of the Interior, 7 Nov. 1910; Ministry of External Relations to Ministry of the Interior, 25.8.10; Ministry of External Relations to Ministry of the Interior, 28 Feb. 1911, AGN, Gob 1a 910(16) 2-52.
 165. Ricardo García Granados, Historia de México, v.4, p.19.
 166. James D. Cockroft, Precursores intelectuales de la revolución mexicana (Mexico City: Siglo veintiuno, 1982), p.127 concludes that the PLM were the principal political force behind these labour disputes. Cf. Hart, Anarchism, p.92, who remarks that the "strike, lock-out, and workers' rebellion of 1906-07, known as Río Blanco..., had a minimum of visible PLM involvement and no identifiable anarchist participation."
 167. El Dictámen, 17 July, 1906; El Reproductor, 19 Aug.09; La Patria, 5 Jun.07; El Diario del Hogar, 24 Oct.08; El Reproductor, 3 Aug. 1911.
 168. Anderson, Textile Labor Movement, p.261; Albro III, Magón, p.111.
 169. Díaz to Dehesa, 6 Dec. 1907, ATD, #22

CHAPTER VII

DEHESA: CRISIS POLITICIAN AND POLITICAL COUNTERWEIGHT

From his election in 1892 until 1900, Dehesa was mainly concerned with solidifying his political position. He had accomplished this by utilizing his friendship with President Díaz. He had also earned a reputation as an honest and competent administrator since Veracruz could count as one of the most prosperous and progressive states in the Mexican Union. His political opposition had dwindled and he was now free to turn his attention to federal politics.

Dehesa was attracted to the federal scene not so much because of his ambition as because of the influence he saw his political enemies, the Científicos, gaining¹ over the President. He became extremely concerned when the President announced to his Minister of Finance, José Yves Limantour, the intention of appointing the latter as² successor in the presidency. Limantour is alleged to have declined³ the request claiming that he was unqualified for the job. However, Díaz convinced him by pointing out that he would have the able Minister of War, General Bernardo Reyes, to help him. Limantour then left Mexico for Europe where he was involved in attempts to re-negotiate the

Mexican external debt. During his absence, Mrs. Limantour committed the indiscretion of telling lady friends at a tea party that she would soon be entertaining them in Chapultepec Castle. The faux pas was eventually revealed to Mrs. Díaz. ⁵ President Díaz was furious, but the incident provided him with an excuse to drop Limantour. He was afraid that the able Minister of Finance, who had had great success in putting the Mexican Treasury on a sound footing, and who was partly responsible for awakening the spirit of free enterprise in the Mexican bourgeoisie, would be sufficiently ambitious to take advantage of his popularity and make a bid for the presidency. ⁶

While still supporting Limantour's candidacy, therefore, he allowed Limantour's enemies, led by Joaquín Baranda, Minister of Justice and Education, and Teodoro Dehesa, to unleash a powerful campaign against his Minister of Finance. The campaign against Limantour was as nasty as a political campaign could be. Not able to challenge Limantour's ability, Baranda and Dehesa decided to use a little known clause of the Mexican Constitution instead. Baranda "discovered" that Limantour, because of irregularities surrounding his birth-- in particular it was rumoured that he was an illegitimate child of rather profligate parents-- and because his parents had not been Mexican citizens, would therefore be ineligible for the supreme executive position. ⁷ Baranda, using his powerful banking connections, together with Dehesa, instigated

demonstrations demanding Díaz's re-election. When Limantour returned to Mexico, the President "sadly" informed him that, due to the constitutional difficulties, and faced with enormous pleas to remain in power, he would be again seeking re-election.

The intrigue surrounding the election of 1900 and the parts played by Limantour and his opponents were characteristic of politics during the Porfiriato. Some historians have seen these intrigues as evidence of the master politician, Díaz, manipulating those around him so as to ensure that no one group ever became strong enough to be able to deprive him of power. The debate will not be concluded here, but much more evidence will have to be gathered before one can draw such definitive conclusions. From the evidence gathered for this work, it would appear that the situation was far more complex, and that the President was not the great manipulator that he has been made out to be, from the point of the success or rather, the lack of success, of his manipulations. Certainly it would seem that as he grew older his ability to play the divide et impera game lessened and he fell increasingly into the hands of the group of people who were called the Científicos. Seeing this development, Dehesa in turn tried to utilize his friendship with the President in order to forestall or counteract the influence of the Científicos. In this way, he came to act as a political counterweight to the point of almost being elected Vice-President. Had

this occurred the course of Mexican history might well have been different.

One can argue that the presence of factions is almost inevitable in a political system which eschews free expression through opposition political parties. To understand the politics of the Porfirian system it is first necessary to look at the main factions. Because Governor Dehesa emerged as the leader of one of them, such an investigation is particularly relevant for this study. His reason for this involvement in federal Mexican politics is obvious enough. He owed his rise to political prominence to his friendship with the President. The rise of any other faction, especially one which was seeking to capture the presidential chair, was politically dangerous for Dehesa. It would have meant an end to his political career. Certainly if the Científicos were able to field a candidate for the presidency and win, that would have been the case. Dehesa was an adamant enemy of this group whom he had come to see as exercising a dangerous influence on the President. Wherever and whenever he had the opportunity he tried to mitigate or remove their influence.

There were three factions or parties in the Mexican federal system: the Científicos, headed first by Díaz's father-in-law, Romero Rubio, and then José Yves Limantour; the Reyistas, followers of General Bernardo Reyes, afterwards called the Democratic Party; and the Pure Tuxtepecans, also called the Jacobins-an absolutely ironic

appellation in the circumstances- led by a former minister in the Lerdo cabinet, Joaquín Baranda. Baranda was Minister of Justice and Public Education until 1901. He was also a very close friend of Dehesa, who was the co-leader of this group. After Baranda's fall in 1901, the group became known as the Dehesistas and tried to get Dehesa elected as Vice-President in place of Ramón Corral (a ¹² Científico).

The Científicos had their origin in the convention of the Liberal Union which was held in Mexico City in April, 1892. ¹³ This convention has been called a farce by the historian Cosío Villegas. ¹⁴ However, many, if not all, of the delegates were leading members of the group which was later dubbed the Científicos: Justo Sierra, Francisco ¹⁵ Bulnes, Romero Rubio, Rosenda Pineda and José Limantour. ¹⁶ Neither Baranda nor Dehesa were present. Besides declaring Díaz as their candidate for the election, the convention drew up a manifesto which advised the government to restore and strengthen four liberties: suffrage, association, press, and justice. Submitted to the Chamber of Deputies in December, 1893, the proposals were rejected ¹⁷ by the President. This was the last attempt by that group to posit any liberal reforms. By 1903, they had given up on political reforms and limited their contribution to advocating a policy which stressed material development ¹⁸ instead. In 1893, José Yves Limantour was named Minister of Finance (Hacienda), one of the most important anmd

powerful Cabinet positions. On the death of Romero Rubio in 1895, Limantour became the acknowledged leader of the Científicos.¹⁹

Judged by an analysis of economic indicators alone, Mexico as an economic entity prospered under Limantour's financial guidance.²⁰ Investments, mainly from abroad, increased, and the creole middle class continued to grow and prosper. For the masses of the population, however, life was increasingly bitter and held little prospect for change. It has been argued and demonstrated elsewhere that life expectancy actually decreased during the Porfiriato as wages declined along with working conditions. This was partly due to the economic policies of the Científicos. Their economic ideas were based on Comtian Positivism which had been introduced into Mexico by the brilliant Minister of Education under President Juárez, Gabino Barreda. The Científicos believed that this was the only ideology which could propel Mexico into the modern scientific and technological age.²¹ With their eyes on the industrial development of Europe and the United States, they wished to see Mexico join the front ranks of the industrial world. For this to occur, however, two things were necessary. Mexico would have to be guaranteed a long period of peace, which they thought could only be secured by keeping the caudillo-President in office for as long as possible.²² Furthermore they believed that the Mexican masses, especially the Indians, were too backward to achieve this

necessary progress. Therefore the upper class would have to guide Mexico's destiny, aided by progressive foreigners who could provide the necessary technology and capital.

Limantour himself said that Mexico was "...a poor country, poor in land, poor in capital resources, and poor in people."²³

Consequently the word Cientifico and the men associated with the group came to be regarded with dubious distinction by many Mexicans and were even thought of as signifying an essentially non-Mexican entity.²⁴ Certainly even some middle and upper class Mexicans came to regard cientificismo as nothing but a "calumny of positivism". It would have been rejected by the European thinkers whom the Mexicans had taken as the expounders of their positivist philosophy--Comte, Spencer and John Stuart Mill.²⁵ There was at this time in Mexico open criticism of this special amalgam of positivist and liberal thought. It had come to be seen merely as a justification for the use of force against the weak, in other words, for untrammelled capitalism.²⁶

Nevertheless this critique appears overly cynical. The members of the Cientifico group which consisted of intellectuals, professionals and businessmen allied with some of the leaders of the Liberal Union Convention of 1892, were united more by conviction than by mere convenience.²⁷ That they were also men of exceptional ability has never been contested, nor has the fact of their

tremendous influence in Mexico, which extended into a
majority of the State administrations. ²⁸ To maintain their
hegemony they exerted considerable effort in thwarting the
ambitions or opposition of those governors or persons who
opposed their policies. ²⁹ They appear to have considered
Mexico as their private patrimony along with the right of
succession to it. ³⁰ Dehesa would have agreed with them on
their first position- that Mexico needed peace and that
President Díaz was the best person to accomplish this. But
he was adamantly opposed to their policy of placing such
emphasis on foreign, especially, United States investment,
as well as their labour policy. He was aware of the growing
power and consciousness of the working class, and believed
that these would have to be treated fairly and given some
voice in government if the system and its continued
peaceful development were to be guaranteed. For these
reasons he opposed the Científicos and especially their
attempt to obtain the supreme executive position.

President Díaz, too, had come to fear the increasing
power of this group. So much seemed to depend on their
contact with foreign financial and industrial sources ³¹ To
counteract their influence he permitted other loyal
supporters like General Reyes, Baranda and Dehesa to remain
close to the seat of power. At times it did seem as if he
were trying to balance the one group against the other. ³²
On occasions he permitted attacks on the Científicos and
even sought to implement solutions and policies of which

they did not approve. On the other hand, he protected Reyes and Dehesa by not allowing them to be attacked

politically. ³³ This struggle also reflected the tension between the federal government and the states, where most of the anti-Científico elements had their power bases. ³⁴

Nevertheless, the Científicos were the stronger group, mainly because of their important positions within the federal government, but also because the "Jacobins" had no specific programme to offer. ³⁵

Annoyed at being thrust aside so easily, Limantour confronted the President shortly after the election of 1900 complaining of the lack of confidence the President had shown him. Díaz could not afford to lose the support of his brilliant Minister of Finance, and therefore retired to Cuernavaca for a short rest before resuming office. His public excuse was that he was suffering from rheumatism. What he was really doing was trying to test the political climate and to allow the ambitious Reyes to make a false move. Immediately word went out to Reyes from his friends that if Díaz died he ought to assume the presidency. Similar postulations were made to Baranda who even went as far as having a conference with a close friend, the commandant of the State of Yucatan, where he happened to be on holiday. Díaz, however, was not really ill. As planned, he returned to Mexico City and delivered his inaugural address to the Congress. He had, of course, been informed of the two potential successors who had shown their hands. This was

the end, at least for the time being, of both Reyes and Baranda. The latter was forced to resign from the Cabinet and accept the humiliating position as Inspector of the National Bank. ³⁶ Reyes, who was still Minister of War, was

then engaged in creating a second army reserve. This also invoked the President's suspicion, and in 1902, after being in the Cabinet for only two years, Reyes was also forced to resign. ³⁷ Díaz was not about to get rid of these two men

completely- they had been useful to him, so Reyes was permitted to regain the governorship of Nuevo Leon. The interim governor was asked to resign and a new election was held. The entire campaign was presented as a battle between Reyes and the Científicos. Díaz personally wrote to all the governors assuring them of his support for Reyes. It was a Pyrrhic victory for the old General. Although he regained the governorship of Nuevo Leon, the Científicos had managed to keep him out of the presidency. Dehesa, who saw his friend in the position of the vanquished, could only manage ³⁸ to say that he was "satisfied" with Reyes's re-election.

Hardly had the Reyes-Limantour controversy ended, however, when the inevitable instability of the regime, masked only by the desire of the participants not to allow the furor of this political infighting to become public, began to impose itself over the question of the 1904 election. ³⁹

Díaz's insecurity over the question of the succession and the problem, therefore, of choosing a Vice-President were the most important aspects of the campaign.

Two lesser issues were the proposed extension of the presidential period to six years and the rivalry between the National Liberal Convention led by the Científicos, and the older Porfirian Circle of Friends directed by a Colonel Tovar, as to who would have the honour of nominating the President for reelection.⁴⁰

Already, in 1902, feelers were being put out as to the best way to organize the campaign. Naturally the various factions began their attempts to gain the President's confidence and ensure an outcome to their liking. The President unfortunately remained reticent about his intentions, which only heightened the intrigue. Cosío Villegas argues that for the first and perhaps the only time Díaz believed that it was necessary to conclude his career in 1904. His choice of successors seemed to be the same as before: Limantour as President and Reyes as Minister of War. From Mexico City, a Veracruz Deputy, Rafael Rodríguez, wrote to Dehesa that Díaz was supporting Limantour's candidacy, remarking that the gravest point was that the President would be imposing an "aristocrat" on the nation.⁴¹ Dehesa, who felt even more strongly about this choice, wrote to both Limantour and the President suggesting that Limantour himself announce Díaz's resolution to run again. His argument to the Minister of Finance was that he himself broach the President on the subject since Díaz "... cannot oppose the will of the people to have him guide them."⁴² Díaz's answer was that he would have to

was that he would have to "... meditate on the matter
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prudently" before making a decision. Not hearing anything
further from the two, Dehesa decided to force the matter
through a press campaign. Both he and his friend, the poet,
Díaz Mirón, published articles in an effort to recruit the
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President and obviate any doubts about the candidacy.
Other articles were printed at the behest of Reyes, with
the result, as mentioned above, that Limantour confronted
the President over the question of confidence. Reyes was
forced to resign in December 1902. Among the prominent
writers of these articles had been Reyes's son,
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Rodolfo, and the two sons of Baranda. Díaz, realizing
that Dehesa's objections to Limantour were valid,
eventually withdrew his support from the Minister of
Finance, but not before considerable confusion and
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political manoeuvring had taken place.

In early 1903, Díaz made up his mind to seek the re-
election and ordered Colonel Tovar to begin putting the
machinery in place. Tovar then wrote to each Governor and
State Deputy asking them to set up local affiliates of the
National Porfirian Circle (also called the Circle of
Friends of Porfirio Díaz). Dehesa's response was to name as
the president of the Veracruz Circle, Guillermo Pasquel, a
rich and respected Veracruz landowner who did not hold any
public office. For vice-president, he chose an artisan who
was very popular with all the social classes. He also
accepted Díaz's wish that State employees, as far as

possible, be excluded from the directorship of the Circles in order to make it appear to be a genuinely popular, rather than State-directed, organization.⁴⁷ In June, the nomination was made official when Francisco Bulnes presented Porfirio Díaz as the official candidate for the National Liberal Convention.⁴⁸ Bulnes's speech, however, unleashed some consternation in the country because he made it seem as if Díaz's re-election and the demand to establish a vice-presidency, were at the behest of foreign bankers, who needed the assurance of peace and continuity as a guarantee for their loans.⁴⁹ Consequently, according to Bulnes's own account, Díaz, who had previously asked Limantour to be his Vice-President, compromised by allowing Limantour to make the choice of Vice-President.⁵⁰ If Bulnes is correct then Díaz certainly picked a man to make the choice who was very respected in foreign financial circles. At the same time he achieved his own purpose of excluding Limantour from that office without ruffling the latter's feathers too much.

Shortly thereafter, a flurry of activity commenced, primarily by Dehesa and the Reyes supporters, with the aim of extending the presidential period to eight years. Bulnes asserts that the Jacobins and Reyistas were trying to ingratiate themselves with the President in order to hinder the appointment of a Científico as Vice-President, a charge which merits some attention. Joaquín Baranda had prepared a twenty-one page political document in 1901 stating three

precepts which were necessary if Mexico were to continue its peaceful evolution. These were: 1) no re-election; 2) an increase of the presidential term; and 3) creation of the position of Vice-President. Baranda had then continued to give a long, reasoned argument why it was necessary to overlook the first precepts in the circumstances, and to reelect Díaz. ⁵¹ The truth is probably a mixture of Dehesa's fervent assertions in telegrams and letters, that Díaz's continuation in office was necessary for the public well-being, and his own attempts to manoeuvre a non-Científico into power. The nature of this power struggle should not be misconstrued. In fact, it was much more than a mere power struggle. There was real antipathy between the two factions which included personal dislike, and which seriously weakened the regime at a time when stability and a concerted effort was necessary to examine and reach agreement on a broad range of policies in order to combat the growing discontent caused by the rapid and one-sided modernization of Mexico. The extent of the struggle may be seen in the feverish activity undertaken by the Veracruz Deputies to the Mexican Congress to carry their proposal for an eight-year term.

Dehesa's suggestion was at first rejected by Díaz, who promised only to wait until the moment was more ⁵² opportune. In November the Veracruz Deputies began their ⁵³ assault by presenting the Bill to the Congress. From Mexico City, Ignacio Muñoz telegraphed Luis Senties, the

State Treasurer, to come to the capital with Salvador Díaz Mirón and Talavera Rodríguez in order to discuss the best way to proceed. ⁵⁴ Senties promptly replied that they would be at their posts immediately. ⁵⁵ Two days later, Dehesa telegraphed the president of the Chamber of Deputies, his old friend and Secretary of State, Leandro Alcolea:

Regarding constitutional reform and establishment of vice-presidential position, see to it with all opportunity that the Veracruz Deputies, as well as others, propose extension of presidential term to eight years. Moreover, to promote this reform, present yourself to the President making him aware that nationals and non-nationals alike desire this as beneficial for the public interest and seek his acquiescence in proceeding with the reform. ⁵⁶

A copy was sent to the President and the next day Alcolea could report that the delegation would be received by Díaz at 10.00 A.M. ⁵⁷ Díaz, however, still held back, claiming that, since he had already had his candidacy announced, he was the last person who could pass an opinion on the matter. ⁵⁸

However, Dehesa was insistent, exhorting the President to yield to the convictions of a majority of the country and to ensure that a majority of the Deputies supported the reform as proposed. ⁵⁹ That same day, Dehesa's sons, Raúl and Ramón, the former a Deputy and the latter a State Deputy, departed for Mexico City along with Luis Senties. ⁶⁰ Dehesa also reminded Modesto Herrera, another federal Deputy, as well as Ignacio Muñoz, to try to see Alcolea about his proposed reform. ⁶¹ Again, the following day Dehesa urged Muñoz that "...all true

political supporters of the re-election must also be for the extension of the term in order to consolidate the nation's well-being." ⁶² Muñoz replied that he had spoken with Alcolea before receiving Dehesa's telegramme and that he had tried tenaciously on four separate occasions to convince the Chamber, including one session which had lasted until nine o'clock the previous evening, but that they wanted the first reading to take place immediately. The tactic was obviously to have the Bill discussed as quickly as possible so that the Dehesa faction would not have the time to convince the President. ⁶³ On the twenty-fifth, Senties reported that their Bill had passed through several committees and the second reading. ⁶⁴

Nevertheless, Dehesa was not content to sit meekly waiting for the result. A politician with considerable foresight and tenacity, he could see one great stumbling block just around the corner. December 1 was the day on which the presidency of the Chamber would change hands. He therefore advised Muñoz that if the Bill were delayed for the next few days he should "...secure the election of Modesto (Herrera) or some other proven friend of our general as president of the Chamber next month, in order for us to succeed." ⁶⁵ Then he sent a flowery letter of thanks to Alcolea for having brought the Bill to the presentation stage, reminding him that it would be complementary to the Bill creating the Vice-Presidency. ⁶⁶ This last statement, which was made continuously by Dehesa,

is difficult to interpret. Motives are sometimes impossible to ascertain from documents. However, the statement might be seen as supporting evidence for Bulnes's assertion that the Jacobins saw in the extension of the presidential term the only means of ensuring the election of a non-Científico as Vice-President. On the other hand, Dehesa may have also wanted the long presidential term in order to give himself enough time to prepare for his own appearance onto the federal scene. Certainly the longer Díaz remained in office the better would be Dehesa's chances. His popularity was growing throughout Mexico. In addition, with time, there would be an increase in the dislike of the Científicos which was already manifest throughout Mexico.

Despite his strenuous efforts, however, Dehesa was not able to accomplish all he had planned. On November 27, an amendment was presented proposing a presidential term of only six years. An attempt to convince the Deputy concerned was unsuccessful and the amendment began to be circulated

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quietly. So quietly was this done, that newspapers in the capital began to report that the term had indeed been

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increased to eight years. Explained Francisco Dehesa:

There have been suggestions of a very subtle nature to reduce the proposed term. If there were security in the fact that Díaz would live eight years more they would be favourable to the Bill as is. But the fear is that if he were to die a short time after the reelection there might result some perversity in the substitution of another person.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, Alcolea was meeting with Chavero, the Deputy who had introduced the amendment, in order to try and

convince him to withdraw it. And Díaz Mirón and the other Veracruz Deputies were telegraphing Dehesa about the tremendous efforts that were underway on behalf of his plan. His short and cryptic reply was a quotation from the disgraced General Mier y Teran: "Nothing for ourselves,⁷⁰ everything for the fatherland." Other telegrammes also arrived in Xalapa congratulating Dehesa on everything from ensuring the peace and tranquility of Mexico to having⁷¹ defeated pseudo-scientism. However, on December 1, 1903, he was advised that the Congress would probably vote an extension of six years. He hastily wrote the President that he knew how the Congress would vote so would the President please use his influence. Díaz, trying to be consoling, replied that he understood Dehesa's motives which were his own, but that he did not want to present "...an inflexible and intransigent opinion."⁷² The next day the vote was held and the Congress approved an extension of two additional years, which the Veracruz delegation counted as a⁷³ victory.

In the circumstances it must be considered a great victory for it demonstrated the support that Dehesa could command in the Congress. Indeed Dehesa had much to be thankful for. His and Baranda's campaign against Limantour had been successful in that Limantour would not be the Vice-President. Secondly, the choice of Ramón Corral was not altogether a loss either. Corral was personally unpopular throughout Mexico, and, if the President were to die,

public clamour against his election might be sufficiently strong to propel Dehesa into Chapultepec Castle.

Dehesa was an ambitious man and had he had the chance he definitely would not have looked askance at the prospect of becoming President. On the other hand, one is forced to conclude on the basis of the available evidence, that he sincerely felt that a continuation in power by Díaz for as long as possible, with perhaps the eventual exclusion of the Científicos from their positions of influence, would be the best method of maintaining Mexico on a peaceful path with possibly the democratic institutionalization of public life. This remarkable politician, the former shop clerk from Veracruz, almost accomplished this. His failure was not for want of trying. Although he initially refused to accept the idea of entering the federal political arena, events in the next few years convinced him to change his mind and make a bid to secure his election as Vice-President.

More circumspect than General Reyes, Dehesa had ceased his press campaign against the Científicos in 1902.⁷⁴ But when, at the end of 1903, a book appeared attacking Limantour, both Reyes and Dehesa were accused by the President of assisting the author financially, a charge which Dehesa vehemently denied.⁷⁵ He made no attempt, however, to hide the fact that he agreed substantially with the charges against the Científicos, but added that he did not consider Limantour one of them "...since no parallelism

can exist between said gentleman and the party called

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Científicos". The author of the book, a Veracruzian named

Juan Pedro Didapp, confirmed that he had received no money
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from either Reyes or Dehesa, but Díaz was not convinced.

Whether the President was offended because he felt that one of his closest political friends had dared to oppose him in public, one cannot say. Perhaps he felt Dehesa was going too far, or harboured secret ambitions. In any case, Dehesa felt it necessary to make his position absolutely clear to the President, including his thoughts on the Vice-Presidency. He wrote:

Of my fifty years, two-thirds have been dedicated, honourably and loyally and without vacillation to serving you. Thus I believed to have served the legitimate interests of the country which I considered linked to your personality....

The followers of Mr. Limantour-- and it can be that he himself also believes that I am his enemy-- accept without any benefit of ascertaining the facts, whatever notions can be spread in your presence to harm me. Is this procedure sane? You yourself will be able to answer for me.

I have been an adversary of Mr. Limantour as a candidate for the Presidency of the Republic, notwithstanding his choice by your friends and more importantly by yourself. Why? Because in my judgement, and that of the majority of the people of this country, we need your continuation for the well-being of the nation. Can the honourable, frank and loyal attitude that I assumed in this question be considered disloyal....?

You will remember the conversation we had in the National Palace (when they gratuitously attributed to me certain articles published in the capital), when I told you that there were two candidates for the presidency and you interrupted me saying, "Reyes and Limantour," and I replied, "No sir, Limantour and you. You are the candidate of the nation and Limantour is your candidate...."

Do you not remember the letter that I sent to Limantour, with a copy to you?

Since the presidential business has been satisfactorily settled, what motives could I have to

be an enemy of Mr. Limantour?

I DO NOT ASPIRE TO BE ANYTHING MORE THAN I AM HERE.
I DESIRE NO POST IN THAT CAPITAL WHATSOEVER.
(my capitals)78

This frank and open declaration seemed to convince the President. Dehesa travelled to Mexico City with the Governor of Yucatan and they were on hand for Díaz's inauguration on December 1.
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Dehesa's last statement, is interesting. There is absolutely no evidence that he had any aspirations to the two top executive posts in 1904. But during the new sexenio he began to change his mind. Possibly it may have been his firm conviction that the policies of the Científicos were leading the nation slowly on the path to revolution. It may also have been the prospect that Díaz would die soon only to be succeeded by Corral, for whom Dehesa had only contempt. On more than one occasion Dehesa had had to put Corral in his place. He had been opposed to Corral's candidacy from the first, as were apparently a majority of Mexicans.
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With the disturbances of Acayucan and Río Blanco behind Dehesa, which he correctly interpreted as the first manifestations of the coming revolution, he may have decided to launch himself entirely into federal politics as a candidate. The evidence for this conclusion is not clear. In any event, the celebrated Creelman interview threw federal politics into turmoil and seemed to add fuel to the political agitation which was only to end with the Revolution. For a moment it appeared as if Dehesa might be
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the preferred vice-presidential candidate in order to satisfy the voices calling for political change.

In December, 1907, Díaz granted an interview to the editor of Pearson's Magazine, James Creelman, the report of which was published in February, 1908. ⁸⁵ This report

stated Díaz's "unchangeable" decision to relinquish power and not seek reelection in 1910. The historian, Cosío Villegas, remarks on the absence of letters from governors, or indeed any influential persons, to Díaz asking for a confirmation of the words attributed to him in the

⁸⁶ article. Actually there was a sudden eruption of activity. Letters and telegrammes scurried back and forth between governors and other influential people trying to find out what had occurred. Dehesa wrote Baranda early in March, one day after the publication of the article in El

Imparcial and El Diario asking for copies so he could see ⁸⁷ the exact wording of the Creelman article. Then there was

a huge debate over the translation of one word. Baranda had pointed out the error which had made everyone uneasy. El Imparcial had translated the English word 'unchangeable' as inquebrantable (unyielding, unbreakable) which, in ⁸⁸

Spanish, carried a much stronger connotation. After verifying the text Dehesa, wrote to Díaz saying that the announcement had caused unrest among all classes in Mexico as well as abroad, and exhorting him to put an end to this ⁸⁹ by making a declaration that he would remain in power.

There followed a spate of correspondence between Dehesa and

other governors urging all to come out boldly in favour of
Díaz's re-election. ⁹⁰ The result was a united and unanimous
demand by the Governors that Díaz seek reelection in 1910. ⁹¹
The President, however, kept silent. Unfortunately this
strengthened the belief in Mexico that he was indeed
serious. Books began to appear, signalled by the apparent
sincerity of the President's statement to Creelman which
had also called for a liberalization of Mexican political
institutions. Two books in particular stirred the Mexican
people to a reflection of impending change. Andrés Molina
Enríquez published his brilliant and influential The Great
National Problems, calling for thorough reform especially
in the agricultural sector; and Francisco Madero penned The
Presidential Succession of 1910 which urged Mexicans to
accept the President's word and begin to organize
opposition parties. ⁹² In October, 1908, the famous
publisher of the opposition paper El Diario del Hogar,
Filomeno Mata, wrote to Díaz from Belen prison asking for an
interview to discuss the Creelman allegations. ⁹³ Díaz
replied denying Mata an interview but included a short
explanation which said that he had "...only expressed a
personal desire, nothing more." ⁹⁴ Simultaneously, El Diario
del Hogar began to speculate on the possible successors to
Díaz. Among the possible candidates was Teodoro Dehesa, who
was acclaimed as one of the genuinely popular political
figures in Mexico, not least of all for his position on the
Rio Blanco affair which "...had made him truly popular with

the working class."

Dehesa himself was extremely concerned about the situation. He realized now that an awareness had been unleashed in Mexico which could not again be suppressed. His political sense told him what the crucial factor would be. In a letter to Baranda he suggested that "...posterity would hold our General Díaz responsible if he does not choose correctly in his designation...." of a Vice-

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President. Both men then began exchanging the latest books dealing with the political question and speculating as to the seriousness of the situation. Baranda was not convinced that the political situation was serious, but Dehesa took the opposite view.

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It was Dehesa's firm opinion that only Díaz and Díaz alone should make the choice of running, and the reelection or election of a Vice-President, and that there should be no speculation by the press or anyone else on the matter.

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But the uncertainty created by the Creelman article had prompted intense political manoeuvring, in both reelectionist and anti-reelectionist political camps. In March, 1909, the National Porfirian Circle held a general meeting at which they proposed General Díaz as their

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candidate for the coming sexenio. The Circle felt that the only way out of the political dilemma was to have Díaz die in office, an opinion that was shared by Dehesa.

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But the opposition was organizing as well. From the beginning of that year, Madero had been playing with the idea of

forming his own party and communicated his thoughts in February to the respected Dr. Vázquez Gómez. On May 22, 1909, the Anti-Reelectionist Centre was officially founded

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by Madero and his supporters. A manifesto was issued demanding adherence to the principle of no reelection and Madero left Mexico City on June 18 on his first political tour which took him to twenty-two of the twenty six

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States. In each State he founded anti-relectionist clubs, the first of which was in Veracruz. Ironically this meeting, which earned Madero an "...unheard of ovation," was held in the Theatre Dehesa.

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Thereafter events took a curious turn. On November 3, 1909, a new party was proclaimed by Dr. Samuel Espinosa de los Monteros, in which Dehesa was named an honorary member because of "...his merits but especially his democratic tendencies (my italics)." De los Monteros was not only a 'democrat.' He also looked favourably on Madero's opposition to Díaz. Towards the end of the year, in fact, Madero was a guest at the party's general meeting, and there were some attempts to fuse the two movements into a common political party.

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These events evoke the question of Dehesa's political stance. Was he, as the Científicos had argued, an opponent of the regime? Was he one of Madero's supporters? Or was there another explanation? Dehesa was above all a consistent supporter of President Díaz. From the records there is absolutely no evidence that he ever waived in

his loyalty to the General. However, he was aware that Mexico needed to reform its political life or there would be a violent upheaval. He was also personally inclined to a more democratic system. He also considered the political agitation that had been set in motion by the Creelman article injurious to the country. He was aware of how fragile the system was, as he was of the strains which modernization had put on it. He never approved of Madero's bid for power although he felt that it was Madero's democratic right to run for the presidency. So he used his influence and his power to protect Madero's right to speak and to organize. ¹⁰⁵

However, Dehesa tried to avert the growing conflict by agreeing to arrange a meeting between the old President and Madero. ¹⁰⁶ According to Dehesa, he was in Mexico City at the time when the nomination meeting of the Anti-Reelectionist party was being held and Madero sent an emissary asking if Dehesa would receive him. In the conversation at their meeting in April, 1910 Madero told Dehesa that his friends were disposed to accept Díaz for another sexenio but could not accept Corral as Vice-President. Dehesa replied that these were also his sentiments and asked Madero why he did not communicate these thoughts to the President. Madero answered that of course he would go to see the President if invited. Dehesa promised to see that an invitation came. Then Madero said that they (his friends) were thinking of proposing Dehesa as Vice-President, and asked whether the Governor would

accept such a nomination. Dehesa answered:

Under no condition. I am politically connected with General Díaz and I will not accept this candidacy without his agreement (my italics). Besides, I do not aspire to the position. For which reason, if as I hope, you have a conference with the President in order to share the impressions you have made about the general repugnance which exists in the country in regard to the reelection of Mr. Corral, I would ask you not to indicate in any way that I desire the post. Do not propose me in any way. . . . Limit yourself to telling him that he should designate some other candidate but not Mr. Corral. 107

Madero agreed and Dehesa then arranged a meeting through the good offices of his friend, Ignacio Muñoz. On April 16, the meeting took place although Dehesa, who introduced Madero to the President, could not stay as he had arranged for a special train to take him back to Xalapa. 108

Attempts by the Científicos to block the meeting by having Madero arrested on a trumped-up charge were thwarted by Felix Díaz, who was Chief of Police for Mexico City. 109

A few weeks later, Madero embarked on his second political journey through Mexico, this time as the official candidate for President of the Anti-Reelectionist party. He again travelled to Veracruz where he was well received because Dehesa had given strict orders that he was not to be molested in any way. 110 In Veracruz port, he was received

enthusiastically, but in Orizaba, scene of the Rio Blanco massacre, he was greeted by 15,000 persons. 111

By this time, Dehesa was convinced that an end to the regime was fast approaching. Still, he did not accept the suggestions that were being made that he declare

himself as vice-presidential candidate. Among the persons urging him to do so had been Madero himself, who, in the meeting with Dehesa in April, had suggested that if Dehesa accepted the nomination as Vice-President, the Anti-Reelectionists would find this acceptable. But Dehesa refused to budge from his previously-stated position. On June 2, 1910, he wrote the President:

If you in your double role as my friend and as President of the Republic were to offer me the nomination as Vice-President, I would have to refuse it cordially but categorically....

People have tried to suggest that I have been guilty of intrigue in aspiring to that post. I have never been an intriguer nor an aspirant. I have only stated that the majority of the people of this country do not want Corral.¹¹³

Shortly thereafter, Felix Díaz, whose name had also been mentioned as a candidate, publicly renounced any involvement, but let it be known that his uncle, the President, was disposed to favour Dehesa's candidacy. 114

After having communicated with Díaz, the National Porfirian Circle, at their meeting held on June 22, 1910, proclaimed their nominations-- Díaz for President and Teodoro Dehesa for Vice-President. At the beginning, of June Dehesa graciously accepted the nomination at a tumultuous

gathering that had been prepared for him in the Theatre 115
Dehesa in Veracruz port. How are we to explain his

acceptance in the light of the letter he wrote to the President scarcely a month earlier? Some historians have seen in this a manoeuvre by the evil, master politician Díaz, who was using Dehesa merely to draw fire away from the

growing anti-reelectionist movement. It has also been suggested that Díaz wanted a democratic element in the campaign to impress foreign countries, but that he never wavered in his support for Corral. ¹¹⁶ The historian and statesman, Lopez Portillo, remarks that Díaz was blind. ¹¹⁷ Sodi de Pallares thought that he was merely stubborn. ¹¹⁸ Another historian argues that he wanted himself to look good by taking votes away from Corral through the inclusion of Dehesa as Corral's opponent in the election. ¹¹⁹

None of these assertions appear to be correct. The answer provided by Dr. Vázquez Gómez in his Memoirs, however, explains both Dehesa's acceptance and the President's actions. Vázquez Gómez had by this time been declared as the nominee for Vice-President by the Anti-reelectionist party. As a friend of the President, he records numerous conversations with Díaz where he suggested that the President throw his weight behind Dehesa's candidacy because "...IF HE IS ELECTED WE WOULD ACCEPT THIS, PERHAPS AVOIDING THE DANGER OF A REVOLUTION (my capitals)." ¹²⁰ Díaz's answer was that one could not always do in political life what one wanted. In other words, the President did favour Dehesa as Vice-President, as Limantour himself noted.

Dehesa must have sensed this and decided in a last-ditch effort-- he was aware of his popularity throughout Mexico-- to try and wrest the President away from the influence of Limantour and the Científicos. The unfortunate

fact, as recorded above, is that by this time the President had come to be utterly dependent on this group. He was not the absolute dictator as has been argued, but was himself dependent, especially after 1900, not only on his Finance Minister, but also on the Científico group who wielded so much power as Governors and bureaucrats throughout the country. A furious campaign was therefore launched by the Científicos against Dehesa. Limantour also confronted the President. Most likely he used the same strategy that he had used earlier, the threat of his resignation. In any case, Limantour observes that Díaz told him that he had limited his interference by telling Dehesa's supporters that they were free

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to launch his candidacy but without his, Díaz's, help.

Vice-President Corral too, who had acquired considerable political power earlier as Minister of the Interior, as well as Vice-President, unleashed a campaign to remove Dehesa supporters from office and diminish the chances of

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victory. In any event, the President must have pressured the Chamber of Deputies who had the task of verifying the votes for the results were not unexpected--Corral received 17,177 votes to Dehesa's 1394. On September 27, 1910,

the Chamber of Deputies declared Díaz and Corral the

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winners. The die was cast. There was now no turning back because the President had refused to compromise with those who demanded a gradual liberalization of Mexican political life. In early October, Madero left Mexico City where he

had just been released under his own recognizance. His destination was San Antonio, Texas. Some days later the Plan of San Luis Potosí, declaring the recent elections null and void, and calling on all Mexicans to overthrow the Díaz regime, was published and circulated. ¹²⁴ The Mexican Revolution was officially underway.

Madero's call to arms, however, had already been anticipated by revolutionaries in Veracruz. These were the remnants of the PLM rebellion at Acayucan who had been joined by workers fleeing the government's suppression at Río Blanco as well as others. The State of Veracruz, known for its penchant for liberal democracy, which ambience had been preserved by Dehesa, had early responded to the call for the formation of Liberal Clubs by Ponciano Arriaga in ¹²⁵ 1900. A Liberal Club, Redención, had been founded in the port city as well as an opposition newspaper ¹²⁶ Excelsior. Other parts of the State had responded ¹²⁷ too. In addition, revolutionary activity had been continuous in Orizaba after the Río Blanco massacre. Early in 1908, a textile worker, Juan Olivares, who had been involved in the labour dispute, had been sent by the PLM to blow up the power house at Necaxa which produced electrical power for the textile factories. Olivares reached Río Blanco ¹²⁸ but somehow the plans were not successful. In that same year, another PLM revolutionary leader was operating in Veracruz and was the object of considerable concern on the ¹²⁹ part of the authorities. Also, an adherent of the more

moderate Madero party, Rafael Tapía, a well-known saddler in Orizaba, had been holding meetings in his house with various people who were to figure prominently in later events. At Madero's behest in April, 1910, the Liberal Club, Ignacio de la Llave, as successor to the workers' mutualist society, was founded with Gabriel Gavira as president and Tapía as treasurer. Hounded by the jefe político who had been forced on the Canton by the Científicos after the events at Río Blanco, Tapía appealed to Dehesa, who suggested and arranged a meeting between Tapía and the President. Tapía was thus able to remain in freedom, planning and waiting for Madero's instructions.

Rumours of a workers' uprising were rampant in Orizaba and Díaz ordered the jefe político to take all precautions. In July, there was an isolated attack on the town of Aloyac led by the future Governor, Candido Aguilar. In the same month too, a much more serious undertaking was being planned.

One year after the abortive revolt in Acayucan, Cándido Donato Padua, one of the leaders, had signed a solemn revolutionary pact with Hilario Salas, Samuel Ramírez, Pedro Carvajal and Juan García, pledging to continue the struggle against the Díaz regime. In July, 1910, Padua joined forces with the notorious bandit, Santana Rodriquez, known as Santanon, in an effort to broaden the struggle. News of the impending revolt filtered through to the authorities, although the jefe político, Camacho, did not think that they were anything but "pure fantasy." In

September and October Santanon appeared in and around the Cantons of Acayucan and Minatitlán, where his name was on everyone's lips. ¹³⁸ Together with Padua, an attack was

planned on San Andrés Tuxtla. It was unsuccessful and ¹³⁹ resulted in Santanon's death.

When Madero crossed the border from San Antonio on November 29, 1910, minor insurrections broke out all over Mexico. In Veracruz, these were already underway because the Mexican Revolution in Veracruz had anticipated Madero by some four years. Rumours had been circulating since the beginning of November that an armed uprising had been planned. On November 21, an insignificant attack was made ¹⁴⁰ on the barracks of the Rurales near Orizaba. It was easily put down and did not achieve its aim of sparking a general uprising of the people of Veracruz. As in other parts of Mexico, the ideas of the PLM were too radical most Veracruzans. Whatever role the PLM revolutionaries were to play in the Revolution would be circumscribed by other groups; but they were the ones who were trained and ready to continue their armed assault on the Porfirian system. Many of these men would also later desert the PLM and join the Madero movement. Such was the case with the leader of the Acayucan revolt, Hilario Salas.

As the fateful New Year approached, the situation in Mexico was changing rapidly although the head of the State Police in Orizaba, Colonel Gaudencio de la Llave, could report to the President:

Neither in this Canton nor in Córdoba, nor in Huatusco, nor in Veracruz, is there any armed movement against the government... despite the continued agitation of El Dictamen and La Opinión against the government.

Rafael Tapía is totally ineffective, remains in hiding and wields no influence among the small farmers (rancheros).¹⁴²

This report was certainly optimistic and premature. In December there were reports that a bomb had been removed from the house of the jefe político of Veracruz and that more had been destined for other officials. ¹⁴³ Shortly thereafter, Rafael Tapía appeared in the Canton of Córdoba with a group of armed, mounted revolutionaries. ¹⁴⁴ Gustavo Madero estimated that there were 1500 rebels operating in Veracruz, which thus put this State at the top of the list of revolutionary activity. ¹⁴⁵ The situation was judged sufficiently serious for General Maas to suggest the formation of an Auxiliary Corps of Volunteers, which was established in February. ¹⁴⁶ A report that Tapía was operating with six thousand riflemen around Minatitlán was probably a gross exaggeration. ¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, he continued to elude the federal troops and, by March, 1911, had not been found. ¹⁴⁸ By April, 1911, the Revolution had spread throughout the country. In Veracruz, the government effectively controlled only three cities, Xalapa, Veracruz and Orizaba. ¹⁴⁹ One revolutionary group operating near Chinameca near Minatitlán engaged federal troops and were disastrously beaten. ¹⁵⁰ Near Acayucan, despite the fact that the Salas brothers and Donato Padua had left to direct

the revolutionary movement in the famous Valle Nacional,
other rebels kept the residents of the town in a state of
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fear.

As events were unfolding, Dehesa was complaining to
the President about the lack of decisiveness of the federal
forces in Acayucan. He reported that the army was guarding
the federal garrison, but not the Canton, leaving the way
open for the rebels to operate with impunity in the
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countryside. Papantla was also exposed to attack since
the ninth regiment of Federal Guards had decided to bivouac
in Furbero, Puebla, where there was apparently no danger of
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attack.

In February, newspapers had been calling for the
resignation of Corral, accusing him of being the cause of
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the present disturbances. Again Díaz considered the
alternative of bringing Reyes and Dehesa into the Cabinet,
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and again he wavered. Then the entire Cabinet resigned
with the exception of Limantour and General Cosío, and new
Ministers were appointed in their place. However, none of
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these were either of the Reyes or Dehesa factions. On
February 14, Madero had quietly crossed into Mexico and, on
May 10, Ciudad Juárez was captured by rebel forces.
The President, suffering from a festering jaw, now left much
of the decision-making to Limantour. The Minister of
Finance was convinced that the rebel forces could not be
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contained. Consequently, the old President presented his
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resignation to the Mexican Congress on May 25. Dehesa

tried to maintain his authority for a while but was forced by public opinion to resign. After negotiating with the chief of the rebel forces, a General Ramos, about his successor, Dehesa presented his own resignation to the Veracruz Chamber of Deputies on June 3, 1911. ¹⁵⁹ Of his resignation the noted historian, García Granados wrote:

The Governor of Veracruz, Teodoro Dehesa, who had been more respected than any other Governor by public opinion, and who had left significant liberty to the press, maintained himself for a while then decided to cede his power to the demagogic wave and was succeeded by a series of impetuous rebels at the service of the intriguers in Mexico. ¹⁶⁰

One of Dehesa's last official acts was to accompany the ex-President to Veracruz port where he saw Díaz board the Ypiranga amidst a twenty-one gun salute from the warships. ¹⁶¹ in the harbour.

With his resignation, Dehesa's official political role in Mexico and Veracruz was ended. But what about his unofficial role? A man so involved in the political life of his country as an important counterweight in federal politics and Governor of an important State could not have been expected to remain outside the political scene whether he wanted to or not. His presence in Veracruz as a private citizen and as one who was always determined to exercise his basic right of free speech, would be associated with this or that faction whether he liked it or not. Certainly his political opponents would never have believed that he was not involved even where this was definitely not the

case. He was accordingly accused of having a role in the counterrevolutionary attempt by Felix Díaz in 1912. And then he was accused of being sympathetic to the brutal and short-lived Huerta regime. None of these charges could be verified although Dehesa probably had some sympathy for Felix Díaz as a man who had been his personal friend. However, Dehesa was far too clear-headed a politician to think that the old General's nephew would have had any chance of capturing a new role for the Porfirian party. On the other hand, he was never, as others asserted, a sort of fifth-columnist in the Porfirian movement, working against their attempts to recapture the presidency.

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The truth is that Dehesa, although a friend and loyal supporter of Porfirio Díaz, had had his own ideas about how Mexico ought to have been run. He was adamantly opposed to the Científicos for a number of reasons. Despite Limantour's talent for finance, which Dehesa acknowledged, he believed that their plan for the development of Mexico, especially the large role accorded foreigners, was wrong. Above all, he believed that every one had the right to speak the truth and give voice to his ideas. Thus he allowed opposition papers to flourish in Veracruz, only intervening when there was blatant distortion of the truth. This attitude was considered treasonous by the Científicos. Furthermore, he believed in orderly development and that Mexico needed peace and good government, not revolution, in order to progress. This is the sole reason behind his help

to Madero in choosing a new Governor. It did not mean that he had any sympathy for the Anti-Reelectionists who he thought had turned Mexico onto a violent path from which it would be difficult to recover. How right he was to be! Despite Díaz's resignation and the peace pact proposed by Madero, the violence did not come to an end.

On May 25, 1911, Eliezer Espinosa, the interim Governor of Veracruz, telegraphed the Ministry of the Interior that there were rumours that the revolutionary forces were about to attack the plaza in Veracruz City. He also reminded them that there were many interests that needed protection such as the foreign ships in the harbour, arms in the Customs, and about eight hundred military and civilian prisoners. Madero's answer is not on record, but he did receive the message. Luckily the rumours were false and the city was spared. On June 7, the new President entered the capital and was given a tumultuous greeting. A few days after Díaz's departure, General Bernardo Reyes met with Dehesa in the port city where they both agreed to abstain from any political activity. Reyes also indicated his intention of assisting in the re-establishment of law and order and helping the new President. The next day Dehesa was politely asked to come to the capital by Emilio Vázquez, the New Minister of the Interior. Dehesa had requested an interview with President Madero for the express purpose of settling the question of a new Governor of Veracruz. On this visit he was accompanied by Demetrio.

Salazar, a Veracruz Deputy to the Mexican Congress. Madero received them very cordially and Dehesa made his purpose plain, saying that he had spoken with General Reyes who was disposed to assist in the restoration of public order. He also assured Madero that neither Reyes nor himself were interested in contesting an election, nor would they be promoting or backing any of their followers. Madero was obviously delighted with this response. He slapped Dehesa jocularly on the thigh and exclaimed that friends of this class were the best, that the Revolution had not triumphed in order to depose all the functionaries, Deputies, Judges and Senators, and that democracies demanded electoral battles because this was necessary to the cause of liberty. After listening to this outburst of idealism Dehesa quietly asked Madero:

Dehesa: How old are you?

Madero: I am thirty-eight years old.

Dehesa: And I am sixty-three, and of those, two-thirds have been devoted to political affairs.

Experience had demonstrated that between us electoral battles are not possible without matters degenerating into quarrels, from which all of us will lose, even the revolutionaries. You will know what policy you must follow. I have fulfilled a patriotic duty in speaking as I have done. 166

Dehesa's perception of the reality of Mexican politics was wise to the point of prophecy. With hindsight one can see how right this assessment had been; but at the time few people would have believed that the Revolution had not ended; and that its worst and bloodiest phase had not even begun.

Dehesa then returned to Veracruz where he helped prepare the ground for a State election for a new Governor. On October 1, Madero and Pino Suárez were elected President and Vice-President. On January 28, 1912, the election for Governor of Veracruz was also held. Showing his determination to work for the restoration of order, Dehesa refused to support another aspirant, Leycegui, who was an old Porfirista but anathema to the electorate. Neither would he support the revolutionary Gabriel Gavira, who had initiated the November 20 uprising in Aztaacan, Veracruz. Instead, he threw his weight behind the Madero candidate, Francisco Lagos Cházaro. ¹⁶⁷ However, this was as far as his support for the new government went. He also refused to accept the post of Minister of the Interior in ¹⁶⁸ the new Cabinet which was offered him by Madero. Gavira, disappointed with the election results, launched a revolt in the State. It was short-lived, however, and Gavira was ¹⁶⁹ captured and incarcerated in San Juan de Ulua.

This election was Dehesa's last political involvement, but one which demonstrated that he had definitely realized the need for change and that there was no turning back to the old order. He is thus truly a transitional figure from the Porfiriato to the Revolution. His successful attempt to bring Díaz and Madero together and his involvement in the transition to a Madero Governor in Veracruz both attest to this fact. The historical problem here is why, if he was such a clear thinker, did he not

break with the Díaz regime earlier and throw his weight behind political change? The answer is both that he did and he did not, at the same time. Political disloyalty to the old President Díaz was not in Dehesa's character. But he also firmly believed that Díaz, if he could have been convinced to resist the Científicos, could have been persuaded to bring more modern elements into Mexican political life, and even bring about an institutional reform. It is clear that Dehesa, while he continued to support the President, also opposed, wherever and whenever he could, the policies of the Científicos. These were, however, the official policies of the regime, and Francisco Bulnes's accusation that Dehesa was "traitorous" therefore has some validity. On the other hand, Dehesa could have made life much more difficult for the presidential aspirant, Madero, on his two political trips to Veracruz. That he chose not to do so must be attributed to two reasons: first, he was genuinely upset by the events of Acayucan and Río Blanco, and wished to see far-reaching reforms for the working class and the peasants; secondly, he accorded Madero the right to speak openly and oppose Díaz because it was Madero's constitutional right to do so. Dehesa was always torn between the letter of constitutional right and the necessity of ensuring the peace that was necessary for the nation to progress. For his own part, he never lowered himself to obsequious behaviour, always telling the President what he thought was the truth. This

right, especially in his attitude to the press, he accorded others.

In December, 1911, Dehesa returned from Xalapa to the port city so as to be away from the State capital and avoid being accused of any political manoeuvring against the new government.¹⁷⁰ The real reason was that he had become quickly disenchanted with the new government, although he did not translate this into political action. Nevertheless, his opponents, Madero supporters, refused to believe that Dehesa, as an intimate friend and political associate of the Porfirian regime, would have been able to refrain from covert political activity. Many were the occasions when complaints were made to Madero about Dehesa's alleged activities. These feelings were exacerbated by Dehesa's refusal to go any further in supporting the new government openly, mainly because of the continuation in office of so many Científico elements under the Madero administration.¹⁷¹ Despite the fact his daughter's father-in-law, General García Peña, was an old friend of Dehesa, and was now Madero's Minister of War, the accusations continued. Consequently Peña sent Ignacio Muñoz to Veracruz to interview Dehesa in order to hear directly from his own mouth the truth of the allegations. Dehesa's answer was unequivocal not only in its denial of any political complicity, but also in his feelings towards Madero and the new government:

I have not participated in any revolutionary business. Such participation corresponds exclusively to

and is the right of the followers of Mr. Madero, who in my humble judgement is entirely responsible for the situation in which he finds himself, since he created it.

He who owes nothing, fears nothing. Nacho (Muñoz) spoke to me in your name suggesting that I leave the country for one or two months, believing that my presence would complicate the internal situation and that this would cause an intervention by our northern neighbours, and consequently would mean my imprisonment....

I am not a friend of Mr. Madero, because I am first a friend of the nation, and there are a great majority of citizens who feel the same as I. I believe that Mr. Madero can only count on the help of the army, which is material force. For he does not have the force of public opinion which is moral force, and on which all government must rest, and which is the major enemy which he has. Please excuse my frankness, but you know that I have not lost the ability to think, nor have I abdicated the right to express my opinions....

When Mr. Madero came to Veracruz a year ago, I, as governor, was able to give him all guarantees for his safety, he as President of the Republic can not do the same for me....

Nevertheless, if Mr. Madero and his colleagues believe that my presence here will aggravate their difficulties, then I am disposed to leave, BUT THEY MUST UNDERSTAND THAT I DO IT FOR MY COUNTRY AND NOT BECAUSE OF ANY FEAR (my italics).172

This letter was taken by General Peña and shown to President Madero who said frankly that he personally did not have any reason whatsoever to see Dehesa leave the country, except that, given Dehesa's moral influence in Veracruz he should not create any political obstruction for the new government. 173 Madero's thoughts on the opposition role that Dehesa might have played were due to his own fears and insecurities. There is no shred of evidence that Dehesa was involved in any overt or covert political activity. Consequently his answer to Madero was swift and cryptic. He objected, he said, to Madero's suggestion that he would be an obstructionist, explaining that he had only

analyzed the political situation for the new President's benefit, and that he had not publicized his ideas in any newspaper. ¹⁷⁴ To a friend in Mexico City, who was enquiring about his well-being, he answered again that since he owed nothing, he had nothing to fear, that he had remained in the port in utter tranquility, and that if any arbitrary act were committed against him, that it would injure the government rather than himself. ¹⁷⁵

Nevertheless, Dehesa was not able to keep his name out of politics, and, despite warnings of the danger he was in, he remained in the country. However, with the attempted coup by Felix Díaz, his situation worsened. Notwithstanding his protestations to the contrary, his name was linked with the coup. He was called, in fact, its "moral" leader, although there was no evidence to attest to this allegation. ¹⁷⁶ Madero and members of his Cabinet felt it strange that Dehesa should have returned to Veracruz just before the coup attempt, and so General Peña compelled him to leave the country in the interest of his own safety. ¹⁷⁷ As General Peña explained to Mrs. Dehesa, nothing could have convinced the revolutionaries, Felix Díaz and his supporters, that Dehesa would not have been sympathetic to their plan. For their part, the Vice-President, Pino Suárez, and the Governor of Veracruz could not believe that Dehesa had maintained a neutral position in the situation. ¹⁷⁸

Consequently, Dehesa left for Havana with his eldest son, Raúl, early in January, 1913. ¹⁷⁹ After hearing

/ of persistent rumours to have him assassinated there, he
left for New York at the end of the month. ¹⁸⁰ From Key
West, where his boat docked, he took a train to Washington,
where he stayed for three days before continuing on to New
York on February 26. ¹⁸¹ One week later came the bitter news
of the death of his old friend and colleague, General
Bernardo Reyes, who had been killed at the head of his
troops in an attempt to overthrow Madero. ¹⁸² Then came the
news which was not unexpected. Guillermo Obregón (senior)
wrote to him from Mexico City saying that while he had been
visiting General Peña, under whose guarantee he was being
held prisoner, the news had come of the President's
imprisonment. He wrote;

The dreadful 'Madero' administration has come to
an end now....I believe that you can return whenever
you want without any difficulty. ¹⁸³

Dehesa, now that the Madero people were out of the way,
felt it safe to return to his home. Consequently he booked
the next passage and returned to Veracruz in the second
week of March, 1913. ¹⁸⁴ If he believed that his life would
be any safer under interim President Huerta, because the
latter had been a Porfirista, Dehesa was mistaken. Before
much time had elapsed it became very clear that President
Huerta would consider as his enemies any of the old
Porfiristas who did not give him their express support. And
Huerta, unlike Madero, had not the slightest scruples about
eliminating his enemies, or those he thought to be such,
without the bother of any proof, let alone a trial. ¹⁸⁵

Dehesa could not have expected much else from Huerta. The general had been in charge of surveying land in Veracruz in the early nineties and his modus operandi had been one of the causes of the Papantla revolt. A strong reason for the mutual antipathy between the two men was certainly that Dehesa had had Huerta replaced as head of the surveying operation by the President's nephew, Ignacio Muñoz.

Dehesa's biographer remarks on his public announcement to remain apart from any government, an attitude which angered Huerta. ¹⁸⁶ Dehesa's correspondence as well as his subsequent actions demonstrate the integrity of this statement. However, there is much evidence of his trying to play an influential part in federal politics by trying to secure the election of Felix Díaz. And there is also much evidence showing his manoeuvring in his home State trying to secure the removal of Maderista Deputies and their replacement by men of his own choosing. On February 21, both Madero and Pino Suárez were assassinated, presumably on the orders of General Huerta. Immediately the agreement reached at the Pact of the Embassy, according to which free elections would be held, was put into effect. Felix Díaz, advised by Rodolfo Reyes, was primarily charged ¹⁸⁷ with choosing the new Cabinet. By March, 1913, plans were being laid for the election which was announced for ¹⁸⁸ October 26 by the Congress. By agreement political parties were allowed to organize and nominate candidates. Felix Díaz was the strongest presidential candidate opposing

Huerta; but Huerta was being harassed by the growing revolutionary movement from the north centred around Coahuila under Governor Venustiano Carranza who had refused to recognize him. He was thus beginning to have doubts about the pending election and, by June, there were rumours that there was a rift between himself and Díaz. In the meantime Dehesa had returned to the port where he was nominated for the post of honorary vice-president of the resuscitated National Liberal Party, a position which he accepted.¹⁸⁹ But his nomination by a commission of the party to be Felix Díaz's running-mate in the coming election was refused.¹⁹⁰ A suggestion from Joaquín Baranda's former secretary that Dehesa would be perfect as Minister of the Interior under Díaz brought an emphatic "In no way!"¹⁹¹ After March however, he was in constant contact with an old friend and former Deputy to the Mexican Congress for Veracruz, Rafael Rodríguez Talavera. On April 13, Talavera wrote:

Tomorrow I will meet with Iñigo Noriego and exchange impressions with him....

Regarding the political situation, a preliminary step that will have to be resolved will be the "Convocation". If this is carried out legally, Felix's campaign will likely be successful, but if not, as most of us presume, then General Huerta will be able to retain power and will use the most terrible means of force to realize his ends.... We can only hope.¹⁹²

There was no doubt that Dehesa supported Díaz's campaign in the election of 1913. There was also no doubt that he did not trust Huerta.¹⁹³ His main fear at this time was that the dissension in the Huerta Cabinet would pave

the way for further unrest in the country and perhaps a restitution of the Maderistas. He was referring of course to the possibility that Huerta would out-manoeuvre Díaz, thus dashing all Dehesa's hopes for a government which would consist of honourable men and no Científicos.

Regarding this, he wrote Talavera commenting that in abnormal circumstances the actual criteria of the law should be substituted by necessity, in order to achieve what was best for the country. ¹⁹⁴ Dehesa at this point was

pinning his hopes on two factors. Although he disliked the Huerta regime, he despised the Maderistas; he was thus hoping that Huerta, instead of concentrating his forces around the capital would take the field against the northern "Constitutionalists," putting an end to the Maderista threat. At the same time, he was hoping against hope that Huerta would honour his election promise, which Dehesa felt would result in a Díaz victory. Talavera's opinion was that Huerta seemed inclined to adhere to his

¹⁹⁵ pact with Díaz. News of the progress of the rebels in the north filled both men with foreboding, more so because of the apparent indifference to events of their star, Felix

¹⁹⁶ Díaz. Dehesa's advice to Talavera was to try to obtain an interview with Huerta "using the language of the military

¹⁹⁷ camp." The object of the interview would have been to try and smooth over the differences between Huerta and Díaz, which Dehesa felt must be accomplished at all cost if the ¹⁹⁸ rebellion were to be crushed.

In the meantime, Talavera and Dehesa had been working assiduously to ensure that their people would find some success in the State elections, or at least that the Maderista element would not control the State. There was still a possibility that some of these might try to assassinate Dehesa. While he stayed in Veracruz this was unlikely, but in Xalapa, the situation was not as favourable. ¹⁹⁹ The forthcoming elections had galvanized all the political groups there and even Talavera had decided to form a political club. ²⁰⁰ Dehesa's advice was that he would find things very difficult in Xalapa: the old guard Porfiristas were avoiding contact with even such a person as Colonel Tovar, who had been the leader of the Circle of Friends. Would not the same thing happen to Talavera, he asked?

I don't know why our friends are so ashamed of the past, when, without it, there would be no present and no future. Frail humans! Poor General Díaz. Don Porfirio to whom fate has dealt the major disillusionment of his life. ²⁰¹

At this point Dehesa was hoping that Huerta would "honour his obligations" and decide to retain power regardless of the outcome of the elections. A rumoured plan that the pro-Madero forces were trying to seduce the General into siding with them was crazy and ought to be rejected if the General did not want to damage his name before History. Wrote Dehesa:

The plan is machiavellian and I wish that our friend General Huerta will remain firm and united with the OLD REGIME THAT WAS DEMONSTRATED TO BE THE BEST OF

MANY THAT WE EVER HAD. (my italics) I wish God will enlighten our General so that he rejects the temptations of the Devil which in this case is Maderism. 202

This odium of Dehesa's for Maderism was based in part on the inclusion of Científicos in the Madero government. It was also based on the conduct of some of those supporting Madero in Veracruz. On June 21, 1911, the so-called Xalapan Dramas had occurred, in which assassinations had been carried out by various Maderistas in high positions in the army and the Veracruz Legislature. ²⁰³ What Dehesa wanted, therefore, was to obtain a categorical refusal from the interim President to hold the elections for Deputies or to prevent them from taking their seats in the Legislature. ²⁰⁴ Both Dehesa's letters were shown to Felix Díaz but Talavera felt that nothing would be accomplished by this.

Indeed, Talavera's letters displayed a mood of resignation and even despair because of the reluctance of the federal government to take any decisive action in regard to Veracruz. He was also in despair because of the many rumours of plots and counter-plots that were keeping the government in a state of turmoil. ²⁰⁵

Talavera, despondent over his lack of success in the capital, then decided to return to Veracruz and run for office himself. Not only, he remarked, in order to serve the State and his party, but also because he was in need of a means of support " after fifty years of having been loyal and serving in the best manner possible." ²⁰⁶ Dehesa was only too happy to help and advised his son, Raúl, who was

campaigning in Xalacingo, of Talavera's wish. However, events were overtaking Dehesa's wishes and plans to restore the old regime in Veracruz, if not in the country. Already, in February, Venustiano Carranza had declared his State independent of the federal government, refusing to recognize Huerta. By June, the "Constitutionalist" forces in Veracruz were gathering momentum. In the north of the State they were led by Cándido Aguilar, in the Huasteca by General Mariano Navarret and Colonel Heriberto Jara, and in the south by Hilario Salas, who had abandoned the PLM for the Constitutionalist movement.

The State government was in the hands of the Maderista Governor, Antonio Pérez Rivera, who refused to take any action against the rebels. On July 2, 1913, he was replaced by Eduardo Caúz on orders of Huerta.

Because of the unstable situation, but probably also because of his tenuous legal position, and a worsening military one, Huerta's paranoia grew. He began to suspect almost everyone of treason. On July 14, Dehesa received a message from the Minister of the Interior, Dr. Urrutia, to present himself in the capital on urgent State business. Arriving there on July 16, he was questioned by the Minister on alleged connections with the Maderistas. Dehesa was forced to write a letter to the interim President denying having any connection with the Madero supporters, and also that the accusation that he had been trying to foment revolution through the press was untrue.

Furthermore, he added, he did not aspire to any political office but that in political matters he had not abdicated the right to think or speak freely. In respect to the elections, he declared, it was the interim President's right to choose whether or not to hold them as it was his choice whether to choose Felix Díaz or someone else. Dehesa reiterated that he only wanted to live in peace, but independently, not holding any office or commission from the federal government. Furthermore, he added, when people spoke of Dehesism, that this was a branch of Porfirism, which he had had the honour to serve. On the question of local politics, he explained:

I must say that I have always desired the removal of Pérez Rivera from his post. Why? Because in my view he represents a maderista element which is contrary to your government. 210

Huerta's answer was unequivocal and reassuring. He exclaimed that he was entirely satisfied with Dehesa's declaration and believed totally in his sincerity. 211 Dehesa for his part assumed that the matter was closed. How wrong he was! 212 A few months later, the elections were held, and, as could have been anticipated, Díaz, having been outmanoeuvred, was forced to flee the country in October. 213 However, the political unrest and intrigues continued. There is an unsigned letter in the Dehesa archive warning the ex-Governor of the dangerous position he was in. The letter cited Dehesa's adhesion to Díaz's candidacy; the machinations of the Maderistas, led by the

defeated governor Gavira who wanted revenge against Dehesa; and the rumours that were being spread about a "dehesista plot."²¹⁴ On January 10, 1914, El Dictámen of Veracruz

published an article in which it charged that the Huerta government was compiling a list of enemies who would shortly be dealt with, and valiantly distanced itself from the regime, calling on Huerta to resign.²¹⁵ It must be

remembered that the newspaper was owned by a close friend of Dehesa, who had protected its freedom while he was governor. On January 25, Dehesa received a visit from Gabriel Huerta, the President's nephew, who showed him a telegramme from the President ordering Dehesa to the capital for a discussion.²¹⁶ Dehesa answered that he

desired to stay in Veracruz since his wife was ill, and furthermore, if the President wished to discuss political questions with him, that it would be a waste of time since he had said all he could in July, and that he was not connected to any political movement whatsoever.²¹⁷

However, Huerta was adamant and Dehesa was forced to leave for Mexico City the next day. Fearing the worst, Dehesa had his daughter Emma, daughter-in-law of General García Peña, Minister of War in Huerta's Cabinet, accompany him. His precaution was well-advised since they were escorted by Gabriel Huerta and Antonio Villavicencio, who were suspected of having orders to assassinate Dehesa on the train.²¹⁸

Dehesa arrived in Mexico City the next day where he

stayed in the home of an English friend, Frederic Adams,
having been informed by President Huerta to consider it his
219
prison. Nothing further occurred but after a few days

when Dehesa requested permission to return to Veracruz,
Huerta invited him to a dinner at General Peña's house. 220

During the dinner, which was uneventful except for an
amusing incident when the lights failed and Huerta ran out
of the house with drawn pistol, Dehesa was not confronted
with any political questions, nor did Huerta explain why he
had been summoned. When Dehesa asked when he could return
home Huerta's answer was whenever he desired, and that he
was going to put a Pullman car at his disposal. Dehesa

refused the offer but Huerta told him to either accept it
or go to prison! 221 The Pullman car was ordered and Dehesa

222
returned to Veracruz port on February 1. It had been a
close call for Dehesa from the man who he had expected to
return the country to peace and constitutional government.
It was also a great political mistake. Months later, in a
letter to his old friend and ex-President he explained what
had occurred:

Huerta has resigned and has left the country. Only
his discredited regime could have made the
revolutionaries succeed. Possibly history will RECORD
HIM AS THE MOST EXECRABLE PRESIDENT MEXICO EVER HAD.
(my italics) 223

In this assessment Dehesa was quite correct. However, he
had compromised his own reputation by supporting the Huerta
regime regardless of his motives. Three months after
Huerta's fall, Dehesa was also obliged to leave the

country. He had attempted to restore the old regime and for this he earned the enmity of the Carranza government.

Dehesa should not have expected anything else. By this time memories of the Pax Porfiriana were disappearing. The most recent memories by the middle of 1914 were the brutal Huerta regime and the civil war to regain a moderate constitutional government which was costing so many lives. The Carranza government therefore confiscated his houses in Xalapa and Veracruz, and, his life in danger, he was forced to leave the country a second time. ²²⁴ This time his exile would be longer. From Havana he again made his way to New York, but eventually returned to Jacksonville, Florida, and thence to Havana where he had his family settled. Repeated letters to President Carranza asking for the return of his properties and permission to return to Mexico went unheeded. In one long letter he asked Carranza to explain why he had received such treatment. But there was no reply. It never occurred to him that there is a time in the politics of all nations when reason cannot transcend a charged politically emotional atmosphere. It never occurred to him that he was considered an enemy of change because of his compromises with the Huerta regime. ²²⁵ It probably did not occur to him also that the old regime had disappeared forever, at least in the political sense.

One year later his wife was obliged for reasons of health to return to Veracruz. He was never to see her again. It was only after the death of Carranza, and under

the presidency of Obregón, that he was allowed to return. The rest of his life was spent peacefully in his house in Veracruz, where he was visited by old friends, among them the Indians who came to ask for advice on their land problems. On September 25, 1936, he passed away.

CHAPTER VII

NOTES

1. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.434; Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.111. Roeder argues that actual power passed to Limantour in 1896 with Díaz's dependency on Limantour's financial wizardry. Cf. also Valadés, Historia de un régimen, v.1, p.53, who claims that Díaz was upset by the death of his father-in-law who had been his guiding hand and who was so fearful of Mexico's future after his own death that he began to concern himself with the problem of a presidential successor.
2. José Yves Limantour, Apuntes sobre mi vida política (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa S.A., 1965), pp.105-117; Valadés, Historia de un régimen, loc. cit.; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.433.
3. Díaz Dufoo, Limantour, p.276; Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.126; Cf. Valadés, Historia de un régimen, v.1, p.55, who claims that Limantour was so certain that he would be named successor that he went to Europe on a trip.
4. Valadés, Historia de un régimen, loc. cit; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.433; Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.127.
5. Valadés, Historia de un régimen, loc. cit; García Granados, Historia de Mexico, v.3, p.38.
6. Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.128; Bellingeri and Sánchez, "Las estructuras agrarias", p.312.
7. Braderman, A Study of Political Parties, p.20; Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.351; Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.127; García Granados, Historia de Mexico, v.3, p.38; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.401.
8. Valadés, v.1, p.57; Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.351; Cecilia Sánchez Garrito Murquia, "El antireeleccionismo en Mexico 1867-1910" (PhD. dissertation, UNAM, 1964), p.67.
9. Braderman, A Study of Political Parties, p.20.
10. Beals, Anderson, Parkes, Rodolfo Reyes, Lopez-Portillo, Sánchez Garrito, and Roeder.
11. Sodi de Fallares. Dehesa, p.167; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.491.
12. Manero, El antiguo régimen, pp.283-318; Francisco Vázquez Gómez, Memorias políticas 1909-13 (Mexico

City: Imprenta Mundial, 1933), p.5; William D. Raat, "The Intellectual Life of Don Porfirio's Mexico, 1876-1910" (PhD. dissertation, State University of New York, 1966), pp.189-190. There is still considerable controversy as to whether the Científicos were a political group or not, and to date there is no detailed study of them. For a discussion of them see Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, pp.335-338, Breyman, "The Científicos", pp.91-97, and Limantour, Apuntes de mi vida, pp.21-22.

13. Jacqueline Ann Rice, The Porfirian Political Elite: Life Patterns of the Delegates to the 1892 Union Liberal Convention (Los Angeles: University of California, 1979), p.19. The Convention was held at the behest of veteran politician Rosenda Pineda for the purpose of nominating Díaz for the presidency; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.655; Valadés, Historia de un regimen, v.1, p.39; cf. Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.97 who see the Convention as an "economic conference disguised as a political one."

14. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.663.

15. Rice, Life Patterns, loc. cit; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.655; Breyman, "The Científicos", pp.91-97.

16. Rice, Life Patterns, p.22.

17. Breyman, "The Científicos", pp.91-97; Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, p.97. For the Manifesto see Manero, El antiguo régimen, pp.286-296, and Díaz Duffoo, Limantour, p.229.

18. Breyman, "The Científicos", pp.91-97; Cockroft, Intellectual Precursors, p.59; cf. Manero, El antiguo régimen, p.299, who gives the date of its demise as 1893 and Limantour, Apuntes de mi vida, p.21, who claims little participation in the Union as well as with the Científicos.

19. Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, v.2, p.24; Parkes, A History of Mexico, p.300; Lopez Portillo, Elevación y caída, p.212. It has been asserted that there were in essence two groups--the larger group of supporters and those close to power such as Limantour. See Breyman, "The Científicos", pp.91-97.

20. Parkes, A History of Mexico, p.301.

21. Breyman, "The Científicos", pp.91-97. See Zea, El Positivismo, for a discussion of Barrera.

22. Charles Curtis Cumberland, Mexican Revolution: Genesis under Madero (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), p.11.

23. Herbert A. Crossman, "José I. Limantour" (PhD. dissertation, Harvard University, 1949), pp.89-91.

24. Aston, The Public Career, p.52.

25. Granados, Historia de Mexico, v.2, p.258; Zea, El Positivismo, pp.236-37.

26. El Nacional, 15 March 1898.

27. Anthony T. Bryan, "Mexican Politics in Transition 1900-13: The Role of General Bernardo Reyes" (PhD. dissertation, University of Nebraska, 1969),

p.47; Breyman, "The Científicos", pp.91-97.

28. Breyman, "The Científicos", loc. cit; Trens, Historia de Veracruz, v.8, p.339; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.751; Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.330.

29. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, loc. cit; Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.331.

30. Rodolfo Reyes, De mi vida: memorias políticas, 1899-1913, 2 vols. (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva Madrid, 1929), v.1, pp.20-21.

31. Beals, Porfirio Díaz, loc. cit. remarks that "Into their hands fell the contracts for paving, lighting, local railways, roads. Mostly lawyers they were the legal representatives of the powerful foreign companies; they arranged the banking and industrial concessions, secured special favours, expedited legal procedures and milked all the teats of the cow"; Lopez-Portillo, Elevación y caída, p.212.

32. Lopez-Portillo, Elevación y caída, loc. cit; Reyes, De mi vida, p.21; Raat, The Intellectual Life, pp.189-190; Anderson, Mexican Textile Labour Movement, p.20; Araiza, Historia del movimiento obrero, v.2, p.24; Sánchez Garrito, "El antireeleccionismo", p.67. Garrito's assertion that "...situation and adequate persons seemed to appear just when Díaz needed them..." and that "...he developed the perfect plan..." to oppose Limantour with Baranda and Dehesa smacks too much of fate as well as conspiracy to be acceptable.

33. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.853; Anderson, Textile Labour Movement, p.27. Anderson argues that Díaz relied on the Científicos only for economic decisions and not for political ones. Why he makes this distinction is not clear since both areas are closely allied. The statement also does not appear to be correct.

34. Anderson, Textile Labour Movement, p.23.

35. Ibid., p.24.

36. Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.353; Cardoso & Hermosillo, La clase obrera, p.312; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.401.

37. Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.202; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.434.

38. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.435.

39. Ibid., p.433; Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, p.138.

40. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.753.

41. Ibid., p.615.

42. Dehesa to Limantour, 8 Nov. 1902, CPD, L27:13086-89; Dehesa to Díaz, 8 Nov. 1902, CPD, L27:13082-85.

43. Díaz to Dehesa, 15 Nov. 1902, CPD, L27:13078. His exact words were "...fria, patriotica y prudentemente." Dehesa to Díaz, 8 Nov. 1902, CPD, L27:13082-85.

44. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, loc. cit.

45. Ibid., p.616; Carlos de Fornaro, Mexico tal cual

es: comentarios (Philadelphia: n.p., 1969), p.128.

46. de Fornaro, Mexico tal cual es, p.23. The reasons were Limantour's bad health, his lack of knowledge of local politics, his unpopularity with the army, his aristocratic manner, foreign appearance, and that he was not a man of the people.

47. Dehesa to Díaz, 18 Mar. 1903, CPD, L28:3611-12.

48. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, loc. cit; Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.145.

49. For parts of Bulnes's speech see Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.146ff; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.754.

50. Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.155.

51. Joaquín Baranda, Memorandum on "Los cimientos políticos de la paz mexicana", Dec. 1901, ATD, File #14.

52. Díaz to Dehesa, 21 Sep. 1903, ATD; Dehesa to Díaz, 21 Sep. 1903, ATD.

53. Alcolea to Dehesa, 18 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

54. I. Muñoz to Senties, 19 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

55. Senties to Muñoz, 19 Nov. 1903, File #14.

56. Dehesa to Alcolea, 21 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

57. Alcolea to Dehesa, 22 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

58. Díaz to Dehesa, 23 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

59. Dehesa to Díaz, 23 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

60. Dehesa to Muñoz, 23 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

61. Dehesa to Herrera, 23 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14; Dehesa to Muñoz, 23 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

62. Dehesa to Muñoz, 24 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

63. Muñoz to Dehesa, 24 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14;

Alcolea to Dehesa, 24 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

64. Senties to Dehesa, 25 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

65. Dehesa to Muñoz, 26 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

66. Dehesa to Alcolea, 27 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

67. Muñoz to Dehesa, 27 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14;

Dehesa to Chavero, 27 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

68. El Popular (Mexico City), 27 Nov. 1903.

69. Francisco Dehesa to Dehesa, 27 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14;

70. Alcolea to Dehesa, 28 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14; Díaz Mirón et. al. to Dehesa, 28 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14; Dehesa to Díaz Mirón, 29 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

71. García Pena to Dehesa, 29 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14; J.B. Laurencio to Dehesa, 30 Nov. 1903, ATD, File #14.

72. Alcolea to Dehesa, 1 Dec. 1903, ATD, File #14; Rafael Dondé to Dehesa, 1 Dec. 1903, ATD, File #14; Dehesa to Díaz, 1 Dec. 1903, ATD, File #14; Díaz to Dehesa, 2 Dec. 1903, ATD, File #14.

73. Muñoz et. al. to Dehesa, 2 Dec. 1903, ATD, File #14; Alcolea to Dehesa, 3 Dec. 1903, ATD, File #14.

74. de Fornaro, Mexico tal cual es, p.23.

75. Dehesa to Díaz, 9 Dec. 1903, CPD, L28:15834-35; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, pp.624-25. The book in question was Juan Pedro Didapp, Partidos políticos de Mexico: la política del dinero y la política del

- patriotismo (Mexico City: Librería Española, 1903).
76. Dehesa to Díaz, 9 Dec. 1903, CPD, L28:15835-36.
77. Didapp to Díaz, 4 Nov. 1904, CPD, L29:14136-44.
- Months later runcours of Dehesa's assistance were still bothering the President. See Dehesa to Díaz, 24 May 1904, CPD, L29:6230 about accusations regarding yet another publication, Juan Pedro Didapp, Gobiernos militares (Mexico City: Librería Español, 1904).
78. Dehesa to Díaz, 25 Nov. 1904, CPD, L29:16251-56.
79. La Patria, 30 Nov. 1904.
80. See the discussion of the Acayucan rebellion in Chapter V and that of Río Blanco in Chapter VI.
81. Dehesa to Corral, 27 May 1903, ATD; Dehesa to Díaz, 27 May 1903, ATD.
82. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.74; Jesus Luna, La carrera publica de don Ramón Corral (Mexico City: S.E.P., 1975), p.98.
83. Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.370; cf. Parkes, Historia de Mexico, p.313, who saw Corral's election as the "...definitive fall of the Reyistas and the Jacobins..." from power.
84. Pérez, Teodoro A. Dehesa, p.14.
85. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, pp.767-68.
86. Ibid.; cf. Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.382.
87. Dehesa to Baranda, 4 Mar. 1908, ATD, File #16.
88. Baranda to Dehesa, 10 Mar. 1908, ATD, File #16.
89. Dehesa to Díaz, 4 Apr. 1908, ATD, File #16.
90. Dehesa to Miguel Cárdenas, 12 May 1908, ATD, File #15; Dehesa to Obregon González, Enrique Creel et. al., 12 May 1908, ATD, File #15; Creel to Dehesa, 29 June 1908, CPD, L33:9100; González to Dehesa, 29 July 1908, CPD, L33:11027.
91. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, P.772.
92. Meyer and Sherman, The Course of Mexican History, p.492; Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.406.
93. Roeder, Porfirio Díaz, v.2, p.404. El Diario del Hogar, 20 Oct. 1908, republished the "controversial" part of the interview.
94. El Diario del Hogar, 27 Oct. 1908.
95. El Diario del Hogar, 20 Oct. 1908.
96. Dehesa to Baranda, 11 Oct. 1908, ATD. Dehesa felt more strongly about the issue than Baranda.
97. Dehesa to Baranda, 29 Oct. 1908, ATD; Baranda to Dehesa 24 Oct. 1908, ATD.
98. de la Garza to Dehesa, 30 Sep. 1908, CPD, L33:13938-39; Dehesa to de la Garz, 5 Oct. 1908, CPD, L33:13940-43.
99. Manuel González Ramírez, Prologue to Epistolario y textos de Ricardo Flores Magó edited by Manuel González Ramírez (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económico, 1964), p.87; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, pp.365, 810.
100. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, loc. cit.

101. Vázquez Gómez, Memorias políticas, pp.20-21.
102. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, pp.887-888; Zilli, Historia sucinta, p.130.
103. Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.409; see also Luna, Corral, p.138.
104. de los Monteros to Dehesa, 3 Nov. 1909, CPD, File #15.
105. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.181; see especially her interview with José Vasconcelos, p.176, who was a member of the Anti-reelectionists.
106. Teodoro Dehesa, "April de 1910 y Junio de 1911", ATD. This recollection of the Revolution was also published in El Imparcial (Texas), 19 Feb. 1915; Stanley R. Ross, Francisco T. Madero: Apostle of Mexican Democracy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), p.99; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.866. Cf. Cumberland, Genesis, p. 104, who maintains that it was Madero's idea, and Granados, Historia de México, v.4, p.93, who argues it was Dehesa's.
107. Dehesa, "April de 1910", ATD.
108. Ibid; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.866.
109. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.180; Cumberland, Genesis, p.105; Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.415 goes as far as asserting that Felix Díaz and Dehesa gave Madero a timely warning. As far as could be ascertained it seems that Díaz merely refused to serve the warrant for Madero's arrest. Liceaga, Felix Díaz, p.33 claims that Corral ordered Felix Díaz to apply the Ley Fuga and that Díaz refused, telling Corral to give him the order in writing.
110. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p. 181; Bulletin announcing Madero's meeting in Orizaba, May 1910, CPD, L35:6601; García Granados, Historia de México, v.4, p.97; Armando María y Campos, Las memorias y las mejores cartas de Francisco I. Madero (Mexico City: Libro Mexicano Editores, 1956), p.109.
111. García Granados, Historia de México, loc. cit.
112. Dehesa to Díaz, 2 June 1910, CPD, L35:8652-59; García Granados, Historia de México, v.4, p.109, cites a letter from Madero to Vázquez Gómez dated 15 June 1910, in which Madero stated that if Díaz ran with an independent candidate rather than with a Científico, he would win and the revolution would not occur. Cumberland, Genesis, p.113, asserts that it was Vázquez Gómez's idea to promote Dehesa because of the former's fears after Madero's arrest.
113. Dehesa to Díaz, 2 June 1910, CPD, L35:8652-59.
114. Henderson, Felix Díaz, p.22; cf. Limantour, Apuntes de mi vida, pp.167-68, who also felt that Dehesa was the President's favourite.
115. Manifiesto of the NPC printed in González Ramírez, Epistolario y textos, pp.86-90; La Patria, 23 June 1910; Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.186.
116. García Granados, v.4, p.100; Beals, Porfirio Díaz, p.416; Cumberland, Genesis, p.113;

- Iturribarria, Porfirio Díaz ante la historia, p.368.
117. Lopez Portillo, Elección y caída, p.453.
118. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.186.
119. Manero, El antiguo régimen, pp.315-16.
120. Vázquez Gómez, Memorias políticas, p.57.
121. Limantour, Apuntes de mi vida, p.168.
122. Dehesa to Muñoz, 3 Oct. 1910, CPD, L35:15355-57; García Galvan to Pineda, CPD, L35:15358-59; S. Zugasti to Dehesa, 24 Sep. 1910, CPD, L35:13412; Dehesa to Muñoz, 3 oct. 1910, CPD, L35:13413.
123. El Diario, 28 Sep 1910.
124. Cumberland, Genesis, p.121.
125. Cockroft, Intellectual Precursors, p.94.
126. Ibid., p.111.
127. Albro III, Ricardo Flores Magón, p.98. Two PLM Clubs were formed in 1905 in Chinameca and Puerto Mexico (Coatzacoalcos).
128. Meyers, The Mexican Liberal Party, p.252; El Reproductor, 13 Aug. 1908, printed a copy of the letter from R. F. Magón to his brother Enrique.
129. Joaquén Maas to Díaz, 5 Oct. 1908, CPD, L35:14409. The activist in this case was Juan Sarabía.
130. Leonardo Pasquel, Prologue in Rafael Tapéa, Mi Participación revolucionaria, p.xvi. Among them were Gabriel Gavira, Francisco Cházaro, later Governor of Veracruz under Madero; Camerino Mendoza, leader of the "Red Battalion" during Carranza's rebellion; and Candido Aguilar, later Governor of Veracruz.
131. Ibid., pp.4-5; Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve historia, p.196.
132. Gómez to Díaz, 12 Feb. 1910, CPD, L35:20446-47. Tapía was definitely involved in armed revolutionary activity after November 1910. See Paul J. Vanderwood, Los rurales mexicanos (Mexico City: Fondo Cultura Económica, 1982), p.168; Portepetit to Ministry of Interior, 24 Feb. 1911, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4.
133. Gómez to Díaz, 22 July 1910, CPD, L35:9502-03; Díaz to Gómez, 25 July 1910, CPD, L35:9506.
134. Meyers, Mexican Liberal Party, p.336.
135. Padua, Movimiento revolucionario, pp.15-16.
136. Cockroft, Intellectual Precursors, p.145.
137. Licengas to Marín, 9 Sep. 1910; Camacho to Dehesa, 12 Sep. 1910.
138. El Diario, 19 Oct. 1910.
139. Albro III, Ricardo Flores Magón, p.205. Santanon was not just the "Robin Hood" as has often been claimed. He was also formally linked to the PLM. See Vanderwood, Rurales, p.47; El Diario, 20 Oct. 1910. Cumberland, Genesis, p.117 claims the revolt was easily put down. In fact, a fierce battle ensued although it only lasted one day.
140. Macedo to Dehesa, 17 Nov. 1910, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4; Dehesa to Ministry of Interior, 18 Nov. 1910, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4; Cpl. Amazquita to General Ramirez,

- 21 Nov. 1910, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4; Edwin Lieuwen, Mexican Militarism: The Political Rise and Fall of the Revolutionary Army, 1910-40 (New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1968), p.9; Ross, Madero, p.124; El Diario, 21 Nov. 1910, 22 Nov. 1910.
141. Albro III, Ricardo Flores Magón, loc. cit.
142. de la Llave to Díaz, 31 Jan. 1911, CPD, L36:2566-67; Cosío to Macedo, 20 Jan. 1911, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4.
143. Maas to Díaz, 10 Dec. 1910, CPD, L35:20833.
144. Portepetit to Min. Interior, 24 Feb. 1911, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4.
145. Ankerson, Some Aspects of Economic Change, p.26.
146. Maas to Díaz, 4 Feb. 1911, CPD, L36:2191; Maas to Díaz, 18 Feb. 1911, CPD, L36:2098.
147. El Germinal (Orizaba), 5 Feb. 1911.
148. Portepetit to Min. of Interior, 12 Mar. 1911, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4.
149. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.896.
150. El Reproductor, 26.1.1911.
151. La Patria, 28 Jan. 1911, 30 Jan. 1911.
152. Dehesa to Díaz, 12 Feb. 1911, CPD, L36:3304-06; Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.898.
153. Dehesa to Min. of Interior, 14 Mar. 1911, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4. Dehesa believed sincerely that the most important reason for the success of the rebels was the indecisiveness of the government. He blames Limantour for this weakness and for advising the President that resistance was futile. See also Manero, El antiguo régimen, p.316.
154. La Patria, 1 Feb. 1911; El Germinal, 5 Feb. 1911.
155. Interview by de los Monteros with Limantour, 29 Mar. 1911, ATD; see also Limantour, Apuntes de mi vida, pp.246-47; Cumberland, Genesis, p.136.
156. Cosío Villegas, La vida política interior, p.905; Cumberland, Genesis, p.136.
157. Interview by Senties with President Huerta regarding the meeting between Huerta, then General of the Army, Limantour and Díaz.
158. Vázquez Gómez, Memorias políticas, p.276; El Diario del Hogar, 25 May 1911.
159. State of Veracruz-Llave, Leyes, Decretos, Circular #12, 21 June 1911.
160. García Granados, Historia de México, v.4, p.177.
161. Dehesa, "Abril de 1910", ATD.
162. García Granados, Historia de México, v.4, p.403; Henderson, Felix Díaz, pp. 66, 93. Henderson concludes that because Dehesa's son Francisco was given a "lucrative post" under Huerta that Dehesa was also involved. First, Francisco was not Dehesa's son but his brother; secondly, the assertion that "Francisco took charge of Veracruz

politics" needs to be demonstrated. That Huerta did not consider Dehesa one of his supporters is demonstrated above.

163. Bulnes, El verdadero Díaz, p.174, refers to the Dehesa's "traitorous" receipt of Madero in Veracruz in 1910. See also García to Díaz, 16 Feb. 1911, CPD, L36:2943-44, complaining of Dehesa's protection of Tapía. García also claims to have knowledge of a conversation in which Dehesa, Muñoz and Diodoro Batalla had alluded to the President's senility. See also the interview conducted by de los Monteros, ATD, in which Limantour stated that "... he (Dehesa) had always conspired against the President."

164. Cumberland, Genesis, p.150.

165. Espinosa to Min. of Interior, 25 May 1911, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4; Espinosa to Madero, 27 May 1911, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4; Zimbrón to Espinosa 27 May 1911, AGN, Gob. 4a 911 (22) 4.

166. Dehesa, "Abril de 1910", ATD.

167. Melgarejo Vivanco, Breve historia, p.197.

168. García Granados, Historia de México, p.128.

169. González Sempé, Evolución política, p.237.

170. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.229.

171. Ibid., p.224.

172. Dehesa to Pena, 26 Sep. 1912, ATD, File #29.

173. Pena to Dehesa, 3 Oct. 1912, ATD, File #29.

174. Dehesa to Pena, 11 Nov. 1912, ATD.

175. Dehesa to Obregón, 15 Oct. 1912, ATD, File #22.

176. Dehesa to Obregón, 27 Oct. 1912, ATD, File #22;

Dehesa to González Mena, 6 Jan. 1913, ATD, File #10.

177. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.230; cf. Henderson, Felix Díaz, p.66 who says that Dehesa returned "...at the precise moment...." of the coup. However other evidence indicates that he returned at least nine months before.

178. Peña to Mrs. Teresa Nuñez de Dehesa, 22 Jan. 1913, ATD.

179. Emma Dehesa to Raúl Dehesa (Hotel Telegrafo, Havana), 6 Jan. 1913, ATD, File #22.

180. Marquez to Dehesa (Havana), 28 Jan. 1913, ATD, File #22, advising Dehesa to "...proceed without delay."

181. The Pullman Coach ticket to Washington D.C. as well as receipts from various hotels are in ATD, File #22; Dehesa to Raúl Dehesa, 26 Feb. 1913, "Arrived. We are all well."

182. Rodolfo Reyes to Dehesa (Hotel Seville, New York), 21.2.13, ATD, "Profound thanks for condolences on death of my father."

183. Obregón to Dehesa, 21 Feb. 1913, ATD, File #22. Obregón included an eye-witness account of what took place in the palace where he was among those Senators asking Madero and Suárez to renounce their posts.

184. Dehesa (S.S. Morro Castle) to Dehesa family (Veracruz), 6 Mar. 1913, ATD, File #22.

185. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.244.

186. Ibid.
187. Cumberland, Genesis, p.238.
188. Charles C. Cumberland, Mexican Revolution: The Constitutionalist Years (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), p.59.
189. Dehesa to González Mena, 15 Mar. 1913, ATD, File #10.
190. Licéaga, Felix Díaz, p.279.
191. Dehesa to Talavera, 27 Apr. 1913.
192. Talavera to Dehesa, 13 Apr. 1913, ATD, File #32. Noriega was a rich Spaniard and an old friend of President Díaz. The reference to "Convocation" meant the confirmation of the President-elect by the Mexican Congress.
193. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, pp.243-44.
194. Dehesa to Talavera, 19 Apr. 1913, ATD, File #32.
195. Talavera to Dehesa, 26 Apr. 1913, ATD, File #32; Dehesa to Talavera, 1 May 1913, ATD, File #32.
196. Dehesa to Talavera, 1 May, 1913, ATD, File #32; Talavera to Dehesa, 3 May 1913, ATD, File #32.
197. Dehesa to Talavera, 5 May 1913, ATD, File #32.
198. Dehesa to Talavera, 8 May 1913, ATD, File #32.
199. María Sánchez to Miguel Roldán, 28 Apr. 1913, ATD, File #32.
200. Talavera to Dehesa, 16 Apr. 1913, ATD, File #32.
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207. Dehesa to Talavera, 28 May 1913, ATD, File #32. Dehesa to Banda, 28 May 1913, ATD, File #32, asking him to stop in Xalapa on his way to Mexico City to speak with Raúl; Dehesa to Raúl Dehesa, 28 May 1913, informing Raúl of these developments and urging him to speak favourably with Banda about Talavera's intentions, and possibly working together. See also Henderson, Felix Díaz, pp.93-95.
208. Leonardo Pasquel, La Revolución en el estado de Veracruz, 2 vols. (Mexico City: Editorial Citlaltepetl, 1972), v.2, p.71.
209. Dehesa to Talavera, 29 Apr. 1913, ATD, File #32; Pasquel, La Revolución, v.2, pp.73-75.
210. Dehesa to Huerta, 21 July 1913, ATD, File #32.
211. Huerta to Dehesa, 2 Aug. 1913, ATD, File #32.
212. Dehesa to Urrutia, 27 July 1913, ATD, File #32; Francisco García to Dehesa, 10 Oct. 1913, ATD, File #32; Dehesa to Ramón Dehesa, 1 Aug. 1913, ATD, File #32.

213. Talavera to Dehesa, 10 Oct. 1913, ATD, File #32; Pasquel, La Revolución, p.76.
214. Unsigned and undated memorandum, ATD.
215. Pasquel, La Revolución, pp.77-79.
216. Huerta to Huerta, 25 Jan. 1914, ATD, File #22.
217. Dehesa to Huerta, 26 Jan. 1914, File #22.
218. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.249. This writer states categorically that they had had orders to kill Dehesa. He obviously thought so as well, which is why he had his daughter accompany him on the trip. Dehesa to Hernandez y Sol (Madrid), 8 Mar. 1914, ATD, File #22. Dehesa had good reason to suspect an assassination attempt. Villavicencio was the reputed killer of Arnulfo Arroyo who had molested President Díaz in the Alameda Park in 1897.
219. Raúl Dehesa to Adams, 26 Jan. 1914, ATD, File #22; Adams to Raúl Dehesa, 26 Jan. 1914, ATD, File #22.
220. Dehesa to Teresa Dehesa, 28 Jan. 1914, ATD, File #22. There are also numerous telegrammes from friends and family.
221. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, p.250.
222. Min. of Communication and Public Works to Ferrocarril Mexicana, 31 Jan. 1914, ATD, File #22; Dehesa to Teresa Dehesa, 31 Jan. 1914, ATD, File #22; Dehesa to Huerta, 1 Feb. 1914, ATD, File #22.
223. Dehesa to Díaz, 22 July 1914, ATD.
224. Unsigned to Dehesa, 1 Sep. 1914, ATD. This letter recorded a conversation in the park opposite Dehesa's house, in which the conversants spoke of his assassination.
225. Sodi de Pallares, Dehesa, does not mention this interlude. Her biography jumps from his return to Mexico to his summons to come to the capital by Huerta. The reason for this is unclear. It is apparent that Dehesa was not a supporter of Huerta. What he desired was an electoral victory by Felix Díaz.
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CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Teodoro A. Dehesa's involvement with President Porfirio Díaz spanned the period from the latter's attempts to gain the Mexican presidency in 1872, to his resignation at the beginning of the Mexican Revolution. From the time of his successful organization of Díaz's escape after the fiasco of La Noria, Dehesa was committed to the General who, in his mind, had saved Mexico from the French intervention and who, he believed, was the man who would lead Mexico to progress and strength. La Noria launched Dehesa into Mexican politics. Through his friendship with President Díaz he was elected Governor of Veracruz in 1892, and was able to turn his administrative talent into putting Veracruz on a sound financial footing-- the basis, in fact for economic development. Ironically it was this talent which influenced the development of the State. Veracruz underwent very rapid development in the industrial and agricultural sectors, and in all others as well. It came to be known as one of the most prosperous and progressive States in the Mexican Union. However, the stresses and strains of this development produced major tensions which,

especially in two cases, led to extensive violence and even an attempt to overthrow the regime. Because of his handling of these crises, Dehesa earned an enviable reputation among Mexican politicians: he was a Governor who could not be associated with the corruption and insensitivity which characterized the Porfiriato. Consequently, he entered the federal scene as an important, perhaps the most important, counterweight to the faction of influential politicians and officials who were collectively known as the Científicos.

This case study was, therefore, undertaken with the idea that an examination of the relations between the State of Veracruz and the federal government of Mexico during the period of Dehesa's governorship would be a contribution to the illumination of the internal politics of the Porfiriato. Indeed, a study of Veracruz during this period reveals a picture of the Porfiriato which, while affirming, in part, certain standard views, also argues for a complexity and variety which is essential to the understanding of the period and which will not be fully attained until similar studies have been completed for other states. The study also suggests that the Porfiriato neither differed qualitatively from the earlier historical period, nor the later one, in as radical manner as has been suggested. Many of the problems which plagued the Porfiriato were inherited; and many of the solutions have proved evasive. The lines of continuity are, therefore, traceable.

Dehesa's first political problems occurred with the followers of his predecessor, General Juan de la Luz Enríquez. They presented a formidable opposition for the new Governor. Yet, he managed to overcome them without using a heavy hand. A political style emerged which was to characterize Dehesa as a sensitive and skillful politician. However, he never allowed anyone to breach the law in their opposition to his authority. He allowed freedom of the press and did not try to suppress views unfavourable to his administration. He preferred to confront his political enemies by giving them a chance to explain themselves rather than crushing them with the means which were obviously at his disposal. Instead of exercising censorship of the press, he established his own newspaper, El Orden, in order to counteract accusations and calumnies appearing in other newspapers. By 1900, his political opponents had given up the fight against his continued existence in office and Dehesa was able to become involved in politics on the federal plane. There he was a constant adviser to President Díaz and one of the few politicians who saw clearly where Mexico was headed and what had to be done to save the regime.

Dehesa was no ideologist but a practical politician. He was comfortable within the general framework of Mexican "liberalism," which advocated progress through a capitalist economic order and the participation of foreign business enterprises. In addition, he advocated and worked to end

the communal system of land-holding which had been the organizational cornerstone of the wealth and power behind the Roman Catholic Church, and which was also the basis for the way of life of the native peoples. However, he differed from his political enemies, the Científicos, both in the extent, speed, and style with which these policies were to be implemented, and especially in his inherently nationalist approach to Mexican social and economic life. In his dealings with the Indians of Veracruz he attempted to divide their communal land but only after the benefits of individual property holding, as well as their rights, had been fully explained to them. He was, therefore, very circumspect in the choosing of government surveyors to carry out this work as well as in his choice of jefes políticos. The uprising at Papantla in 1896 shows how difficult this work was because of the general feeling in Mexico that the native people were the proper subjects for exploitation. It also shows the limits of power in the Porfiriato.

As has been attested elsewhere, the President did try to protect the Indians from exploitation by unscrupulous citizens. Unfortunately, his power was limited inversely by the unbounded greed of some of his fellow citizens. Dehesa's task was made doubly difficult because of this factor. The President was constantly being bombarded with accusations and false reports by citizens-- his supporters, albeit-- in whose interest it was to have a

too-scrupulous jefe político removed. This was the most common avenue for manoeuvre because direct complaint against a Governor was never very effective.

In the case of the uprising at Acayucan, there was an altogether different set of circumstances. The occasion for the revolt was the conjunction of grievances concerning land occupied for centuries by the Popolucan Indians, and the attempt by the anarcho-socialist PLM to overthrow the Díaz regime. The complexity of problems facing the regime is clearly demonstrable here. The President was concerned not only in retaining this southern area of Mexico from possible takeover by the United States, but also in using the oil potential as a counterbalance to the growing power of U.S. oil interests and capital. Without the dispute over Popolucan land, the Acayucan revolt might never have occurred since the PLM cadres by themselves would not have been strong enough to launch an effective revolt. However, the alliance between the urban supporters of the PLM and the Indians produced a serious attempt to overthrow the government, which, in the light of subsequent events, must be considered the beginning of the Mexican Revolution. Dehesa had foreseen that possibility clearly and, together with his brother, Francisco, had attempted to help the Indians against their powerful Creole neighbours. Here, again, the President was unable to assert his policies since any move against powerful agrarian and industrial interests would have meant a very quick end to the regime.

This conclusion raises, of course, the interesting question of who ultimately had power in the system. Certainly the President did, at least in legal terms, as well as through his control of the army. But it seems not too farfetched to suggest that that power was his only as long as he carried through policies which were for the benefit of the Mexican upper and middle classes.

This is one reason why President Díaz felt it necessary to retain the Científicos in positions of power and why he did not feel able to accommodate the Dehesa faction and its particular approach to social and economic affairs. Nowhere is this as clearly evident as in the Río Blanco labour dispute. At Río Blanco it was obvious that a downturn in profits caused by a depression in worldwide textile production would have to be paid for by the workers. Dehesa's recognition of this fact caused him to charge the capitalists with greed. However, not only the capitalists but the people in power behind the President, the Científicos, had no doubts that Mexican development and progress should only be achieved at the expense of the working people. Dehesa understood this only too clearly and perceived where it would take the country. His frustrated attempts to ameliorate and change working conditions and increase wage rates were an indication that he knew the eventual political price that a reactionary labour policy would exact. At Río Blanco, Dehesa made his most serious and overt stand against government policy.

His printing of Carlos Herrera's account of the events at Río Blanco in El Dictamen, which was contrary to the government's and the army's version, was almost treasonous. As it was, this defiance won him acclaim throughout the country as a progressive politician and was in addition to his already enviable reputation as an honest, efficient and talented administrator.

After Río Blanco Dehesa decided to use all his political acumen in resisting the Científicos and attempted to bend the old President away from his dependence on this group. Dehesa knew that political change was in the air. He also felt that if change were introduced through violent means Mexico would enter a protracted struggle which would be extremely costly in terms of human lives. He therefore tried to be as fair and amenable to Francisco Madero as possible. He not only arranged the famous interview between Madero and Díaz, but protected Madero on his campaign trips through Veracruz and, after the fall of the regime, aided his government in Veracruz as best he could. Dehesa, in regards his ideas, his approach to political life, and his involvement in the political changes around 1911, was an important, transitional figure in Mexican political affairs. His own role in paving the way for political change must not be overlooked.

Dehesa, however, never forgave Madero for "opening the Pandora's box" of the Mexican political system. In particular, he never forgave him for overthrowing the old

President who was Dehesa's personal friend and mentor. It is therefore ironic that the man who had continuously fought for a more democratic Veracruz and Mexico, who had championed the cause of the Indians and the workers, was forced to leave Mexico under threat of his life by the very people who claimed to be overthrowing a tyranny. The truth is that Madero had initiated a political change which would not be easy to stop since there were so many people who had been denied access to political power and the attendant material rewards during the Porfiriato. In this political climate, anyone who had been associated with the old Porfirian regime, was suspect.

Dehesa, who had cooperated with Madero in the beginning, was not only disillusioned by his own treatment, but by the turn of events. Political change, however, was not all that took place with the advent of Madero. The blame may not be his, but it is a fact that many unspeakable deeds may be attributed to people under his control. Therefore, when the opportunity presented itself with the removal of Madero, Dehesa decided to return to Mexico.

Here, for the first time in his political career, Dehesa committed a serious error that almost cost him his life. He had, of course, intended to stay out of practical politics, now that the Porfirian regime had come to an end. He had not participated in Felix Díaz's abortive coup, and assumed that he would be able to live unmolested in

Veracruz after the fall of the Madero government. He should have known better. General Huerta was no stranger to Dehesa. The ex-Governor had been intimately involved with the General from the first days of his governorship when Huerta had been in charge of the division of communal lands in Papantla. He knew Huerta's temperament and his methods. He ought not to have believed that Huerta, having once tasted the supreme power, would allow a fair election in which his rival, Felix Díaz, might have been successful. Dehesa was certainly involved in campaigning on Díaz's behalf. When the election turned out to be a fiasco, it was obvious that he, -- still an extremely influential person in Veracruz-- would be suspect. Once again, he was forced to choose exile. After Huerta's overthrow, there was no chance of returning, since the odium that surrounded the Porfirians now included the collective guilt for Madero's murder. Only years later, when all influence of the Porfirians had passed into history, would Dehesa be allowed to return.

It is not surprising that accurate historical judgement of the Porfirians, including men like Dehesa, should have been suspended for years. The ravages of the Mexican Revolution, caused, in part, by the politics of the Porfirians themselves, lingered on for years and inhibited any dispassionate judgement of the thirty-five year dictatorship. However, the passage of time allows us to see somewhat more objectively the history of those years when

Mexico was struggling to enter the modern, "developed" world. For many Mexicans it was a bitter and unfair period. However, it must be recognised that that particular style of development was not achieved without opposition. There were a few people in Mexico who worked to alleviate the conditions of grinding poverty and injustice which was the lot of most Mexicans. One such person was Teodoro A. Dehesa. Despite his efforts, however, he was not able to achieve the success he desired. His enemies were strong and implacable. That he was able to get as far as he did attests to his sensitivity, energy and talent. To be successful he would have needed the support of many others like himself, and there were not many like him. Even the President himself, as attested by one of his famous remarks, could not always achieve what he wanted.

This study has attempted to throw the Porfiriato into relief by concentrating on one State. Given the highly personal nature of Mexican politics, it was necessary to focus on the Governor of that State. This should not be read as an attempt to imply any concession to the Great-Man theory of history. It has also been argued here that there were important and strong forces which, at times, waylaid and subverted the attempts of even those who exercised executive power in the system.

The Porfiriato remains a fascinating period for historical study precisely because it was not the simple dictatorship that it has been made out to be. It was not an

aberration. Neither was the Mexican Revolution such a break with the Porfiriato as myth would assert. The Porfiriato had strong antecedents in its immediate historical past and continued to exert its own influence on post-revolutionary Mexico. Whether this hypothesis will stand the test of further investigation remains to be seen after specific studies have been conducted for other states. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Porfiriato was far more complex an historical period than has hitherto been attested and that the monolith was in fact a multilith.

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Veracruz

El Cosmopolita
El Dictámen
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