VIII

The Pueblos Carry Out a Revolution

"... hanging on tight to the tail of our jefe Zapata's horse."

While Morelos's seclusion lasted, the state was almost a frontier. Dispossessed and destitute families had indeed inhabited the place for centuries; now, psychologically, they arrived. What they conquered, cleared, leveled, and settled was not a territory, which they only recovered, but a society, which they thus recreated. Like other immigrants and pioneers, they proceeded fitfully—sometimes by the compulsion of immediate needs, sometimes by dreams they would not surrender. But in this social wilderness they moved in a remarkably constant direction toward the establishment of democratic municipalities, country neighborhoods where every family had influence in the disposition of local resources.

In central and southern Mexico the utopia of a free association of rural clans was very ancient. In various forms it had moved villagers long before the Spaniards came. Its latest vehicle was the Zapatista army: ironically, Morelos's country families had clarified their civilian notions in military service. The Liberating Army of the Center and South was a "people's army." And to the men who fought in its ranks, and to the women who

accompanied them as private quartermistresses, being "people" counted more than being an "army." For leadership they still looked more readily to their village chiefs than to their revolutionary army officers. At first, during the early years of the guerrillas, they had suffered no tension in their allegiance, because village chiefs and revolutionary officers were commonly the same persons, or close relatives, or old friends. But in the big campaigns against Huerta, as the skeleton of a regular army formed, amateur warriors had started to become professionals, and commanders had had fewer personal connections with local civilian leaders. Although village councils normally cooperated with the army, ordinary soldiers had more and more divided, or at least different, loyalties. The war did not go on long enough, however, for the Liberating Army's militarist tendencies to harden. Rather the army and the village leaders worked out in practice a federal chain of command. The army chief passed his orders down to the village chiefs, or their deputies who campaigned with him, and they in turn passed the orders on to their respective followings. This mediation usually contained the tension between rival authorities.[1]

As for the tension among villages, or among village contingents on duty, the civil war itself had relaxed it. Already before the war village leaders had been acquainted with at least the reputation of each others' families; and their common struggle generated a cohesion among them. People from traditionally rival places like Santa María and Huitzilac had died defending each other, which bound the survivors in a close sympathy.

Far from an autonomous military corporation, like Villa's or Orozco's drifters, the revolutionary army that took shape in Morelos in 1913–14 was simply an armed league of the state's municipalities. And when peace returned in the late summer of 1914, the villagers refounded local society in civil terms. As soon as they could, they elected provisional municipal and judicial authorities and claimed surrounding assets. They even refused to let railroad crews cut down timber for crossties and fuel or draw water for locomotives.[2] To harried Conventionist officials in Mexico City, this

[1] On the traditional character of the Zapatista movement, see François Chevalier: "Un factor decisivo de la revolución agraria de México: 'el levantamiento de Zapata' (1911–1919)," *Cuadernos Americanos,* CXIII, 6 (November 1960), 165–87. On the Zapatista army, see Gómez: op. cit., pp. 114, 133, and Carlos Pérez Guerrero: "Cómo vivían los bandidos zapatistas," *Mujeres y Deportes,* February 6, 1937.

[2] Robert E. Quirk: *The Mexican Revolution, 1914–1915. The Convention of Aguascalientes* (Bloomington, 1960), p. 206. Palafox to Zapata, December 21, 1914, AZ, 28: 19: 1.

was the work of perverse and superstitious peasants. But the villagers themselves saw the case otherwise: old railroad-hacienda contracts were no longer valid; the timber and water were theirs now. Having supported and composed the revolutionary army, these country folk reasoned that they should be the beneficiaries of its success. More important, they had also learned in the war that military leaders ought to respect them, and that if they did not, others should appear who would. Village authorities all over the state espoused this new toughness, and it constituted the firmest inhibition against neighborhood dictators.

Zapata and most of his chiefs shared these popular expectations about civilian rule. They also had not lost their sense of who they were—the sons of the pueblo, field hands, sharecroppers, and rancheros. Their original authority had been in local councils. And the pretensions they developed were honest, country pretensions. No native Morelos revolutionary dressed in khaki, the current national fashion for aspiring politicos. When a Morelos chief wanted to look elegant, as Zapata did at Xochimilco, he dressed as for a fair at the district market, in rings and gaudy colors and flashy silver buttons. The only uniforms in Morelos's revolutionary army were those sported by Amador Salazar's personal escort: they were green *charro* outfits.[3] The esteem the local chiefs always appreciated most was the esteem of fellow villagers. Like villagers, and as the Ayala plan proscribed, they instituted a civil state as soon as they could, electing de la O provisional governor. When de la O's military duties occupied him otherwise, the chiefs in a secret ballot elected a new governor, Lorenzo Vázquez. And Vázquez prepared to call regular elections for the governorship, the state legislature, the higher state courts, and the municipalities.[4]

Corps of conquest seldom disband smoothly on the frontier, and knots of military power remained in Morelos. Recurrent complaints reached Governor Vázquez that local chiefs abused municipal presidents, mocked civil officials, and refused to give up nationalized territory. In mid-March Vázquez had to appeal to Zapata for "moral support" against "some badly intentioned persons who have the mistaken belief that the [state's] authori-

[3] Marte R. Gómez: *Las comisiones agrarias del sur* (México, 1961), p. 87.

[4] José Urbán Aguirre: *Geografía e Historia del Estado de Morelos* (2nd edn., Cuernavaca, 1963), p. 252. Amado Cháverri Matamoros: "El Archivo de Zapata," serialized in *La Prensa,* September 27, 1935. Zapata told Soto y Gama that he wanted a secret vote to replace de la O because he wanted no politicking—no argument or swaying of opinion because of his or some other chief's stand. Zapata himself voted for Francisco Pacheco, he told Soto y Gama. Personal interview with Soto y Gama.

ties must be under the soles of any revolutionary at all who has himself no more authority than the power of his arms."[5]

But this bullying was casual and personal, and not a sign of an intention to rule. The Morelos chiefs rarely if ever met in junta to make regular decisions. Peers of their rural realm, they still communicated only through the first peer, Zapata, at his court, the Tlaltizapán headquarters. In a grave emergency many might have repaired together to the court for consultation, advice, or orders. But happily for them, grave emergencies did not occur in Morelos in 1915. Few even left their neighborhood to campaign. Despite abuses, their sense of obligation, like Zapata's, was directed not to the army but to the villages. To protect the new government Vázquez asked Zapata to subordinate revolutionary commanders to municipal authorities, to make them turn over confiscated property to the state, and to help organize a "public security force"—either the traditional village vigilantes or state police. And Zapata approved Vázquez's requests, to guarantee "the good functioning of all administrative affairs and to maintain order and tranquillity in all the pueblos of this state."

Zapata had already rebuked military chiefs who interfered in village affairs. When he himself took part in settling local troubles, as he did more than once, he limited his involvement to enforcing decisions the villagers reached on their own. When, for instance, during the agrarian reform it came time to mark the boundaries between Yautepec and Anenecuilco fields, he accompanied the district agrarian commission into the countryside to a tecorral, a stone fence, where the representatives of both communities had gathered. The oldest men around had come along as experts. For years these elders had struggled in their neighbors' defense, and Zapata listened to their judgments "with particular deference," recalled a young member of the commission. As Anenecuilco's president and as the Liberating Army's commander-in-chief, he then instructed the agronomists who would do the surveying. "The pueblos say that this tecorral is their boundary," he told them, "and that's where you are going to trace me your marks. You engineers sometimes get stuck on straight lines, but the boundary is going to be the stone fence, even if you have to work six months measuring all its ins and outs . . ."[6] Significantly, Zapata never organized a state police: law enforcement, such as it was, remained the province of village councils.

[5] Vázquez to Zapata, March 14, 1915, AZ, 28: 18: 1.

[6] Gómez: *Las comisiones,* pp. 76–7.

The local people themselves recognized how responsible the army chiefs generally were. Zapata especially they trusted, as the champion who would right all wrongs. High in the mountains near the Puebla border Soto y Gama's brother Conrado, serving on the State Agrarian Commission, met an old woman in a little isolated village. Not knowing even whether she understood Spanish, he asked her what she thought of General Zapata. "What do you want us to say?" she answered, "—us poor mountain Indians who go along hanging on tight to the tail of our jefe Zapata's horse."[7]

The result was the real possibility of local democracies. Although the chiefs retained extraordinary power, passing it down to a trustee when they left on campaign, their control was never institutional nor so restrictive as the Porfirian bosses'. And although Zapata's personal provision of guarantees was irregular, because access to him was irregular, he was a nevertheless respected chief justice. The revolutionary society that actually developed in Morelos never outgrew contention between the new civil and military authorities, but at least the contest was genuine, and the location of legitimacy clear. From the beginning the movement had been a deliberate enterprise by country chiefs to restore the integrity of the state's villages, to gain local rights of participation in national progress. When Madero initiated the revolution in November 1910, Morelos rural leaders did not flock to his cause without weeks of hard reckoning and calculation. And when they did join him, it was for conscious, practical reasons—to recover village lands and establish village security. When later they reacted against Madero's refusal to keep his promises, they defined their opposition with a public plan. And despite Madero's great popularity, many villagers supported them, actively or passively. If, in the war against Huerta and afterward, their local concerns seemed a liability, the state chiefs remained uncomfortable with grander, vaguer projects: in the villages they were at home, and the rest they left to their secretaries. In this insistent provincialism was the movement's strength and its weakness.

The authority reconstituted in the villages provided the ground for the state's agrarian reform. And the reform in turn reinforced the villages by concentrating in them control over agricultural property. As Palafox declared in September 1914, the "repartition of lands will be carried out in conformity with the customs and usages of each pueblo. . . . that is, if a certain pueblo wants the communal system, so it will be executed, and if

[7] Díaz Soto y Gama: *La revolución,* pp. 262–3.

another pueblo wants the division of land in order to admit small [individual] property, so it will be done."[8] Thus emerging as the sources of power and livelihood were the most traditional agencies of local society.

This resort to the past was different from the Carrancista agrarian reform. On January 6, 1915, Carranza signed a decree according to which state authorities would control the provisional allotment of lands to claimants. And because of the war, state authorities might be military as well as civil, natives of their zone of command or not, ignorant of its local "custom and usages" or not. Carranza expressly noted that the reform was not "to revive the old communities nor to create others like them but only to give . . . land to the miserable rural population which today lacks it. . . ." He further specified that "the property of the lands will not belong to the pueblo in common but is to be divided in pleno dominio—fee simple . . ." In practice those who took charge of expropriations and redistributions were enterprising generals contemptuous of old ways and intent on success in the new. And the graft was wondrous. So firm a grip did these Carrancista chiefs fasten on the benefits of the reform that a year later in another decree Carranza had to proclaim that the military were to intervene "only when the action of the political authorities might be difficult," and even then only on special instructions from the chief executive, for a limited purpose and a temporary period. But in the Carrancista areas the entrepreneurs remained in charge. As they managed it, agrarian reform was to help create a new, national economy in which they could flourish.[9] For the Zapatistas, it was the discharge of a national duty to uphold the dignity of local life. The regime that would form in Morelos would come about not through the orders of bureaucrats or generals but through the cooperation of village leaders.

The revolution in land tenure in Morelos in 1915 was an orderly process, largely because of Manuel Palafox. His ambition brought himself and other agraristas into the Conventionist government, and his peremptory conduct there assured official ratification of local reforms. This seemed only the beginning of a historic career. When the Zapatistas had occupied Mexico City, Palafox had entered the precincts of glory and stateliness, the classic forum of the heroes of his country. He was then a mere twenty-nine years

[8] Cited in Magaña: op. cit., IV, 314.

[9] For these decrees, see Manuel Fabila, ed.: *Cinco siglos de legislación agraria en México, 1493–1940* (México, 1941), pp. 270–4, 280–1. For a short commentary on the 1915 decree, see Eyler N. Simpson: *The Ejido: Mexico's Way Out* (Chapel Hill, 1937), pp. 56–62.

old. What this meticulous, cunning, intense little man conceived his destiny to be is still unknown, his private archives supposedly having burned, his associates mostly having died or learned to vilify him, his few surviving confidants secretive or in doubt about him; but it seems likely that he imagined himself another great reforming figure in the line that went back through the immortals of the mid-nineteenth century, Benito Juárez and Melchor Ocampo, back to the enlightened founding fathers of the Republic. During his stay in the capital he behaved as if by design to lay claim to historians' attention. Bold and ingenious in his program, determined, arrogant, incredibly busy, Palafox sprang into action at the first opportunity. Leaving a reliable aide, Santiago Orozco, to run the southern headquarters, he set up another Zapatista headquarters in Mexico City after the Xochimilco conference. And from his office in the Hotel Cosmos—"The Leading International Hotel in Mexico City, San Juan de Letrán 12, with two telephones"—he maneuvered strenuously to advance the agrarista cause.

Within days Palafox became secretary of agriculture in the Conventionist cabinet, the ranking Zapatista in the government. And to the reporter who asked him on the day of his appointment if he meant now, like officials before him, "to study the agrarian question," he replied, "No, señor, I'll not dedicate myself to that. The agrarian question I've got amply studied. I'll dedicate myself to carrying [reform] into the field of practice . . ."[1]

Immediately the American agents singled him out as a troublemaker. When one agent asked him for safe-conduct passes to visit an American-owned hacienda in a Zapatista zone, "he told me," the agent reported, "that he could not give them, as all of these estates were to be divided up, and the land distributed to the poor." The agent explained that this property was American. Palafox's answer was scandalous: "he replied, that it did not make any difference whether it was American or any other foreign property; that these estates were to be divided up . . ." The agent promised his superiors further reports on Palafox. "I can foresee," he wrote, "that he will be an element destined to give the Minister of Foreign Affairs a great deal of avoidable work." By late December, identifying Palafox as the one who would divide properties "whether they belonged to Americans or Chinamen," the agent filed a conclusive judgment on him. "He is impossible," the agent had decided, "and his rabid socialistic ideas could never be of any help in solving the problems in a beneficial manner for his country."

[1] "Hace 50 años," *Excélsior,* December 14, 1964.

Gloatingly the agent then anticipated how Villa would "attend to" Palafox when Villa and Zapata split.[2]

In early January Palafox organized his department. Besides founding a National Bank of Rural Loans and directing the establishment of Regional Schools of Agriculture and a National Factory of Agricultural Implements, he began reviewing village petitions for lands. On January 14 he set up within the department a special bureau of land division. To villagers even in Hidalgo and Guanajuato he sent word to reclaim their fields.[3]

The administration of agrarian reform began in Morelos as soon as Palafox found technicians to carry it out. These came voluntarily, from the graduating class of 1914 of the National School of Agriculture. The 1913 class had gone to Chihuahua to serve in Villista headquarters, but various personal bonds drew the 1914 class to the south. Another of the Soto y Gama brothers, Ignacio, taught in the school. The students liked and respected him, and his attachment to the Morelos revolution influenced them deeply. Also it happened that the oldest student in the class, Alfonso Cruz, had known Palafox in Sinaloa before the revolution, and now as an aide of the secretary he recruited his mates into service with the Zapatistas.

In mid-January the Convention formally appointed ninety-five of these young agronomists to agrarian commissions "charged with the survey and division of lands" in Morelos, Guerrero, Puebla, Mexico, and the Federal District. Twenty-three were to go to Morelos—in six parties, one for each of the state's former political districts. In the end five of the Morelos-bound commissioners did not take up their appointments. But Morelos was the closest, safest, and most exciting place, and many assigned to other states went there. So on January 30, bearing their tripods, levels, and chains, forty-one youths presented themselves in Cuernavaca. They had arrived early, partly from eagerness for work, partly from a fear of the Carrancistas, who had just reoccupied Mexico City and driven the Convention also to Cuernavaca.

To run the district offices, Palafox then contracted thirty-five civil and military engineers temporarily exiled in Morelos. These included Conrado and Ignacio Díaz Soto y Gama, a highly respected young agronomist, Felipe Santibáñez, and Felipe Carrillo Puerto, later famous as a radical

[2] Canova to the secretary of state, December 17 and 20, 1914, NA, 59: 812.00/14122 and 14131

[3] Silliman to the secretary of state, January 13, 1915, ibid., 14195. *La Convención*, January 5, 6, 14, and 15, 1915.

governor of Yucatán. Four other agronomists from earlier classes of the agricultural school appeared, and Palafox contracted them too. He quickly organized them and the most recent graduates into district commissions and distributed their various assignments.[4] To supervise their work, he named Alfonso Cruz head of agrarian operations in the state.

The size of the individual commissions varied slightly, depending on how many young assistants accompanied the district chief and subchief. The Tetecala commission numbered nine persons; Jonacatepec and Yautepec had eight; Cuernavaca, seven; Cuautla, six; and Jojutla, five. The staffs remained fairly stable: by the end of the year every commission had undergone at least one change in chiefs, but only the Jonacatepec group had replaced assistants.[5]

The commissions shortly took up their assignments, the non-Cuernavacans moving their equipment by wagon to the several former district seats. There the local Zapatista commanders allocated them buildings near the center of town for their offices and quarters. These were mostly old mansions, deserted by their wealthy inhabitants and now nationalized property. Some houses had furniture, some did not; but the assistants' morale stayed high—even with the drastic shortage of girls—and Zapata and Palafox arranged for the local commanders to protest the commissions in their duties.[6]

Once a commission was installed in its quarters, the assistants put their instruments in order and the chief had notices posted that they were ready for business. Many villages had already taken over the fields they had fought the plantations for, and often much more land besides; but they quickly accepted the offer for legalizing their claims. The first representatives came in and requested surveys, and in groups of two or three the young men went out to see the pueblo chiefs. There they would inspect what the local farmers called "la mapa," the village's land title which often dated from viceroyal times. And then, provided with a work crew to carry the equipment and hack out the brush, they would move "in almost a

[4] Gómez: *Las comisiones,* pp. 18–21, 44, 50.

[5] Ibid., pp. 190–5. Santibáñez served as agrarian agent on the Yautepec commission, which included Marte Gómez as an assistant. Carrillo Puerto was agent for the Cuautla commission, which included as an assistant Fidel Velázquez, presently secretary general of the Mexican Workers' Confederation. As for the Soto y Gamas, Conrado went to Guerrero as the Iguala district agent, and Ignacio directed the Rural Loan Bank.

[6] Ibid., pp. 51–7.

military operation" into the countryside to determine where the boundary lines ran. This was no easy chore. As points of reference, "la mapa" often showed "a big rock," "a leafy fig tree," "a rounded-off hill," or "a deep canyon." For directions the assistants would have to consult local elders, and even then get nothing precise. In some cases the vagueness was intentional: it covered up a village's greediness. Pueblo chiefs knew that the plantations now lay open to invasion and that the most aggressive villages would take over the most and the best land. It would have been surprising if in these circumstances some villages did not try to pre-empt good fields. But in general village leaders seem to have acted with restraint. Ordinarily their confusion was in good faith. At least they recognized the commission's formal authority in land matters and presented such maps as they had.

Still, serious conflicts arose. For although the commission respected local custom in its surveys, there were insoluble village rivalries that only compromise could ease. A plantation might have arrogated one village's lands decades before, then subsequently rented them for years to farmers from another village. How to dispose of the fields now? In such cases the assistants would call the parties involved into a junta and hope for conciliatory attitudes. The villages were extremely suspicious, however, and with their representatives to the juntas they often sent along their military leaders and gangs of local toughs. If a village representative felt the junta was about to wrong his pueblo, he would refuse to accept its rulings. "We're not sucking hind tit," he would inform the commission, and to the cheers of his hometown following he would withdraw from the talks.[7]

The commissioners might then either turn to a more prestigious authority, the district revolutionary chief, or even General Zapata himself, or they might proceed with their contested survey. The second course was likely to involve them in a violent feud between the rival villages. And the higher appeal they preferred to invoke as a last resort. So all they could do was to try new negotiations. And in time the youths' hard work and their obvious sincerity won them the villagers' trust. "These ingenieritos are no dandies," the local farmers reported. "They can take walking all day as much as we do, and then in the evening they go on with their papers."[8]

The Temixco-Santa María case especially helped the commissions gain acceptance in the countryside. Rural families all over the state knew about the struggle between the hacienda and the village north of Cuernavaca.

[7] Ibid., pp. 62–9.
[8] Ibid., pp. 71–8.

In the last years of the Porfiriato the hacienda had gained what then seemed a definitive victory. And in the civil wars the village was practically razed. But the first act of the Cuernavaca commission was to go out to restore Santa María's traditional lands. The villagers greeted the ingenieritos warmly, with bouquets and speeches. And on February 19 the formal ceremony of restitution took place.[9] Former inhabitants returned, and Santa María came back to life. The case was renowned as a sign to other villagers that they could count on the commissions to honor their titles.[1]

When finally a village had its boundaries surveyed, and received its allotted section of a neighboring hacienda, the district commission left it autonomous. According to Article 6 of the decree of September 8, 1914, the village could keep its land under a common title and distribute cultivation rights, or it could distribute the titles themselves to individual smallholders—however it elected. Neither the state nor the federal government had any jurisdiction in such affairs. As Zapata wished and as Palafox had declared, "custom and the usages of each pueblo" would determine the local property system.[2] The federal government retained only the power to prevent title-holders, whether communal or individual, from selling or renting their lands—which would protect them against collusion between crooked village politicians and speculators. In the impossibility of enforcing a general prohibition against greed, restricting the right to fall victim to it was the best the government could do. Evidently no local farmer protested against the restriction.

Thus the villages of Morelos were born anew. In the months the six commissions functioned in the state they surveyed and defined the boundaries of almost all the one hundred-odd pueblos there, incorporating into them most of the local farm land, stands of timber, and irrigation facilities.[3] The regime—or series of regimes—that they chartered became a regular entrenched system. By early March Zapata notified the current Conventionist president, Roque González Garza, that "The matter relating to the agrarian question is resolved in a definitive manner, for the different pueblos of the state, in accord with the titles which protect their properties,

[9] "Informe que rinde el Jefe de la Comisión Agraria en el Distrito de Cuernavaca . . . February 19, 1915," *El Nacional,* November 20, 1932.

[1] Gómez: *Las comisiones,* pp. 64–5.

[2] For other comments on Zapata's refusal to consider ideologically derived patterns of land reform, see Díaz Soto y Gama: *La revolución,* pp. 272–4.

[3] For an account of the various commissions' work, see Gómez: *Las comisiones,* pp. 64–78.

have entered into the possession of said lands . . ." Subsequent disputes among villagers or villages, he declared, would go to the secretary of agriculture for rulings, either directly or through a special commission or a civil court.[4]

The land not included in the village dominions remained at the disposition of Secretary Palafox, who could leave it as private property, or after indemnization expropriate one third of it in the public interest, or confiscate it outright as the holding of an enemy of the revolution. Some planters had assumed that by sweet talk and the offer of capital and expertise they might recover their haciendas, at least in part. "If I'm not badly informed," Joachim Amor wrote to Zapata from Mexico City in October 1914, "you wouldn't look with displeasure on the reestablishment of work on the plantations, in view of the great poverty which reigns there." For his investment he only asked "the very natural condition that you give your consent and impart your protection and aid so we can work." He wondered incidentally if Zapata might not arrange to free his fellow planters, Ignacio de la Torre y Mier, Manuel Araoz, Romualdo Pasquel, and José Pagaza, from the Mexico City penitentiary, so they too could contribute to the state's recovery.[5] But Palafox, with his "rabid socialistic ideas," had astounded metropolitan observers by retaining control of all lands the villages did not take. Apparently he did not even pay indemnities but simply confiscated the surplus territory. Still there were planters and plantation attorneys who did not believe that the local revolutionary chiefs shared this presumed lunacy. But they quickly learned their mistake. As an American consul wrote to Washington in distress, "A few days since [my conversations with Palafox,] Ramón Olivares [sic], a fine type of Mexican, educated in the United States and in England, a member of the American club, is reported to have been brutally murdered near Cuernavaca by the Zapatista Governor of Morelos, the notorious Genoveva [sic] de la O . . ."[6]

The sugar mills and distilleries Palafox also confiscated. These were "in a complete ruin," as Zapata himself admitted: what the federals had not destroyed or stolen from them in the 1913–14 war, the villagers and refugees had later made off with. But both Zapata and Palafox wanted to put the mills back in operation, not as private enterprises but as public services. There the villagers who continued to produce cane could bring their harvests. There refugee peons could resettle to earn a wage. And there

[4] Cháverri Matamoros in *La Prensa,* September 27, 1935.

[5] Amor to Zapata, October 21, 1914, AZ, 27: 7.

[6] Silliman to the secretary of state, January 13, 1915, NA, 59: 812.00/14195.

the government could collect the profits for revenue. Repairs and the mobilization of laborers and draft animals began as soon as Palafox took office. And by early March four mills were again in business in Morelos—Temixco, Hospital, Atlihuayán, and Zacatepec. In charge of them were native generals, de la O, Emigdio Marmolejo, Amador Salazar, and Lorenzo Vázquez, respectively. The meager proceeds they took in they returned to headquarters to defray the "very many extraordinary expenses," as Zapata called them, ". . . of military hospitals, barracks, help to ambulance columns, and aid to the widows of revolutionaries killed on campaign . . ." In time, Zapata was sure, the wealth of the state would surpass even its former abundance, and then "we will see what is the best way to use it."[7]

Other than revolutionary observers also entertained these speculations, which seemed increasingly germane after Conventionist armies reoccupied Mexico City in mid-March and the Convention returned there as the central government. Attracted now to Morelos were various sharpers, carpetbaggers, pitchmen, and hucksters. Precisely in eliminating the planters and promoting an economic revival in the state, Palafox had put them onto the scent. They could well understand, ace fleecers themselves, that the secretary had dispossessed the old owners; but they could not believe that he would keep the property as a public domain. By all the laws they took for gospel it was inevitable that for a fee or a cut Palafox would transfer land to new private owners. To them, nationalization seemed only a quaint procedure for replacing one crew of capitalists with another.

Among these characters, the jauntiest and most persistent was a New Englander who had spent the last twenty years in Mexico, Hubert L. Hall. A businessman, a Mormon, and an inside-dopester on his adopted country, Hall impressed Americans who met him quite favorably. As one agent reported, " . . . he is entirely trustworthy and a man of high character. . . . Senator Smoot knows him very well . . ."[8] Morelos was of special interest to Hall. For a while he had run a hotel in Cuernavaca, and by 1910 he had acquired land in the timber country around Santa María; the first complaint to the United States embassy about damage to American property in Morelos had come from Mrs. Hall, in August 1911.[9] During the rebellion that followed Hall had to write off his investment in the state. In March 1913, when it seemed the Zapatistas might make peace, he had tried to

[7] Cháverri Matamoros in *La Prensa,* September 27, 1935.

[8] Lind to the secretary of state, March 23, 1914, NA, 59: 812.00/20609 1/2.

[9] Dearing to Mrs. H. L. Hall, August 14, 1911, NA.

recoup his losses by organizing a company for "the division of lands" in which he offered fifty thousand pesos in shares to Zapata and ten thousand pesos in shares to each of the other main chiefs.[1] The plan fell a cropper, however, and in the ensuing war Hall had seen his Mexican prospects gravely jeopardized. But as the revolutionaries emerged triumphant in mid-1914 he had recognized that in the chaos of reconstruction he might parlay his connections and bluff into a real fortune. Back in the United States, he persuaded the State Department that he was a "personal friend of Zapata," almost wheedled diplomatic credentials to present to the southern headquarters, and did get an official allowance for his trip home. Only Zapata's warning that "it would not be safe for that gentleman to come to his camp" had stymied Hall then.[2] But now the go-getter returned to Morelos, pretending anyway to diplomatic status, as buoyant as ever and with a new scheme.

The racket he proposed was the Liberating Army Cooperative Colony. This was to be a private company capitalized at 180,000 pesos, which two hundred founding members were to subscribe in thirty monthly installments. The founders were to be the leading revolutionary chiefs and secretaries "who struggled so dauntlessly for the liberty of the people in the past" and whom Hall would now enlist in "the great labor of education and redemption of the same people, by means of colonizing land, establishing cooperatively and with the aid of the government works of irrigation, industry, and manufacture where very many laborers will be employed." Specifically the founders were to direct the operations of a massive agricultural combine holding over 64,000 acres in the rich Cuernavaca valley. The combine would include lands formerly attached to Temixco, Ocuila, San Vicente, and Atlacomulco haciendas, lands which Hall expected Secretary Palafox to grant to the company as a "concession." There the newest methods in farming and ranching would be standard. Also to be established were agricultural schools and experiment stations, cooperative markets, shops, warehouses, stables, and a weekly newspaper. One share in the company's stock would go to the head of each family laboring on the colony, one to each married couple, one to each grown child living in a family, and one to each widow. If other groups of two hundred revolutionaries wanted to found affiliated colonies, they could

[1] Magaña: op. cit., III, 97.

[2] Bryan to the Brazilian minister, August 28, 1914, NA, 59: 812.00/13015. Silliman to the secretary of state, August 29, 1914, ibid., 13040.

freely do so; and if the land around them was insufficient, they could take fields away from contiguous haciendas or pueblos, "naturally without prejudicing their rights." But Hall preferred to start the first colony around Cuernavaca, "craddle [sic] of the great revolution of the South, whose spirit and high ideals we wish to commemorate and perpetuate in this altruistic and beneficent manner."

The chiefs and secretaries Hall actually conned into this enterprise were evidently not many or important. In his first (and only) flyer in March he claimed seventy founders already subscribed, among them Palafox, Montaño, Lorenzo Vázquez, Leobardo Galván, Santiago Orozco, Genaro Amezcua, and Antonio and Ignacio Díaz Soto y Gama. But of these only Ignacio Díaz Soto y Gama had a seat on the colony's organizing committee or the provisional board of directors over which Hall presided. As secretary of both groups, this dashing agronomist composed the company's advertising literature. Probably only he took a serious part in the project. In the English translation that Hall rendered of the prospectus he modified some of Soto y Gama's wildest boasts: where for example the original read that "all the other prominent chiefs of the Conventionist army" had enrolled as founders, Hall wrote that "invitations have been extended to General Emiliano Zapata and all the other principal officials of the Ejército Libertador" to enroll. No record yet discovered indicates that these chiefs or the others named even conferred with Hall, much less signed pledges of subscription.

In early April Hall approached Palafox himself in Mexico City. "Desiring to assist," the good Mormon declared, "in the great humanitarism labor which the Mexican government is now undertaking in its efforts for the economic, moral and educational benefit and progress of its citizens, especially in the agrarian question which for years I have studied and have been deeply interested in both theoretically and practically, I have invited a number of leading citizens to unite with me to organize a Cooperative Colonization Association to labor and operate in connection with the government, in such parts of the republic as it may be seen to be of advantage to do, beginning its labors in the State of Morelos, the cradle of the revolutionary movement of the South, and which was of so pronounced and Agrarian Character, having met with a willing and hearty response from over one hundred of the foremost men of the military government, officials, agricultural, artesian and commercial classes who have manifested an ardent desire to commence the work as soon as possible, and to that end, we have organized a provisional organization to take the necessary first

steps to secure our desire." Then he asked for the land grant. The request, he believed, was "most reasonable and moderate as compared with concessions and attractions for Colonists offered by the governments of Canada, Australia, the Argentine, Brazil and the United States." As an old hand in such matters, he reminded Palafox that "The concensus of opinion of the experienced men who have studied the colonist and emigrant problem of Mexico *is that it can only be accomplished successfully here, when operated on a large scale, and largely aided and fostered by the Government . . .*"[3]

Palafox's response, however, was not "willing and hearty." Although he evidently made no formal refusal, he did not grant the land Hall wanted. And he started inquiries to check if Hall was in fact an American agent. By mid-April he knew from Washington that "Hall has not been nor is now employed in the Department of State nor represents it in any form."[4] No further trace of Hall appeared in the affairs of Morelos. And the villagers' version of agrarian reform proceeded apace. From his headquarters in Tlaltizapán Zapata guaranteed it. As another American agent reported after meeting him there on April 16: "He believes it is right that the property of the rich should be taken and given to the poor."[5]

So solid and vigorous was the local revolution that it continued independently of the shifting fate of the Zapatista politicians in Mexico City. After returning to the capital in mid-March Palafox and Soto y Gama carried on a ferocious struggle with the Villista president of the Convention, Roque González Garza. The Villistas resented not only the Zapatistas' pretensions to power and their drive for social reforms but also, most rankling, the weakness of the southern military effort against the Carrancistas. The Zapatistas in turn protested that they could not make, buy, or collect from Villa enough ammunition to mount regular campaigns, and that anyway they deserved an equal role in forming policy; most disgusting to them was how the Villistas shrank from social reforms, in agrarian or other matters. Above all they feared that the Villistas might retreat north and leave them in the lurch. And to hold their allies in place they practically put them under guard, appointing Gildardo Magaña governor of the Federal District and Amador Salazar commander of the Mexico City garrison. When in early April Palafox demanded that González Garza allot funds to pay for uniforms for the southern army, the President refused and on the is-

[3] For all the documents relating to the Hall episode, see Lind to the secretary of state, March 23, 1914, NA. The spelling, syntax, and emphasis are Hall's own.

[4] Bryan to Duval West, April 12, 1915, AZ, 28: 6.

[5] Duval West, Report to the President, May 11, 1915, NA, 59: 812.00/19181.

sue tried to eject Palafox from the cabinet. Soto y Gama arranged a truce, but Palafox remained so offensive to the President that on May 1 González Garza did force his resignation. The news enraged Zapata, who came up to Mexico City—in what proved to be his last trip to the capital—and demanded Palafox's reinstatement, in vain. Then a month later Soto y Gama engineered González Garza's defeat in the Convention, a new, frailer executive took office, and Palafox returned to his post.[6] But these metropolitan intrigues did not really interest Zapata, which was why they went on and on. And they did not carry into Morelos. There people were moving on their own course, in no need of outside sponsors or patrons. And there in full force the revolution continued.

In the spring harvests began, the first fruit to mature from this progress of the pueblos. The crops the farmers now brought in were not the planters' cane or rice but the traditional foodstuffs, corn and beans. As the rainy season came on, Governor Vázquez distributed among the municipal governments 500,000 pesos—a loan from the Convention—which were to go to local farmers as credit for seed and tools. By mid-June reporters found all the fields in the state under cultivation, again mainly in corn.[7]

Zapata did not approve of this development, which would leave the sugar mills idle. At least since 1911 he had foreseen that reorganized haciendas might be a bountiful source of public wealth, and recent talks with agronomists had confirmed his idea that the mills should continue to operate as "national factories." Farmers growing cane and selling it to the mills would earn money, he understood, and so be able to save, buy new goods, and use new services. Accordingly he had ordered spare parts to replace those on damaged machines. And three more mills reopened for business. Again native chiefs were in charge—Modesto Rangel at El Puente, Eufemio Zapata at Cuautlixco, and Maurilio Mejía, Zapata's nephew, at Cuahuixtla. Later, Santa Clara reopened under Mendoza. But assisting them technically now were agronomists from the Rural Loan Bank, under the imaginative direction of Ignacio Díaz Soto y Gama. Zapata himself urged villagers to quit growing vegetables and instead produce a cash crop. "If you keep on growing chile peppers, onions, and tomatoes," he told Villa

[6] For an account of these struggles based on González Garza's archive and favoring him, see Quirk: op. cit., pp. 211–23, 232–52. For a Zapatista version, see Palafox to Zapata, March 28, 1914 [sic, 1915], AZ, 27: 10; Palafox to Zapata, April 13, 1915, AZ, 30: 6; A. Díaz Soto y Gama to Zapata, May 17, 1915, AZ, 28: 23: 1; Palafox to Zapata, June 25, 1915, AZ, 27: 1.

[7] *La Convención,* May 20 and June 17, 1915.

de Ayala farmers, "you'll never get out of the state of poverty you've always lived in. That's why, as I advise you, you have to grow cane . . ." Through conditional gifts of money and seed, he did persuade some villagers to resume the cultivation of cane.[8]

But most families went on truck farming. Rather than rehabilitate the hacienda, they obviously preferred to work and trade in foodstuffs that had always seemed the mainstay of the pueblo. And during the summer they restocked Morelos's district markets with the familiar beans, corn, chick-peas, tomatoes, onions, chile peppers, even chickens. While Mexico City was on the verge of starvation at this time, common folk in Morelos evidently had more to eat than in 1910—and at lower real prices. So profuse was the production of food that despite the constant infusion of Conventionist currency into the state's economy, there was little sign of inflation. In the fondas, the crude country inns where revolutionary officers, local officials, and metropolitan refugees ate, the young agrarian commissioners got by easily on four pesos a day.[9]

In such clear relief the character of revolutionary Morelos emerged: in the very crops people liked to grow, they revealed the kind of community they liked to dwell in. They had no taste for the style of individuals on the make, the life of perpetual achievement and acquisition, of chance and change and moving on. Rather, they wanted a life they could control, a modest, familial prosperity in the company of other modestly prosperous families whom they knew, and all in one place. An experiment, for instance, they would try only after they were certain it would work—after, that is, it was no longer experimental. And profits they appreciated only if they had an orthodox use for them.

Even among those in official command the tone of relations in the state in 1915 was intensely, almost intentionally, rural and rustic. In sartorial fashion the standard was white pajamas, the southern farmers' work clothes. Headquarters secretaries wore them not only through affectation but also because they were safer in them. On visits to Cuernavaca allied revolutionaries from the north doffed their khakis; otherwise they courted insults

[8] Serafín M. Robles: "El Zapatismo y la Industria Azucarera en Morelos," *El Campesino,* August 1950. Porfirio Palacios: "Todo es según el color. . . . El problema del azúcar y la visión de Zapata," *La Prensa,* February 19, 1944.

[9] Gómez: *Las comisiones,* pp. 39, 59–60. On the Conventionist currency, which came into Morelos through payments to the southern army, see Francisco Ramírez Plancarte: *La Ciudad de México durante la revolución constitucionalista* (2nd edn., México, 1941), pp. 450–5.

and even assaults if they wandered far from the central plaza. Anyone in trousers, a shirt, and boots was a *catrín,* a dandy. In language the familiar, second-person address was the norm, and country slang and dialect prevailed: a fellow or a buddy was a *vale* (literally, a voucher), to shoot was "to bust" (*quebrar*), "fun" (*el gusto*) was trick riding and roping, the enemy was *los Carranzas, pobre* (poor) came out as *probe, somos* (we are) as *semos, fue* (he was) as *hue.* For entertainment there were no fancy liquors or shows imported but only the same local diversions as before the war—warm beer and raw rum (*resacado*), cock fights, and "fun" on horses.

The heart of the state was now in Tlaltizapán. In this restful little town in the hollows leading down into the Jojutla rice fields, where towering dusky green laurels cast the square and streets in permanent shadow, where the wind suddenly moving in the tops of the trees could hush the talking below, where in the quiet the sound would rise of water rippling through the maze of local creeks and canals—in this resort Zapata had made not only a headquarters but also a home. And here, as the American agent who came to meet him could see, all the farming families in the state looked to him "as a Saviour and a Father."[1] Here, unlike in Mexico City, there was no busy display of confiscated luxury, no gleeful consumption of captured treasure, no swarm of bureaucrats leaping from telephone to limousine, only the regular, measured round of native business. The days Zapata passed in his offices in an old rice mill at the northern edge of town, hearing petitions, forwarding them to Palafox in Mexico City or ruling on them himself, deciding strategy and policy, dispatching orders. In the evenings he and his aides relaxed in the plaza, drinking, arguing about plucky cocks and fast and frisky horses, discussing the rains and prices with farmers who joined them for a beer, Zapata as always smoking slowly on a good cigar. The nights he spent back in his quarters with a woman from the town; he fathered two children at least in Tlaltizapán.[2] For his birthday in August the townspeople held a fiesta, and the local señoritas put on a stir-

[1] West, Report, May 11, 1915, NA.

[2] Zapata fathered at least five sons and four daughters. His wife, Josefa, bore him two children, Felipe and María Asunción, both of whom died in infancy. See Herminia Aguilar: "Doña Josefa Espejo, Vda. de Zapata," *El Campesino,* May 1950. Other children were "hijos naturales." Surviving at least to adulthood were Nicolás, born in 1906; Eugenio, probably born in 1913; María Elena, probably born in 1913; Ana María, born in 1914; Diego, born in 1916; María Luisa, probably born in 1918; and Mateo, born in 1918. See Gill: op. cit., pp. 69–74.

ring program—"parade, speech, hymn to labor, waltz, dialogue, speech, parade, poetry, speech, fantasia, dialogue, children's comedy, monologue and speech, national anthem . . ."[3] In this haven Zapata indulged such dreams of glory as he had. Beside the church on a hill at the southern edge of town he wanted a mausoleum built, as a collective tomb for himself and his closest chiefs. In Tlaltizapán he had found the moral capital of his revolution.

The extravaganza of the year was a bullfight in Yautepec. There Salazar had a little plaza de toros built opposite the train station, and Juan Silveti, a celebrated novillero later to become one of Mexico's best toreros, came to perform against two young bulls from Ignacio de la Torre y Mier's prize Toluca herd. Revolutionary chiefs assembled from throughout the state, some in Pullman cars. Zapata of course came up from Tlaltizapán. He and Salazar even took a preliminary part in the fight, riding rings around the bulls, dodging their charges, and wearing them down for the artless peons who were serving Silveti as banderilleros.[4]

No social event more elegant than this occurred in Morelos in 1915, because no sophisticates were there to stage or attend it. The devotees of refined culture had long since left for the metropolis, some in terror, others in exultation, like Montaño, who became Conventionist secretary of education. The only old nabob still in the state was de la Torre y Mier, released from the Mexico City penitentiary but kept out of pocket and under house arrest in Cuautla. The nearest that gay blades in Homburgs and ladies with boas were spotted was in Amecameca, a rail junction across the line in Mexico State; there a mob lynched one smart couplè.[5] Reforming out of its own origins and on a frontier, revolutionary Morelos was a very suspicious society, not easily hospitable, much less generous, to those who seemed not to belong. Local families had fought hard and long to recover their rural heritage. And in their agrarian state they wanted only other country families like themselves. There was a method in this intolerance, this deliberate coarseness, this willful ignorance of urbane ways. For city folk were the born bearers of ill tidings. Even the dogs knew to bark at them.

Thus, when the first omens of the state's inevitable doom appeared in the north, no native and few other Zapatistas recognized them. The omens

[3] Felicitación Que los Vecinos de Tlaltizapán ofrecen al Sr. Gral. Emiliano Zapata . . . August, 1915, AZ, 28: 5.

[4] Gómez: *Las comisiones,* pp. 121–3.

[5] Ibid., p. 102.

were the reports of three successive, tremendous defeats that the Carrancista General Obregón had inflicted upon Villa—two in early April at Celaya, the third in early June at León, all in Guanajuato, in the strategic great basin northwest of Mexico City. Obregón, who had lost an arm at León, now emerged as a master of war. Despite the news Zapata did not open a second front. In the capital Palafox and Soto y Gama worried not about the collapse of the army the Convention depended on but about the land reform bill they expected to introduce soon.[6]

But the crisis came on anyway. On July 11 a Carrancista army under Pablo González occupied Mexico City. The Convention retreated in disorder to Toluca, where it maintained the pretense of a national government. And Salazar's Morelos troops in the metropolis and Federal District withdrew south. Six days later González evacuated the capital again, to protect Obregón's lines of communication with Veracruz against a Villista attack in Hidalgo; and when he left, Zapatista forces sneaked back. But it seemed certain that he could return when he chose: although Villa maintained his battered army in the field, the nation's military balance had shifted decisively in the Carrancistas' favor.

At last southerners began to read the signs. As outlanders, the young agrarian commissioners stranded in Morelos lost their illusions first. Sadly they planned no more vacation trips to the capital.[7] Zapata himself finally went into action. To hold off González's return, he personally commanded on July 30 a powerful attack of 6,000 men against 1,700 Carrancistas northeast of Mexico City. Other attacks took place simultaneously throughout the area. But none could contain the Carrancista advance. On August 2 González reentered the capital, this time to stay.[8] In Morelos merchants began trying to refuse Convention currency.[9]

Still, no alarm charged the state. Zapata returned to rest in Tlaltizapán, honored at his birthday party and evidently more preoccupied with the doings in the Toluca Convention than with his crumbling military position.[1] On the advice of Palafox and Soto y Gama he believed that an inter-American conference then organizing in Washington to treat the Mexican problem would result in Carranza's downfall, and that the Carrancista

[6] Palafox to Zapata, June 25, 1915, AZ.

[7] Gómez: *Las comisiones,* pp. 119–20.

[8] See Pablo González's official report on his operations from July 17 to August 2, 1915, cited in Barragán: op. cit., II, 611–17.

[9] Pacheco to Zapata, August 5, 1915, AZ, 28: 5: 1.

[1] Zapata to Palafox, August 26, 1915, ibid.

chiefs would soon rejoin the Convention.[2] If so, he had no need to waste ammunition and men.

But weekly the decay of his position became more obvious. As Villa lost one key town after another in the north and as the inter-American conference failed, Zapata returned to action. To harry the Carrancistas in the rear, he launched strong attacks into the Federal District and Mexico State. In late September he even captured the power plant at Necaxa, the source of metropolitan electricity. But he could not hold it nor any of the other towns and villages he had taken. Everywhere the Carrancistas pushed him back, more firmly in control of the Valley of Mexico than any commanders since 1910. In Puebla and Mexico State local Zapatista chiefs began accepting amnesties from the Carrancista government, which gravely disturbed the chiefs in Morelos.[3] The state's seclusion had ended. Its revolutionaries were now on the defensive.

On October 10 the refugee Convention in Toluca divided for the last time, the Villistas and the President fleeing north. The Zapatistas escaped again to Cuernavaca, where, under Palafox's guidance, they reconvened the rump as the official and exclusive embodiment of the national revolution. These pretensions soon suffered irreparable deflation. On October 19 President Wilson extended the United States's de facto recognition to Carranza's government. He also prohibited all arms shipments to Mexico except to Carranza's authorities. The American decision thus fixed politically the new balance of power which the Carrancista armies had already won militarily. And it marked the beginning, after five years of civil war, of Mexico's reconsolidation. Carranza had finally realized his claim to sovereign legitimacy. Although the Carrancistas could not yet dominate the whole nation, they could prevent any other faction from displacing them. Henceforth they would rule.

In Morelos, however, the native attitude remained skeptical. The local chiefs had no clue to how solid the northern movement had also become. They still considered Carranza a mere leftover from the old regime, another haughty landlord who aspired to restore the Porfirian order. And not withstanding "Mister Wilson's" recognition, they doubted that he could retain the loyalty of the genuine revolutionary generals around him. Having

[2] Soto y Gama to Zapata, August 17, 1915, AZ, 28: 6: 1.

[3] "Para la historia," *La Prensa,* September 22, October 31, November 3 and 19, 1931. (Henceforth citations of this series will refer only to the date of *La Prensa.*) Silliman to the secretary of state, September 27 and 30, 1915, NA, 59: 812.00/16135 and 16333.

witnessed desertions and treacheries galore during the past five years, they reckoned Carranza would not last long. By now they had already resisted and helped bring down three federal governments, each apparently stronger than his. So the strategy they pursued was the same as before: vigorous raids in the south, to discredit the government and tempt ambitious loyalists to revolt.

With less excuse the Zapatista secretaries also disparaged Carranza's sudden ascendancy. Voicing the official Morelos response through the Convention now in Cuernavaca, they encouraged the stubborn native hopes. Secretary of Agriculture Palafox dominated the Convention absolutely and tolerated no gesture of compromise. As he and Soto y Gama lost power, they became more intransigent in policy. In 1915–16, in an exaggerated but less dramatic way, the same complex of tensions developed as in 1914—Zapata's retreat from serious politics, and Palafox's rigid opposition.

On October 26 Palafox published a Manifesto to the Nation, probably composed by Soto y Gama. It was the first official southern response to Carranza's new government, an introduction to an extensive Program of Political and Social Reforms which the Toluca Convention had voted a month earlier and which the Cuernavaca rump now issued, slightly amended, as its own. The program itself was an interesting draft of the basic changes the Conventionists believed necessary to save the nation. It was a more detailed catalogue of improvements than a similar Carrancista project published the previous December, and it contained promises of legislation both more stringent and more moderate, depending on the subject, than the various decrees Carranza had promulgated on land, labor, municipalities, divorce, education, taxes, and mineral concessions.[4] That same day Palafox delivered on one promise, publishing a radical agrarian law that gave the secretary of agriculture immense authority over urban and rural property and natural resources. By this remarkable law the Department of Agriculture would be the central agency of a stupendous nationalizing reformation of Mexico.[5] But the introductory manifesto was a gross mistake, betraying a fantastic misconception of the national context in which the proposed reforms might have an appeal. Lambasting Carranza's "ill-

[4] Manifesto to the Nation, October 26, 1915, AZ, 28: 5: 3. The text of the program of reforms is also in González Ramírez: *Planes,* pp. 123–8. For Carranza's promises, see ibid., pp. 158–64. For a study of his decrees, see Nettie Lee Benson: "The Preconstitutional Regime of Venustiano Carranza, 1913–1917" (M.A. thesis, University of Texas, 1936), pp. 96–128.

[5] See Appendix C for the text of this law.

fated faction" for "an infamous and incredible pact with the great landholders," the southern secretaries specifically accepted "with pleasure the manufacturer, the merchant, the mineowner, the businessman, all the active and enterprising elements which open new paths for industry and provide work to great groups of workers . . ." But "the hacendado," they intoned, "the monopolist of all the lands, the usurper of nature's wealth, the creator of national misery, the infamous slave-trader who treats men like beasts of burden, the hacendado being unproductive and idle—him the [Zapatista] Revolution does not tolerate." The southern program was "quite simple," as they summarized it: "War to the death against the hacendados, ample guarantees for all the other classes of society."

This was the rhetoric of 1911 or 1913, not late 1915, and no revolutionary not already a committed Zapatista could thrill to it. For the old landlords, the supposed villains, no longer had power in Mexico. Most languished in jail or exile. As a class they hardly even existed. True, outside Morelos the nation's villages had not emerged dominant. But the state and district chiefs who led them were not likely to champion an agrarian revolt now, since thanks to Carranza precisely they had become the new landlords. As for the careerists in business and labor, they already had a government to depend on and lobby in. And so far it served them well. That thus a new regime had actually formed, cohesive and durable, that Carranza was a front not for the Amors, the Escandóns, and the García Pimentels, but for the clever and ruthless young operators from the north who commanded the revolutionary armies, that the danger for Morelos villagers was not in familiar reaction but in alien progress—this crisis the southern secretaries had no notion of. In their blindness they reinforced the local chiefs' tenacity.

The ruin of the native revolution in Morelos was therefore no caving in but a ragged, bitter, and confused giving way. Through the fall Zapata arranged raids from Oaxaca to Hidalgo. Indeed his forces were more active now than when Villa had needed them. But the raids gained nothing in territory or prestige. They did not even demoralize the government, whose generals took over more and more towns in the states surrounding Morelos.[6] The raids, moreover, cost dearly in ammunition, which because of the American embargo was daily more scarce. At Atlihuayán hacienda Zapata kept a primitive munitions factory working, recharging old Mauser and .30-.30 shells and for slugs plugging them with little pieces of copper cable stolen from Mexico City suburban trolleys and power works; but

[6] *La Prensa,* November 17, 21, and 24, 1931.

the supply was irregular and inadequate.[7] Meanwhile the Villista army collapsed completely in the north, and attention refocused on the south. In late November the government announced plans for a "definitive" campaign against the Zapatistas, "right in their hideouts in . . . Morelos."[8] Isolated as never before in the revolution, the state would soon be under siege. The young agrarian commissioners began applying for permits to get out. Scared and desperate, one became alcoholic; others sneaked off to the capital without waiting for passes.[9]

Zapata tried to tighten security over local resources for defense. The management of the munitions factory he removed from Secretary of War Pacheco's control and brought into the headquarters.[1] He also ordered his army to prohibit trade between Zapatista and Carrancista zones "in every article," primary necessities or not—"to take away from the enemy all those elements which could serve for his sustenance."[2] And he began to reclaim the sugar mills from the chiefs, to assign them to the Rural Loan Bank to operate directly.[3] But even at the first small harvest in these "national factories," and the prospect of a little revenue, he was gloomy. He wanted to give the proceeds to the peons working in the mills: "Who knows," he told his secretary, "what they will have to suffer later on?" Guiltily he insisted that the imminent woe was not his fault "but that of events which have to come."[4]

The government's offer of amnesty, publicized since August, greatly increased the strain on the local chiefs. Suspecting a defection, one would try to disarm another's forces. But this jumpy vigilance only tended, as Zapata warned in reprimand, "to deepen the personal enmities which exist between chiefs . . . which we must avoid at all cost."[5] Fearful that subversive telegrafists might sabotage his military operations, de la O tried to control the wire offices in his zone.[6] In a squabble over an artillery piece, his men killed one of the most daring and proficient Zapatista field commanders, Antonio

[7] Ibid., October 10, 1931.
[8] Ibid., November 28, 1931.
[9] Gómez: *Las comisiones,* pp. 138–59.
[1] Zapata to Pacheco, November 7, 1915, AZ, 31: Copybook 2.
[2] Headquarters circular, February 9, 1916, AA.
[3] Gabriel Encinas to Mendoza, January 25, 1916, AA.
[4] Palacios in *La Prensa,* February 19, 1944.
[5] Zapata to L. Vázquez, November 15, 1915, AZ, 31: Copybook 2.
[6] Zapata to de la O, December 11–12, 1915, ibid.

Barona.[7] In the southeastern zone Mendoza was so offended by intruding rival chiefs and by innuendos about his loyalty that he challenged Zapata to name a new chief there.[8] And along the front allied chiefs actually took amnesties. Most disturbing, these defectors came mainly from Pacheco's division in Mexico State and the Federal District, which guarded the northern entrances to Morelos. They were Zapatistas of recent conversion whom Pacheco, as Conventionist secretary of war, had commissioned in droves; and they deserted now as speedily as they had joined. One, however, was a grave loss: Vicente Navarro, a tough and canny chief who had defended the pass at Contreras. When he took an amnesty, the Carrancistas moved right down to La Cima on the threshhold of Morelos.[9]

Still, the high native chiefs did not flag in their defiance. Mustering forces of two thousand to three thousand men at three or four different rendezvous, they struck in coordinated attacks into the Federal District, southern and central Puebla, and southern Mexico State. If a chief had ex-federal officers on his staff, he got fifth-column help from ex-federals serving on the other side. Especially along the Puebla border these friendly enemy officers would sell supplies, pass on intelligence, and arrange private truces so fighting could go on elsewhere.[1] To the southwest, after Carrancistas pushing up from Acapulco took Chilpancingo and Iguala and penetrated into Morelos, de la O drove them back in a terrific counter-offensive. Sweeping down into Guerrero, he and Jesús Salgado wiped out garrisons and field forces alike re-covered the country in "fine and prosperous" crops. By late December de la O had carried the war into the Carrancista home territory around Acapulco. Outside the city, the American consul there reported, the Carrancistas showed an "absolute lack of any positive control."[2] Throughout the end of 1915 and the first weeks of 1916 the Morelos revolutionaries put up such a fierce resistance around their state that the vaunted government campaign against their "hideouts" could

[7] *La Prensa,* December 5, 1931. Gómez: *Las comisiones,* p. 91.

[8] Mendoza to Zapata, January 4, 1916, AZ, 27: 5.

[9] *La Prensa,* November 3, 10, and 19, and December 8 and 29, 1931. Meléndez: op. cit., I, 369–70.

[1] Confidential memorandum, n.d. (late 1915–early 1916?), AGRE, L-E-794: 31 [sic, 19]: 20. Confidential report, n.d. (late 1915–early 1916?), ibid., 32. J. G. Nava to César López de Lara, October 29, 1915, ibid., 34.

[2] Edwards to the secretary of state, November 3, 1915, and January 25, 1916, NA, 59: 812.00/16834 and 17256.

not start. "Only the lowest class Indians can pass the lines with safety," noted the new American chargé d'affaires; "anyone else would undoubtedly risk his life."[3]

But the government merely raised the pressure. In late January it amplified its own agrarista propaganda: the National Agrarian Commission, it promised, would "initiate works for the restitution and grants of ejidos to the pueblos."[4] On February 1 the undersecretary of war announced that twenty thousand new troops would join the ten thousand already assigned to the south. He also threatened to use the government's recently acquired flotilla of airplanes to give "a mortal blow" to the Zapatistas.[5] And his department finally took steps to remove ex-federals from posts where they could obstruct operations.[6]

Again the public Zapatista response was a fire-breathing Manifesto to the Nation. The only reasons for "the fratricidal struggle staining the . . . Fatherland with blood," the headquarters secretaries ranted, were the "boundless ambition of one man of unhealthy passions and no conscience," Venustiano Carranza, and the sycophancy of the group that surrounded him.[7] Even in private they exuded cheer. To Zapata Palafox confided his hope "that in the near future when we dominate Mexico City and other regions of the country, . . . then as I've always hoped, a great number of agrarian commissions will form, so that they will go into all the states of the Republic."[8]

But the chiefs were not so certain. Among them the government's continuing vigor and resolve had prompted darker judgments—doubts whether to go on in principled violence, which would invite the Carrancistas to repeat the work of Huerta and Robles in the state, or to bargain for peace and local autonomy by recognizing Carranza. This was a dilemma especially painful to the chiefs in the northwestern zone, where the brunt of a Carrancista invasion would fall. There the ranking figure was Pacheco, based in Huitzilac. Already he had lost much outlying support and many key points of defense. And as powerful Carrancista legions massed at La Cima, they obliged him to decide whether he should make a deal or pre-

[3] Parker to the secretary of state, November 18, 1915, ibid., 16896.

[4] *El Demócrata,* January 23, 1916.

[5] Ibid., February 1, 1916.

[6] Estado Mayor del General Vicente Segura: *Historia de la Brigada Mixta "Hidalgo," 1915–1916* (México, 1917), p. 23.

[7] Manifesto to the Nation, February 7, 1916, AZ, 27: 2.

[8] Palafox to Zapata, February 7, 1916, ibid.

pare for battle. On his decision the Carrancistas would walk into Morelos or have to fight for every hill and ravine. Pacheco was a mystic: in all affairs he did, he said, as God bid him.[9] Now he listened for the divine word.

On February 20 Zapata authorized Pacheco to communicate secretly with General Pablo González, who commanded the Constitutionalist forces at La Cima.[1] What Zapata intended—to initiate peace talks, arrange a local truce, or suborn González—remains unclear, though it was probably the last.[2] It also remains unclear whether Pacheco followed Zapata's instructions, or from the first undertook an independent course. At heart neither chief probably knew exactly what he was up to: depending on González's response, different proposals might arise.

Then de la O and his lieutenant, Valentín Reyes, discovered the correspondence between Pacheco and González. De la O and Pacheco were old rivals, because of a feud between their native villages of Santa María and Huitzilac; and recently the contest had become more heated.[3] With good reason de la O was suspicious as well as jealous. And Reyes apparently expected that he could displace Pacheco and succeed to his command. They both warned Pacheco against treason.

Pacheco immediately complained to Zapata that de la O and Reyes were bothering him. And Zapata in turn informed the two chiefs that it was with headquarters' authority that Pacheco had entered "into dealings and communication with the enemy . . ." The object of the talks, he assured them, was "to learn the aims of the Carrancista General Pablo González and other chiefs who second him with respect to the cause which we defend." The headquarters had received Pacheco's reports on what had happened so far, Zapata said, and it would support Pacheco "as long as the conferences which he had with [the Carrancista generals] were for the benefit of the Revolution, and something advantageous was gained without damage to the principles of the Plan de Ayala."[4]

Pacheco soon hinted, however, that the Good Lord had disposed as de la O had guessed. With hostilities suspended and supposedly in the midst of delicate talks, he complained gruffly to Zapata about his troops' poor pay.

[9] Personal interview with Soto y Gama. Octavio Paz: "Trágico fin del General Pacheco," *El Universal,* December 3, 1933.

[1] *La Prensa,* July 7, 1932. Zapata to Pacheco, March 4, 1916, AZ, 31: Copybook 3.

[2] For a contrary view, see Rafael Alvarado: "Zapata intentó asesinar al General Pablo González," *Todo,* November 5, 1942.

[3] Zapata to de la O, January 8, 1916, AZ, 31: Copybook 2.

[4] Zapata to Reyes and to de la O, March 4, 1916, AZ, 31: Copybook 3.

"I would appreciate it," he wrote, "if you would order the paymaster-general to attend to the paymasters of my division . . . so [my soldiers] who find themselves daily attacking the enemy and away from home . . . can buy corn and not run into difficulties."[5] And suddenly on March 13, under no fire, he evacuated Huitzilac and retreated south to Cuentepec. The Carrancistas moved immediately and without resistance down past Huitzilac as far as La Cruz. Seven miles away, Cuernavaca prepared for a bombardment. Through binoculars the Carrancista officers could see white surrender flags hung out of windows there. On March 18 González himself arrived in La Cruz to inspect the positions his forces held on the heights above the Morelos capital.[6] By then the weary Conventionists had fled on down to Jojutla. De la O obstructed González's advance and saved the front for the moment. But strategically the defense of the state was now impossible.

Incredibly, Pacheco remained free. Even after the Cuentepec municipal president corroborated de la O's constant charges of treason, Zapata stayed loyal. On March 23 he assured Pacheco that "up to today" he had given no credit to rumors of his treachery; and he warned de la O against shooting Pacheco until he had thoroughly investigated the case and proved Pacheco's guilt beyond a doubt.[7] Boldly inspired now, Pacheco complained that de la O had mistreated his troops and sacked Cuernavaca.[8] But as he maneuvered on south, evidently angling to flank Jojutla and capture the Convention, his luck ran out. At Miacatlán one of de la O's patrols caught and shot him. Zapata kept his troops in arms, redistributing them among other chiefs.[9]

Hardly had this loss sunk in when a worse blow struck. On April 16, on his way back to Yautepec after reconnaissance west of the town, Amador Salazar was killed by a stray enemy bullet that hit him in the neck. In the shock of death he stayed upright in the saddle. Finally, as his big sombrero slipped, his aides saw what had happened.[1] So on the eve of attack by the most formidable army they had yet faced, the Zapatistas were without two of their highest chiefs and best commanders.

Meanwhile González had moved his forces in a ring around the state. He, like the other high politicians and generals of the new regime, was im-

[5] Pacheco to Zapata, March 11, 1916, AZ, 27: 3.

[6] *El Demócrata,* March 21, 1916, Meléndez: op. cit., I, 370.

[7] Zapata to Pacheco and to de la O, March 23, 1916, AZ, 31: Copybook 3.

[8] Pacheco to Zapata, March 27 and 28, 1916, AZ, 27: 3.

[9] Zapata to I. P. Zabala, April 13, 1916, AZ, 27: 4.

[1] Meléndez: op. cit., I, 371–2. Gómez: *Las comisiones,* pp. 123–4.

patient to end the southern problem. A Constitutional Convention was on their agenda, to legitimize Carranza's reformist decrees, but preparations for it could not begin in earnest until the nation was more or less at peace. Besides, Villa had just provoked an international crisis, raiding murderously into Columbus, New Mexico, and bringing back in pursuit of him a U.S. Army punitive expedition; and on the eve of constitutional reform the Carrancistas could not afford the reappearance of even the possibility of the old Villa-Zapata axis.[2] González now commanded thirty thousand troops, well-supplied and in high spirits, and for his own reputation he was bent on achieving an impressive success. From Jojutla, as if to rally the local forces, the die-hard Conventionists reissued their October 26 manifesto and program of reform.[3] But the surviving Morelos chiefs no longer deluded themselves. They knew the state would shortly be a battleground again, and they were already organizing the procedure, military and civilian, for evacuating the state's villages.[4]

On April 27 González set up his headquarters at Tres Marías and resumed operations. By April 29 government troops held positions surrounding Cuernavaca. At six a.m. on May 2 González directed the final action; and after a short, sharp attack, the state capital fell.[5] Zapata had come up from Tlaltizapán to direct its defense, but withdrew just in time to escape. In the next two or three days almost all the state's other main towns fell to the government commanders. The War Department even had a plane bombing Zapatista lines. By May 6 González reported to Secretary of War Obregón that the campaign was practically finished.[6] The Liberating Army barely held Jojutla, its Tlaltizapán headquarters, and a few scattered villages. And late efforts to suborn Carrancista commanders were to no avail.[7]

As it entered Morelos, the Carrancista army seemed the old federal army reincarnate. Its troops came not as liberators but as conquerors of the local population, which was itself the enemy and enjoyed at most only the rights of prisoners of war. When the Carrancistas took Cuautla, they hanged the

[2] On the crisis, see Clarence C. Clendenen: *The United States and Pancho Villa. A Study in Unconventional Diplomacy* (Ithaca, 1961), pp. 234–69.

[3] Manifesto to the Nation, April 18, 1916, AZ, 27: 4.

[4] Zapata to municipal presidents, March 30, 1916, AZ, 27: 3.

[5] *El Demócrata,* May 10, 1916.

[6] Ibid., May 5 and 8, 1916. Oscar Lewis: *Pedro Martínez. A Mexican Peasant and His Family* (New York, 1964), p. 101.

[7] Letters from Almazán, Eufemio Zapata, and Maurilio Mejía to one commander, General Vicente Segura, in Puebla, and his replies, are in Estado Mayor: op. cit., pp. 104–19.

parish priest as a Zapatista spy.[8] On May 5 González ordered every person in the state to turn in his arms: continued possession of them would be grounds for the "severest penalties." At Jiutepec on May 8 the Carrancista General Rafael Cepeda assembled 225 prisoners and after a summary trial had them all shot.[9]

In terror pacificos swarmed out of pueblos in the line of the Carrancista advance. Fleeing south into Guerrero or east into the high, volcano country, they littered the roadsides with material thrown away to lighten their loads. They jammed little villages still for the moment safe, like Tehuiztla, southwest of Jojutla. This hamlet "presented the look of a fair," reported an observer there in early May, "but a fair of pain and rage. People's faces were furious. They would barely mumble out a few words, but everyone had a violent remark for the Constitutionalists on the tip of his tongue. In conversations, comments on the news alternated with reports which emigrants asked of each other about roads, villages, little settlements stuck up in the steepest part of the mountains, inaccessible, unheard of places—so they could go there to leave their families . . ."[1]

By mid-May the Carrancistas had shipped nearly thirteen hundred prisoners to Mexico City. Some were combatants, some were not. All of them, declared the military commander in the capital, General Benjamín Hill, were bound for Yucatán: and not only them, but all future prisoners. There, General Hill indicated, they would have the "opportunity to work . . . under the vigilance of civil and military authorities"—which would make them "men useful for society and for their families."[2]

From Tlaltizapán Zapata tried desperately to organize municipal police to keep local order as one army replaced another in the state.[3] But police who assumed such responsibility only invited the first fire against their families. For the invading Carrancistas, who considered the villagers themselves outlaws, the transfer of power had to be violent. In mid-June, after another crushing attack, González's forces took Tlaltizapán itself, and a tremendous booty. They also executed 286 persons—132 men, 112 women, and 42 minors of both sexes, as the local register of burials recorded them.[4]

[8] Porfirio Palacios: "Zapatismo vs. Gonzalismo," *Todo,* December 24, 1942.

[9] *La Prensa,* May 5, 1932. *El Demócrata,* May 10, 1916.

[1] Anonymous memorandum on events around Jojutla, May 4, 1916, AZ, 27: 5.

[2] *El Demócrata,* May 16, 1916.

[3] Circular to municipal presidents and assistants, May 31, 1916, AZ, 30: 12.

[4] Palacios: *Zapata,* p. 230. *El Demócrata,* June 15, 1916. *La Prensa,* June 25, 1932.

Helpless in regular battles, Zapata, his surviving chiefs, and the men who stayed with them retreated back into the rough hills.

As the Carrancistas drove into the Zapatista capital, it seemed that the local revolution had failed completely, that the villagers' efforts to carry out their own changes had been a profound mistake and that only on dictation from Mexico City could reform occur and last in Morelos. If so, the idea of a popular revolution was a delusion. If so, the Plan de Ayala was mere rural fustian, and Zapata not an insightful leader but simply a brave and angry clod.