

Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Mexico

By MANUEL GOMEZ.

MEXICO is a heart-breaker for the U. S. capitalist press. Cartoonists and editorial writers long ago developed the not too ingenious habit of picturing the republic to the south as a "land of pulque and perpetual revolution," with the bedraggled Mexican peons ever willing to engage in "revolution" for no other apparent reason than that they were born that way. The failure of the present Gomez-Serrano outburst against the Calles government has dealt a serious blow to this conception. Repeating, still more decisively, the 1923-24 debacle of the adventure in armed reaction led by Adolfo de la Huerta, the fadeout of Generals Arnulfo Gomez and Francisco Serrano indicates once more that while the Mexican masses have participated in revolution they cannot be mobilized for counter-revolution.

The Mexican masses refused to take up arms under the leadership of General Gomez, just as they had refused to take up arms for de la Huerta. De la Huerta at least had been able to count on the support of considerable sections of the army. Gomez and Serrano found themselves almost alone. Whatever elements sympathized with the movement were awed into inaction by the stolid resistance of the decisive factors of the social structure of Mexican society. Long awaited, the crisis was past before most people realized it had arrived. The Gomez-Serrano affair will be known in Mexican history as the uprising that never got started.

Gomez and Serrano were the first nationally-recognized rebel leaders since the days of Victoriano Huerta to appeal for support without making any pretense of labor or peasant orientation. They were the first ones since the overthrow of Diaz to openly court the favor of Wall Street and Washington. These two circumstances are not coincidental. They show that the national revolution in Mexico is now inseparable from the agrarian revolution and the leadership of the workers, while the classes opposing the labor-peasant demands have deserted the national revolution and gone over to American imperialism. Instinctive realization of this fact rallied many bourgeois-bureaucratic elements—Catholic tho they were—to the defense of the status quo and contributed to the quick defeat of the counter-revolution. Some of these elements will desert the national revolution tomorrow, as the Mexican class struggle becomes sharper, but for the time being they have bowed to the logic

of the united anti-imperialist front. Others, in leading places, have remained with the revolution to betray it, but they too have served a temporarily useful purpose. As to the great mass of workers and peasants, their faith in and devotion to the revolution remains unshaken.

GENERAL SERRANO is dead and General Gomez is fleeing for his life thru the state of Vera Cruz, where the entire worker and peasant population is ready to rise like a hostile wall against him as soon as he should come down out of the mountains with the handful of followers that still clings to him. The Calles government is more firmly entrenched than ever. General Alvaro Obregon, referred to in the newspapers as Calles' candidate, now stands unopposed in the coming presidential election. The solid foundation of the Mexican revolution, which has stood strong now in the face of two major counter-revolutionary assaults in four years, is established.

The danger is that we may be so impressed with the demonstrated strength of the Mexican revolution as to ignore its inherent weaknesses and thus fail to see the perils existing in the present situation.

Excessive jubilation would be somewhat premature. One crisis does not make an epoch. The counter-revolution is defeated but it is far from being dead. General Gomez might follow General Serrano to the grave without in any way solving the essential problem. Deficient as it appears, and is today, in mobilizable support, the counter-revolution represents potent forces, capable of continuing the struggle all the more fiercely on a new basis, employing the utmost elasticity in tactics, enjoying financial means equal to any emergency.

THE counter-revolutionary elements in the Mexican situation are:

- 1.—The landed aristocracy, which has been against the revolution from the beginning.
- 2.—The upper bourgeoisie, which generally speaking supported the movement against Porfirio Diaz but which deserted the revolution during and after the rise of Carranza.
- 3.—The Catholic Church, which in the present situation represents the interests of the above classes but which has roots in all classes of Mexican society.
- 4.—Sections of the army.
- 5.—American imperialism.

THE Gomez-Serrano rising was not just a chance thrust. For nearly two years the reactionary elements in Mexican society have been feeling their way toward such a movement, not without foreign stimulation. The defiant Catholicism of last year provided a rallying banner. General Gomez, who had achieved notoriety in Tamaulipas by acting as a labor-hat-

ing instrument of the U. S. oil interests, and in Vera Cruz by assaulting the peasant leagues on behalf of the landowners' organization known as the "Sindicato de Agricultores," was looked to as a prospective military leader of the movement which events had been preparing. His loyalty to the Calles regime was questioned on all sides as far back as May, 1926,

when I was in Mexico. From the moment that Gomez declared his candidacy for president all doubt vanished. He could not hope under any conceivable circumstances to receive enough votes to elect him as against Obregon. It was plain that his electoral campaign was merely an initial stage in what was to be a carefully-planned revolt of nation-wide proportions. And

it was with this understanding that all the elements listed above supported him.

In estimating the extent of the setback received by the reaction it is a mistake to consider the Mexican counter-revolution as something confined to Mexico, without relation to the policy of Washington and Wall Street. American imperialism is the most persistent enemy that the Mexican revolution has to face. One must see the Gomez-Serrano affair in perspective, showing its connection with a whole series of events including not only the Catholic and anti-labor (article 123) struggles, but the land-and-oil laws controversy as well.

Too much is made of the differences between the Wall Street oil men and the Wall Street bankers with regard to Mexican policy. It was after all President Coolidge who appointed as successive ambassadors to Mexico both James R. Sheffield ("the agent of the oil interests") and Dwight W. Morrow, of the firm of J. P. Morgan. The change does not indicate that American imperialism has abandoned either the direct or the indirect (subsidizing of counter-revolution, etc.) method of aggression against Mexico. It is not too much to say that the counter-revolutionary danger would not exist at all if it were not for that aggression.

Certainly the House of Morgan, in which Ambassador Morrow was a partner up to the moment of his appointment, looked with favor upon the recent outbreak in Mexico. Certainly further disturbances will help to make Mr. Morrow's job in Mexico City easier. It is plain that armed counter-revolution could not hope to succeed in its objective at the present time, given the fact that the United States government is not prepared to adopt a program of military invasion. But the menace of rebel movements is a club which Ambassador Morrow can wield effectively to drive a hard bargain with President-apparent Obregon.

Obregon had the House of Morgan to deal with once before, during his first term as president of Mexico. It was not until he satisfied the Morgan debt demands thru the Lamont-de la Huerta agreement that the United States government recognized his regime.

It should be borne in mind that Obregon represents the right wing of the present regime in Mexico. Unless the Mexican masses are on the alert they may find that they themselves are in the very trap set for them by Wall Street. They may find that essential conquests of the revolution have been defended against armed as-

sault only to be bartered away in the hour of apparent triumph.

As a matter of fact the Calles-Obregon regime has only two possible courses open to it: either it must make its peace with American imperialism (in which case it could no longer claim to represent the revolution), or it must throw its efforts in the direction of creating a national socio-political structure independent of imperialism and capable of developing a constructive national economy in spite of it.

THE workers and peasants represent the only classes in Mexico upon which such a program could base itself. Any policy which does not base itself frankly on these classes, in alliance with the petty-bourgeois and other sympathetic elements cannot pretend to be charting a safe course for the Mexican revolution.

President Calles has never faced this issue squarely, despite his elaborate "national reconstruction program"—in which, after all, the interests of the workers and peasants are relegated to the background. There was even something lacking in the way in which he met the Gomez-Serrano rebellion. It is true that he acted with promptness and decision in nullifying the counter-revolution on the battlefield but he did not explain the counter-revolutionary issues to the people. Up to the present moment he has given out no proclamation of any kind, much less a direct appeal to the workers and peasants. In this sense the present situation represents a step backward from the atmosphere of the "red-battalion" days.

Obregon will not swing the pendulum back the other way.

The Communist Party of Mexico must be on the alert for every possible shift in the center of gravity of the revolutionary regime, (such as that from Calles to Obregon, who is now the real head of the government). While supporting the government in every progressive stand against rebellion, the Party must not hesitate to point out the internal dangers of the situation and to oppose every step away from the worker-peasant base of the revolution. The Party must press for effective guarantees on the part of the workers and peasants as the only safeguard of the united anti-imperialist front.

Friends of the Mexican revolution in this country must watch every move of American imperialism, remembering that Mexico constitutes the historic point of focus for the clash of forces inherent in the application of Monroe-Doctrine policy to Latin America.

Detroit Co-Operative To Speak English and Deal in Food-Stuffs

DETROIT, Oct. 21.—Cooperation in Detroit will take a long step forward on Wednesday, October 26, when a cooperative association for the retail of groceries, meats, and general merchandise will be organized at the Finnish Hall, 5969 14th St., (Near McGraw) by Detroit workers.

Several cooperative organizations exist in Detroit at present, but all are organizations on a language basis and only one, an Italian cooperative, handles groceries.

The new organization will be known as the "Workers Cooperative Association" and will have an International and American character.

All who are interested in the Co-operative movement should attend this meeting and join as charter members.

Third German Workers' Delegation to U. S. S. R.

An extensive campaign is now in progress in Germany for the sending of a third workers' delegation to the U. S. S. R.

The delegation is being organized under the slogans: "Struggle against imperialist war" and "Fraternal unity of the working class of Germany and the Soviet Union."

Collections of signatures are being made all over Germany to greetings which are to be sent to the workers of the U. S. S. R. for the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the October Revolution. Everyone who signs the greetings also contributes ten pfennig to cover the travelling expenses of the delegation.

Fails In Channel Swim.

LONDON, Oct. 21.—Miss Mercedes Gleitze, London typist, failed today to repeat her performance of a few weeks' ago in swimming the English Channel, according to a wireless dispatch to the Evening News from an aeroplane over the channel.

DESTITUTE HORDE OF CHILDREN IN PHILIPPINE ISLES

American Fathers Leave Native Families

WASHINGTON, Oct. 21.—The deplorable condition of thousands of destitute children in the Philippines was outlined today by a government committee appointed last summer. The committee consisted of former Senator J. W. Wadsworth, Sophie Irene Loeb, president, and Mrs. Oliver Hariman, vice-president, of the Child Welfare Committee of America.

The report presented to the president showed that there are thousands of children of unmixed blood in poverty and distress.

Besides there are 18,000 children of American fathers and native mothers in the Philippines who are in dire distress, the American father having in most cases deserted.

The report suggested that in order to give home life to these children, by keeping the home together when the breadwinner is removed, the Philippine legislature enact a law to provide home care for dependent children.

U. S. Government Sinks Roots Into Argentine

WASHINGTON, Oct. 21.—The American government is planning to spend at least \$500,000 in the purchase or construction of an embassy at Buenos Aires.

The fierce competition for Argentine trade and the growing indications that the state department regards Latin America as a U. S. protectorate are given as reasons by observers here.

Mere Fact That Porto Rican Is Innocent Not Enough to Release Him

BOSTON, Oct. 21.—United States Circuit Court of Appeals this afternoon took under advisement the case of Capalino Figueroa, who languishes in the jail at Colonia Tuno Guayama, Porto Rico for the murder of Ceferino Colon, a crime for which another man stands confessed.

The case of Figueroa has been through all the state and federal courts of Porto Rico since 1923 when the defendant was found guilty of the slaying on a plantation.

Demanding justice on the grounds of his constitutional rights, Figueroa has refused a pardon by the governor of Porto Rico. Mere innocence means little to the American judiciary.

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Spanish Monopoly Will Use Oil From the USSR

MADRID, Oct. 21.—An oil monopoly has been awarded to thirty-six banks by the Spanish government, it was announced today.

The monopoly is merely a market for Soviet and Roumanian wells in addition to American wells not controlled by the Standard Oil Company.

Bok's Prize Man Dead.

BERKELEY, Cal., Oct. 21.—Dr. Charles H. Livermore, winner of the Bok peace prize, for which he was awarded \$100,000, was dead here today. He collapsed yesterday while speaking before the Women's Alliance of the Unitarian Club.

Livermore's article resulted in free charges of collusion between himself and the Bok committee. His winning thesis was a rather stale argument for the League of Nations.

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