

THE PUBLIC CAREER OF DON RAMÓN CORRAL

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

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Denton, Texas

August, 1973

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Luna, Jesús, The Public Career of Don Ramon Corral. Doctor of Philosophy (History), August, 1973. 200 pp., bibliography, 143 titles.

Ramón Corral, Vice-President of Mexico from 1904 to 1911, was a crucial figure in the fall of the Porfiriato. As a politician, he worked diligently to preserve the Diaz regime. As the heir-apparent to the presidency after Díaz' death, Corral became a symbol against whom the opponents of the dictatorship of Díaz could rally.

In spite of Corral's importance, he has been ignored by post-revolutionary Mexican historians--no biography of Corral has appeared since 1910. The secondary sources for the Porfiriato are inadequate to a study of Corral's career. Therefore, research centered mostly on primary sources, chiefly those in the Colección General Porfirio Díaz (Cholula, Puebla), Mexico City Newspapers, the Corral Papers in the Centro de Estudios Históricos (Mexico City), and the Archivo General del Estado and Archivo Histórico in Hermosillo, Sonora. The Colección General Porfirio Díaz at the University of the Americas was the most important since this depository is the most extensive collection of materials on the Porfiriato and the one used least by scholars.

This essay attempts to fill some of the gaps in our knowledge of Corral's public life, especially for the period of his vice-presidency. It is divided into three parts, covering Corral's career in state and national politics and in exile. The study is basically chronological except for chapter two on Corral's role in Indian--primarily Yaqui--relations. This question was so important in Sonoran politics that a separate chapter seemed necessary.

Part One details Corral's rise from secretary to a local magistrate in Alamos, Sonora, to the state legislature in 1877, and to a leadership role in the state administration--first as Secretary of Government and then as acting-Governor and Governor. With his friend, Luis Torres, Corral dominated Sonora from 1879 to 1900. His primary concerns while a Sonoran power were educational and economic development, and the subjugation of the Indian population. He prospered financially from his use of public power.

In 1900, after a distinguished career as a regional politician, Corral became Governor of the Federal District. Thereafter, he rose rapidly in the Porfirian hierarchy. Part Two is a study of this rapid rise and fall. Corral associated himself with the científicos, headed by Treasury Minister Limantour, then the second most important man in Mexico. In 1903, Corral became Ministro de Gobernación, a position which coordinated the political functions of the regime.

When the office of Vice-President was re-created in 1903, the científicos, after a contest involving Reyes, Mariscal, and Corral, convinced Díaz to support Corral for the office. Though Corral became Vice-President in 1904 and retained his position as Ministro de Gobernación, Díaz did not "prepare" him to succeed to the presidency. Furthermore, although the President enjoyed a freedom from hostile criticism by the controlled press, that freedom was not accorded Corral. Enemies of the dictatorship fought strongly to defeat him in 1910. They saw in Corral the threat of continuation of the Porfirian dictatorship after the death of Díaz.

Had Díaz abandoned Corral in 1910, he might have been able to live out his life as President of Mexico. Francisco Madero thought that Díaz

was acceptable, but not Corral. Díaz did not dump Corral, so Madero and his group opposed both in the election of 1910. The regime's election frauds drove Madero into revolution. The revolution drove the regime into exile.

The last, and shortest, section of this essay is a study of Corral's life in exile, and is based largely on his unpublished Diary.

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PREFACE

The focus of this paper is Ramón Corral. Corral was born at Alamos, Sonora, in 1854. He entered politics in his teens and rose rapidly to leadership of the state. He served as Secretary of Government, acting-Governor, and Governor of Sonora; he served in the state and national legislatures; and he became nationally prominent as Governor of the Federal District, as Minister of Government for Mexico, and, finally as Vice-President of Mexico.

The span of Corral's political career is co-terminous with the Porfiriato, 1877-1911. Though he completed his career as Porfirio's vice-president, Corral was only twenty-three and an alternate deputy in the Sonoran state legislature when Díaz began his long rule. Ramón Corral grew up, politically, with the Porfiriato, prospered from it, and died with it.

This essay is not intended to be a comprehensive biography of Corral, but rather a sketch of his political life. The essay is divided into three parts. Part One examines Corral's career in state politics in Sonora, with a special section on his role in the Yaqui affair. Part Two describes Corral's role in national politics--first as governor of the Federal District, then as Minister of Government, and finally as Vice-President and Minister of Government combined. This part also deals extensively with the succession controversy of 1903-1904, and with

the re-election crisis of 1908-1910. Part Three, the shortest section of the essay, contains a description of Corral's life in exile and the conclusions of the study.

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PART ONE

CORRAL IN SONORAN POLITICS

CHAPTER I
THE POLITICAL CAREER OF RAMÓN CORRAL TO 1900

The selection of Ramón Corral as Vice-President in 1904, a position which made him the heir apparent to the Porfiriato, surprised most Mexicans because he was a comparative unknown outside his home state of Sonora. Corral was born on January 10, 1854, at the hacienda of Las Mercedes near the town of Alamos, Sonora, where he was baptized.¹ Ramon's parents, Fulgencio Corral and Francisca Verdugo, resided at the hacienda for five years; then they moved to Palmarejo, Chihuahua, where they lived until 1863, at which time they moved to the town of Chinipas, Chihuahua. At Chinipas, Corral's father became the municipal president; he also opened a general store.²

Because of the frequent changes in residence during Corral's early life, he had little chance to go to school. Ramón did enroll in a primary school in Chinipas; but his father acted as his tutor, and it was from his father that Corral learned the rudiments of literacy. Nonetheless, the combination of some formal schooling and parental guidance gave him a fair educational background. Don Fulgencio died on January

¹Libro No. 6 Bautismos de la C. D. 1 de marzo de 1846 a 20 de mayo de 1854. Entry No. 53, p. 451. Parroquia de la Purísima Concepción, Alamos, Sonora.

²José C. Valadés, ed., "El Archivo de Don Ramón Corral," La Prensa (San Antonio, Texas) 12 September 1937, p. 1.(hereafter cited as ARC). See also Manuel R. Uruchurtu Apuntes biograficos del señor don Ramón Corral: desde su nacimiento hasta encargarse del gobierno del Distrito Federal (1854 a 1900) (Mexico: E. Gómez de la Puente, 1910), p. 7.

14, 1868, as the result of a kick from a horse; and his death brought hardships to the family. Ramón, the eldest, was barely fourteen, and the widow was left with six other children.³

With no income to sustain the family, Ramón, as the oldest son, was forced to seek employment as a clerk in the court of justice at Chinipas. He quickly became dissatisfied with his job and his prospects, and left Chinipas for Alamos, where he arrived in June of 1868. There, he was employed by Miguel Urrea, the head of the court of justice at Alamos.⁴ It was in this position that Corral made the contacts which allowed him to blossom forth as a successful politician-- first in Sonora, and then on the national scene.

At first, Urrea hired Corral as a writer for the court; but, he was so impressed by his abilities that he made the teenager his personal secretary. Urrea encouraged Corral's inclinations towards scholarship; and in Alamos, where some of the wealthier Sonorenses lived, Corral had access to the best books of his time. Urrea had been--and was--a leader of the liberal element, which by now opposed Governor Ignacio Pesqueira. Since Corral was also becoming an ardent opponent of the state government, Urrea encouraged the young Corral and at times treated him as his own son; but their close association did not last. One document of the period states that Urrea fired Corral as his personal secretary because

³Valadés, ARC, 12 September 1937, p. 1; Uruchurtu, Apuntes, p. 8. Corral's brothers and sisters were Laura, Alberto, Fulgencio, Manuel, Epifanio, and Dolores.

⁴Uruchurtu, Apuntes, p. 8.

Corral had forged Urrea's signature and obtained 400 pesos from one of Urrea's friends.⁵

At the time, 1868, Sonora was governed by Ignacio Pesqueira, a staunch conservative, who was strongly opposed by the Alamoses because of the forced loans he had imposed on the populace of Alamos. Under the influence of Urrea, who remained friendly, Corral became one of Pesqueira's most vocal opponents. Corral had either resigned or had been fired by Urrea in 1868, but in 1872, with Urrea's help, he became editor of two newspapers, first La Voz de Alamos and later El Fantasma. In these two weekly publications, Corral vehemently attacked Pesqueira's government, charging irregularities in the election procedures and failure by the government to distribute ballots to opposition voters. He concluded by stating that the government was dominated by willing slaves, and that the dominant party would go to any extremes to stay in power.⁶

Corral's sharpest criticisms of the governor concerned his perpetuation in power and his conduct of Indian affairs. Pesqueira, an old Juarista, took over the government of Sonora in 1856, and he and his comrades alternated in the governorship. However, they had failed to contain the frequent raids of the Apaches, Yaquis, Mayos, and various other Indian tribes of Sonora. As a result of the lack of security against Indian attacks, much of the economic activity of the state was

⁵Ismael S. Quiroga to Florencio Velasco, 13 August 1873, Sección Francisco I. Madero, doc. 3947, reel 22, Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Historia, Mexico, D. F. (hereafter cited as FIM/INAH).

⁶Valadés, ARC, 12 September 1937, p. 1; Uruchurtu, Apuntes, p. 8. See also Eduardo W. Villa, Historia del estado de Sonora, 2d ed. (Hermosillo: Editorial Sonora, 1951), p. 324.

curtailed or suspended. Pesqueira tried to improve security measures by imposing forced loans on the people in order to pay for the campaigns against the Indians. As a result, Sonorenses began to leave the state for other Mexican states, or for Arizona, either because of the lack of security in Sonora, or to avoid paying the forced loans. This action by Pesqueira aroused the wealthy class of the state and alienated them from the government. Corral, through his newspaper articles, played an important part in encouraging discontent with Pesqueira's government in southeastern Sonora. On September 20, 1873, Carlos Conant led the opposition into open revolt, and the governor called out the troops to suppress the rebellion. Under the command of Colonel Próspero Salazar Bustamante, the state troops quickly defeated the opposition at Mineral de Promontorios, near Alamos.⁷

After their defeat, Conant, Corral, and others fled from Sonora to Chinipas. Colonel Salazar Bustamante followed his adversaries into Chihuahua, disregarding the sovereignty of that state; however the local authorities in Chinipas refused to divulge the rebels' hiding places. Corral, fearing for his life, hid in the home of Jesús Martínez; two days later he was discovered, but he managed to escape by diving into the Río de Chinipas.⁸

Pesqueira's army forced the rebels into hiding in 1873; the punishment he dispensed kept most of the opposition away or underground. In

⁷Diccionario Porrúa de historia biografía y geographia de Mexico, 2d ed., n.v. "Pesqueira, Ignacio." See also Uruchurtu Apuntes, pp. 12-17; and Valades, ARC, 12 September 1937, p. 1.

⁸Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 18-23; Valadés, ARC, 12 September, 1937, p. 1.

the following two years peace seemed to reign over the state, except for raids by the Apaches. However, in 1875 the Yaquis, under the command of José Maria Leyva Cajeme, raised their standard in revolt. It was under these circumstances that state elections were held in 1875. Pesqueira and his machine supported his nephew, Colonel José J. Pesqueira, for the governorship; the opposition ran General Jesús Garcia Morales. By this time, Corral had made his way back to Alamos, and he opposed the Pesqueira candidacy as editor of the newspaper, El Fantasma. As editor of the paper, Corral charged the Pesqueiristas with being enemies of change and defenders of the evil practice of re-election which led to the perpetuation of power. Corral also accused Pesqueira of being against free suffrage and a defender of oppression.⁹

Despite Corral's opposition, Colonel José Pesqueira was elected unanimously, except in the four districts of Alamos, Altar, Arizpe, and Magdalena, where Garcia Morales had triumphed. The government, however, annulled the results from these four districts and declared Colonel Pesqueira the victor. Under these circumstances, on August 11, 1875, twenty days before José Pesqueira was to be inaugurated as the new governor, Francisco Serna and Francisco Lizárraga defied the government by armed rebellion. That same day the rebels formulated a plan which called for the president of Mexico to designate a provisional governor. In the meantime, Serna became head of the revolution in Sonora. The government of Sonora, which was still under the command of General Ignacio Pesqueira,

⁹Ramón Corral, "La Cuestión Electoral," El Fantasma (Alamos, Sonora) 16 July 1875, p. 1; Ramón Corral, "El Partido Independiente," El Fantasma, 30 July 1875, p. 1.

then named Francisco Altamirano y Altamirano military commander of the districts of Altar and Magdalena, where the revolt had broken out. Altamirano y Altamirano then marched into the two districts and skirmished with the Sernistas, causing Serna and other rebels to flee into Arizona.¹⁰

The following month Pesqueira imposed two forced loans on the Sonorenses, and opposition to his rule increased. By the latter part of the year, Serna and his supporters who had fled to Arizona were back in the state. In January, 1876, Colonel Antonio Palacio, who occupied the plaza of Hermosillo, proclaimed in favor of Serna, and General Pesqueira was forced to advance to Hermosillo. Palacio fled Hermosillo on the approach of Pesqueira's forces and Pesqueira took control of the city. Shortly thereafter, Pesqueira began persecutions against the friends of Serna, imposed forced loans and violated civil rights, causing many of the citizens to flee to Guaymas. Sonora had entered into a civil war and engagements were frequent between the Pesqueiristas and the forces of Serna, who had the support of Lizárraga, Luis and Lorenzo Torres, and others.¹¹

It was in one of these battles that Corral, dissatisfied with mere verbal barrage against the government, took up arms and fought in a disastrous engagement against Pesqueira's forces at Batacosa on February 4, 1876. In this battle Corral was wounded in one leg and had to retire to the city of Alamos.¹²

¹⁰Villa, Historia de Sonora, p. 325.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 327-328.

¹²Uruchurtu, Apuntes, p. 25; Valadés, ARC, 12 September 1937, p. 7.

Because of the civil war in Sonora, the federal government, under the presidency of Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada, intervened. Lerdo sent General Vicente Mariscal to Sonora, where he arrived on March 1, 1876. Upon his arrival, Mariscal issued a proclamation to both sides stating that the intention of the federal government was to bring peace to the state. After conferring with several people in Guaymas, Mariscal went to Alamos, where he also discussed the situation with Governor José J. Pesqueira. Mariscal then departed for the state capital at Ures. He returned to Alamos on March 14, 1876, at which time he placed Sonora under martial law and assumed the civil and military command of the state. Fearing some kind of resistance from Pesqueira, Mariscal ordered rebel leader and Sernista supporter Lorenzo Torres to bring his forces to Alamos. Serna, who was near the town of Hermosillo, then marched into that city; the reception given to him there indicated the general discontent of the Sonorenses against Pesqueira. In view of these developments, Pesqueira laid down his arms and retired to his hacienda at Las Delicias.¹³

In that same year, 1876, federal elections were held and Sonora supported the re-election of Lerdo de Tejada. However, because of the revolt of Porfirio Díaz and his Plan of Tuxtepec, Lerdo abandoned the executive office; José María Iglesias, the President of the Supreme Court, was theoretically the legal successor. Mariscal then recognized the legitimacy of Iglesias' claims as successor to Lerdo.¹⁴

¹³Villa, Historia de Sonora, pp. 329-332.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 336.

Because of the dispute for the highest office in Mexico, General Ignacio Pesqueira came out of retirement; raised an armed force recognizing Iglesias; and declared that Mariscal had no powers in Sonora, and that he (Pesqueira) was assuming the governor's duties. Mariscal then fought against Pesqueira, and, after an encounter at Ures in late January, 1877, Mariscal forced the Pesqueiristas to flee the state into Chihuahua. The following month, after Díaz was inaugurated as President, the Sonoran legislature recognized the government of Porfirio Díaz.¹⁵

Sonora, however, was still without a constitutional governor. Therefore, on April 20, 1877, a call was issued for state elections. Sonorenses divided into two groups in those elections; one supported Mariscal, and the other supported Francisco Serna. Mariscal was elected Governor and Serna won the position of Vice-Governor.¹⁶

During this election period in Sonora, General Pesqueira went to Mexico City and convinced Díaz that his uprising against Mariscal had been in favor of the Tuxtepec rebellion. As a result, Díaz appointed General Epitacio Huerta, a close friend of Pesqueira, as federal military commander for the state of Sonora. The Pesqueirista party then left the capital and arrived in Guaymas in July, 1877. Mariscal had already been elected Governor, but, rumors circulated that Huerta had received orders from Díaz to take command of the state. After arriving in Guaymas, the Pesqueirista party left for Hermosillo, where a huge crowd met the ex-governor and voiced their disapproval of him by hurling rocks. The party then continued to the state capital, where they met

¹⁵Ibid., p. 338.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 339.

the same reception. In light of the unfavorable demonstrations against Pesqueira, General Huerta announced that in the future he would not protect Pesqueira, and that the ex-governor would be held responsible for any abuses his government had committed while in power. Pesqueira then retired to his hacienda, where he died on January 4, 1886.¹⁷

Pesqueirismo was dead in Sonora by 1877. Corral had barely reached manhood; yet, he had already taken an active part in a revolt, and his editorial activity had played a significant part in the overthrow of Pesqueira's government in 1876. By 1877, at the age of twenty-three, Corral was a seasoned veteran in the politics of his native state. It was during this year that Corral, for the first time, held an elective political position. In the elections for state representative, Corral was elected as a substitute to Santiago Goyeneche, who had been elected to represent the district of Alamos in the seventh state legislature. One month after the legislature convened, Goyeneche asked for a leave of absence; Corral represented the district of Alamos after October 16, 1877.¹⁸

In the state legislature, Corral followed the lead of deputies Carlos R. Ortiz and Luis Torres, and opposed governor Mariscal. The

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 339-341.

¹⁸Junta de Diputados to Ramón Corral, 19 September 1878, Archivo del Congreso, vol. 49, expediente [no number], Archivo Histórico de Sonora, Hermosillo, Sonora. (hereafter cited as ADC/AHS). See also Santiago Goyeneche to the Secretary of the Permanent Deputation of the State Legislature, 29 September 1877, ADC/AHS, vol. 47, exp. 4; and Correspondencia de Elecciones de Diputado del mes de junio, 1877, 10 June 1877, ADC/AHS, vol. 47, exp. 9.

opposition to Mariscal developed after he had submitted a proposal intending to reduce the duties on corn brought into Sonora. Since this would have been detrimental to the grain growers of the state, the bill was rejected; the rejection augmented the differences between the Governor and the legislature. The opposition, led by Ortiz, increased; and in the early part of January, 1878, deputies Corral, Ortiz, Benigno V. Garcia, Manuel and Rafael Barreda, Fernando Serrano, and others met at the home of Ortiz and drafted a decree calling for the legislature to move from Ures to Hermosillo because of the lack of guarantees for the opposition deputies. The decree was given to the governor for publication. Mariscal failed to act on it, so the separatist deputies in late March of 1878, transferred the legislature and its records to Hermosillo without the Governor's approval. Once in Hermosillo, the Congress expedited several laws and founded a newspaper, La Constitucion, which appeared regularly during its residency in Hermosillo.¹⁹

In the state capital of Ures, Mariscal continued conducting business with that part of the legislature which remained loyal to him. In May, in an attempt to end the division in the government, Mariscal went to Hermosillo to persuade the malcontents to return to Ures, which they did on May 16, 1878. On the 21st of that same month the state legislature opened its regular session under the presidency of Corral. But the differences between the executive and the legislature had not been settled.

¹⁹Vicente Mariscal to Ramón Corral and Antonio Escalante, 23 March 1878, Sección Sonora, reel 7, Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Historia, Mexico, D. F. (hereafter cited as Son/INAH). See also Ramón Corral et al. to Vicente Mariscal, 24 March 1878, Son/INAH, reel 7; Vicente Mariscal to the President of the Permanent Deputation of the State Legislature, 13 and 17 April 1878, ADC/AHS, vol. 48, exp. 7; and Sesión Extraordinaria y Secreta, 23 March 1878, ADC/AHS, vol. 50, exp. 1.

On June 1, the legislature issued a bill declaring legal all the resolutions of the Hermosillo legislature up to April 25, 1878. The bill was submitted to the governor for his approval, but he rejected it. Furious with the legislature, Mariscal then issued a circular to the municipal presidents of the state instructing them not to obey any of the laws issued by the opposition while in Hermosillo. The dispute over the bill was referred to the federal Senate, which was to decide on its approval or rejection. During this period, oppositionist deputies, who saw a danger to themselves in Mariscal's strong opposition to the law of June 1st, left the Capital.²⁰

Three and a half months later, on September 16, 1878, the legislature was to have its opening session; yet the federal Senate had not acted on the dispute. Those loyal followers of Mariscal who were in Ures met for the opening session; but, since no quorum could be formed, the opening session was postponed until September 19. The oppositionist deputies still would not attend; therefore the government issued a convocation on October 5 calling for new elections to replace those deputies who refused to meet. By November 11, elections had been held and deputies elected to replace the separatist deputies. The malcontents, some of whom were in Hermosillo, united in Guaymas under the presidency of Corral and answered Mariscal's convocation of October 5. In their reply, the separatist deputies charged Mariscal with violating several articles

²⁰Carlos Ortiz et al. to Vicente Mariscal, 25 April 1878, ADC/AHS, vol. 50, exp. no/n. For the decree of 1 June 1878 see Carlos Ortiz to Vicente Mariscal, 1 June 1878, ADC/AHS, vol. 50, exp. no/n. See also Villa, Historia de Sonora, p. 341, and Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 27-31.

of the constitution, and suggested that he should leave his post and allow Vice-Governor Francisco Serna to take over.²¹

Serna tried to arrange a peaceful solution to the question. He responded to the demands of the Guaymas malcontents by saying that he would uphold the decision of the federal Senate which must adjudicate the differences. However, the federal Senate never ruled on the law; and when Mariscal called the legislature into session with the newly elected deputies, Serna broke with him and sided with the opposition. The Vice-Governor then raised an armed force; and, with the help of deputies Corral, Ortiz, Barreda, and Luis, Lorenzo and Anastasio Torres, he occupied the city of Alamos on February 5, 1879. Alamos, which was the center of the opposition party and the city where many of the rich families of Sonora resided or had connections, became the headquarters for Serna. The day after he took over the city, he named Luis Torres as secretary of the district of Alamos and Jose M. Ortiz as its municipal president.²²

Mariscal organized some troops and went to Hermosillo. Serna marched towards the city of Hermosillo, but before he arrived, Mariscal fled to Ures. Serna continued his pursuit and the Governor fled the state, eventually making his way to Mazatlan and continuing from there to Mexico City. On March 23, 1879, Serna occupied the capital city of

²¹Ramón Corral et al. to Francisco Serna, 26 October 1878, Son/INAH, reel 7; Vicente Mariscal to the Deputies of the State Legislature, 15 November 1878, ADC/AHS, vol. 50, exp. 1; Villa, Historia de Sonora, p. 342; and Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 32-35.

²²Boletín Oficial, 21 February 1879, copy in Son/INAH, reel 7. See also Villa, Historia de Sonora, p. 342; and Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 35-36.

Ures, and the following month, April 26, 1879, the state capital was moved to Hermosillo. On that same day Corral was appointed Secretary of Government. He was to carry out the duties of this office while the legislature was in recess.²³

Thus, at the age of twenty-five, Corral had already attained one of the three most important posts in the political hierarchy of Sonora. Corral worked furiously at the job of Secretary of Government, which he occupied during the recess of the legislature from 1879 to 1881. He tackled various urgent problems which confronted Sonora, the most important being the poor condition of public education, followed closely by problems with the Yaquis, Mayos, Apaches, and other Indian tribes. During the legislative recess, Corral performed many of the duties of Governor in addition to his duties as Secretary of Government. Serna, who had little or no further political aspirations, was content to take care of his commercial and agricultural interests. The major part of Serna's duties were delegated to young Corral. From this time until his exile in 1911, Sonora remained under the political leadership of Corral and his close friend, Luis E. Torres.²⁴

In the election year of 1879, Luis E. Torres and José T. Otero were elected Governor and Vice-Governor respectively. Corral was returned as a deputy. During the lame-duck months preceding the take-over of government by Torres, Corral was virtually the acting Governor. On the day of

²³"Proyecto de ley que traslada la capital del estado a la ciudad de Hermosillo," 4 April 1879, ADC/AHS, vol. 52, exp. no/n. See also Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 37-39; and Villa, Historia de Sonora, pp. 343-344.

²⁴Uruchurtu, Apuntes, p. 42.

the elections he was named President of the Chamber of Deputies. Corral also spoke at the Governor's inaugural reception and promised that the legislature would try to aid the Governor in dealing with the urgent problems of the state. After the inauguration of the new Governor, Corral temporarily left his post in the Chamber to accept reappointment as Secretary of Government under his friend Luis Torres.

Perhaps Corral's finest contribution to his native state during this period was his sponsorship of public instruction. He proposed state subsidies to upgrade the level of education in Sonora. He was also responsible for inaugurating a program for the construction of new primary schools and for the development of a secondary school, the Colegio de Instrucción Secundaria, in Hermosillo, the new capital of Sonora. When the public treasury failed to produce the subsidy needed to fund the school, Corral invited several persons to meet on January 4, 1881, at the Casino del Comercio to raise funds in support of the project. Corral and the group raised the money needed to begin the school. At that meeting they also created a central junta for Hermosillo, to continue raising funds, and local juntas in the outlying districts to be responsible to the central junta in Hermosillo. Corral's efforts paid off at the official level in 1881 when the government of Sonora allocated \$P 24,000 out of the proposed \$P 168,535 budget for education.²⁵

Corral had presented the proposal for the foundation of the Colegio to the Chamber of Deputies on October 29, 1880. Six months later, in April of 1881, Corral left Hermosillo for the Federal District after

²⁵Ibid., pp. 43-51. For the election of Corral as deputy see Diputados Proprietarios, Distrito de Alamos, 8 August 1879, ADC/AHS, vol. 50, exp. 3.

having been elected deputy to the federal Congress by the district of Hermosillo. Since education was uppermost in his mind at the time of his departure, it was only natural that he seek to push this issue at the earliest opportunity.²⁶

On the 16th of May, seven days after arriving in Mexico City, Corral presented himself to the Chamber to be seated. At the time of Corral's arrival in the Chamber, the most exciting issue facing the deputies was a proposal for free importation of wheat and flour from foreign countries. This issue was supported strongly by Sinaloa and Baja California.²⁷ Free importation of these two items would have been disastrous to Sonoran producers, since they could not compete in price with wheat and flour from the United States. The passage of this proposal would have killed their trade with Sinaloa and Baja California, and those two states accounted for the majority of Sonora's exports. Senator Carlos R. Ortiz and Corral worked together to defeat the proposal in Congress, and Corral even published a pamphlet defending his position.²⁸ During that same congressional period, Corral introduced a bill calling for the federal government to allow the free exportation of flour valued at \$P 35,000, the profit to be used in acquiring from Europe some of the items necessary to upgrade secondary education in Sonora.²⁹

²⁶Uruchurtu, Apuntes, p. 51.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 53-54.

²⁸Ramón Corral, La Cuestion de la Harina. Colección de artículos y documentos publicados en "El Telegrafo" (Mexico: Tip. de V. Villada, 1881.)

²⁹Uruchurtu, Apuntes, p. 55.

During his ten-month stay in the Federal District, Corral became acquainted with the majority of the men who later were to be his friends. Corral also became acquainted with the important cities in the central valley during his term. However, his acquaintance with the powers and politics of the Federal District was just beginning.³⁰

In the early part of December, along with his friend, General José Guillermo Carbo, Corral embarked from Veracruz to New York City via Havana. Corral and Carbo arrived in New York City on the 10th of December and met with Luis E. Torres who was waiting for them. After visiting Philadelphia, Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Chicago, and San Francisco, Corral returned to Sonora by way of Tucson and Nogales at the end of June, 1882.³¹

A few months before Corral left for the United States, his friend, federal Senator Carlos R. Ortiz, had been elected Governor of Sonora, with Manuel Escalante as his Vice-Governor. Their terms were to run from September, 1881, to August 31, 1883. Though born in Sonora, Ortiz was educated in Germany and had spent most of his early youth in the Federal District. When Ortiz took over as Governor in 1881, he was in good standing with Torres, Corral, and Carbo. However, by the time Corral and Carbo returned from the United States, Ortiz had become suspicious of Corral's close association with Generals Torres and Carbo. Shortly thereafter Carbo and Ortiz had a "falling-out" with each other because Ortiz, who was in charge of state troops, did not cooperate with Carbo, who was the federal commander of the first military zone. Corral and Torres sided with Carbo. Added to this was the fact

³⁰Ibid., p. 56.

³¹Ibid.

that the trio also became upset with Ortiz because of what they considered excess expenditures for public instruction--specifically the high salaries paid to the professors in the newly created Instituto Sonorense, which had itself been costly.³²

Because of continuing Indian uprisings and the use of state troops by Ortiz to suppress them, the state treasury went into arrears. Torres and Corral, with the aid of Carbo, organized opposition to Ortiz. On the night of October 29, 1882, a group of townspeople gathered in front of the governor's house, fired a few shots, and demanded his resignation. Ortiz agreed that he would leave the post the following day. Antonio Escalante, the Vice-Governor took over as head of state. Escalante, however, lasted only a few days and then resigned. The state legislature then named Cirilo Ramírez as interim governor; he resigned the governor's chair on December 28, 1882. Finally, Felizardo Torres was picked to finish the term. None of the three men were capable of handling the administration of government; but the last one, Felizardo Torres, a close friend of Luis Torres, Corral, and Carbo, allowed himself to be guided by Corral, who, as Secretary of Government was able to help him end the term on August 31, 1883.³³

After Ortiz' forced departure, Corral helped to increase funds in the depleted state treasury by amortizing the enormous floating debt created by Ortiz' spending on education. Corral suspended most building,

³²Ibid., pp. 58-63; Villa, Historia de Sonora, p. 351.

³³Ramón Corral, "La Administración del Sr. D. Felizardo Torres," La Constitución (Hermosillo, Sonora), 7 September 1883, copy in Son/INAH, reel 7. See also Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 64-68.

even the construction of the Instituto Sonorense (which today is the government palace). In this way, Corral obtained a considerable reduction in expenditures and gave the public confidence in the new administration of Sonora. With these measures in progress, the credit of the state improved and the government obtained new loans to alleviate the penury of the state treasury. In June of 1883, following an amendment to the state constitution changing the governor's term to four years, elections were held and Luis E. Torres and Francisco Gandara were named Governor and Vice-Governor respectively for the term ending August 31, 1887.³⁴

Torres named Corral to his old post as Secretary of Government-- Sonora seemed to be prospering. Industry was growing in the state, and there was a marked increase in both public and private wealth. The first crisis faced by the new administration began towards the end of August, 1883, when the Newbern, an American ship, arrived in Guaymas from Mazatlán carrying the dreaded disease, yellow fever.³⁵ The first cases reported in the port city were not recognized immediately. Since Hermosillo was close to Guaymas now that the two cities were connected by rail, the disease spread quickly to Hermosillo. The two most affected districts were Guaymas and Hermosillo. After high death totals in Hermosillo in September and October, the disease declined in November, and was stamped out in the latter part of December. Commerce and trade suffered during the epidemic; and Corral presented a bill in the early part of November

³⁴Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 68-69.

³⁵"La Fiebre Amarilla," La Constitución, 13 October 1883, copy in Son/INAH, reel 7. See also Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 71-72; and Villa, Historia de Sonora, pp. 355-356.

(which became law on November 5) authorizing the use of state funds by the Governor to fight the disease and to aid the poor.³⁶

To add to the problems of the state, a new bill was presented to the federal Congress in November, 1883, proposing the free importation of foreign flour into Sinaloa. Sinaloa argued that she consumed flour from Sonora at high prices, without Sonora consuming any products from Sinaloa. Corral immediately began to denounce the proposal in the official state government newspaper, La Constitución. He argued that the passage of the bill would be detrimental to Sonora; Sinaloa consumed over \$P 200,000 worth of flour from Sonora, while Sonora consumed goods valued at close to \$P 500,000 from Sinaloa. Corral admitted that the price of Sonoran flour in Sinaloa was high. That, he argued, was the result of the fact that Sinaloan merchants had already raised their prices because of a rumor that the state would increase its import tax by three pesos per load. Because of Corral's opposition, the bill did not pass.³⁷

Among his other activities during this period, Corral, with the aid of a local court magistrate named Eduardo Castañeda, reformed the penal code of the state and had the reform adopted in the following legislative session. Perhaps his greatest contribution to the state during this period lay in maintaining a favorable balance of exports over imports. On April 25, 1884, Corral asked for and received a temporary license to leave his post as Secretary of Government in order to take his sick mother

³⁶"Ley No. 2 que autoriza algunos gastos erogados por el ejecutivo durante la epidemia de la fiebre amarilla," 9 November 1883, ADC/AHS, vol. 67, exp. 1.

³⁷Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 74-75.

to Mexico City. On May 7, 1884, Corral's mother died; Corral remained in Mexico City; but, by June 12, he was back in Hermosillo at his old post.³⁸

On his return, Corral discovered that yellow fever had again appeared in Guaymas and Hermosillo, counting among its victims the Bishop of Sonora, José de Jesús Maria Rico, who finally passed away on August 11 of that year. Some of the bishop's devout followers proceeded to bring his body to the Capilla del Carmen (which still stands today in Hermosillo), even though the government had denied them permission to do so. After the faithful had buried the bishop in the Capilla, Corral and a few of his loyal followers exhumed the body and buried it in the town cemetery for health reasons.³⁹

Though disease, economic problems, and political reform occupied much of Corral's time, the most consistent problems he faced were provided by the Indians of the state. The Yaquis and Mayos rebelled again in 1884, and Corral, after taking part in a minor skirmish with them, returned to his job as Secretary of Government. On July 24, 1885, he started to publish statistics referring to the indigenous tribes of Sonora in La Constitución; Corral's research on the Indian tribes of Sonora was published years later.⁴⁰ Indian problems, and Corral's relation to them, will be considered in detail in the next chapter of this paper.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 75-77

³⁹"Sobre la inhumación del cadáver del Obispo Rico," La Constitución, 5 September 1883, copy in Son/INAH, reel 7.

⁴⁰Ramón Corral, "Las Razas Indígenas de Sonora," Obras Históricas (Hermosillo: Biblioteca Sonorense de Geografía e Historia, 1959).

The year 1885 was a prosperous one for Sonora. Public security seemed adequate even in the face of Indian rebellions; public education was rapidly improving; taxes were being collected; and payments to state employees were on schedule. Corral even had time in the middle of October to attend a festival held to award prizes to those students who had distinguished themselves academically. He delivered an eloquent speech praising the students, the parents, and the teachers.⁴¹

On January 4th of the following year, Corral's old political rival, General Ignacio Pesqueira, died. Corral decided to write an epitaph for his former rival and in the following three weeks he collected the newspapers, researched the government archives, gathered the General's correspondence, and wrote a short biography of Pesqueira in very favorable terms. His first article on Pesqueira appeared in La Constitución in late January, of 1886.⁴²

One of the few incidents tending to discredit Corral came to a head about this time--the Guadalupe Velarde case. In 1883 a law suit was brought over some property in the district of Moctezuma claimed by Genaro Terán and his mother Dolores Villaescuna, on one hand; and some neighbors from the Hacienda of Pivipa who were represented by Velarde. The judge ruled against Velarde, but the neighbors had already taken over the property. The judge asked for assistance; the government of Luis Torres declared the Velarde group to be rebels, arrested them and sent them to the Federal District. Velarde was released after promising to abdicate claims to the land. Nonetheless Velarde returned to Sonora and again

⁴¹Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 92-107.

⁴²Ibid. See also Ramón Corral, El General Ignacio Pesqueira, Reseña Histórica del estado de Sonora (desde 1856 hasta 1877) (Hermosillo: Imprenta del estado, 1900).

took over the lands. In April of 1884 the federal Supreme Court ruled that the case had to be settled in Sonora; again the state ordered Velarde's arrest. He was captured and sentenced to death by firing squad. Because Governor Torres and Secretary of Government Corral sided with the Terán faction, and because of the intervention of the state government in the affair, their enemies suggested that the government had used its position to assassinate an opponent.⁴³

The fight for public office intensified, and charges of corruption and profiteering were leveled against Corral and Torres. These charges, although nothing was found to prove or disprove them, were made known to the federal government by way of newspaper articles and letters sent to Porfirio Díaz.⁴⁴ The opposition to Torres and Corral founded a newspaper in Hermosillo called El Pueblo. The paper was founded by Gabriel M. Peralta and Agustín Pesqueira, a distant relative of ex-Governor Ignacio Pesqueira. In Guaymas, José María Maytorena, who was being sponsored for Governor by this opposition, founded the newspaper, El Sonorense, which spoke out strongly against the Torres-Corral government. The opposition also founded a newspaper called La Sombra de Velarde (Guaymas) for the purpose of exploiting the association of the government with the Velarde incident. In Nogales, Arizona, El Eco de la Frontera

⁴³Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 113-116.

⁴⁴These charges were leveled against Corral after he moved to the Federal District. There were perhaps earlier charges, but this author could find none. For these later charges see Dionisio González, León Serna, and Arturo Serna to Porfirio Díaz, 28 September 1901, Colección General Porfirio Díaz, University of the Americas, Cholula, Puebla, reels 185-186, docs. 11227-11233 (hereafter cited as CGPD).

also backed Maytorena. Due to the heavy press attack, the government jailed Peralta, Pesqueira, and a few other opposition editors.⁴⁵

Political feeling was extreme; at one point Corral was almost involved in a duel with the opposition. He was invited for a drink by a foreigner, Napoleon O. Armin Graf, who was accompanied by Agustín Pesqueira, Leonides Encinas, and Florencio Vega--all three of whom supported Maytorena. Corral refused the drink, saying he did not associate with company like that which Graf kept. The opposition leaders became enraged and challenged Corral to a duel outside the state; Corral declined to leave the state to fight the duel, so it never took place.⁴⁶

In spite of the efforts of the opposition to discredit the leadership of Sonora, Lorenzo Torres, a close friend of Luis Torres, was elected Governor in 1887; Corral was elected Vice-Governor.⁴⁷ Lorenzo knew and cared little about political matters, and he only allowed his name to be used because of his closeness to the Torres-Corral faction. Less than four months after his inauguration, Lorenzo Torres asked for and received license for a leave of absence in December of 1887; Corral took over as the acting Governor. Immediately, he attacked again the problem of public education in Sonora. Although publicly-supported education existed in the major towns of Hermosillo, Guaymas, and Alamos, little or nothing had been done in the rest of the state. To remedy this situation

⁴⁵Villa, Historia de Sonora, p. 366; Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 130-132.

⁴⁶Manuel Santiago Corbala Acuña, Alamos de Sonora (Mexico: Talleres de la Editorial Libros de México, S. A., 1968), pp. 159-160; Villa, Historia de Sonora, p. 367; Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 133-134.

⁴⁷La Constitución, 3 June 1887, copy in Son/INAH, reel 8.

Corral began to purchase maps, blackboards, benches, and other necessary articles and materials in the United States. He also raised salaries to attract teachers with degrees. New schools were constructed in Guaymas and Hermosillo, and other schools were opened in Ures and Magdalena.⁴⁸

As acting Governor, Corral dedicated himself to the understanding of the urgent necessities of his native state. To facilitate this understanding, he began to undertake periodic trips to the various districts of Sonora. On April 24, 1888, Corral left Hermosillo to visit Alamos. During his stay in Alamos he helped organize a junta for public instruction; he proposed that ten per-cent of the state revenues from the Alamos district be used by the local Ayuntamiento to subsidize public instruction in Alamos.⁴⁹

Governor Corral returned to Hermosillo in late May, 1888. Later, he was invited to Guaymas by the junta of public instruction of that city. As a result of this visit, the legislature authorized the same funding arrangement for Guaymas that it had approved for Alamos. Schools in the Villa de Magdalena were also subsidized as in Alamos and Guaymas. The high point for education in Sonora in 1888 was a teacher's conference on methods and organization of public instruction. Prizes were awarded to the better teachers and primary certificates were presented to five recent graduates.⁵⁰

⁴⁸Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 138-141.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 144-146.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 147-149.

Early in the following year, Corral began plans for the construction of a colegio, and on January 1, 1889, the Colegio de Sonora was inaugurated. With the foundation of the Colegio, Hermosillo now had four schools of instruction for boys and three for girls, in addition to other special schools. Classes were held for the working class during the evening in one of the boys' schools. Other Sonoran cities also gained new educational institutions, though not as rapidly as Hermosillo. On February 5, 1889, a school for adults was founded in Alamos by the Society of Artisans; in May, two new schools were created, one in Minas Prietas, the other at the Torres railroad station. On October 4, a new school was founded in Alamos, and on the 13th a coeducational school was opened in the Carbo station. Corral left Hermosillo toward the end of October for the district of Altar to investigate the educational situation in the towns of La Ciénega, Pitiquito, Atil, and Tubutana. He also appointed visitors of public instruction to investigate the quality of public education in Alamos and Nogales. Corral returned to Hermosillo on the 30th of November; in the early part of the following month he presented the proposed state budget for the following year. Out of a proposed sum of \$P 281,108, over \$P 50,000 was to be used for public instruction.⁵¹

On December 16, 1889, the regular festival was held to award prizes to the graduating students, and Corral gave a long speech detailing the impetus the state had given to public education. That same month two

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 150-158. See also La Constitución, 4 January 1889, copy in Son/INAH, reel 8.

students were sent to Mexico City with full scholarships to study at the Escuela Normal in that City.⁵²

Almost every month that Corral was governor new schools were constructed. On January 15, 1890, two schools--one for boys and one for girls--opened their doors in San Antonio de la Huerta in the district of Ures. On the 16th, a school for boys was opened in Banamichi, in the district of Arizpe. In February, three others were established in the district of Ures: one each for boys and girls in Mazatlán, and one for boys at Nacori Grande. On February 4, the Society of Artisans in Guaymas established a night school for adults. Schools, and the construction of schools, seemed to be the order of the day. Between April and July of 1890, ten new schools were established, mostly in small towns in outlying districts.⁵³ Out of the \$P 327,498 proposed in the budget presented in 1890, the sum of \$P 76,655 was allocated for public education. This sum was independent of the funds the Ayuntamientos would contribute.⁵⁴

When Corral took over as acting Governor of Sonora in 1887, the state had 139 poorly equipped schools with an enrollment of 3859 boys and 1675 girls--a total of 5534. At the end of his term (August 31, 1891), there were 175 schools with 6272 boys and 3229 girls--a total of 9,501 enrolled. By 1891, the state even had a monthly educational journal published in Alamos.⁵⁵

⁵²Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 158-159.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 160-167.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 168.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 174-175.

Though the development of an adequate educational system occupied much of Corral's attention during his acting governorship (1887-1891), he was equally concerned with improving communication, transportation, the extraction of mineral wealth, and the development of industry. Existing roads were improved and new ones were opened. In late 1887, Villa de Razón in the district of Ures was linked with the Carbo station on the Sonora railroad. This road benefited several existing mines, which could now export their products easily, and encouraged the opening of new mines along its route. Another road was opened linking Arizpe to Villa de Magdalena on the Sonora railroad, with similar effect on the mines along its route. Alamos, which had always had closer ties with Sinaloa than with Sonora, was linked by a stage line to the Batamotal station on the Sonoran railroad, thus tying that city more closely to its own state.⁵⁶ In February, 1888, construction began on a new road from the old capital and mining center of Ures to Hermosillo.⁵⁷

As a complement to the developing road system, Corral pushed the construction of telegraphic communications. In February, 1889, Alamos and Agiabampo were connected by extending the telegraph line ninety-four kilometers. Later, Arizpe and Ures (121 kilometers apart), and Villa de Altar and Santa Ana (80 kilometers apart) were connected by telegraph. Perhaps remembering his ties with Chinipas, Corral, by arrangement with the government of Chihuahua, constructed seventy-one kilometers of telegraph from Alamos to the state line; eventually, Chihuahua constructed

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 142.

⁵⁷Ibid.

its portion, and Chinipas now had communication with the rest of the world.⁵⁸

Corral returned to Alamos in May of 1889 to inaugurate some public projects which he had sponsored on his previous visit of April, 1888. He returned to Hermosillo, and on July 8, he left for Magdalena; he returned on the 12th, leaving several works under construction: the construction of a jail, a dike, and a new road from Magdalena to Cucurpe. The previous month Corral had ordered the repair and reconstruction of the old road from Nogales to the town of Santa Cruz in the district of Magdalena. Also in the beginning of 1889, construction began on a road to link the towns of Cahui and Concepción in the district of Arizpe.⁵⁹

Although education and public works projects were of primary concern to Corral during his period as acting Governor, he was involved in all aspects of state life--politically, economically, and culturally. He was one of the strong forces behind the creation of the state library in late 1888. He encouraged the expansion of the mining industry, in which he had been interested since the mid-1880's, when he undertook an inspection tour of the mining districts. He was also active in cultural circles and in the affairs of the various artisans' societies of the state, even serving as president of the Sociedad de Artesanos of Hermosillo in 1889. On the personal level, Corral--at age thirty-four--married Amparo Escalante, daughter of a prominent Hermosillo family, after being rejected by his first choice.⁶⁰

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 153.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 154-155.

⁶⁰Oficina del Registro Civil, Libro de Matrimonios 1888, vol. 974, pp. 18-19, acta No. 12, 25 February 1888, Archivo General del Estado, Hermosillo, Sonora. (hereafter cited as AGDE). See also Uruchurtu,

On the whole, Corral must be judged a success during his term as acting Governor. In actuality, Corral had been largely responsible for the affairs of Sonora since he first became Secretary of Government in 1879; he continued to dominate the state as Secretary of Government from 1891 to 1895 and as Governor from 1895 to 1899. But the period 1887-1891 marked the first time that Corral had been in titular control of Sonora. The public judged him a success. La Patria, a Mexico City newspaper, called him a model governor interested only in the well-being of his state. In January of 1891, seven months before Corral left office, La Patria commented that during his brief term, the state of Sonora had made notable progress. "Corral," the paper editorialized, "is a young man full of new ideas, and leaves a good memory of his administration."⁶¹

On the 1st of September, 1891, Corral turned over the reins of government to Luis E. Torres, who had been elected with little contest. Corral then left for Mexico City, but returned to Hermosillo on October 26. A few days after his return, he re-occupied his old post as Secretary of Government. Soon afterwards, Torres took a leave of absence to

Apuntes, pp. 113, 142-143, 154-157; and Valadés, ARC, 19 September 1937, p. 1. Valadés states that Corral first tried to marry the daughter of Mrs. Guereña who was the owner of the hacienda Las Mercedes where Corral was born. A big wedding was prepared, but at the last minute Mrs. Guereña confessed to Corral that she could not allow the marriage because her daughter was Corral's half sister. Apparently Mrs. Guereña had practiced extra-marital activities with Don Fulgencio when he was the administrator at the hacienda. The scandal caused Corral's political standing to become shaky; but, with the support of Díaz, Corral was able to remain firm in Sonoran politics.

⁶¹La Patria, (Mexico, D.F.) 24 January 1891, cited in Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 169-170.

serve as commander of the federal military district, and Vice-Governor Rafael Izábal took over as acting Governor.⁶²

The Izábal administration was largely a continuation of the programs of the Corral administration. For Corral, this period marked the intensification of his association with the rich and the establishment of his own fortune. Corral, because of the knowledge he had gained in public office, soon became an advisor to several rich mining companies. In effect, Corral achieved the position of being a powerful advisor with the strongest possible connections in the government; no business requiring state permission could be transacted without Corral's stamp of approval. The end result was that Corral, although not technically doing anything illegal, used his privileged position to enrich himself. His fortune increased quickly. In 1886 as Secretary of Government, he had declared several unworked mines to be "unowned," had acquired them, and now sold them for about 50,000 pesos in gold and some stock to an English company.⁶³ Corral's relations with foreign mining companies, who utilized him and his position, usually resulted in the gift of stocks and bonds in those companies in return for his favors. Corral served as Secretary of Government until August 31, 1895. At the same time he acted as arbiter lawyer, and counselor for foreign mining companies; his fortunes boomed. Then in the election of 1895 Corral was elected Governor for the term extending from September 1, 1895, to August 31, 1899.⁶⁴

⁶²Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 175-176.

⁶³Ibid., pp. 180, 190.

⁶⁴La Constitución, 14 December 1894, p. 4. See expedientes 111 and 112 on this data. See also Ibid., 28 December 1894, p. 4, exps. 114, 117; 4 January 1895, p. 4, exps. 121, 122, 127; 11 January 1895, p. 5, exps. 129, 130, 131; 25 January 1895, p. 6, exp. 136; 8 February 1895, p. 3, exp. 149; and 13 February 1895, p. 3 exps. 151, 152.

As Governor, Corral again quickly attacked the many complex problems of his state. He encouraged the use of better building materials in Sonora. A few days after his inauguration as Governor, a contract was agreed upon with the Ayuntamiento of Minas Prietas to bring potable water by means of iron pipes to that important mining town. Education was furthered as in his previous administration, and city governments were authorized by the legislature in December, 1895, to impose a monthly contribution on their inhabitants to augment the funds for public instruction. In the middle of December, Corral left for Alamos to inaugurate several public works, including the introduction of potable water carried by iron pipes.⁶⁵

Corral returned to the state capital in early January, 1896, to face the problem of obtaining money to fund the state government, since a recent amendment to the federal constitution had abolished the alcabalas (excise taxes). In June, Corral called all the merchants of the state together to explain the replacement of the alcabalas with a two-percent tax on sales which the state legislature had just passed.⁶⁶

Corral's own finances, in contrast to those of the state, were in good shape. About the time he proposed the sales tax, Corral had consummated the sale of a mine, La Gran Central Mining and Milling Company. Corral received some 50,000 pesos in gold for his share; and for his part in arranging the sale, the new owners compensated him with a good deal of stock.⁶⁷

⁶⁵Uruchurtu, Apuntes, p. 184.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 185-187.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 190.

Corral continued to benefit financially from state business. In May of 1898, the state legislature approved three industrial contracts in which Corral had financial interests. On May 25, the legislature approved a contract between the Governor and the Moctezuma Copper Company to establish a copper mining community in Nacozari; in the latter days of the same month the legislature approved a contract for the construction of an electrical service company. Although Corral owned no stock in either of these companies, both were required to post a performance bond with the Bank of Sonora in which Corral held considerable stock. The third contract was with the Compañia Explotadora de Maderas, in which Corral held fifty per-cent of the stock.⁶⁸ It is unlikely that this company would have gained a state contract without the Governor's influence. There seems little doubt that Corral prospered financially because he was successful politically.

In early January, 1899, the legislature gave Corral permission to leave his governorship for forty days to go to Mexico City and take care of some public-interest affairs. On the 9th he took his leave of absence. A few days later, Corral arrived in the capital; shortly thereafter, a ball was held in his honor by General Mariano Escobedo, who seems to have been supporting Corral as a possible national political figure. Corral returned to Hermosillo on February 22, 1899.⁶⁹

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 197, 201-202. For other contracts see La Constitución, 26 June 1896; 19 July 1897; 25 December 1897; 27 May 1898; 24 June 1898; 9 July 1898; 12 October 1898. Copies of these contracts as they appeared in La Constitución are found in Son/INAH, reel 8.

⁶⁹For Corral's license to leave, see La Constitución, 9 January 1899, copy in Son/INAH, reel 8. See also Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 203-204.

In the elections in April, 1899, Luis E. Torres and Celedonio C. Ortiz were elected Governor and Vice-Governor for the period of September 1, 1899, to August 31, 1903. On inauguration day, Corral resigned his powers to Torres and gave a lengthy speech on the accomplishments and failures of his administration. Corral was only forty-five years old when he left office; but his hair was already white, and an illness of the throat had set in. That illness, which eventually proved to be cancer, was not discovered by either the specialists in Mexico City or the United States. Therefore Corral decided to go to Europe to vacation and to seek medical advice.⁷⁰

⁷⁰Interview with Hortensia Corral, Viuda de Antillón, 28 November 1971, Mexico, D. F. See also Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 209-210.

CHAPTER II
RAMÓN CORRAL AND THE YAQUI QUESTION

One of the most persistent problems facing the governments of Sonora and neighboring states in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries arose from the relations between the indigeneous tribes of northwestern Mexico--especially the Yaqui--and the whites, whom the Indians called Yori. During the colonial period, when white settlements in the northwest were still small and unimportant, the King of Spain had confirmed the right of the Yaquis and other tribes to hold their ancestral lands. Title-maps bearing the signature of the King were issued to the Indians. In keeping with the land-holding patterns common to the natives at the time, titles were invested in the communities.

Communal ownership of land became illegal in 1856 as a consequence of the Ley Lerdo, which outlawed corporate ownership. The Constitution of 1857 contained the same provisions. Though provision was made for conversion of communal ownership to private ownership, many villagers were largely unaware of the change in the law; others refused to comply. Since the law was publicly associated with the fight against church ownership of land, the potential effect on the Indian villages was largely obscured.

It was not long before money-hungry men--chiefly whites--realized the potential of this law. Community--corporately--owned property could be "denounced," become national property, and the person who originally "discovered" and denounced the property could receive a large percentage

of the land as a reward for finding a violation of the constitution. The rest was sold, or given away, by the government.

The Yaquis of Sonora are the best example of a tribe which ultimately rebelled against the loss of their lands--a lengthy process which was largely completed by the enforcement of the Ley Lerdo. The punishment of the Yaquis is one of the blackest marks in Mexican history. Corral's role in the affair was crucial, and his reputation has suffered greatly because of it.

The lands controlled by the Yaqui and their allies the Mayo included two of the richest river valleys in Sonora--those of the Yaqui and Mayo rivers. White encroachment on these two fertile valleys, which was persistent in colonial and early republican times, accelerated after 1870. The revolts of the Yaqui and other tribes offered the opportunity for the whites to complete their takeover of Indian land. The Indians were robbed of their lands, and many of those who survived were sent as "slaves" to the henequen plantations of Yucatan.¹

A serious Indian revolt broke out in 1880. President Díaz sent General Bernardo Reyes to Sonora to take command of the First Military District (Sonora, Sinaloa, and Baja California) and to aid the state governments in putting down the revolt. Díaz informed Reyes that he was ready to send in a federal force twenty times stronger than that of the rebels. He had just put down a revolt in Tepic, Díaz boasted to Reyes, and he would do the same in Sonora.²

¹John Kenneth Turner, Barbarous Mexico, 2d ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969), pp. 1-27.

²Porfirio Díaz to Bernardo Reyes, n.d., Colección General Porfirio Díaz, University of the Americas, Cholula, Puebla, reel 294, copiador 1, 3 December 1884 to 25 April 1885, doc. 448. (hereafter cited as CGPD).

General Bernardo Reyes had been named by Díaz as chief of the military forces in Sonora, Sinaloa, and Baja California on August 13, 1880; he remained in that capacity until March 11, 1883. During his presence in Sonora, and because of his intervention on the Yaqui question, Ramón Corral and Reyes began to develop a lasting dislike for each other. Reyes recognized that the revolt was sparked by attempts to take away Indian lands. On May 29, 1881, he reported in his informe to the government that "you will stumble on difficulties to satisfy the greed of all those who have denounced lands there...the denounced lands greatly exceed the extension of land embraced by those rivers."³ Reyes proposed an intelligent, semi-military, colonization scheme which would protect the Yaquis, yet introduce outside influences. The Sonora trio of Torres, Corral, and Izábal, however, opposed Reyes' scheme.

On November 29, 1880, when Corral was president of the Chamber of Deputies of the state legislature of Sonora, he had sent a long informe to the Secretary of War accusing the Yaquis of plundering, murdering, and committing many other atrocities. Corral said nothing about the mistreatment of the Yaquis by those who wanted their lands; he asked for a contingent of federal soldiers to defeat the Yaquis once and for all.⁴ The Governor of Sinaloa also asked the Minister of War for federal soldiers to defeat the Mayos and the Yaquis. He stated that the soldiers were necessary

³Carleton Beals, Porfirio Diaz: Dictator of Mexico (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1932), p. 310.

⁴Manuel R. Uruchurtu, Apuntes biográficos del señor don Ramón Corral: desde su nacimiento hasta encargarse del gobierno del Distrito Federal (1854 a 1900) (Mexico: E. Gómez de la Puente, 1910), p. 51.

in order to give guarantees desired by those who are industrious and who, with the necessary capital, would undertake important construction which would change the lands of the immense territory occupied by the Yaqui and Mayo Rivers.⁵

Reyes, according to his biographer, E. V. Niemeyer, Jr., opposed this naked assault on the Mayos and Yaquis; and his stand on the Yaqui question placed him in direct opposition to Corral and other influential men of Sonora who were interested in exploiting the indigeneous races.⁶

Though revolts of varying seriousness were launched by the Indians in the 1870's and early 1880's, it was not until the year 1885 that the Yaquis mounted an all-out attack against the usurpers of their lands in Sonora. Under one of their leaders, José Maria Leyva Cajeme, the Yaquis began a struggle which continued intermittently until Díaz was overthrown, though by that time most of the Yaquis were either dead or in exile.

Cajeme was a civilized Yaqui from Hermosillo who had fought with distinction on the side of the Republic during the French intervention. After the war, General Pesqueira named him commander of a detachment of one hundred men; and, in 1874, Cajeme was named Alcalde Mayor of the Yaqui, a post created by the government to keep the Indians subjugated.

⁵Eberhardt V. Niemeyer, Jr., El General Bernardo Reyes, trans. Juan Antonio Ayala (Monterrey, Mexico: Gobierno del Estado de Nuevo León Centro de Estudios Humanísticos de la Universidad de Nuevo León, 1966), p. 27.

⁶Ibid., p. 28. Niemeyer adds that Reyes was offered a share in the spoils of the Yaqui lands by Rosendo Piñeda who later became the head of the (camarilla) chamber of the científicos. Reyes refused the offer and personally expelled Piñeda from his hotel room. This incident marked the beginning of the rivalry between the científicos and Reyes, according to Niemeyer.

Cajeme realized the intentions of the Yori, and he used his knowledge to build his strength in the Yaqui River valley. From that time until his capture in April of 1887, he ruled the Yaqui valley.

Shrewd Cajeme began to name other Yaquis to various posts and began to collect taxes. He aided deserters from the Mexican federal army in order to seize their munitions, imposed tributes on any ships that came up the Yaqui River to trade, and organized an administration of justice and a treasury. He also divided the lands for cultivation and assigned a quota which every town should contribute to the Yaqui nation in time of war. In order to continue his dominance, delegations were periodically selected from the various towns to meet with Cajeme. He would offer his resignation to the delegation, only to be given a vote of confidence. Not all the Yaquis were in agreement with Cajeme; but only a few left the Yaqui Valley to reside in Guaymas, Hermosillo, or outside the state.⁷

One of the malcontents was Loreto Molina, ex-leader of the Yaquis, who conspired with other Indians in a plan to murder Cajeme. Molina, along with thirty others, arrived in Cajeme's stronghold; but, the Indian leader was not at home. Frustrated in their attempts to capture Cajeme, Molina and his followers took one of his captains and three other Yaquis prisoners.⁸ Cajeme, infuriated by this attack, addressed a note to the captain at the port of Guaymas stating that in reprisal he would detain

⁷Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 88-89.

⁸Ramón Corral, Memoria de la administración pública del estado de Sonora, presentada a la legislatura del mismo por el Gobernador Ramón Corral (Guaymas, Sonora: E. Gaxiola y Ca., 1891), p. 358.

the boats that carried commercial goods between Guaymas and the Yaqui valley. Furthermore, those lanchas which carried over seventy loads of wood would not be able to leave the Yaqui territory unless they paid the fee of \$P 200 each within a period of ten days. Eventually a commission was sent by Cajeme to talk to several of the state leaders. The Indian chieftain pointed out that if the federal government had sent Molina on his mission, he (Cajeme) was disappointed. But, if the government were not implicated, he wanted Molina and his men turned over to him so that punishment could be meted out. The state officials tried to persuade Cajeme to abandon his hostile attitude, stating that it would be best for all concerned to obey the laws. The Yaqui delegation, upset with the government's actions, left; after a few days of waiting, Cajeme ordered twenty-two lanchas burned.⁹

Shortly thereafter, various encounters took place between the Yaquis and government troops. The Díaz regime responded in May of 1885 by launching a formal campaign against the Yaquis with a force of 2,000 men. On the 16th of that month government forces tried to over-run a Yaqui position which was well fortified; and, in the ensuing battle, the government troops were defeated. The victory gave the Yaquis reason to hope for success, and they began to fortify their own villages in expectation of the government's onslaught.¹⁰ In the following two months, several engagements were fought; and, even though no clear-cut victories

⁹Ibid., p. 359.

¹⁰Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 95-101; José C. Valadés, ed., "El Archivo de Don Ramón Corral," La Prensa (San Antonio, Texas) 19 September 1937, p. 1. (hereinafter cited as ARC). The defeat suffered by the government troops was at a place called Anil.

were won, the well-trained government troops with superior weapons began to prove themselves superior. The Yaquis were short of supplies by July, and several Indian chieftains surrendered. However, government troops were also weakened; and, on July 22, they pulled back from the Yaqui stronghold. For a short time, peace prevailed.¹¹

During this time Corral occupied the post of Secretary of Government. He left his position for a short while and organized a group of volunteers to fight the Yaquis; but, after a brief skirmish with them, he returned to his post. In his spare time, he researched the state archives for documents on the history of the Yaquis and Mayos, and published articles based on these materials in the government newspaper, La Constitución.¹²

The Yaquis and Mayos kept constant pressure on the government of Sonora throughout much of 1885 by repeatedly raiding villages, towns, and small ranches. The Sonoran government recognized the Indians as a threat with which the state could not deal effectively by itself. The Indians were ready to fight for their lands; and, with Cajeme leading them, the Yaquis prepared to defend themselves in the following year.

The next year, 1886, was a tragic year for the Indians. Díaz sent in additional troops, and government forces soon destroyed Indian villages and defeated some of the best Yaqui troops. The federales kept up a constant pursuit of the Indians; and, by the end of 1886, 1,700 Mayos and 4,000 Yaquis had surrendered. It has been claimed that many

¹¹Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 104-105.

¹²Ibid., Ramón Corral, "Las razas indígenas de Sonora," in Obras Históricas (Hermosillo, Sonora: Biblioteca Sonorense de Geografía e Historia, 1959).

of these Indians were loaded into rail cars, or ships, and sold into slavery to the henequen growers in Yucatán.¹³ Cajeme, however, refused to abandon the cause and continued to fight until his capture in April of 1887.

There is no doubt that the Indians were deported to become laborers at domestic service or in the henequen fields. Likewise, Ramón Corral's involvement in the deportations is easy to document. But, as to whether or not he received a commission from the sale of Yaquis sent to Yucatán, the author found no evidence. However, one would not expect such evidence to be left. As early as 1877, Vicente Mariscal reported to the Sonoran legislature that

in the last encounter between government troops and Yaquis, the government committed all kinds of abuses and violations, such as depriving the Indians not only of their rights but also of their women and children; and once made prisoners they were deported to the port of Guaymas where they were distributed for domestic service under slavery conditions.¹⁴

¹³Valadés, ARC, 19 September 1937, p. 1. See also Henry B. Parkes, A History of Mexico, rev. ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1950), p. 296. Parkes states, that Cajeme's "followers were sold at seventy-five pesos a head to the plantations of Quintana Roo--a process by which Corral himself and his successor, Luis Torres, made fortunes, and which continued, in spite of the suppression of the rebellion, until 1910." Edward I. Bell, in The Political Shame of Mexico (New York: McBride, Nast and Company, 1914), pp. 58-59, claims that "Corral had trafficked in the freedom of the Yaqui Indians...Not only had he seized their fertile lands along the rivers of Sonora, which they had held for centuries, but he had captured the peaceful Yaqui to the number of thousands, had shipped them like cattle in box cars two thousand miles across Mexico, and had sold them into peonage or virtual slavery to the henequen growers of Yucatan."

¹⁴Vicente Mariscal to the Congress of Sonora, 1 August 1877, Archivo del Congreso, vol, 46, exp. 42, Archivo Histórico de Sonora, Hermosillo, Sonora. (hereinafter cited as ADC/AHS).

Later, in 1895 when Corral was Governor of Sonora, federal commander Luis Torres sent him a telegram asking him to prepare a list of the indigenous prisoners who would be deported.¹⁵ This list was sent to the captain of the ship, Oaxaca, which was stationed in Guaymas; it indicated not only the number (which was seventeen), but also whether the Indians were Yaquis or Mayos, and their sex. The list that Corral sent to the captain of the Oaxaca contained the names of six women from the Seris tribe. The remainder were men--five Yaquis and six Seris.¹⁶ The number of deportees would have been greater, perhaps, had the government not paid 100 pesos for each Yaqui killed in battle.¹⁷

In 1887 the Yaquis lost their best leader, José María Leyva Cajeme. In April, 1887, when Cajeme was at the town of San José, near Guaymas, a Yaqui woman informed the customs collector at Guaymas of his presence. The customs collector notified the prefect, Francisco Seldner, who in turn wired Luis Torres in Nogales. Torres then assigned General Angel Martínez to apprehend Cajeme; the Indian chief was captured on April 12. Cajeme was then transferred to Guaymas on April 21; the following day he was put on board of the ship, Democrata, destined for the Yaqui valley. In Cocorit he was given a military trial and sentenced to death. On April 25, Cajeme was pronounced dead. The official version was that he

¹⁵Luis Torres to Corral, 13 October 1895, Archivo Histórico de Sonora, Hermosillo, Sonora, carpetón 15, referencia 214.1, Tribu Yaqui, gaveta 2-3. (hereafter cited as AHS).

¹⁶Corral to the commander of the ship Oaxaca, 14 October 1895, AHS, carpetón 15, referencia 214.1, Tribu Yaqui, gaveta 2-3.

¹⁷Luis Torres to Corral, 10 December 1895, AHS, carpetón 15, referencia 214.1, Tribu Yaqui, gaveta 2-3.

had been shot while trying to escape at a place called Tres Cruces. Corral visited Cajeme while he was in jail; and, after his death, Corral wrote a short biography of the Indian leader.¹⁸

After the death of Cajeme, the Yaquis continued to resist the Yori. Juan Maldonado, alias Tetabiate, had been Cajeme's second in command, and he assumed the leadership of the Yaquis after Cajeme's death. By this time, the number of rebellious Yaquis numbered only about 400. The government, thinking the war with the Yaquis was over, ordered ribbons and medals from Europe for the officers and their troops. But the war was not over in 1887. Under the leadership of Tetabiate, the Yaquis and Mayos refused to submit, and continued to harass small settlements.¹⁹

The federal government, unable to subdue the Yaquis by force, began a resettlement program by moving indigenous families into the town of Vicam along the Yaqui river. Fifty families were settled there, with each family receiving six hectarias of land for every couple, and four hectarias for each son over three years old.²⁰ Other indigeneous families were taken to the towns of Torín, Cocorit, and Bacum in the Yaqui River valley; the same grants of land were made to them. The government's plan was to give the Yaquis a small portion of their land,

¹⁸Ramón Corral, "Biografía de José María Leyva Cajeme," in Obras Históricas (Hermosillo, Sonora: Biblioteca Sonorense de Geografía e Historia, 1959).

¹⁹Laureano Calvo Berber, Nociones de historia de Sonora (Mexico: Librería de M. Porrúa, 1958), pp. 265-268; Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 136-137.

²⁰Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 165-166.

while the land surveying commissions could dispose of the rest of the Yaqui territory. The fractioning of the Yaqui lands had started officially in 1881, when a surveying commission under the command of Antonio Díaz was sent out. The Yaquis did not accept this fractioning. Their reply was that God had given all of the land to all of the Yaquis; they did not need anyone to give them land which was already theirs. The land, the Yaquis replied, was like water and light: all of it belonged to everybody.²¹

War between the federal government and the Yaquis under the leadership of Tetabiate continued. Meanwhile the rulers of Sonora flooded Díaz with letters concerning the Yaqui situation.²² Finally, in February of 1897, Colonel Francisco Peinado, who had been sent by Díaz to the Yaqui River valley as a peace commissioner, and Tetabiate began to exchange correspondence in an attempt to settle their differences. Both sides wanted peace; the Yaquis, however, refused to surrender their arms.²³ After weeks of negotiations, on March 22, 1897, Peinado sent a report to Díaz stating some of the reasons for the continuance of the Yaqui rebellion. He informed Díaz that, because of the ambitions of various men in Sonora, a situation had been created which the Yaquis found hard to live with; thus they had to rebel. The rebellion, Peinado continued, offered greedy people of Sonora an excuse to attack the Indians and take over

²¹Ibid.

²²CGPD, reel 124, doc. 1244; reel 125, doc. 2606; reel 129, doc. 8997.

²³Luis Torres to Díaz, 11 February 1897, CGPD, reel 138, doc. 2534. See also Francisco Peinado to Juan Maldonado (Tetabiate), 23 January 1897, reel 138, doc. 2535; and Maldonado to Peinado, 6 February 1897, reel 138, doc. 2536.

their lands. He added that the businessmen of the state were indirectly responsible for the rebellion, since they wanted the Yaqui lands to build businesses on them. Coupled to this was the way in which "civilized" Yaquis were mistreated by their employers, and the high rates charged those Yaquis for their living necessities. The situation was so bad that many Yaquis felt compelled to flee and join their comrades in arms.²⁴

On May 4, 1897, Colonel Peinado wrote to Porfirio Díaz that he had met with Tetabiate and other Yaqui leaders and that they were willing to end the war which had caused many hardships on both sides. However, Tetabiate wanted land, credit, money, and guarantees for his people. Peinado added that he had heard it rumored that the businessmen were saying that the end of the Yaqui war would be the end of a good business, and that with the end of the war a certain number of Yaquis were going to be distributed to "each person."²⁵ Finally, on June 1, 1897, the Yaquis and the federal government signed a peace pact.²⁶ But, the problems between the two cultures were not resolved. In the latter part of June, Luis Torres wrote to Díaz that quite a few of the ejidos around the Yaqui pueblos had already been distributed to persons who had denounced this land. Under the circumstances, he recommended that Díaz urge the Minister of Fomento not to permit further denunciations of land close to the eight

²⁴Francisco Peinado to Díaz, 22 March 1897, CGPD, reel 138, docs. 3127-3132

²⁵Peinado to Díaz, 4 May 1897, CGPD, reel 141, docs, 7609-7614.

²⁶The peace pact between the government and the Yaquis, 1 June 1897, in CGPD, reel 145, doc. 15311.

Yaqui towns without first having the approval of the chief of the scientific commission, Colonel Angé1 Garcia Pena.²⁷

Before the peace pact was signed, Díaz and Torre exchanged correspondence on lands that were to be given to the Yaquis.²⁸ Now, after the peace agreement, Torres wrote to Díaz stating that he was ready to start settling families in the Rio Yaqui area but that there was insufficient land for the 15,000 Yaquis who were ready to settle.²⁹ Corral also wrote to Díaz stating that it would be difficult for the state of Sonora to find the money required to feed the multitude of semi-savages whose numbers increased daily.³⁰

The questions of land and ejidos resurfaced after the peace settlement. The Yaquis, who had long been settled in the area, considered the Yaqui valley theirs, and opposed the federal government's attempt to give them lands outside the valley. Even before the pact was signed, Torres had written to Díaz informing him that some of the lands that they had tried to distribute to the Indians had been refused.³¹

In October, 1897, Tetabiate wrote Díaz stating that the Yaquis had kept the peace as they had promised. However, he added, the federal government had promised them the return of their lands; now the govern-

²⁷Luis Torres to Díaz, 5 June 1897, CGPD, reel 141, doc. 7818.

²⁸Torres to Díaz and Díaz to Torres, October, 1897, CGPD, reel 145, docs. 15284, 15288, 15296, 15297, 15301, 15309.

²⁹Torres to Díaz, 24 June 1897, CGPD, reel 141, doc. 7796.

³⁰Corral to Díaz, 19 June 1897, CGPD, reel 142, doc. 9099.

³¹Luis Torres to Díaz, 25 March 1897, CGPD, reel 143, doc. 11482.

ment told them that some of these lands had been sold; and the government was now trying to give them worthless lands away from the Yaqui River valley. The land there had to be cleared, and water was needed for irrigation. This land, said Tetabiate, was worthless to them; it would not be productive for three more years. The Yaquis desired the low land along the river, he concluded; and, in order for the sons of the Yaquis to progress, they needed additional acreage, ranches, and water to raise their livestock.³²

Under these circumstances, the peace was difficult to maintain. As early as October, four months after the signing of the peace treaty, Tetabiate had trespassed onto some lands claimed by white settlers; on hearing of this, Luis Torres issued an order to send troops to resist Tetabiate.³³ With the peace signed, the federal and state governments believed that the Indian would accept the government's orders. In November, after Tetabiate had written to Díaz, Corral wrote to the commander-in-chief stating that the last war had left the Yaquis without a desire for a new war and that he hoped that the land the government gave the Indians would keep them pacified.³⁴ Earlier in that same month, Corral had written Díaz stating that the Indians wanted all the land along the

³²Juan Maldonado to Díaz, 24 October 1897, CGPD, reel 145, docs. 14997-15004.

³³Lorenzo Torres to Luis, 4 October 1897, CGPD, reel 145, doc. 15313; Luis Torres to Lorenzo Torres, 5 October 1897, CGPD, reel 145, doc. 15314.

³⁴Corral to Díaz, 16 November 1897, CGPD, reel 145, doc. 14489.

Rio Yaqui that they formerly owned, and that this could be an attempt by the Yaquis to live independently of the federal government. Corral added that he considered Tetabiate dull and stupid.³⁵

Corral was corresponding with Tetabiate, and his letters to the Yaqui chieftain indicate that Tetabiate had demanded the return of all lands that the Yaquis once occupied in the Yaqui valley.³⁶ Corral responded that all the land in Mexico belonged to the federal government; that the government could distribute the lands to whomever it wished, according to the laws of the land; that neither the whites nor the Indians could, or should, take the land by force; and that the government could not take away land that had already been distributed. Corral added that, during the Yaqui wars, the government took possession of the lands in the Yaqui River valley when many of the Yaquis fled to the mountains. Since then, many other settlers had moved in; and the government had granted lands to those who desired to work them. The government could not now ask these people to move away. The government realized that the Yaquis were born on this land; that was why the government was now taking measures to distribute the land so that every Yaqui would have some land to work. The government, he continued, wanted the Yaquis to live in peace: that was why the government was helping the Indians by constructing a water main at Bacojari so that the Yaquis could irrigate their lands. Corral added that there was enough land for the Yaquis, Mayos, and whites. Finally, he pointed out that, since the peace

³⁵Corral to Díaz, 2 November 1897, CGPD, reel 145, doc. 14527.

³⁶Corral to Juan Maldonado, 2 November 1897, CGPD, reel 145, docs. 14531-14535.

negotiations with Peinado, the government had aided the Yaquis with provisions, clothes, gifts, and other necessities; furthermore, the government was paying the Indians under Tetabiate a salary; and lands were being distributed, along with seed, farm implements, and animals. In return, Corral maintained, the government asked for nothing.³⁷

Corral sent a copy of this letter to Díaz, who chastised him in reply for using the word "nation" in referring to the Yaquis.³⁸ The future vice-president, however, wrote Díaz that he did not believe that the Yaquis interpreted the word as implying an independent nationality, but used it to mean "tribe." Corral reiterated his belief that the war had left the Yaquis without the means, or the desire, to continue at war.³⁹

The constant and firm pursuit of the several hundred Yaquis still in rebellion had left the rebels tired and exhausted. Throughout the two years previous to the signing of the peace pact, constant telegrams were sent from Luis Torres, who was military commander of Sonora, to Díaz stating that various Indians had been captured and were ready to be deported.⁴⁰ In one such telegram Torres stated,

I have captured several Yaquis that have been in communication with the rebels and because of their action they need a firm punishment, although I don't believe that it is necessary

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Corral to Díaz, 16 November 1897, CGPD, reel 145, doc. 14489.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Luis Torres to Díaz, 9 July 1895, CGPD, reel 335, doc. 4322; Torres to Díaz, 27 July 1895, CGPD, reel 335, docs. 4634-4635.

to put them in front of a firing squad. I wish you would authorize me to send them to Acapulco or Tonalá [in order to] deport them to a place from which they cannot return.⁴¹

In another telegram, Torres asked Díaz where he would like the Indian prisoners he was sending to disembark. Díaz replied, "Salina Cruz," on the south coast of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.⁴²

Two years later Torres telegraphed Díaz that it was impossible to make a deal with the Yaquis, and that they would accept nothing less than the right to live in the Yaqui River valley area. Torres added: "the very idea of deportation of all Yaquis if it were made known to them would result in a new insurrection. This [the deportation of all Yaquis] must not be thought of as an absolute impossibility."⁴³

Three months later Torres telegraphed Díaz that it would be better for the Indians to revolt rather than to have to tolerate their contentiousness.⁴⁴ The Yaquis continued to observe their peace agreement with the government until 1899; but, in July of that year, another Yaqui uprising occurred. Corral telegraphed Díaz: "Extremely urgent. I entreat that you help us against the Yaqui rebels. Please send by Wells Fargo Express 500 Remington rifles and 100,000 rounds of ammunition."⁴⁵

⁴¹Torres to Díaz, 7 May 1895, CGPD, reel 334, doc. 2887.

⁴²Torres to Díaz, 17 October 1895, CGPD, reel 336, doc. 6049; and Díaz to Torres, 18 October 1895, CGPD, reel 336, doc. 6049. Díaz penned his answer on the bottom of Torres' telegram.

⁴³Torres to Díaz, 5 July 1897, CGPD, reel 341, docs. 3324-3325.

⁴⁴Torres to Díaz, 19 October 1897, CGPD, reel 342, doc. 5036.

⁴⁵Corral to Díaz, 24 July 1899, CGPD, reel 346, doc. 2896.

The Yaquis were in open rebellion again; the government reacted by arresting peaceful Yaquis, breaking up families, and deporting them.⁴⁶

The courageous and fearless Yaquis continued to resist. Torres in the opening month of the 20th century wrote Díaz that the Indian campaign would end quickly if the war were continued until the complete extermination of those in arms, and if those who supported them were deported as accomplices. Torres warned Díaz that the current campaign would last longer, but that this action would signify the last revolt by the Yaqui Indians.⁴⁷

On the 18th of January, 1900, at the bloody engagement of Mazocoba, government troops under the command of General Lorenzo Torres routed the Yaquis, leaving over 400 dead and 1,000 Yaquis, mainly women and children, prisoners. On the following day Luis Torres telegraphed Díaz that the prisoners captured in the encounter were ready to be deported on the ship Oaxaca.⁴⁸ In spite of this defeat, small groups of Indians continued to defy the federal government. As a result, the Porfiriato ordered a commission under Colonel Angé1 Garcia Pena to map out the Yaqui region, and orders were given to send 4,800 men to combat the Yaquis. In July of that year, another battle took place at Mazocaba between federal troops and rebellious Yaquis. In this encounter, troops led by Loreto Villa defeated the Yaquis again; Tetabiate was killed

⁴⁶Luis Torres to Díaz, 17 November 1899, CGPD, reel 347, doc. 5209.

⁴⁷Torres to Díaz, 16 January 1900, CGPD, reel 348, docs. 761-762.

⁴⁸Torres to Díaz, 19 January 1900, CGPD, reel 348, doc. 357.

during the battle. Persecutions against the Yaquis continued. The government arrested peaceful Yaquis, broke up families, and deported them.⁴⁹

Sonoran state officials believed that the war with the Yaquis was over; but, the dauntless tribe continued to defy government troops. In April of 1902, Torres wrote to Díaz about a plan in which all the Yaquis who lived in a certain zone would be captured and deported.⁵⁰ Apparently the plan was accepted; from 1902 to 1905 a more vigorous campaign against the Yaquis was undertaken by state officials. Hundreds of Indians were either executed or deported to Yucatán during this period. With such policies in effect, the Yaquis continued to resist government troops until the overthrow of the Porfiriato.⁵¹

The Yaqui question was not fully settled during the Porfirian regime. Yaqui and Mayo Indians, who had lived for centuries in the Yaqui River valley, desired to live free and in peace on their aboriginal lands, without Mexican laws or rules regulating their daily norms, customs, secular traditions, and methods of self-government. Porfirio Díaz and the supporters of his regime aspired, on the other hand, to incorporate these groups of Indians (or at least the land that they owned) into the Mexican nation. The objective of the Mexican chief of state was to deprive the Yaquis of their rich, fertile lands either by peaceful persuasion--to which the Yaquis never submitted--or by force, which was consistent with Diaz's system of pan o palo (bread or stick). Due to the economic

⁴⁹Calvo Berber, Nociones, p. 273.

⁵⁰Luis Torres to Díaz, 25 April 1902, CGPD, reel 191, doc. 5907.

⁵¹Calvo Berber, Nociones, pp. 273-274.

forces in Sonora, and to a clique of individuals who desired to enrich themselves from Indian lands, the Porfiriato decided on the latter policy. The result was an inevitable clash between government forces and Sonoran Indians fighting for their right to retain the lands that had been granted to their ancestors since the beginning of Spanish imperialism in the new world. It was a bloody engagement. The well-provided government force desired to take over Indian territory for an absolute government that wanted to open up Indian lands for production and foreign industry. On the other side were strong-spirited and proud Indians who wished to preserve their ancestral forms of life. The net result was the destruction of Indian villages and homes; the murder and wholesale deportation of Yaqui, Mayo and other Indians; and the loss of Indian lands to white Sonoran politicians and foreign businessmen.

The Indians who opposed the policies of the Porfiriato were rounded up and put into concentration camps; those who opposed this policy were considered enemies of civilization and deported to the Valle Nacional in the state of Oaxaca, or to the henequen haciendas in Yucatán. John Kenneth Turner was correct in his book, Barbarous Mexico, when he wrote that human chattel slavery was still practiced in Mexico in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.⁵² However, one must realize that at the time these events were occurring, they were not considered particularly barbaric in Mexico. A few short years before, the United States had used the same justifications in the exploitation and mass murder of the American Indians. Since Mexico was considered to be a backward country during this period, the Porfirian leadership viewed the

⁵²Turner, Barbarous Mexico, pp. 1-26.

exploitation and deportation of the indigeneous tribes of Sonora as a justifiable and rational approach to the creation of a thorough national unity.

The Yaqui Wars continued through the Porfirian years until the Yaquis signed a peace agreement with the Maderistas. Ramón Corral, as one of the leaders of Sonora, faced the Yaqui insurrections and dealt with them as Díaz dictated. When Corral left the governorship in 1899, the problems of the Yaquis passed on to Luis Torres, who assumed the governorship after Corral. Torres, Corral, and Rafael Izábal, who usually shared political power in Sonora, always reported to the federal government that the Yaqui rebellions were extremely serious. From the evidence, it appears that these three men often exaggerated the situation and made it appear to be worse than it actually was. The Sonoran triumvirate had the backing of the federal government, and since no one dared oppose Díaz, then no one dared oppose them.

Corral's problems with the Yaquis did not end when he left the governorship on September 1, 1899. His involvement with the handling of the Yaquis developed into a black legend that followed him to Mexico City when he was appointed Governor of the Federal District.

Corral was only forty-five years old at the time he stepped down as Governor of Sonora, but his hair had already turned gray and he was suffering from an acute illness of the throat that often restrained him from speaking. Corral decided to leave for Europe in search of a cure for the illness--cancer of the throat--from which he would later die.⁵³

⁵³Uruchurtu, *Apuntes*, pp. 209-210. Interview with Hortencia Corral Viuda de Antillón, 28 November 1971, Mexico City. See also Anita Brenner, *The Wind That Swept Mexico; The History of the Mexican Revolution 1910-1942*, 2d ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971), p. 23.

Corral did not leave Sonora until April of 1900 because he had to take care of his own numerous businesses, and because he was also constantly advising other businessmen as to the state of affairs in Sonora.⁵⁴

Corral arrived in England in early May, and went on to Paris towards the end of the month. The doctors in England and France recommended that Corral go to the spa-waters of Ems, Germany. Corral went there and consulted a specialist who diagnosed his illness as a malignant polyp in the throat. The specialist at Ems recommended a surgeon in Frankfort, who removed the polyp. After recovering from the operation, Corral visited the rest of Germany, Italy, and Austria before returning to Paris.⁵⁵

It was while Corral was in Paris that Díaz decided to call him and appoint him Governor of the Federal District. On October 1, 1900, Díaz telegraphed the Mexican consul in Paris, José Maria Vega Limón, instructing him to tell Corral to return to Mexico for public service, and to have Corral indicate the date of his arrival.⁵⁶ Luis Torres also telegraphed Díaz stating that he had urged Corral to return quickly and that he had informed Corral as to his new duties.⁵⁷ After receiving the telegram from Díaz, Corral telegraphed Díaz that he had bought a ticket to return on the 17 of October and that he would be in Sonora by early

⁵⁴Uruchurtu, Apuntes, pp. 211-212.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Díaz to José Maria Vega Limón, 1 October 1900, CGPD, reel 349, doc. 3939.

⁵⁷Luis Torres to Díaz, 1 October 1900, CGPD, reel 349, doc. 3942.

November.⁵⁸ By the 4th of November, Corral had arrived in Sonora.

He telegraphed Díaz that he had arrived and was awaiting his orders.⁵⁹

⁵⁸Corral to Díaz, 2 October 1900, CGPD, reel 349, doc. 3961.

⁵⁹Corral to Díaz, 4 November 1900, CGPD, reel 350, doc. 4315.

PART TWO

CORRAL AND NATIONAL POLITICS, 1900-1911

CHAPTER III

THE EMERGENCE OF CORRAL IN NATIONAL POLITICS

Ramón Corral was appointed governor of the Federal District on December 19, 1900.¹ According to one source, his appointment came because of his close relationship with José Yves Limantour whom he had met in Paris.² Corral assumed the governorship of the Federal District at a time when a man with a firm hand was needed, since the Governors before him had protected gamblers in the District. When Corral arrived, he was resented by some of the close followers of Díaz who disapproved of this fuereño (country bumpkin) being named Governor of the District. Corral himself did not set out to win public opinion and thought little of it. Stories quickly circulated that had people laughing at him; and tales about his violent and dissonant character made their way among the populace. Corral also liked to drink and he cared little about what people said. The ex-Governor of Sonora gained little popularity with the elite; and, because of his firmness, he lost the support of the poorer classes in Mexico.³

¹Mexico, Cámara de Diputados, Diario de los Debates de la Cámara de Diputados, 20a Legislatura Constitucional de la Unión, Sesión Ordinaria, 1900-1901, vol. 1, p. 672; Agustín Casasola, Historia Gráfica de la Revolución, 1900-1946 (Mexico, D. F.: Archivo Casasola, 194), vol. 1, p. 3.

²José R. del Castillo, Historia de la Revolución Social de México (Mexico, 1915), p. 119.

³Ibid.

According to a speech Corral made to the aldermen of the city when he took over the government of the Federal District, he believed that the Ayuntamiento's most transcendental problems were the question of drainage, the paving and widening of the streets, the construction of concrete sidewalks, the provision of potable water for the inhabitants, and the continuation of the works initiated by the previous Ayuntamiento. Corral stated that the improvement of police services, the betterment of the conditions within the jails and prisons, and health and beautification projects, were all projects with high priority. He added that, since he had just taken over as Governor of the District, he could not estimate all the needs of the city, nor did he know of the means available to deal with all the problems. He stated that Mexico City, because of its great political importance, must make efforts to fulfill its needs. Corral concluded by saying that the federal government had given them its backing and that the federal legislature had granted the Ayuntamiento a subsidy of two million pesos for municipal works. He suggested to the aldermen of 1901 that they were the depositories of hope; and he wished they would respond favorably to the work ahead.⁴

During Corral's first year as Governor, various projects were taken up. He gave special attention to the construction and pavement of streets, the repairing of sidewalks, the provision of potable water for the District, the beautification of parks, the development of new mercados and the improve-

⁴Juan Bribiesca, ed., Discurso del Sr. D. Guillermo de Landa y Escandón Presidente del Ayuntamiento en 1900. Discurso del Sr. D. Ramón Corral Gobernador del Distrito Federal y Memoria Documentada de los Trabajos Municipales de 1900 (Mexico: La Europea, 1901), pp. 11-28.

ment of existing ones, the improvement of garbage collection, and the general cleanliness of the city.⁵ After Corral's first year in office, Guillermo Landa y Escandón, who was then president of the Ayuntamiento, made a speech to the aldermen stating that during Corral's first year in office the Ayuntamiento had managed to take on many projects; but it had to cut out some plans due to the limited credit of the Ayuntamiento. He stated that 1901 had been an exceptional year because the Ayuntamiento had found itself with more funds than expected. He added, however, that the District was still faced with various problems. Among other things, many of the streets were torn up in order to install drainage systems, electrical wiring for the city, and electrical connections for the electric trolley car. Landa y Escandón concluded that the main project for 1901 had been the paving of streets. As for street pavement, he remarked that two companies, the Barber Asphalt Paving Company and the Neuchatel Asphalt Company, had paved eighty-eight streets covering a surface of over 141,000 square meters at a cost to the city of 757,588.30 pesos. The city had also contracted for street paving with other smaller companies; and when the work of these smaller companies was added, a total of 119 streets covering 192,792 square meters had been paved in 1901. Sidewalks occupying 118,257 square meters had also been constructed on 205 streets in Mexico City.⁶

⁵Juan Bribiesca, ed., Discurso del Sr. D. Guillermo de Landa y Escandón Presidente del Ayuntamiento en 1901. Discurso del Sr. D. Ramón Corral Gobernador del Distrito Federal y Memoria Documentada de los Trabajos Municipales de 1901 (Mexico: La Europea, 1902), pp. 11-29.

⁶Ibid., pp. 14-16.

New public health projects were also initiated in Corral's first year as Governor. More potable water was made available for the city, new drains and garbage dumps were created, water lines were extended, and additional aqueducts were constructed.⁷ While much progress appears to have been underway, the city did very little for the common citizen. True, streets and parks were beautified for the people to enjoy, but in eulogizing the achievements of the Ayuntamiento and the Governor of the Federal District, little mention was made of the construction of new hospitals, food for the needy, or other "welfare" projects.

Corral also spoke to the gathered aldermen after his first year in office and praised them for the great improvements in the areas of drainage, electrical facilities, widening of the streets, expansion of water lines, creation of new mercados, and beautification projects. He concluded by telling the aldermen for 1902 that the need for public projects never ended, for, like the progress that produced the need for earlier public works projects, continuing progress would require continuing efforts in this area. Although much had been done in Mexico City, much more needed to be done. He stressed that for the year 1902, the two most fundamental problems for the city were the provision of good and abundant potable water and the construction of a slaughterhouse.⁸

In the following year many of the projects of 1901 were extended. The Ayuntamiento kept pressing for the widening of streets and pavement of sidewalks. Urban renewal was taking place in Mexico; homes were being bought from citizens to expand city streets and to install drainage systems

⁷Ibid., pp. 33-37.

⁸Ibid.

and electrical conduits. Cleanup crews in the city also spent more man hours in their attempt to beautify the growing megalopolis. At the end of 1902, Corral again praised the Ayuntamiento for its fine efforts in helping to create a better and cleaner Federal District while operating with a monetary deficit. Corral praised the work on the mercados and on the streets; he especially praised the Ayuntamiento for the creation of the new slaughterhouse, the Rastro de Peralvillo.⁹

In conclusion, Corral stated to the aldermen for 1903 that the most urgent problems for the coming year were the acquisition of funds and the provision of abundant potable water for the city. Potable water, he said, was the most important item because the city depended on it for its health, its cleanliness, and for its increase in population. Several studies had been made, Corral added, but if necessary, new studies would be undertaken. The problem must not be forgotten.¹⁰

As Governor of the District, Corral was also responsible for enacting new legislation that would provide better benefits for public officials. For example, he proposed an act to compensate policemen of the city when they were injured on the job and to provide pensions for the families of those killed in the line of duty. Corral also urged banks to lend money to public servants at a lower interest rate.¹¹ As Governor

⁹Juan Bribiesca, ed., Discursos del Sr. D. Fernando Pimental y Fagoaga Presidente Interino del Ayuntamiento en 1902; del Sr. D. Ramón Corral Gobernador del Distrito Federal y del Sr. D. Guillermo de Landa y Escandón Presidente del Ayuntamiento en 1903 y Memoria Documentada de los Trabajos Municipales de 1902 (Mexico: La Europea, 1903), pp. 11-28.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 37-38.

¹¹Memoria de la Secretaria de Gobernación Correspondiente Al Cuatrienio de 1 de Diciembre de 1900 a 30 de Noviembre de 1904 (Mexico: Imprenta del Gobierno Federal, 1906), p. 47.

he was also responsible for initiating legislation that regulated the hours and days that alcohol could be sold in the District. He recommended that the sale of alcohol be prohibited in some establishments in which other activities took place (such as gambling or prostitution).¹² In addition, Corral often served as an initiator of charity or relief projects, most notably in connection with the bubonic plague which hit Mazatlán in January, 1903.¹³

While Governor of the Federal District, Corral also acted as middleman between Díaz and the politicians from his native state of Sonora. Often Luis Torres or Rafael Izábal would write to Corral expressing their views on those political situations in Sonora about which they wished Corral to inform Díaz.¹⁴ At one time Corral became involved in a land dispute and a civil suit in Sonora. The land dispute arose after the municipal elections of 1900 in the city of Hermosillo. Apparently, the Torres-Izábal clan had once again manipulated the municipal elections to keep their people in power, but they had faced opposition from the Sernas and Gándaras of Sonora. After the elections were over, Dionisio González, León Serna, and Arturo Serna wrote Díaz in September, 1901, charging fraud in the municipal elections and accusing Izábal of manipu-

¹²Ibid., pp. 49, 490-508.

¹³"El Señor-Ramón Corral, Ciudadano Benemerito del Estado de Sinaloa. Dictamen de la Primera Comisión de Gobernación de la H. Legislatura del mismo" (Culiacán, Sinaloa: Faustino Díaz, 1903). See also Corral to Díaz, 27 April 1901, Colección General Porfirio Díaz, University of the Americas, Cholula, Puebla, reel 180, doc. 3339 (hereafter cited as CGPD).

¹⁴Corral to Díaz, 12 April 1902, CGPD, reel 190, doc. 4529; Luis Torres to Díaz, 5 November 1901, CGPD, reel 186, doc. 11595; Corral to Díaz, 3 January 1902, CGPD, reel 187, doc. 109.

lating the elections to prevent exposure of his misuse of communal waters for his land. The three discontents also charged that after the elections those who had sided with the government were rewarded while men in the opposition were badly mistreated. González, L. Serna, and A. Serna charged that after the election a civil suit against the hacienda El Carmen had been brought to court by Alberto Rodríguez, a close friend of Izábal. The hacienda belonged to Francisco Gándara, a relative of Gonzalez. The three charged that Rodríguez, a notary public, had paid Ramón Corral, who was now Governor of the District, and Eduardo Castañeda, President of the state Supreme Court, 10,000 pesos cash and 250 pesos monthly for a period of two years for helping Rodríguez establish his practice.¹⁵

The trio added that Corral and Castañeda were part of the political group that dominated the public administration of the state of Sonora. In addition to these charges, the three men said that after the election commissioners were sent to the town of Santa Ana to name people to the Ayuntamiento. Santa Ana was the home town of Arturo and León Serna, and the men named to the Ayuntamiento quickly brought suit against the Sernas over some water rights. They allowed vigilante groups to intimidate and terrorize the Sernas to the point that they were forced to abandon their hacienda of Santa Marta. In addition, the state government brought sedition charges against the three men. Eventually the government jailed González, while at the same time allowing Cipriano Gómez, a known killer

¹⁵Dionisio González, Arturo Serna, and León Serna to Díaz, 28 September 1901, CGPD, reel 185, docs. 11227-11230, and reel 186, docs. 11230-11233.

and assassin of González' brother, to go free. The three men also charged that the state government protected a circle of friends. Among those protected were Celedonio C. Ortiz, who had separate himself from the government but still received a salary as Vice-Governor; and Ignacio Bustillos, who had been replaced as a judge in Arizpe because of his incompetence only to be named judge in Guaymas.¹⁶

The complainants accused Izábal of being illegally imposed as Governor of Sonora, because, according to the state constitution, an acting Governor could only be named in the absence of the Governor or Vice-Governor and then only for a period of six months. Izábal had been in power since August of 1900, and this was September, 1901. Due to the shenanigans of state officials, according to González and the Sernas, Sonora had already lost about 3,000 people and would continue to lose inhabitants if the situation continued. The three individuals also stated that the political administration of the state had never had the proper decorum in its relation with American companies, especially the "Creston Colorado Company" and the "Grand Central Company" which owned the mineral rights of "Minas Prietas." These companies, according to the trio, paid the salaries of the local policemen, bribed local judges, and for years had paid a retainer to Ramón Corral while he was Governor and Secretary of Government of the state. In return for this well-placed money, these two companies found themselves free of labor litigation and paid very little in taxes in comparison with other businesses. The three men concluded by charging that various business houses and institutions of credit had

¹⁶Ibid.

been warned not to deal with them or the state might take action against them. The men argued that they were not politicians; they were only asking for guarantees to work in peace.¹⁷ The land dispute, Gándara versus Rodríguez, continued to occupy the time of those involved. In March, 1902, Francisco Gándara wrote to Porfirio Díaz about his property, stating that he feared its loss because he heard rumors to the effect that some of the magistrates in the Supreme Court were being pressured to vote against him. Gándara expressed his fears to Díaz, and asked him to use his power to neutralize these outside influences so that the suit regarding the hacienda of El Carmen could be settled with the strictest adherence to the law.¹⁸

Corral took an interest in the case, and wrote to Torres about the land dispute. In March, 1902, Torres responded to Corral stating that he now regarded Serna as a friend and a member of the group, and that he would treat him fairly.¹⁹ However, Torres had written to Díaz a month earlier arguing that Rodríguez should win the land dispute in order to punish enemies of Díaz.²⁰ Finally, the court did rule against the Serna-Gándara family, and Corral relayed the message to his good friend, Luis Torres, in Sonora. Torres replied to Corral's telegram stating that he

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸F. Gándara to Díaz, 22 March 1902, CGPD, reel 189, docs. 2714-2715.

¹⁹Luis Torres to Corral, 21 March 1902, CGPD, reel 189, doc. 3345.

²⁰Luis Torres to Díaz, 24 February 1902, CGPD, reel 189, doc. 3364. See also Rafael Izabal to Díaz, 24 February 1902, CGPD, reel 189, doc. 3449.

was satisfied with the decision and that he would try to keep Izábal and his friends from boasting and stirring up more trouble over the affair.²¹

The other affair in Sonora in which Corral became involved while Governor of the Federal District concerned the trial of Jesús J. Pesqueira, who was accused of attempting to steal cattle from an elderly widow. Jesús J. Pesqueira was a distant relative of the once powerful Governor Pesqueira of Sonora. Although Corral had helped destroy the power of the Pesqueiras, Jesús decided to appeal to him for help. Corral eventually sent a letter asking for moderate treatment for Pesqueira. Pesqueira then wrote again to Corral asking for his interference in the matter and blaming Corral's friend, Rafael Izábal, for some of his troubles. This time, Corral replied very sharply to Jesús Pesqueira's request stating that it was his (Pesqueira's) fault that he had gotten into trouble, and the idea of blaming state officials for his woes was an old trick that no longer worked.²² Besides these two specific affairs, Corral kept abreast of state politics in Sonora, and often arranged meetings between the Governor of Sonora and Díaz so that Díaz could let Torres or Izábal know whom he wanted for Governor, Vice-Governor, magistrates, senators, or representatives, in upcoming elections.²³

²¹Luis Torres to Díaz, 2 August 1902, CGPD, reel 193, doc. 9889; Luis Torres to Corral, 14 August 1902, CGPD, reel 194, docs. 11642-11643.

²²For the Jesús J. Pesqueira affair, see Luis Torres to Corral, 14 August 1902, CGPD, reel 194, docs. 11642-11643; J. J. Pesqueira to Corral, 26 August 1902, CGPD, reel 194, docs. 11637-11638; Corral to J. J. Pesqueira, 2 September 1902, CGPD, reel 194, docs. 11639-11641.

²³Corral to Díaz, 18 October 1902, CGPD, reel 194, doc. 11634.

Many commentators on the history of Mexico--such as Anita Brenner and William Weber Johnson--have accused Corral of enriching himself even further while Governor of the Federal District by accepting a percentage of the profits in return for protecting gambling, prostitution, and other forms of vice.²⁴ Such activity would not have been inconsistent with Corral's style of public service, but proof of these charges is not available. Jose C. Valadés, who spent years working in the Corral period, told this author in an interview that he believed the charges to be part of a smear campaign. Whether smear or truth, the charges were believed after 1911, and Corral's reputation was blackened because of them.²⁵

During Porfirio Díaz' sixth term as President of Mexico, his ancient Minister of War, Felipe Berriozábal, died on January 8, 1900. Then, for political and military reasons, Bernardo Reyes was brought in as the new minister on the 24th of that month. The naming of Reyes to occupy this important cabinet post was contradictory to Díaz' usual policy of not naming popular and prominent military men to high cabinet positions; he wished to keep this type of man away from the limelight. The popular and well-known Governor of Nuevo León, according to one of his biographers, was brought into the cabinet by Díaz to check the aspirations of the científicos.²⁶

²⁴Anita Brenner, The Wind That Swept Mexico; The History of the Mexican Revolution 1910-1942, 2d ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971), p. 23; William Weber Johnson, Heroic Mexico, The Violent Emergence of A Modern Nation (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1968), p. 16.

²⁵Interview with Jose C. Valadés, 22 November 1971, Mexico, D.F.

²⁶Eberhardt V. Niemeyer, Jr., El General Bernardo Reyes, trans. Juan Antonio Ayala (Monterrey, Mexico: Gobierno del Estado de Nuevo Leon Centro de Estudios Humanísticos de la Universidad de Nuevo León, 1966), pp. 91-109.

Affairs of state soon developed into a political standoff as both groups--científicos and Reyistas-- found themselves bidding for the support of the old caudillo, who was still manipulating the strings of power. Both groups increased their attacks on each other until Díaz believed that it was indispensable to investigate the charges being made by the Reyistas before his cabinet split and his government suffered a loss of prestige. The charges stemmed from a political disagreement between Reyes and José Yves Limantour, the leader of the científicos. When Reyes created a second army unit, he was attacked in the press as having created the unit under the false pretense of preparing Mexico against the possibility of a foreign war. The charge was made that Reyes created the reserve to further his political ambitions. Limantour referred to it as "a pure Reyista army," to be used in the future by Reyes to provoke a revolution and place himself in the presidential seat.²⁷ The attacks against Reyes brought several independent newspapers into the verbal war between the two ministers. The papers began to attack Limantour's nationality, charging that he was not a Mexican by birth. Therefore, they pointed out, he could never be president, and that his candidacy for that post would be an impossibility. For that matter, the papers maintained, he could not even be Secretary of the Treasury.²⁸

Díaz, who feared the loss of his power, was suspicious of Reyes after he had brought him into his cabinet. Reyes' reforms of the army (the cre-

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Adolfo Duclos Salinas, Méjico pacificado; el progreso de Méjico y los hombres que lo gobiernan. Porfirio Díaz-Bernardo Reyes (St. Louis, Missouri: Imprenta de Hughes y Ca., 1904), p. 232.

ation of the second reserve and his handling of other affairs without consulting with other cabinet members) did not serve to alleviate Díaz' fear of him.²⁹

Since it was Reyes' son, Rodolfo, and his followers from the National School of Jurisprudence who were making the attacks, Díaz commissioned Ramón Corral to investigate the charges against the científicos--especially those against Limantour. Using the police and detectives who were under his command as Governor of the District, Corral allegedly found the originals of the published articles in the archives of the Minister of War, with corrections supposedly made by Reyes.³⁰

When Díaz confronted Reyes with the "evidence" Reyes denied having planted the articles in the newspapers. The authenticity of Corral's charges against Reyes is denied by José R. del Castillo, a writer of this period, who states that Ramón Corral was capable of most anything and would not hesitate in choosing any means to serve his intent, regardless of scruple.³¹ Niemeyer hints that the whole affair was staged to destroy Reyes politically. Anthony Bryan, another of Reyes' biographers, also states that the "authenticity of Corral's accusations is at least questionable."³²

²⁹Castillo, Revolución Social, p. 79.

³⁰Ricardo Garcia Granados, Historia de Mexico desde la restauración de la república en 1867 hasta la caída de Porfirio Díaz (Mexico: A. Botas e hijos, 1912?), vol. 3. p. 79.

³¹Castillo, Revolución Social, p. 79; Duclos Salinas, Méjico pacificado, p. 232.

³²Anthony T. Bryan, "Mexican Politics In Transition, 1900-1913: The Role of General Bernardo Reyes," (Ph. D. diss. University of Nebraska, 1969), p. 103. Niemeyer, El General, pp. 107-109.

Reyes had become too popular for Díaz. So, when Limantour told Díaz that he must dismiss Reyes or he, Limantour, would resign, the sacrificial victim was Reyes.³³ Perhaps Díaz had already opted for this when he commissioned Corral to find the "evidence." The old sly man reasoned that the Ministry of War could be delegated to another person who would not cause problems; but he could not afford Limantour's resignation, because the brilliant Minister of Hacienda was responsible for keeping the Porfiriato economically strong. The question as to whether Díaz dismissed Reyes or whether he resigned is still a question that Anthony Bryan says "remains a matter of speculation."³⁴

Reyes announced his resignation from the cabinet on December 22, 1902. In January, 1903, Díaz began the re-organization of his cabinet. Ignacio Mariscal was left at his old post as Secretario de Relaciones, a post he had occupied since 1884. Ramón Corral, who had "discovered" the evidence implicating Reyes, was promoted from Governor of the Federal District to Ministro de Gobernación. Justino Fernández continued as Ministro de Justicia y Instrucción Pública, and José Ives Limantour remained as Ministro de Hacienda. Francisco Mena replaced Reyes in the cabinet as Ministro de Guerra y Marina; Manuel González Cósio was moved from Gobernación, the post Corral received, to Fomento, Colonización y

³³Niemeyer, El General, pp. 107-108; Bryan, "Mexican Politics in Transition," has an excellent discussion of this episode, pp. 97-109. See also Castillo, Revolución Social, pp. 75-79; Duclos Salinas, Méjico pacificado, pp. 231-232.

³⁴Bryan, "Mexican Politics in Transition," p. 103; Manuel Calero, Un Deceñio de Política Mexicana (San Antonio, Texas: Casa Editorial Lozano, 1920), pp. 24-25.

Industria; and Leandro Fernández was placed in charge of the Secretaría de Comunicaciones. In 1905 the post of Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes was created and Justo Sierra headed it.³⁵

With the organization of this new cabinet, científico domination was intact. According to Carleton Beals,

From 1892-1900 the cabinet, despite inner feuds, was an administrative body. Now Limantour-Corral ascendancy was completed. From 1903 on, cabinet and government became the executive board of a narrow political party. Previously Porfirio had surrounded himself with old friends and filled remaining posts from all parties. Aged Mariscal and Gonzalez Cosio were impotent landmarks; but the rest of the cabinet--Limantour, Sierra, Corral, Molina, Fernandez Leandro, [sic] and Carmen's relative, Justino Fernandez--were Cientifico men. In 1910 when Enrique Creel replaced Mariscal on his death, Cientifico domination was perfected. Even Porfirio's private secretary, Chausal, [sic] was overtly Cientifico. 1900-1910 marked the rise of Limantour, the decline of Diaz.³⁶

The científicos were in power. Corral, on the appointment to his new post, received some criticism in a Mexico City newspaper. The paper, El Monitor, although it entitled its editorial "The Changes in the Cabinet, What did we Gain?" directed all of its unfavorable comment against Corral. It charged Corral with having done little as Governor of the

³⁵Casasola, Historia Gráfica, vol. 1, p. xiii. For Corral's appointment consult Diario Oficial, 16 January 1903, vol. 64, pp. 209-210; and Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación, 1900-1904, doc. 1, p. 91.

³⁶Carleton Beals, Porfirio Diaz: Dictator of Mexico (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1932), p. 357.

Federal District, accusing him of being absent from the District for the most part. The paper also stated that since Corral replaced González Cosío as Minister of Government, it should not prove too difficult for an active man to better the record of the ancient minister. According to the Monitor, the new minister had a lot of tasks from which to select; it suggested that Corral re-organize the division of Public Welfare. The paper wished Corral well, and hoped that he would live up to all the praises that were lauded on him by his friends; but as far as the Monitor was concerned, the brilliant aptitudes that Corral's friends claimed for him had not flourished when Corral had been Governor of the District.³⁷

With his appointment as Minister of Government, Ramón Corral occupied the second most powerful position during the Porfiriato. Although this ministry was subject to the will of the President, one must still wonder why Díaz elevated a relatively unknown man to such a high position. By 1903 Díaz had sufficient faith in the loyalty of Corral to appoint him his right hand man, even though Corral may have been imposed on Porfirio by the científicos. Certainly, Corral did not have the national reputation in 1903 to occupy the powerful post of Ministro de Gobernación, or to become Vice-President a year later. Yet, his close association with Limantour, who was the recognized head of the científicos, and his performances as a good administrator and a loyal man augmented Corral's availability as Minister of Government.

The Ministry of Government was an extremely powerful position, one which any ambitious politician would have desired to hold. Even in 1903,

³⁷"Los Cambios en el Gabinete, Que Ganamos?" El Monitor (Mexico, D. F.) 20 January 1903, p. 1.

before the constitutional amendment re-creating the office of Vice-President had been passed, the Ministro de Gobernación was the second man in line of succession in case the Mexican executive should die in office. Only the Ministro de Relaciones preceded him in the line of succession. However, as far as powers of the office were concerned, the Ministry of Government surpassed all the others, although in the Porfirian regime this was comparatively meaningless (unless as Beals claims, but others doubt, Díaz had lost most of his power and was now dominated by the científicos).³⁸

As Ministro de Gobernación Corral served as the channel for convoking cabinet meetings whenever Díaz decided to call his cabinet together. Corral was also responsible for arranging meetings between the state governors and the President or other high government officials. This gave him an excellent opportunity to influence affairs of state and become well aware of them. Not only was the Ministro de Gobernación supposed to keep records pertaining to such meetings, thus allowing him to be the best informed man, but he was also supposed to check on the execution of policy decided upon between the federal government and the states. Corral, in this position, was besieged with letters concerning state politics, ranging from the administration of the state judiciary to arrangements--both political and legal--for the election of new governors. This was especially true in matters relating to the northwestern states.³⁹

³⁸Beals, Porfirio Diaz, p. 357.

³⁹Luis Torres to Díaz, 15 November 1905, CGPD, reel 224, doc. 16088. This document reveals that Corral had informed Torres of Díaz' wishes regarding the sale of firearms to the Yaquis in Tucson; Corral to Teodoro Dehesa, 13 August 1906, CGPD, reel 231, docs. 10416-10418; for sending out orders to the state governments see Memoria de la Secretaria de Gobernación, 1900-1904, doc. 17, pp. 128-129, and doc. 113, p. 409.

Another important function that the Ministro de Gobernación served was to gather and coordinate information for the President. Also the Minister had to advise the executive on needed legislation, draft bills for the President to submit to Congress, and make recommendations on laws before the executive signed them. Corral's office was responsible for assembling material from the reports of the different ministries for the annual message of the President to the opening session of each congress.⁴⁰

The office of Gobernación offered Corral the opportunity to serve as chairman of various interministerial committees for purposes of administrative coordination. In 1904, for example, a reform of the Federal District took place and the political administration of the District was placed under the joint direction of the Secretaries of State and Gobernación. The administration of federal territories, which were dependencies of the executive, also fell under the care of Gobernación, and Corral was responsible for their administration and progress.⁴¹

The Minister of Government also served as a liaison between the Congress and the administration in power. Corral's post placed him in charge of the publication of bills, decrees, and proposed constitutional amendments. Among other functions he was also responsible for approving

⁴⁰William P. Tucker, The Mexican Government Today (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957), pp. 173-181; Jose Mijares Palencia, The Mexican Government, Its Organization; A non Political Book of Valuable Facts (Mexico, D. F.: Sociedad Mexicana de Publicaciones, 1937), pp. 15-27.

⁴¹Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación, 1900-1904, doc. 112, pp. 393-409. See also the informe on federal territories, pp. 73-87.

appointments and resignations, licensing charities and gambling, calling upcoming elections, managing immigration and deportation, representing the government in various social functions, smoothing over troubles in the states, and overseeing the rurales (rural police force).⁴² As head of the rurales, Corral controlled their activities and sent them where they were needed. He was also responsible for the maintenance of the group, including their salaries, arms, horses, dress, and all other necessities.⁴³

Corral's powers as Ministro de Gobernación were immense and the contacts that he made through his office were innumerable. Corral was also in charge of regulating the sale of drugs and meat; public health came under his office; as did supervision of traffic, automobiles, alcoholism, and private contracts.⁴⁴ Other functions included presenting honors to "Distinguished Heroes;" for example, when the body of Nicolas Bravo was to be brought to the capital, Gobernación was in charge of that task. Gobernación was also in charge of public works.⁴⁵

⁴²Ibid., docs. 1-2, pp. 91-93; on electoral reforms see doc. 17, p. 128; on approval of senators and magistrates see docs. 22-24, pp. 133-134; on control over gambling see doc. 131, pp. 509-511, and Corral to Teodoro Dehesa, 25 March 1903, CGPD, reel 199, doc. 5207.

⁴³Memoria de la Secretaria de Gobernación, 1900-1904, docs, 43-45, pp. 174-175. See also Head of the Rural Police to Corral, 26 August 1906, CGPD, reel 230, doc. 9041; J. Duret to Díaz, 24 April 1906, CGPD, reel 235, doc. 18173.

⁴⁴Memoria de la Secretaria de Gobernación, 1900-1904, On alcohol see doc. 127, pp. 490-497; on meats, drugs, and public health see docs. 67-70, pp. 250-258; on automobiles and private contracts see doc. 78, pp. 296-297, and doc. 125, pp. 488-489.

⁴⁵Ibid., doc. 61, p. 193; docs. 178-195, pp. 611-660.

In short, the scope of the functions of the Ministro de Gobernación included almost anything inside the country. The ministry's organization included the following departments: Government, Interior Relations, Penal Colony, Consultation, Administration of Population, Immigration, and Publications. It also encompassed the Government Printing Office and the General Archives of the Nation.⁴⁶

Díaz was head of state, but Corral was prime minister!

⁴⁶Mijares Palencia, The Mexican Government, p. 15.

CHAPTER IV
THE CREATION OF THE OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT

The problem of succession to the presidency had plagued Mexico since the creation of the republic in 1824. In order to appreciate the complex situation involved in the creation of the office of Vice-President one must look at the different attempts made in Mexican constitutions to develop a method of succession to the Presidency in the event of disability of the incumbent. The systems which evolved after independence can be classified into two groups: one which incorporated a Vice-President and one which did not. The first one is complex, however, because there were constitutions that created the vice-presidency as an autonomous office, while other constitutions added the function of the Vice-President to another office--such as the 1857 constitution which made the President of the Supreme Court the successor to the President.¹

The Mexican Constitution of 1824 (Art. 85) created the office of Vice-President as an autonomous function. The person obtaining the highest number of votes in a presidential election was declared President, while the person with the second highest number of votes was elected Vice-President. In case of the absence of the President, the Vice-President would assume his duties. If both men were absent, the Chamber of Deputies would choose a replacement; if the Chamber were not in session, then the executive power would be assumed by the President of the Supreme Court

¹Felipe Tena Ramírez, Derecho Constitucional Mexicano (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, s. a., 1944), p. 381.

and two men selected by the Council of Government.² This system created too many problems, since the successor to the President was usually the leader of the opposition. The first two Vice-Presidents rebelled against their President and the third was thrown out by the President.³ The system obviously was not working well.

In 1836, following the centralist coup of 1835, a new constitution was adopted. This new constitution did not adopt the system of a vice-presidential office, but it did require that, in the absence of the President, an interim President be named. The Senate was responsible for the naming of the interim President, but only after the Chamber had proposed three individuals (Cuarta Ley, Art. II).⁴ However, in the temporary absence of the President, the President of the Council of Government was to govern (Cuarta Ley, Art. VIII).⁵

The Organic Bases (the Constitution) of 1843 made use of these two systems to replace the President. The first one stated that in the temporary absence of the President, the President of the Council would substitute for him; and in case the President were gone for more than fifteen days, then the Senate would elect his replacement (Art. 91).⁶ The Reform

²Felipe Tena Ramírez, Leyes Fundamentales de México 1808-1971, 4th ed. (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, s. a., 1971), pp. 179-181.

³Nicolas Bravo rebelled unsuccessfully in 1827; Anastasio Bustamante was successful in 1829-1830; and Valentín Gómez Farias was removed by Santa Anna in 1834.

⁴Tena Ramírez, Leyes Fundamentales, pp. 222-223.

⁵Ibid., p. 223.

⁶Ibid., p. 420.

Act of 1847 rejected the office of Vice-President completely. Instead, it adopted the provisions used in the Constitution of 1824 in case both the President and Vice-President were absent (Art. 15 of Reform Act);⁷ that is, the Chamber, if in session, would designate the interim President. If the house were not in session, executive power rested with the President of the Supreme Court and two individuals elected by the Council of Government.

The 1857 constitution entrusted the function of substituting for the President of the Republic to the President of the Supreme Court, in cases of temporary or permanent absence (Art. 79).⁸ This system proved to be just as bad as that recommended in the Constitution of 1824. The first President under the Constitution of 1857--Ignacio Comonfort--suspended the Constitution, arrested the President of the Supreme Court (Benito Juárez), then released Juárez, resigned, and was replaced by Juárez. Juárez, too, had his troubles with his "successor"--Jesús González Ortega. When Juárez' term expired in 1865, with no possibility of an election because of the war against Maximilian, González Ortega should have replaced him; but, Juárez would not permit him to do so. Finally in 1876, because of disputes over the election and Díaz' revolt, Supreme Court President José Maria Iglesias claimed the office in opposition to President Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada.⁹

⁷Ibid., p. 474.

⁸Ibid., p. 620.

⁹Walter V. Scholes, Mexican Politics During the Juarez Regime 1855-1872 (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1969), pp. 22-24, 111-116; Carleton Beals, Porfirio Díaz: Dictator of Mexico (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1932), pp. 186-210.

Ignacio Vallarta, who became President of the Supreme Court in 1877, understood the inconveniences of the system; and, after he took over as President of the Supreme Court, he proposed and obtained the absolute separation of the functions of the Vice-President and that of the President of the Supreme Court. On July 2, 1877, Vallarta, in an initiative, exposed the faults of the system and proposed a system called Insaculados. Vallarta had initiated this program in Jalisco with satisfactory results. Vallarta proposed that at the time of the presidential elections, the nation would also choose three individuals called Insaculados. One of these three was to be designated, by the House or by the Permanent Deputation, to substitute for the President in his temporary absence, or until the conclusion of his term if the absence were permanent. But the designation of the Insaculado who was to replace the President could not be made until the absence of the President occurred. If the absence of the President were sudden or unexpected, the President of the Supreme Court would be the substitute, but only for the period necessary to allow the Chamber or the Permanent Deputation to meet and elect one of the three Insaculados. Vallarta argued that the system of Insaculados would not pit the President of the Supreme Court against the President of the Republic, and would remove the President of the Supreme Court from politics. The system of Insaculados, Vallarta continued, did not make any of the three the necessary successor; that, he thought, would be sufficient to destroy the illegitimate ambitions of those who wished to get power illegally.¹⁰

¹⁰Tena Ramírez, Derecho Constitucional, pp. 383-384.

This last change would have been better if the candidates did not have to be chosen by the Congress. The designation of Insaculados meant that all three were eligible for the highest office; and, in the case of the absence of the Mexican President, three distinct political factions could be formed to contest for the executive office. Vallarta's initiative failed in the Senate, but his primary idea of divorcing the President of the Supreme Court from politics triumphed in the reform of 1882. This reform declared that, in the absence of the President, the President of the Senate, or, if this body were not in session, the President or the Permanent Deputation, would replace the Mexican executive. Vallarta, who had accepted the Presidency of the Supreme Court under the condition that he would leave his post when the functions of the vice-presidency had been separated from the President of the Supreme Court, renounced his post immediately after the reform of 1882 was promulgated. He had finally realized his dream of separating the Court from politics.¹¹

The unfortunate aspect of the reform of 1882 was that sheer luck would determine who was to succeed the President in case of his absence. The system provided that the successor would be the President of the Senate (which met from September 16 to December 15 and from April 1 to May 31), or if this body were not in session, the President of the Permanent Deputation.¹² This system remained until 1896, when a new one was imposed. This new reform of 1896 stipulated that the Secretario de Relaciones would substitute for

¹¹Ibid., p. 384.

¹²Tena Ramírez, Leyes Fundamentales, p. 615.

the President in case of absence; if he could not accept, then the Ministro de Gobernación would take over until Congress could meet and select a replacement.¹³

In 1904, the last reform of the 1857 constitution was made with regard to the presidential succession. This new reform recreated the office of Vice-President as an autonomous post. The Vice-President was chosen by a separate vote at the same time as the President; he had no function other than to act as President of the Senate, with a voice, but no vote unless a tie occurred (an impossibility in a Porfirian Congress).¹⁴ However, if the Vice-President held an appointive office in the executive branch, he could not preside over the Senate. In the case of the absence of the President, the Vice-President would substitute for him. In the case of the absence of both, the Secretario de Relaciones would follow; in his absence, the other secretaries would succeed in the order that their cabinet post had been established. If the absence of the executive were permanent and more than one year remained in the term, extraordinary elections had to be held. If less than a year remained, then the replacement would continue until the election of a new President.¹⁵

In the fourth term of the Porfiriato, (1892-1896), the acute question of who was to replace Díaz began to surface. Questions as to a replacement for Díaz had previously been submerged due to the oppressive tactics of the dictator and also because of Díaz' good health. However,

¹³Ibid., p. 709.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 715. The Vice-President could hold a cabinet position if asked to serve by the President.

¹⁵Ibid.

by 1896, Díaz, already 62, had outlived most of his contemporaries, and his own demise had to be considered. If Díaz had died before 1896, the Presidency would have gone to a member of Congress. Most of the powerful politicians of Mexico were in the executive branch, and it is probably more than accident that the concern for Díaz' health and for a stable succession resulted in placing the succession firmly in the executive branch. The reforms of 1896 and 1904 both provided this--the first through cabinet succession, and the second through recreation of the office of Vice-President.

One of the first to propose the reestablishment of the vice-presidency was Luis del Toro, an avowed opponent of Díaz. On March 22, 1895, del Toro proposed that the office of Vice-President be created. He argued that the Constituent Congress of 1857 did away with the vice-presidency because they viewed the office as a focal point for intrigue against the President which often resulted in violent uprisings. Del Toro affirmed that this was not the logical way to view the office. He stressed that one should look at current conditions in Mexico and judge from them whether it were feasible to have a Vice-President. Del Toro replied in the affirmative, arguing that a Vice-President could become an example of the finest qualities one could expect from a public official.¹⁶ The editors of El Democrata, who were also opponents of the government, stated that Díaz should admit the necessity to prepare new men to take over the government in the near future. In order to do this, the paper continued, the government must reinstate public liberties and allow young men to make themselves

¹⁶Daniel Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna de México, El Porfiriato: La Vida Política Interior Parte Segunda (Mexico: Editorial Hermes, 1972), vol. 9, pp. 341-342.

known. The paper concluded that the government must tolerate some disorder in political life since many of the people were very passionate. And only by doing all of these previous things could the government meet its obligations to the people.¹⁷

Instead of a vice-presidency, Díaz accepted the cabinet succession of 1896. Around the turn of the century, Díaz' advanced age and occasional sickness began to worry foreign capitalists who were afraid that, without a clear-cut succession to the presidency, the Mexican Republic would suffer another bloody civil war. The Díaz regime had already been warned about this, and Limantour brought the issue back home when he returned to Mexico from Europe in late 1903.¹⁸ Díaz did not want someone to be named as a clear-cut successor, and the method of succession was already specified in the constitution. Díaz, however, was forced to respect foreign capital. Foreign investment had allowed Díaz to provide apparent material progress in Mexico, though at the expense of the common people, and if he did not succumb to the capitalists' wishes, "progress" in Mexico could be temporarily halted. Díaz preferred the existing system, and would have accepted a system of two vice-presidents; but elevating one man to be his successor was repugnant to him.¹⁹

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸José Yves Limantour, Apuntes Sobre me vida pública 1892-1911 (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, s. a. , 1965), pp. 136-137; Nemesio García Naranjo, Porfirio Díaz (San Antonio, Texas: Casa Editorial Lozano, 1930), p. 131.

¹⁹Ricardo García Granados, Historia de México desde la restauración de la república en 1867 hasta la caída de Porfirio Díaz (Mexico: A. Botas e hijos, 1912?), vol. 2, p. 173.

Nevertheless, Díaz realized that without foreign capital his government could fall. He reluctantly agreed to a constitutional reform that re-created the office of Vice-President, for he seems to have believed that re-creating the office might disturb domestic politics. The office was not created to provide for succession, since succession was already specified in the constitution, but to provide a succession which foreign capitalists could understand and trust.

Once the constitutional change had been approved by Díaz, the proposal was taken by the Ministro de Gobernación to the Chamber of Deputies on November 18, 1903.²⁰ The initiative argued that the method of succession used until then was no longer considered convenient in light of the new political changes that had occurred through the years. The initiative proposed that Articles 79 and 80 of the constitution be reformed. As amended, Article 79, Section I, provided that the same electors who, according to Article 76, designated the President of the Republic, were also to elect, for a period of four years, a Vice-President who must be a citizen who possessed the prerequisites for the presidency which Article 77 required. The Vice-President would take possession of his office at the same time as the President, in accordance with Article 78. Section II of Article 79 specified that the Vice-President, by reason of his office, would be President of the Senate with a voice, but without a vote unless a tie existed. However, the Vice-President could occupy another post at the will of the executive. In such a case the Vice-President would be substituted in his temporary or permanent absence as President of the Senate in the manner established by the Senate rules. Article 80, Section I,

²⁰Ibid., p. 174.

specified that if the President of the Republic did not appear on time to take possession of his office, or if he were temporarily or permanently absent, or if he were given permission to leave his post, then the Vice-President assumed executive power by law without the necessity of a new oath. Section II of Article 80 stated that, if the permanent absence of the President occurred, the Vice-President would substitute for him until the end of the term for which he was elected, and in other cases until the President returned.²¹

The opponents of the científicos viewed this proposal as a political triumph for the Limantour clique. To detract somewhat from Limantour and to gain attention for themselves, they proposed a new initiative to the Chamber of Deputies on November 24. This new proposal was made by Alonzo Rodríguez Miramón and was supported by the majority of the Veracruz deputation. The initiative by Rodríguez Miramón proposed to reform Article 78 of the Federal Constitution to lengthen the term of the President from four years to eight, with no mention of a vice-president.²² The científicos were aroused and angered by the initiative. Díaz, who had no intention of relinquishing his power anyway, did not place much importance in the new proposal. In the end, a compromise was struck which gave both the President and the Vice-President terms of six years. The científicos had won.

The reform to create the vice-presidency and to extend the term to six years was approved by the House and the Senate on the 2nd and 10th

²¹Ibid., pp. 174-175; Tena Ramírez, Leyes Fundamentales, p. 715.

²²García Granados, Historia de México, pp. 175-176.

of December, 1903. After passing both houses, the constitutional reform was circulated to the state legislatures for their approval, and promulgated in May, 1904.²³

The state governors kept a close watch over the reform that was being discussed in Congress. On December 17, 1903, Manuel Cárdenas, Governor of Coahuila, wrote to Díaz saying that he had been reading the local press and that as soon as the reform reached his state he would take all measures necessary to approve it.²⁴ The following day Bernardo Reyes wrote Díaz stating that he had received Díaz' letter of December 14, in which Díaz indicated he wanted an affirmative vote from the legislature of Nuevo León. Reyes said that as soon as the reform arrived in the state the legislature would convene, and he believed that the legislature would vote in the affirmative.²⁵

One governor after another began to respond to Díaz' overtures for approval of the constitutional reform. Olegario Molina of Yucatán answered Díaz on December 22: Rafael Izábal of Sonora followed suit the next day; three days later Miguel Ahumada, Governor of Jalisco, sent in his reply. Genaro G. García, Governor of Zacatecas, had already discussed the reform with Díaz in a letter he wrote on December 18, in which he expressed sadness because Limantour had to be eliminated for "delicate

²³Ibid., p. 176.

²⁴Manuel Cárdenas to Díaz, 17 December 1903, Colección General Porfirio Díaz, University of the Americas, Cholula, Puebla, reel 205, docs. 15965-15966. (hereafter cited as CGPD).

²⁵Bernardo Reyes to Díaz, 18 December 1903, CGPD, reel 205, doc. 15717.

reasons." García was one of the first to write to Díaz stating that the constitutional change had been approved by the state of Zacatecas.²⁶

Enrique Creel, Governor of Chihuahua wrote to Díaz in February, 1904, stating that he had received Díaz' letter of December 14. Creel assured Díaz that his letter had been clear and that he understood that José Yves Limantour was not going to be a candidate for the vice-presidency. Creel asked that Díaz, when he found it convenient, should let him and his friends know whom Díaz supported for the vice-presidential office.²⁷

Once the constitutional reform had been proclaimed, the struggle for the selection of a Vice-President began, and aroused the ambitions of many men. Limantour, one of the obvious choices, was not a candidate. According to Díaz' letter of December 14, 1903, asking the governors to expedite passage of the constitutional amendment, Limantour preferred to remain in an exclusively administrative position and would not seek the vice-presidency.²⁸ Every political group of any significance tried to gain Díaz' favor, because a vote of confidence from him

²⁶Olegario Molina to Díaz, 22 December 1903, CGPD, reel 205, doc. 16427; Rafael Izabal to Díaz, 23 December 1903, CGPD, reel 205, doc. 15660; Miguel Ahumada to Díaz, 26 December 1903, CGPD, reel 205, doc. 16179; Genaro García to Díaz, 18 December 1903, CGPD, reel 205, doc. 16704; García to Díaz, 31 December 1903, CGPD, reel 206, doc. 17045.

²⁷Enrique Creel to Díaz, 15 February 1904, CGPD, reel 207, doc. 2446; Yves Limantour, Apuntes sobre mi vida, pp. 138-140. This second letter was to clear up any misunderstanding about rumors that were circulating that Limantour was opposed to the constitutional change and that relations between him and Díaz were strained. See also Carlos Díaz Dufoo, Limantour, 2d ed. (Mexico: Imprenta Victoria, s. a., 1922), p. 337.

²⁸Limantour, Apuntes sobre mi vida, p. 142.

would insure the success of their candidate. To allow all political factions to participate, it was decided to have a national convention to nominate a man for Vice-President, since the choice for President was automatic. Díaz was postulated as President, but the convention met primarily to decide on a vice-presidential candidate.

According to Limantour, Díaz was preoccupied during this period with the selection of a Vice-President, and solicited Limantour's opinion as to a vice-presidential candidate who would be accepted in Mexico as well as abroad.²⁹ Limantour's choice was Ramón Corral, who as Governor of Sonora and of the Federal District, and later as Ministro de Gobernación, had demonstrated his ample administrative abilities. But, since Limantour did not want to prejudice Díaz' choice, he postponed his recommendation of Corral until after discussing the choice of Corral with a few of his friends. Finally, he proposed Corral and Olegario Molina, Governor of Yucatán.³⁰ Díaz accepted Limantour's two choices, and stated that both men were equally competent and far superior to any of those mentioned by the public.³¹ He especially liked the idea that neither one was a military man; but he did not indicate his preference to Limantour.³²

Before the convention met on June 6, 1904, the press of Mexico City constantly ran articles with headlines like, "THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, WHO WILL BE THE OFFICIAL CANDIDATE." Rumors circulated

²⁹Ibid., pp. 142-143.

³⁰Ibid., p. 143.

³¹Other candidates mentioned by the press were Bernardo Reyes and Ignacio Mariscal.

³²Limantour, Apuntes sobre mi vida, p. 143.

in the capital claiming that Mena would be Vice-President; others said that Limantour had the inside track and that one of the states bordering Guatemala would postulate his candidacy.³³ On April, 1904, the Círculo Nacional Porfirista published a document in the newspaper El País calling for a convention to elect a Vice-President, and urged the states to send delegates to the convention. It also stated that the credentials for the delegates should be signed by the president and secretary, or secretaries, of the state parties, and that registration of the delegates would start on May 10, 1904. The document was dated March 10, 1904.³⁴

The Porfirian convention of 1904 to nominate a Vice-President was a farce. Díaz already had his candidate, and the convention served only as a show of those democratic principles which could not and did not exist under the Porfiriato. According to Miguel Alessio Robles, several men, including Ramón Corral, Justo Sierra, Rosendo Pineda, Fernando Pimentel y Fagoaga, and Roberto Nuñez, all noted científicos, went to see Limantour to find out who was going to be the vice-presidential candidate. Limantour replied to the group that he did not know, so the group proposed that he speak with Díaz. Three days later, while Corral was having breakfast in the Jardín Hotel in Mexico City, Nuñez, who was Limantour's sub-secretary, met Corral there and took him to see Limantour. When Corral entered Limantour's office, the Minister of Hacienda congratulated him on being Díaz' candidate for Vice-President. When Corral responded that he could not accept, because the only viable candidate of

³³"La Vice-Presidencia de la Republica," El País (Mexico. D. F.), 27 March 1904, p. 1.

³⁴"El Vice-Presidente de la Republica," El País, 4 April 1904, p. 1.

the científicos was Limantour, Limantour rebutted that he could not accept because of the question of his citizenship which had been brought up by the opposition. Humbly, Corral accepted Limantour's explanations but declared that he could not be Vice-President because he was not well known and because he did not have the political stature that would justify his designation as a vice-presidential candidate. Limantour replied that if Corral refused the office, Díaz would select someone from the opposite party and that his labor as Ministro de Hacienda would have been for naught. Corral then agreed to accept, but indicated that it was a big mistake for him. Corral later discussed his selection with Diego Redo and expressed the fear that Mexico was tired of the continuous government it had, and that, if he (Corral) accepted the vice-presidency, he would be viewed as a continuation of Porfirio's regime.³⁵

The following day a cabinet meeting was held at the Palacio Nacional, but Díaz said nothing to Corral about his candidacy. Corral talked to Limantour, and Limantour explained to Corral that he would talk to Díaz and show him a letter that he intended to publish indicating that he (Limantour) would not accept an elective position. The following day Limantour met with Díaz and explained to him the situation, informing Díaz that the convention would accept Díaz' choice for a Vice-President. Díaz then asked Limantour to tell Corral to meet him so they could talk about the vice-presidential office.³⁶

Another version of how Corral was prematurely selected is presented by Coronel Antonio Tovar, who was president of the convention. Tovar

³⁵Miguel Alessio Robles, "Como Surgio la Candidatura de Ramón Corral," Todo (Mexico, D. F.), 11 November 1943, pp. 7, 58.

³⁶Ibid., p. 58.

related that a couple of days before the convention met, Diaz asked him who was acceptable as a candidate by the Partido Nacional Porfirista, of which Tovar was President. Tovar replied that there had been no mention of a specific candidate but that the Partido Nacional was opposed to anyone from the científicos. Díaz asked why, since the científicos had served the government well. Tovar indicated that Díaz was right, but that except for a few bureaucrats, public opinion was against the científicos. Díaz then asked Tovar whom he personally preferred, and when pressed for an answer, Tovar responded with the name of Bernardo Reyes. Díaz' replied that Reyes was not a suitable choice. He said Reyes was a good governor, but that Mexico needed a man who would not create divisions. If Reyes were selected, the científicos would oppose him and a confrontation would occur. Díaz then asked Tovar for another choice and Tovar picked Joaquin Barranda, Díaz' ex-minister of Justice and Public Education. Díaz replied that Barranda did not have enough support. Díaz then mentioned Limantour, to which Tovar replied that both Reyes and Barranda were opposed, and there was also the question of whether Limantour was Mexican or French. Tovar then asked Díaz his opinion about Mariscal; Díaz responded that Mariscal was a good man but that he was too old to be a good selection.³⁷

After explaining the disadvantages of Mariscal, Díaz asked Tovar his opinion of Corral. Tovar responded that Corral did not have sufficient merit or recognition; and, besides, rumor had him allied with the

³⁷Antonio Tovar, "Mi Entrevista con el Presidente Díaz, Como designo candidato a la Vice-Presidencia a D. Ramón Corral," El Universal (Mexico, D. F.), 27 December 1929, p. 3.

científicos. Díaz replied that Corral was not affiliated with the científicos; Corral did not belong to any party. Díaz added that it was true that Corral was often seen in the company of científicos like Rosendo Pineda, but, as Ministro de Gobernación, Corral talked to different groups. As to his political antecedents, Díaz stated that ever since Corral had become Secretary of Government in the state government of Sonora, he had observed him, and that he had performed well in Sonora. Furthermore Corral had been a very good governor of his native state and Díaz had observed him closely when he came to Mexico City as Governor of the Federal District. Corral's performance in that office was so satisfactory that he was elevated to the cabinet as Ministro de Gobernación in 1903. Díaz added that in some cases Corral even surpassed Limantour. Tovar replied that he had nothing against Corral. Díaz then asked when the convention would take place, and asked that he be reminded about the convention two or three days before. The day before the convention, Tovar met with Díaz again and informed him that the convention would select whomever the Partido Nacional supported. Díaz then asked Tovar his choice for Vice-President, and Tovar responded that he would promote the candidacy of Corral; but so far he had not talked to his friends. Díaz then asked him who would preside over the convention and Tovar replied that he would.³⁸

That afternoon Tovar met with Doctor Gregorio Mendizábal and invited him to make the speech nominating Ramón Corral for Vice-President. Mendizábal agreed. In the evening, Tovar spoke to the vice-president of the

³⁸Ibid.

convention, Carlos de Olaguibel y Arista, and to Demetrio Salazar, one of the ex-vice-presidents of the Partido Nacional Porfirista. Also at that meeting were José López Portillo y Rojas, a close friend of Reyes, and Ricardo Rodríguez, a member of the Supreme Court of Justice. All of them had their doubts about Corral and believed him to be a científico.³⁹

The convention opened on June 6, 1904. Attendance at the first meeting was very good, with nearly every seat in the chamber occupied. The first session was merely to welcome the delegates, with José López Portillo y Rojas of Jalisco delivering the welcoming address. After sketching the aims and origins of the Nationalist Party Portillo y Rojas went on to say,

Only due to the potent breath of the generous ideal which animates our party, which is also the Porfirian ideal, has it been possible to realize the noble aims of those who at all costs desire the union of Mexicans beneath the standard of peace; placing higher than the interests of factions, than the interests of greed, and the interests of ambitions, the sacred, eternal, and sublime interest of the republic. The Nationalist Party, gentlemen, is a political organization of simple and natural formation which faithfully interprets the national aspirations and which has for its object to preserve in our native land the blessings that have been achieved under the aegis of our institutions and to condemn to perpetual and ignominious silence the monster of discord.⁴⁰

The Jalisco orator continued, stating that the recently promulgated constitutional amendment recreating the vice-presidency had been well received by the nation. He added that the meeting of the convention and its delib-

³⁹Ibid., p. 7.

⁴⁰"Convention Meets to Name Candidate," Mexican Herald (Mexico, D. F.), 7 June 1904, p. 1.

erations were proof that the institutions of the country were being put into practice. López Portillo y Rojas concluded that

the country no longer wants astute intriguers but loyal servants of the people. Having met on this spot and at this hour, we are prepared to act in unison and like one man, animated by the breath of the same vivifying spirit, which is our love for the land of our birth. When the vote of the assembly shall once have been fixed, we shall embrace the successful candidacy, whichever it may be, in obedience to our program, even though we may have to forego personal opinions. And the union of our will will only be a reflection of the union of our people who are ready to sacrifice everything on the altar of their future on which are enshrined Peace and Labor. Thus, we delegates here present will have the glory of being the first to demonstrate by practical facts the irrevocable evolution achieved by our country in recent times by virtue of which politics have become in our midst the instrument of order, prosperity, and progress.⁴¹

López Portillo y Rojas' welcoming address was warm, patriotic, and inspiring, but not unifying. The old dictator was not ready to allow the free nomination of his Vice-President as the welcoming orator implied. Before the convention met again on June 7, the Mexican Herald canvassed the delegates and a large number of them opted for Corral.⁴²

On the second day, the convention was called to order at 6:45 p.m. with Corone] Antonio Tovar presiding. More delegates were in attendance than the night before, and the galleries were packed. After routine

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

business had been transacted, and before the debate on candidates had been initiated, Juan Pedro Didapp took the floor to ask how many votes were needed to assure a candidacy. He was declared out of order and told that his question would be answered at the appropriate time.⁴³

When the particular point of how to nominate a candidate arose, Manuel Mateos Cejudo proposed that a single delegate should propose the candidacy of one person. Then López Portillo y Rojas took the floor and suggested that when the name of a candidate was proposed it should be supported by at least thirty-five delegates so that the person named could be considered a serious candidate and so as to avoid the loss of time. Didapp and Manuel Anda Siliceo objected to this proposal, and the question of whether a candidate needed the support of thirty-five delegates was put to a vote. The measure passed by a 93-29 vote.⁴⁴

After this business had been transacted, Anda y Siliceo was the first to speak out for a candidate. He said that it was not his purpose to discuss or question the merits of Corral, which were well known by all present; but, as the assembly was a free one and each delegate was entitled to express his opinion, it was his purpose to propose the candidacy of Limantour. He went on to argue for the candidacy of Limantour, reviewing the great career of the Ministro de Hacienda. He added that it was true that Limantour had renounced his candidacy, but that at the present time the delegates were assembled in a convention and were not

⁴³"Las Candidaturas Corral y Mariscal, La Convención Nacional de 1904," El Universal, 28 December 1929, p. 1.

⁴⁴Ibid.

casting their votes at an election. The object of a convention, he concluded, was to bring out different ways of thinking by groups and individuals; and such expressions of opinion were independent of Limantour's will.⁴⁵

The next speaker, Manuel Vidaurranzaga, bored the convention with his flowery speech and at one point paused to ask whether he should end his discourse there, or finish. He was allowed to continue but warned to finish as soon as possible. The convention's attitude towards Vidaurranzaga was rude and harsh; and, at one point, the rowdiness of the delegates and the audience threatened to wreck the convention; but Antonio Tovar restored order, and gave the floor to Juan A. Mateos. Mateos reviewed several candidates: Bernardo Reyes, Limantour, Mariscal, and finally Corral. The next speaker was Doctor Gregorio Mendizábal. He made a lengthy speech boosting the candidacy of Corral. Mendizábal drew certain metaphors from his profession and provoked laughter when he referred to political clinics and again when he compared a good ruler to a good physician who understands the constitution like a doctor knows his patient, and knows what treatment is beneficial. The only drawback to Corral, he said, was his youth; but he pointed out Díaz had been younger than Corral when he took over the reins of government in 1876.⁴⁶

Heriberto Barrón, followed Mendizábal; he proposed the candidacy of Mariscal. He said that Mariscal had been a great collaborator of Juárez. Barrón tried to stampede the convention by asking those thirty-

⁴⁵"Minister Corral Carries Convention," Mexican Herald, 8 June 1904, p. 1.

⁴⁶Ibid.

five delegates in favor of Mariscal to rise and parade before the rostrum of the speaker. This move by Barrón excited the convention and rumors circulated that Mariscal would carry the convention. The voting then took place and the final results were announced by Rodolfo Reyes as follows:

Corral.....	118
Mariscal.....	72
Limantour....	5
Reyes.....	1
Blank vote ..	1

The blank vote was added to that of the top candidate as prescribed by the rules of the convention, and Corral was declared the winner. The convention terminated the session at 11:30 p.m.⁴⁷

A vice-presidential candidate had been selected. Corral may not have been Díaz' first choice, but he was the most acceptable to Díaz of those whom the científicos found agreeable. Díaz would have preferred not to have a Vice-President, but European financiers felt safe with one. In 1903 Limantour was negotiating a ten-million-dollar loan in Europe; after contacting some of the financial kings, he wrote Díaz that the bankers of Europe were not willing to keep lending money to Mexico because of their fear that once Díaz passed away Mexico would be ruined and anarchy would result.⁴⁸ Considering the age of Díaz--73 at the time--

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Limantour, Apuntes sobre mi vida, pp. 136-137; Francisco Bulnes, El Verdadero Díaz y la Revolución (Mexico: Editorial Nacional, 1967), p. 335; José Bravo Ugarte, Historia de México (Mexico: Editorial Jus, 1962), vol. 3, p. 384.

it was absurd to loan ten million dollars, for a period of forty-three years, to a nation whose stability depended on a dictator who had one foot in the grave. The European financiers desired a guarantee of Porfirian continuity before they approved such a loan. Since the Porfirian regime currently depended on Don Porfirio himself, he had to prepare a man who would continue his policies long after he was gone, if he wanted the loan.

Díaz was an avowed enemy of the institution known as the vice-presidency. He believed that vice-presidents only existed to overthrow elected executives, and he found ample evidence in the history of Mexico to feed his fears. Díaz thought over the question very carefully for a full week before he agreed to create the vice-presidency.⁴⁹

Against his will, Díaz agreed to the creation of the office, and had the constitutional reform presented to the Congress. After Limantour arrived from Europe, having already promised the moneyed powers in Europe that a clear-cut successor to Díaz would be elected, Díaz offered him the vice-presidency. Limantour declined. Díaz then asked Limantour for his recommendation for the office, since the moneymakers in Europe trusted "Pepe's" judgement. Limantour proposed Corral.⁵⁰

Francisco Bulnes tells a different story about the choice of Corral. Díaz, he said, much preferred Mariscal, who was also supported by the Reyistas and Dehesa. The fact that Mariscal did not renounce his

⁴⁹Bulnes, El Verdadero Díaz, pp. 335-336.

⁵⁰Limantour, Apuntes sobre mi vida, pp. 138, 142-143.

candidacy until after the convention signifies that he had the support of Díaz.⁵¹ No candidate during the Porfiriato would have allowed his candidacy to be postulated without the support of the caudillo: such was considered treason. For example, when Reyes defied Díaz in 1909 his punishment was political exile to Europe.

Francisco Bulnes argued that Díaz supported Mariscal (who was much older than himself). When Mariscal's name was proposed to the convention and supported avidly by the students of the Preparatoria y Jurisprudencia, who were led by Rodolfo Reyes, Díaz, according to Bulnes, was ready to give the order for the voting to take place. However, at the last minute, Justino Fernández, Minister of Justice and Public Instruction, pointed out to Díaz that Mariscal was a strong supporter of Reyes, and if he triumphed it would be a victory for Reyes. Furthermore, to elect an old man (Mariscal was 77) to the vice-presidency would constitute a negation of the agreement with the foreign capitalist. Fernández warned Díaz that if he did this, he would lose his credit standing in the financial world and the world press would never forgive him.⁵²

Convinced by Fernández, Díaz finally agreed on the candidacy of Corral. At 9 p.m. on the second day of the convention, word was circulated in the assembly that Dr. Gregorio Mendizábal was on his way to the assembly with Díaz' choice. Mendizábal arrived, and after keeping the delegates in suspense, pronounced the candidacy of Corral. Immediately

⁵¹Bulnes, El Verdadero Díaz, p. 340.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 343-344.

a tremor of anger re-echoed throughout the chamber as the students voiced their disapproval. The delegates however, selected Corral.⁵³

A vice-presidential nominee had been chosen.

Tovar, Limantour, and others maintain that Díaz had agreed to Corral's candidacy several days before the convention. Bulnes, Garcia Granados, and others argue that Díaz was partial to Mariscal, but agreed on Corral at the last moment. Indications are that Díaz had at least tentatively agreed on Corral, but held up Mendizábal's departure for the convention to give the nominating address either out of indecision, or to keep up the suspense. Limantour told Corral that he (Corral) was Díaz' choice; Díaz certainly led Tovar to believe that. On the other hand, Díaz would have preferred Mariscal, who could have posed no threat to him. Díaz must have been torn by this decision. Mariscal was the safer choice; Corral was the practical choice. As usual, Díaz made the practical choice.

On June 10, several delegates met and went to see Díaz to inform him of the convention's choice. Díaz accepted their selection and praised Corral highly for his merits. The delegation then proceeded to the Ministry of Government, where Dr. Mendizábal informed Corral that he had been their selection for the high office of Vice-President. Corral modestly accepted the nomination, stating that the post to which he had been selected was superior to his capacities and above his aspirations. He added that, although his political career was fairly long, it had been in a distant state, and that his time of service in the capital was short.

⁵³Ibid., p. 344.

On the whole, he thought that he had not rendered important enough service to entitle him to the post for which the convention had designated him. Corral concluded by saying that, if the popular vote favored him with election to the vice-presidency, he would have no other policy than that of seconding the policy of Díaz; and he would have no other aim than to contribute the full measure of his abilities to cement the unity of all Mexicans.⁵⁴

Four days after the nomination of Corral by the convention, the newspaper El País printed an editorial stating that it was useless to discuss the candidacy of Corral. Since he was the officially designated candidate, stated the paper, he would be elected in the upcoming elections. El País contended that little was known of Corral except in the northern part of Mexico; but in regard to his role as Governor of the Federal District, and later as Ministro de Gobernación, the paper found no exceptional qualities in Corral or any great services which he had performed that revealed the exceptional aptitudes his friends claimed for him. No facts were known that would prove or disprove Corral's abilities. What was known, stated the daily, was that the method used in proposing the candidacy of Corral was not the best suited for the occasion. The paper vehemently stated that it was impossible to explain why a government which was at peace and had so much influence would resort to old political tricks to select a candidate. The idea of choosing a group of delegates and having them select a candidate was an old trick of the government, El País argued. It was rumored that, when the convention was called

⁵⁴"Convention's Choice Formally Announced," Mexican Herald, 11 June 1904, p. 1.

for a Monday, Díaz, on the previous Saturday, did not even know who the candidate would be; and not until the last hour did he decide on his selection. El País claimed that although the nation had been asking Díaz for quite some time for a successor, the imposition of Corral would divide the country. The newspaper also printed the text of a pamphlet signed by various delegates and circulated in the Federal District on June 10th. The pamphlet protested the candidacy of Corral and stated that Corral had been imposed on the convention.⁵⁵

El País also ran an article the following day stating that although Corral had been nominated as the official candidate for Vice-President, it had been believed in Guadalajara that somebody else was to be the candidate, and the candidacy of Corral had not been well received. The paper also printed an article listing several delegates who still supported the candidacy of the Ministro de Relaciones, Ignacio Mariscal.⁵⁶

In the elections on the 10th of the following month, the Díaz-Corral ticket was triumphant. Immediately after the elections, all of the governors reported to Díaz that the elections had gone according to schedule and the elections of representatives, senators, and supreme court judges had gone well. Bernardo Reyes telegraphed Díaz,

Yesterday the elections for representatives and senators were held and today the state had the satisfaction to give you their unanimous vote, at the same time the vote was unanimous in favor of Senor Corral whom you recommend for the vice-presidency of the Republic.⁵⁷

⁵⁵"La Candidatura del Sr. Corral," El País, 11 June 1904, p. 1.

⁵⁶"La Vice-Presidencia," El País, 12 June 1904, p. 1; "La Candidatura del Sr. Mariscal," El País, 12 June 1904, p. 1.

⁵⁷Bernardo Reyes to Díaz, 11 July 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 1861.

Governor Emilio Pimentel of Oaxaca also wired Díaz, "In all of the electoral circles of the state the magistrates for the supreme court which were annotated on the list, were elected."⁵⁸

The election was mere formality. Díaz had already sent out a list with the names of those he wanted elected as senators, representatives, and magistrates of the supreme court. He had also indicated his preference for Corral as Vice-President!⁵⁹ On September 28, 1904, it was officially announced that Díaz and Corral had been elected President and Vice-President respectively for the period beginning December 1, 1904, and ending on November 30, 1910.⁶⁰

⁵⁸Emilio Pimentel to Díaz, 13 July 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 1909.

⁵⁹Bernardo Reyes to Díaz, 11 July 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 1861. In this letter Reyes states that all the people Díaz had recommended to be elected, were elected as was Corral whom Díaz had recommended for the vice-presidency.

⁶⁰Memoria de la Secretaria de Gobernación Correspondiente Al Cuatrienio de 1 de Diciembre de 1900 a 30 de Noviembre de 1904 (Mexico: Imprenta del Gobierno Federal, 1906), doc. 26, pp. 135-136.

CHAPTER V

RAMÓN CORRAL AS VICE-PRESIDENT OF MEXICO--1904-1910

On July 10, 1904, Porfirio Díaz and Ramón Corral were respectively elected President and Vice-President, and the elections were made official by the Mexican Congress on September 28, 1904. Their term was to last from December 1, 1904, to November 30, 1910.¹

According to most of the traditional sources, Ramón Corral's candidacy for Vice-President was not well received. Agustín Casasola states that even though Corral was an absolutely unpopular candidate, his candidacy triumphed by being united with that of Díaz.² Henry B. Parkes argued that the nomination of Corral was a científico victory, but that Díaz knew Corral was much too unpopular to be dangerous to him. Although Corral was an efficient administrator who had governed Sonora sternly and even built a few schools, he was known chiefly as the man who had made a fortune by selling the unfortunate Yaquis into slavery. Díaz seemed delighted at the general hatred of Corral by the Mexicans.³ William Weber Johnson adds that at the time that Díaz was elected in 1904, he had selected the unpopular Ramón Corral as his Vice-President. "So whole-heartedly

¹Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación Correspondiente Al Cuatrienio de 1 de Diciembre de 1900 a 30 de Noviembre de 1904 (Mexico: Imprenta del Gobierno Federal, 1906), doc 26, pp. 135-136; Diario Oficial, 28 September 1904, vol. 65, p. 371.

²Agustín Casasola, Historia Gráfica de la Revolución, 1900-1946 (Mexico, D. F.: Archivo Casasola, 194-), vol. 1, p. xiv.

³Henry B. Parkes, A History of Mexico, rev. ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1950), p. 313.

was he disliked that no one would willingly accept him as President in preference to Díaz, ... It was an ingenious Díaz maneuver to make his own tenure secure."⁴ Still another observer, Nemesio Garcia Naranjo, noted that Mexico received the nomination of Corral with surprise, because, even though Corral had intelligence and a firm character, he was not well-known on the national level.⁵ Cosío Villegas adds that a newspaper in Mexico City made an inquiry among "persons of prestige and those who occupied prominent places in society" and all, without exception, considered the naming of Corral as a candidate to be an error.⁶

Even a group of delegates from the nominating convention protested the candidacy of Corral and published the protest in a local newspaper.⁷ And, to add insult to injury, still another delegate, Juan Pedro Didapp, wrote to Corral criticizing him for accepting the vice-presidency. Didapp argued that Corral had not been nominated by the nation but only by a handful of citizens.⁸ There is no doubt that Corral's candidacy was unpopular among many of the citizens. Corral himself was so offended by Didapp's letter that he wrote to him saying that if Didapp would consult the newspapers of the capital and of the various states, especially in

⁴William Weber Johnson, Heroic Mexico, The Violent Emergence of A Modern Nation (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1968), p. 16.

⁵Nemesio Garcia Naranjo, Porfirio Díaz (San Antonio, Texas: Casa Editorial Lozano, 1980), p. 133.

⁶Daniel Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna de México, El Porfiriato: La Vida Política Interior Parte Segunda (Mexico: Editorial Hermes, 1972), vol. 9, p. 347.

⁷"La Candidatura del Sr. Corral," El País (Mexico, D. F.), 11 June 1904, p. 1.

⁸Juan Pedro Didapp to Corral, 9 July 1904, Colección General Porfirio Díaz, University of the Americas, Cholula, Puebla, reel 210, doc. 7892. (hereafter cited as CGPD).

the upcoming days, he would modify his opinion. Corral urged Didapp to come to his office so that he could witness the various letters and telegrams of support that he had received and was receiving daily.⁹

How and why did Corral obtain this bad publicity if, as was claimed by various sources, he were a political unknown? Valadés suggests that Corral was a true collaborator in the continuity and prolongation of the Porfirista regime. Corral had penetrated so profoundly into the spirit of Don Porfirio that his orders to the governors, his movement of rurales throughout the republic, his correspondence with local and distant politicians, his vigilance over public officials--all mechanical operations of the Porfiriato--had become so solely identified with the regime that his unpopularity stemmed from this. Thus, if Corral as Vice-President were to succeed Díaz as President, the regime would continue regardless of its mistakes. The country preferred to keep on admiring Díaz rather than to accept Corral.¹⁰ Another possible source of unpopularity may have stemmed from the purely political nature of Corral's office. Opposition to Díaz, though present, was dangerous to express. However, opponents of the regime could reveal their hostility to Díaz' surrogate, Corral, with much less danger to themselves. Opposition to Corral may have derived from what little was known of his political past, but it was also, indirectly, an expression of opposition to Díaz.

⁹Corral to Didapp, 12 July 1904, CGPD, reel 215, doc. 17353.

¹⁰Jose C. Valadés, Historia General de la Revolución Mexicana (Mexico: M. Quesada Brandi, 1963), vol. 1, pp. 80-82; José López Portillo y Rojas, Elevación y Caída de Porfirio Díaz (Mexico: Librería Española, 1943), p. 401.

Mrs. Alec Tweedie, who met Corral in November of 1904, described him as

A man of medium height with swarthy skin greyish white hair, and dark penetrating eyes, with something of the same merry look as the man under whom he is to serve. A man of physical force, well-built and thickly-set, affable in manner, cheerful in countenance, he has yet a certain air of authority, and one could easily imagine him in a position of command. There is considerable determination in the face, which is rather lined for a man of fifty. In fact, Corral at fifty appears as old as General Diaz at seventy-five.

He looks the sort of man who would be a warm friend or a bitter enemy, a man of strong emotion and warmth of heart, a man easily beloved, and kindly in his acts--characteristics more prominent on the surface, than great strength of character.¹¹

The characterization of Corral by Mrs. Tweedie does not square with the traditional view of the man, or with the view reportedly current when Corral arrived in Mexico City to assume his duties as Governor of the Federal District. Corral reportedly came to the capital with a black reputation. One writer later passed him off as a "...Yaqui slave trader who had slipped down from Sonora to a riotous life in the capital..."¹² The sentiment embodied in this last quote seems to reflect the contemporary one. Corral's association with the deportation of Yaqui Indians

¹¹Ethel Brilliana Tweedie, The Maker of Modern Mexico: Porfirio Diaz (New York: John Lane Company, 1906), p. 379.

¹²Carleton Beals, Porfirio Diaz: Dictator of Mexico (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1932), p. 369.

to the henequen growers of Yucatan was known in the Federal District at the time of his arrival. Furthermore, the fact that he had grown rich while in public office led to the suspicion that he had used public power to his private advantage. This suspicion is well-founded: while in public office he used his influence to award electrification and other public works contracts to companies controlled by himself and his friends. Corral also had financial interests in many of the foreign companies which received contracts from his government.¹³

That he fattened himself at the public trough was not unusual. During much of the Porfiriato this was acceptable practice. Why, then, was Corral considered, and is still referred to as, "the most hated man in the country [Mexico]."¹⁴ This charge dates from his period as Vice-President, but the charges levied against him have been based largely on that part of his career prior to his entry into national politics as Governor of the Federal District. The belief that Corral was "the most hated man in Mexico" seems to have developed after his entry into national politics and probably was motivated by considerations extraneous to his earlier career.

When Corral came to Mexico City in 1900 his reputation, though black, was no worse than that of many other Mexican politicians. The fact that he was from Sonora probably did little to increase his standing among the cosmopolitan citizens of the capital. His handling of the affairs of the Federal District did not greatly improve his public image. William

¹³Jose C. Valadés, El Porfirismo: historia de un regimen el nacimiento (1876-1884) (Mexico: Antigua Libreria Robredo, 1941), pp. 72-73.

¹⁴Johnson, Heroic Mexico, p. 16.

Weber Johnson writes of Corral in this period: "He was regarded as the protector of commercialized vice in Mexico City and suffered from a far advanced social disease."¹⁵

In spite of his many faults, Corral was recognized as a fine politician and a capable administrator. His rule as Governor of the Federal District evidently pleased Díaz, for he appointed Corral as Secretary of Government in 1903. In this capacity Corral aided Díaz in adjusting the relations of the states and of the national government; and, in spite of much abuse, he won the confidence of the business classes in Mexico.¹⁶

The question of a clear cut successor to Díaz, which had troubled many of Díaz' supporters and foreign investors, came to a head in 1903 when Díaz was forced to decide either to consent to the re-establishment of the vice-presidential office, or lose the opportunity for a ten-million-dollar loan. Only then did the old tyrant agree to a Vice-President. Although it appears that José Yves Limantour supported Corral for the vice-presidency, Díaz also decided for Corral because he saw in him a man who would perpetuate the policies that he favored. Díaz did not want a Vice-President who would challenge his policies, but rather one who would be devoted and loyal to him. Corral had proved his loyalty to the old caudillo first as Governor of the District and later as Ministro de Gobernación. Corral was a competent administrator who had ruled Sonora sternly; and, since Díaz wanted someone from the northern part of the country, he found in Corral a man who fitted the bill. Corral was not well known in national politics--like a Bernardo Reyes or a José Ives

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶López Portillo y Rojas, Elevación y Caída, pp. 256-258.

Limantour--and his poor reputation, which Díaz appears to have allowed to flourish in the newspapers of the capital, made it difficult for Corral to develop an independent power base. This evidently pleased the dictator. Díaz also favored Corral because he knew Corral was a sick man, and he fully expected to outlive him (which he did). After the election of Corral as Vice-President, the general hatred that developed against him delighted Díaz.¹⁷

After the elections in July of 1904, in which Corral was elected Vice-President, he was not permitted to function as President of the Senate, since the 1903 amendment barred him from doing so if he also held an appointive position. Though Corral remained powerful because he retained the Ministry of Government, his vice-presidential post was purely honorary. Díaz, according to Beals, converted Corral into

....a sublimated office secretary, always obsequious, always silent, always at hand, especially for ceremonies which Diaz now found fatiguing. Corral was a toy show-piece, in ridiculous apron-string position. Both the public and Corral joked about his humiliation. "I am much amused by this Vice-Presidency. Porfirio remembers me only when he wants me to attend some official ceremony not convenient for him....Let Ramon Go!... a distribution of prizes lasting till midnight...Let Ramon Go!... The day is cold...raining...hot... danger of catching a cold...Let Ramon Go!" More and more of Corral's scant prestige vanished.¹⁸

¹⁷Beals, Porfirio Diaz, p. 369; López Portillo y Rojas, Elevación y Caída, pp. 401-402.

¹⁸Beals, Porfirio Diaz, pp. 369-370.

Since Corral was allowed to keep the cabinet post of Minister of Government, his elevation to the largely honorary office of Vice-President in no way reduced his actual influence, nor did it deprive the government of his services. Corral was used quickly by Díaz. Almost three months after the elections, but before his inauguration, Corral left to attend a social function in the United States--the St. Louis exposition. Corral communicated to Díaz all of his stops and movements. The visit to the United States had been announced in advance; and on October 4, Bernardo Reyes, who was still Governor of Nuevo León, sent a telegram to Díaz' secretary, Rafael Chousal, asking if Corral would pass through Monterrey. Chousal answered in the affirmative, and two days later Reyes asked permission to visit Corral at the railroad station on his stop in that city. Chousal replied that it would be a nice gesture. Everybody was keeping track of the Vice-President. When Corral stopped in Nuevo Laredo on October 8, because of his wife's illness, both Reyes and Luis Torres wired Díaz that Corral had stopped in Nuevo Laredo out of consideration for Señora Corral.¹⁹

The newly elected Vice-President arrived in St. Louis on the 10th of that month. He wired Díaz that the ceremonies would start the following day, and that he would appear representing Díaz. The next day Corral communicated to Díaz that he had attended the exposition and that a man by the name of Francis had proposed cordial toasts. On Corral's arrival

¹⁹Corral to Díaz, 8 October 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 2650; Bernardo Reyes to Rafael Chousal, 4 October 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 2607; Reyes to Chousal, 6 October 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 2641; Luis Torres to Chousal, 8 October 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 2651; Reyes to Díaz, 8 October 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 2653.

in St. Louis he also wired President Theodore Roosevelt that he was in St. Louis representing General Porfirio Díaz, President of the Republic of Mexico.²⁰

Evidently there had been a mix-up in the American State Department; Washington had no knowledge of Corral's presence in St. Louis. The following day, after Corral's message to Roosevelt, Under-Secretary of State, Francis B. Loomis, wired the Mexican ambassador in St. Louis, Manuel de Azpiroz, to ask how long Vice-President Corral would remain in the United States, and whether or not he could visit Washington, D. C. Loomis added, "through a mistake we did not know of Señor Corral ['s] arrival in this country wish [sic] today the President desired to have him welcomed at the frontier by a personal representative."²¹

Corral replied that he would not be able to visit Washington, D. C., and that he would only remain in St. Louis until that Sunday; then he would leave for San Francisco and spend about a week there. Hoping to make up for the faux-pax, Loomis wired the Mexican ambassador again saying he wished to be informed on what date Corral was likely to arrive in San Francisco, because the President desired to have military and naval representatives to meet him there. Loomis added "Does your excellency accompany him?"²²

²⁰Corral to Díaz, 11 October 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 2669; Corral to Díaz, 12 October 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 2673; Corral to Theodore Roosevelt, 11 October 1904, CGPD, reel 213, doc. 12743.

²¹Francis B. Loomis to Manuel de Aspiroz, 12 October 1904, CGPD, reel, 213, doc. 12744.

²²Aspiroz to Loomis, 13 October 1904, CGPD, reel 213, doc. 12745.

Information about Corral's departure from St. Louis was sent to the Under-Secretary of State. On October 15, the Mexican ambassador wired Loomis that Corral would leave the following day on the Union Pacific Railway through Kansas City, Denver, and on to San Francisco. The Ambassador concluded, "Having completed all arrangements, he desires only to send you his cordial thanks for your courteous offers."²³

Though the American State Department might be in the dark, Corral made sure that Díaz was kept informed of his trip. The day he was to leave for San Francisco, he wrote Díaz a letter describing all the occurrences since his departure from Mexico City and added that the exposition was more splendid than Mexico had anticipated it to be. But he added, Mexico's role in it had been a good one, especially in the department of mining.²⁴

On Corral's arrival in San Francisco, Theodore Roosevelt wired him a message stating that "through a regrettable oversight a timely answer was not made to your telegram of the eleventh instant."²⁵ Roosevelt added that, once informed of Corral's coming, he had directed that all possible courtesies be extended at St. Louis, San Francisco, and elsewhere. He concluded by describing Corral's visit as another proof of the good will that existed between the two countries. Corral replied that since his arrival he had been treated with extreme kindness and that the good will that existed between the two countries was everywhere manifested.²⁶

²³Aspiroz to Loomis, 15 October 1904, CGPD, reel 213, doc. 12750.

²⁴Corral to Díaz, 16 October 1904, CGPD, reel 213, doc. 12742.

²⁵Theodore Roosevelt to Corral, 20 October 1904, CGPD, reel 213, doc. 12722.

²⁶Ibid. Corral wrote his reply on the bottom of the telegram.

After his arrival in San Francisco, Corral wrote Díaz saying that he felt shamed in not receiving a telegram from Roosevelt while he was in St. Louis, and was afraid that he might not have been correct in sending a telegram to the President of the United States. However, shortly after his arrival in San Francisco, his fears were assuaged because of Roosevelt's response. Corral added that on their stop in Kansas City two formal luncheons attended by the most prominent people of Kansas City had been given by a Mr. and Mrs. Stilwell: one luncheon for the women and another for the men. Corral also stated that even before he reached San Francisco, U. S. naval and military officers met him, and that his plans were to visit some ships. He concluded that everywhere they went they were well received by everyone and that the Mexican-American community had also welcomed him.²⁷

Corral left San Francisco on November 1, 1904, after having spent almost a month in the United States. From San Francisco he went to Los Angeles; before crossing the Mexican-American boundary, he sent a telegram to President Roosevelt expressing his thanks. He arrived in Hermosillo, Sonora, on November 5, and remained there until November 22, when he left for the Mexican capital. It was on his return from the United States that Díaz arranged for Corral to meet Mrs. Alec Tweedie.²⁸

After his return from the United States, Vice-President Corral was primarily occupied with the Ministry of Gobernación and its bewildering

²⁷Corral to Díaz, 22 October 1904, CGPD, reel 213, docs. 12718-12721.

²⁸Corral to Díaz, 5 November 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 2830; Corral to Díaz, 22 November 1904, CGPD, reel 356, doc. 2939; Alec Tweedie to Carmen Díaz, 1 December 1904, CGPD, reel 214, doc. 15249.

scope of activities. He had to contend with merchants who were complaining about the operation of the Health Department, and with unhappy employment seekers; organize documents relating to troubles in Guanajuato and Nuevo León; and correspond with those who wanted schools in Tepic, or a brewery in Nuevo León. In most of these matters, Corral only served in an advisory capacity to Díaz. The documents reveal that only when it came to the question of the Yaquis in Sonora or affairs in the northern part of Mexico was Corral consulted closely.²⁹

The Yaqui question resurfaced in 1905 (it had never been completely settled) and continued throughout the Porfiriato. However, in 1905 American newspapers began to pick up the stories on the Yaquis which made sensational news in the United States, where the progress of the nation as a whole had developed to a point that the public could not tolerate in others the injustices that they themselves had committed a few years before. These articles on the Yaquis made sensational copy and sold well. Various Mexicans picked up such accounts and began to mail them to Don Porfirio. One clipping, which appears without date or name of the newspaper in which it appeared, is classified in the Colección General Porfirio Díaz under the February-March, 1905, correspondence. Its headline reads "YAQUI WAR" IS CARRIED ON PURELY FOR "GRAFT". The article stated that a few Americans and Mexicans had been killed by the Yaquis, and that this report was brought to El Paso by an American businessman in Mexico. However, this same man stated that there was no Yaqui war as

²⁹Ignacio Mendoza to Díaz, 17 January 1905, CGPD, reel 216, doc. 239; Enrique Artes Molín to Díaz, 6 June 1905, CGPD, reel 220, doc. 7311; Heriberto Barrón to Díaz, 13 July 1905, CGPD, reel 221, doc. 9771; Bernardo Reyes to Díaz, 4, 16, 28 July 1905, CGPD, reel 221, docs. 9930-9931, 9977, 10170; Reinaldo Patrón to Corral, 25 August 1905, CGPD, reel 221, doc. 10559; Luis Torres to Díaz, 16 February 1905, CGPD, reel 216, doc. 1551.

the general public understood it. There were, he said, only a few renegade Indians who carried on a campaign of murder and robbery like the outlaws of the American west. The reports of Yaqui rebellions and uprisings were made by greedy officials who were profiting from the "war". The American reported that the Mexican troops could put down the renegades in a week, but that it was not in the interest of the officials to do so; for, as long as they could make the home government believe that a real war was in progress, they could draw the supplies for the army there. Those who were fighting the rebellion were glad to see these frequent raids of brigands. The reports were always exaggerated by the time they reached the national capital, and demands for additional supplies for their troops (much of which the troops never saw) seemed reasonable. The article concluded that the reason the renegade Indians had not been captured was that the officials who had been conducting the war were growing rich on the graft.³⁰

In October, 1905, an article appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle stating that the Mexican Government, unable to cope with the Yaquis by itself, had entered into contract with the Imperial Japanese Colonization Company for the purpose of colonizing the Yaqui area and, hopefully, pacifying the Indians. Under the proposed plan, the Chronicle noted, Japanese war veterans would receive lands, and the Mexican government agreed to furnish the colonists with arms and ammunition. It was estimated that about 700 Japanese ex-soldiers and their families would settle in the rich

³⁰Un Ranchero to Díaz, n. d., CGPD, reel 217, doc. 2365. This document is listed under reel 217 which carries a date of February-March, 1905. See also Un Deudo to Díaz, 25 April 1906, CGPD, reel 228, doc. 4194.

and fertile Yaqui River country. The article claimed that General Luis Torres, who conducted the last Yaqui campaign, had adopted the cruel policy of extermination, sparing neither men, women, nor children; but in the end he failed to pacify the Yaquis. The idea of using Japanese colonists to pacify the Indians was at best risky, said the paper, as the new alien element might become as much of a source of trouble to the government as the Yaquis. "The Japanese colonists may ultimately find the task of policing the Yaquis more difficult and less profitable to them than that of co-operating with the tribe against Mexican aggressions," the Chronicle concluded.³¹

A year later another Chronicle article reached Díaz, and this one explained why the Yaqui was vindictive. The article explained that the Yaquis had been peaceful until 1903 when government troops slaughtered women and children in Mazatlán. After that incident, state officials began deporting Yaquis and breaking up families by giving the children to Mexicans and sending the mothers to Yucatán. The fathers went on the warpath, but who could blame them, the Chronicle asked?³²

The reports in the Chronicle were not exaggerated. Enough documentation exists to prove the stories of the Chronicle. Luis E. Torres, who was military commander of the first military zone, wired Alberto Cubillas, who was also a part of the clique and a one-time substitute Governor of

³¹Copy of an article from the San Francisco Chronicle to Díaz, 30 October 1905, CGPD, reel 223, doc. 14024.

³²Copy of an article from the San Francisco Chronicle to Díaz, 27 May, 1906, CGPD, reel 229, doc. 7045.

Sonora, the following message on March 8, 1907: "By telegram I have ordered Captain Bernal to prepare the 96 prisoners, including men, women and children so that on first order they can be taken to Guaymas and deported."³³ Three days later Torres again wired Cubillas to "Order Captain Eduardo C. Bernal to send by train the 96 Yaquis who are to go to Guaymas to be deported."³⁴ Seven months later Torres wired the Secretary of War that he would soon have "200 Indians of both sexes and various ages to be deported."³⁵ He asked the Secretary of War to arrange for a ship to pick them up. In July of 1908, Governor Cubillas wrote to Lorenzo Torres, a military commander in Sonora: "As you have recommended in your message of today, I will make known to the peaceful Indians the decree of the Minister of War which states that for every attack made, 500 Yaquis will be deported to Yucatán."³⁶

That the Yaquis were deported in mass cannot be denied. If the Torres-Izábal-Corral clique profitted from the situation, that apparently cannot be substantiated. But profits were made. The documents reveal that many of the Yaquis held prisoners were parceled out among some of the families of Hermosillo. Governor Cubillas had ten. Also in the documents is a list of Mexican families in Hermosillo among whom eighty-six Yaqui children were distributed.³⁷ Time and time again telegrams

³³Luis Torres to Alberto Cubillas, 8 March 1907, Archivo del Estado, Hermosillo, Sonora, vol. 2193, exp. 2. (hereafter cited as ADE).

³⁴Torres to Cubillas, 11 March 1907, ADE, vol. 2193, exp. 2.

³⁵Torres to Secretary of War, 30 October 1907, ADE, vol. 2193, exp. 2.

³⁶Alberto Cubillas to Lorenzo Torres, 18 July 1908, ADE, vol. 2315, exp. 1.

³⁷This is a general list of Yaquis distributed among the citizens of Hermosillo, 1906, ADE, vol. 2193, exp. 4.

appear from Alberto Cubillas to Vice-President Corral stating, "Yaquis will be deported." For example, in one of them Cubillas wired Corral: "Tomorrow the ship Ramón Corral will set sail carrying 800 Yaquis among them men, women and children."³⁸ There are numerous other examples.

The Yaquis remained under tremendous pressure to protect themselves, and it was not until Francisco I. Madero's forces came into Sonora that another peace-pact was signed between the federal government and the Yaqui Indians.³⁹

The other dramatic incident in which Corral played an important role while Vice-President, was in the handling of the labor strike at Cananea, Sonora. The period of the Porfiriato was the apex of foreign involvement in the Mexican economy, and close collaboration between the Mexican bourgeoisie and foreign capital existed during this period. The Porfirian government sanctioned and protected non-Mexican enterprises while at the same time a ruthless labor policy kept the Mexican worker at a precarious subsistence level. The workers' strike at Cananea revealed this ruthless policy at its worst; and Cananea was one of those major incidents which led the Porfiriato to its final disintegration. The strike by the workers at Cananea represents the first important labor protest to confront the Díaz regime in its waning years.⁴⁰

³⁸Alberto Cubillas to Corral, 7 July 1908, ADE, vol. 2315, exp. 1. Other telegrams are, Corral to Cubillas, 7 July 1908, ADE, vol. 2315, exp. 1; Corral to Cubillas, 15 July 1908, ADE, vol. 2315, exp. 1; Luis Torres to Cubillas, 1 October 1908, ADE, vol. 2315, exp. 1; Lorenzo Torres to Cubillas, 7 May 1908, ADE, vol. 2315, exp. 1.

³⁹"Madero Pacta con los Yaquis que se sometían al Gobierno," El País, 2 September 1911, p. 2.

⁴⁰Ron Chambers, "Cananea, 1906: A Harbinger of Warning," (Seminar paper, the University of the Americas, Cholula, Puebla, 1971), p. 2.

During the years of the Porfiriato, foreign investment (primarily American) dominated the mining industry of Mexico. In 1908 the Mexican mining industry was capitalized at \$P 363,000,000, of which only \$P 28,000,000 were Mexican.⁴¹ One of the foremost exploiters of Mexican minerals was William C. Greene, who became one of the world's richest copper magnates in the early 1900's. He was able to obtain an option on the mine at Cananea from General Ignacio Pesqueira's widow for the nominal fee of \$US 47,000. Greene then swindled his partner, J. H. Costello, who was not aware that their agreement had to be registered in the Federal District, and forced him out in 1899. He then organized the Cananea Consolidated Copper Company.⁴²

There is no doubt that the Porfirian regime co-operated with this American capitalist. A few examples will suffice. A month before the strike at Cananea, Greene was completing a road from Temosachic to Pinos Altos that allowed the movement of machinery to his Conchena mine. The Sonoran government contributed 15,000 pesos for the construction of this road, justifying their action by declaring that it was a public highway. Greene also enjoyed an export tax exemption of two percent which allowed him to increase his profits and made it extremely difficult for other mineral companies to compete with him.⁴³

⁴¹Marvin B. Bernstein, The Mexican Mining Industry, 1890-1950; A Study of the Interaction of Politics Economics and Technology (Albany: State University of New York, 1964), p. 74.

⁴²Marvin D. Bernstein, "Colonel William C. Greene and the Cananea Copper Bubble," Bulletin of the Business Historical Society 26 (1952): 180-181.

⁴³Chambers, "Cananea, 1906," p. 10.

At the time of the strike in Cananea, Sonora, which is located some forty-five miles south of the U. S.-Mexican border, some 22,000 people were residing there.⁴⁴ On June 1, 1906, the Mexican mine workers, frustrated over the years with their economic situation, decided to test Greene's strength. Many accounts of what occurred at Cananea have been related.⁴⁵ The following account agrees roughly with that rendered by Rafael Izábal when he was called upon to give a report as to what happened. Izábal gave a good factual account as to the events and what occurred at the time the strike took place, but, as will be detailed below, he lied in reference to the question of whether or not American troops were allowed to come in and help him quell the revolt.

On the morning of June 1, 1906, a group of Mexican miners at the Oversight mine went on strike demanding shorter hours and higher wages. The chief of police at Ronquillo, when informed of the strike, tried to end it by requesting the miners to present their grievances to the company. The miners followed his advice and commissioned fifteen delegates to present their demands to Greene: they did, and Greene said he would study the matter. Meanwhile, the discontented group continued to increase in size and they remained on strike, carrying three red flags which read Cinco Pesos, Ocho Horas (five pesos, eight hours). The miners, in an

⁴⁴ Memoria de la Secretaria de Gobernación que comprende de 1 de Diciembre de 1904 a 30 de Junio de 1906 (Mexico: Imprenta del Gobierno Federal, 1909), doc. 18, p. 48.

⁴⁵ Manuel González Ramírez, ed., Fuentes Para La Historia de la Revolución Mexicana: La Huelga de Cananea (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1956); Esteban B. Calderón, Juicio Sobre la Guerra del Yaqui y Genesis de la Huelga de Cananea (Mexico, D. F.: Ediciones del Sindicato de Electricistas, 1956); Herbert O. Brauer, "The Cananea Incident," New Mexico Historical Review, 12 (October, 1938), 387-415.

attempt to press their demands, marched toward the lumber yard; but when they reached their destination, Jorge Metcalf, head of the lumber yard, closed the doors on them and drenched them with a water hose. The miners were infuriated and rushed the building. Metcalf fired, killing two of the miners. Thoroughly enraged by now, the miners forced their way inside the lumber yard, forcing both Metcalf brothers, Jorge and Guillermo, to find refuge inside the offices. From there, Jorge fired again at the miners. Then the miners set fire to the lumber yard and forced the Metcalf brothers to flee outside, where they were disarmed and killed. In this brief action, three miners had been killed and several wounded; in addition, the two Metcalf brothers were dead. Later two more bodies were found among the ruins of the fire. The strikers then began to march towards the main part of the mining company complex, where the bank and the company store were located. Greene and Arthur S. Dwight, President of the company, accompanied by twenty-five or thirty armed men, tried to impede the miners' advance. Firing broke out again and three more miners were killed. The strikers dispersed, after ransacking a storage shed that contained about 200 pistols, some rifles, and some ammunition.⁴⁶

Governor Izábal arrived in Naco, on the Arizona border north of Cananea, around six or seven a.m. on June 2, and received alarming news. Greene had already wired him to come quickly because the situation was grave.⁴⁷

⁴⁶Memoria de la Secretaria de Gobernación, 1904-1906, doc. 18, pp. 46-47.

⁴⁷W. C. Greene to Rafael Izábal, 1 June 1906, ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1.

At Naco, Izábal found a large group of excited and armed Americans which he permitted to cross the border and accompany him to Cananea on the train. Upon Izábal's arrival in Cananea, fighting had subsided; and, according to Izábal, he refused to allow the armed Americans to leave the train, so they returned to Naco.⁴⁸ Colonel Emilio Kosterlitsky and the rurales also arrived, along with some of Luis Torres' troops, and the action subsided. By the next day, the strike was suppressed and many of the strikers jailed. Some thirty or more Mexicans and six Americans were killed. By the fourth, peace was restored, the miners were back at work, and the strike had been smashed.⁴⁹

When the strike occurred, Izábal immediately contacted his close and influential friend in the capital, Ramón Corral. Corral wired back stating he would leave for Cananea immediately and that Izábal was authorized to do whatever was necessary. Corral added that an all-out effort was recommended. The next day (June 2) Corral again wired Izábal that, though he had not yet seen the President so that he could communicate his instructions to Izábal, he thought it best to suggest that no matter how bad the situation was, Izábal should not permit American troops of any kind on Mexican soil. Corral also suggested that this would be a

⁴⁸Izábal's story is questionable as to whether Americans participated in the fighting. See Thomas H. Rynning, Gun Notches: The Life Story of a Cowboy-Soldier as told to Al Cohn and Joe Chisholm (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1931), pp. 290-315. Rynning who was captain of the Arizona Rangers states that he and his group did go to Cananea and that they were sworn in by Governor Izabal himself. According to Rynning, the Americans did participate in the fighting at Cananea.

⁴⁹Memoria de la Secretaria de Gobernación, 1904-1906, doc. 18, pp. 46-47.

good opportunity to punish newspapermen who had promoted the disorder. Later the same day, after Corral had seen Díaz, he communicated to Izábal that for no reason should he permit an American force to enter, and he concluded by wishing that the forces Izábal took from Naco had been Mexican.⁵⁰

But Izábal had already done what he was now ordered not to do. He had allowed armed Americans to cross the frontier to aid him in quelling the disturbances at Cananea. Izábal communicated his actions to Corral, to which the Vice-President responded on June 6:

Send me (a) telegram saying; that the Americans who came with you to Cananea were individuals with no military organization, some of them armed as was natural under the circumstances and because in that frontier almost all the people still are [armed] in ordinary times; that you could not prevent them from taking the train in Naco on the American side, because you had neither authority nor the means to make them obey you, nor did those people have a military character; and that when you arrived at Cananea [in] Mexican Territory you did not permit them to take any part in the activities, nor even to leave the train in which they came [and] in which you made them return immediately to American territory. We will consider this report the official one to contradict the exaggerated accounts that are circulating; and in another telegram tell me what kind of people the armed Americans were, how many and how they were organized. [This second report is] for the enlightenment of

⁵⁰Corral to Rafael Izábal, 1 June 1906, ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1; Corral to Izábal, 2 June 1906, ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1; Corral to Izábal, 2 June 1906, ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1.

myself and the President. It would also be very desirable to know if those who came to Greene's place [in] Cananea were soldiers or not[,] to your knowledge.⁵¹

Izabal replied to Corral on the same day:

Your coded message mailed yesterday at 1:35 P.M. I believe that you sent it before you received the ones from General Torres and myself over the same affair; but be what may be, to my judgement the worst thing that can happen is that I say what you have indicated, because it will be entirely unsubstantiable and will result without doubt in contradiction with the official version of the other side. Besides[,] is it not much graver for these men to have passed without authorization, violating our frontier, than for them to have passed with my authorization?⁵²

Corral, trying to protect his good, but politically naive, friend, wired back two days later:

There is an enormous difference between [1] that the armed Americans entered [Mexico] with your orders which gave them the appearance of an organized military force which indicated that you and they believed that they were needed and [2] that they entered as individuals...Consider this and [consider] that the version of the other side has importance because what [it] deals with is national public sentiment in relation to the violation of our territory and to who may give this permission [to enter]. By mail I am sending you the account that I wish you would send me so that it can be published. See what you think of it.⁵³

⁵¹Corral to Izabal, 6 June 1906, ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1.

⁵²Izabal to Corral, 6 June 1906, ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1.

⁵³Corral to Izabal, 8 June 1906, ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1.

Izábal's political skin--though in trouble because of his bumbling efforts--had been saved by his friend in Mexico City, Ramón Corral. The report that Izábal rendered to Corral as Secretary of Government read like a carbon copy of Corral's June 6 message to Izábal.⁵⁴ The Cananea incident was played down by Don Porfirio and his machine. The Imparcial a strongly pro-government newspaper, played down the strike; and, when the incident was discussed in the controlled Porfirian press, it stressed that the Mexican miners had no legitimate grievances to strike about and played up the fact that a few of them held savings accounts. Prices at Greene's company store were low, the paper said, and in general the Mexicans at Cananea were better off than most of their fellow citizens throughout Mexico. The only acceptable complaint was the ill-treatment of some Mexican workers by a few American foremen.⁵⁵

After the strike at Cananea, the Izábal-Torres group considered executing the leaders. Corral, however, wired them on June 8, 1906, stating "that it is impossible to shoot the instigators of the disorders because it would cause a great scandal in the country." He added that "the judge should apply the law rigorously and afterwards we will send them to San Juan de Ulloa to serve their sentences."⁵⁶ This telegram is often played up by various historians who write on the Cananea revolt.

⁵⁴Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación, 1904-1906, doc. 17, pp. 45-46.

⁵⁵El Imparcial (Mexico, D. F.), 7 June 1906, p. 1; Chambers, "Cananea, 1906," p. 29; Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación, 1904-1906, doc. 18 and annex 1-5, pp. 46-54. This document and its annexes were revealed by the Mexican government, showing that some workers at Cananea had savings accounts and owned homes; that food prices were cheaper at Cananea; and that the only justified motive for the rebellion was the overbearing treatment of Mexican workers by two or three American foremen.

⁵⁶Corral to Rafael Izábal, 8 June 1906, ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1.

However, on the next day, Corral again wired Izábal saying that

the instigators could and should be punished as the authors of the crime under article 47 of the Penal code. Thus if the death sentence is given by the judge to the authors of the plot, the same should be applied to the instigators [and] it should be arranged that it be so.⁵⁷

Corral was not as lenient as it seemed!

This ugly incident actually gave the government a good excuse to clean up what it did not want. Many of the prisoners from Cananea were pressed into service in the army, though most were imprisoned in San Juan de Ulloa. Some hostile newsmen left the country for fear of reprisal, and attempts were made to extradite them.⁵⁸ Suppression of labor intensified. The Porfiriato--insensitive to the masses at best--continued to allow unequal treatment for foreign and Mexican workers, the less equal being the Mexican. Later strikes were suppressed in the same way, though without American troops being involved.

At the same time the government attempted to cover up even the facts about Cananea. Izábal was urged by Corral to ask Greene to write to a newspaper (whose name is coded in the dispatch) and deny that Mexican workers received less than American workers for equal performance. As for Izábal himself, Corral managed a good whitewash. First he told Izábal what he wanted in the official report (i.e., an implicit denial that Americans were used as troops). When Izábal did not understand that he--and

⁵⁷Corral to Izábal, 9 June 1906, ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1.

⁵⁸Corral to Izábal, 6 June 1906 (four telegrams on this day), ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1; Corral to Izábal, 13 June 1906, ADE, vol. 2184, exp. 1.

the government's image--was being rescued, Corral wrote the official version for him, sent it to him, and asked that he return it as if he had written it! Later, probably to avoid too great an insult to Izábal, he was told he would be given another chance to read his report and correct it before it was published.

Ramón Corral, who saved Rafael Izábal over the Cananea incident, appears to come out "smelling like a rose" in most accounts because of his telegram to Izábal ordering him not to execute the leaders of the revolt. However, most historians have failed to note the second telegram, which indicates that Corral was as much in favor of the executions as Izábal, but only if they were carried out through the "due process of law," a "due process" which did not exist under the Porfiriato.

While Vice-President, but not as Vice-President, Corral played an important role in those affairs which concerned the states in the northern part of the republic. But after the Cananea incident, Corral's health began to fail him. Around the early part of May, 1907, Corral left the Federal District for an extended vacation in Sonora. On May 20, 1907, he wired Díaz that he had arrived in Hermosillo and was feeling a little better.⁵⁹ During his stay in Sonora, Corral travelled throughout the state inspecting new railroad lines, and generally taking care of his businesses. Torres' messages to Don Porfirio indicated that Corral was ill.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Corral to Díaz, 20 May 1907, CGPD, reel 360, doc. 1877; Bernardo Reyes to Díaz, 9 May 1907, CGPD, reel 360, doc. 1696.

⁶⁰For Corral's health see CGPD, reel 360, docs. 1909, 2005, 2042, 2098, 2424, 2426, 2437, 2464; on the inspection trip, see reel 360, docs. 2286, 2294, 2420; on a death in Corral's family, see reel 360, docs. 2422, 2423, 2431, on his trip to Cananea, see reel 361, docs. 2611, 2622, on his departure to Mexico City, see reel 361, docs. 2800, 2830, on the trip, see reel 361, docs. 2886, 2913.

Corral remained in his native state until July 30, 1907. He was still not feeling well, and on his way to the capital he stopped in Tepic, where Mariano Ruiz tried to talk to him about some matters involving Gobernacion. Ruiz later reported to Díaz' secretary, Chousal, stating, "I tried to deal with him on two questions with Gobernacion but Corral assumed an incomprehensible and tyrannical attitude."⁶¹

Other than the incidents involving the Yaquis and Cananea, Corral did not become publicly associated with the more dramatic affairs. He was a model Vice-President. In that delicate position, Corral was modest and discreet; he never challenged the policies of Don Porfirio. His record as Vice-President reveals that he did nothing to augment the fears that Díaz had of Corral's office. Díaz must have trusted his Vice-President, or he would not have allowed him to hold the office of Gobernación in conjunction with that of Vice-President. But Díaz--who adored power-- failed to prepare Mexico for a peaceful transmission of power. He chose Corral, most likely, because he was comfortable, capable, and necessary-- not because he wanted him to be President. By not allowing Corral to exhibit his own qualities and merits, he contributed to the general discontent against Corral. He failed to give Corral a participation in the political process that Corral was to continue in case Díaz should die before Corral did. Corral was unable to develop individual prestige or influence, and this added to the wide-spread belief that Corral was merely

⁶¹Mariano Ruiz to Rafael Chousal, 5 August 1907, CGPD, reel 361, doc. 2946.

being used by Porfirio. Instead of consulting Corral on questions of elections, often Díaz would consult Limantour.⁶² Corral's unpopularity grew because Don Porfirio allowed the press liberties at the expense of his Vice-President. Corral failed to make the office of Vice-President into an important one because neither he nor Díaz wished it to be important. Corral, the Ministro de Gobernación overshadowed Corral, the Vice-President, and both lived in Díaz' shade. There is no evidence to indicate that Díaz was grooming Corral to become President and, by 1910, few Mexicans wanted that anyway. Mexico had a clear-cut succession; but it did not have an obvious successor to its octogenarian President.

⁶² José Ives Limantour, Apuntes sobre mi vida pública 1892-1911 (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, s. a., 1965), pp. 148-150; Francisco Bulnes, El Verdadero Díaz y la Revolución (Mexico: Editorial Nacional, 1967), pp. 347-349; López Portillo y Rojas, Elevación y Caída, pp. 400-402.

CHAPTER VI
RE-ELECTION CONTROVERSY

Mexico was restive under the Porfiriato, especially after 1900. The prosperity of the Díaz regime had not extended to the lower classes. Labor showed its discontent through strikes which were brutally suppressed. Rural Mexicans, deprived of their lands and converted to peonage, were largely quiescent; but their situation contained the potential for revolt. Even middle and upper class Mexicans were becoming aware of the need for change. To the middle and upper classes, change meant opening up the system so that they could exercise greater influence on the direction of affairs. The succession controversy of 1903-1904 illustrated the belief of this segment of the population that the political process should be broadened to prepare for the death of Don Porfirio, but it also illustrates Díaz' refusal to consider his own demise, or to prepare Mexico for it. Corral became his Vice-President, but not his successor. Díaz apparently had every intention of perpetually succeeding himself.

By early 1908, with the elections still two years away, and the seventy-eight-year-old Díaz in his seventh term as President, Díaz consented to an interview with James Creelman, an American reporter representing Pearson's Magazine. The interview was granted to Creelman on February 17, 1908. In the interview Díaz stated that he believed in democratic principles and that he had tried to leave the presidency on several occasions; but that, under pressure, he had remained in office for the well-being of Mexico. He stated that he knew the inherent evils

of perpetuity, but that his continuation in office was necessary to the progress and development of Mexico. He assured Creelman that he wanted to see political parties developed in Mexico and that "regardless of the feelings and opinions of my friends and supporters, I am determined to retire at the end of my present term and I will not accept re-election. I will then be eighty years old."¹

Díaz' motives for granting the interview are not certain. Writers have speculated that perhaps the old caudillo was serious, or just trying to flush out his potential enemies and friends; or maybe this interview was only granted for foreign consumption.² But, whatever the reasons for the interview, Díaz did not step down from power. The interview proved to be a major error; it served as the catalyst that motivated the formation of the political parties that finally overthrew the aged Don Porfirio.³

The reaction to the interview, at first, was silence; and then articles, pamphlets, and books began to appear challenging the Porfirian regime. Writers like Querido Moheno, Manuel Calero, Francisco de P. Sentiés, and Andrés Molina Enriquez penned their discussions of discontent in various articles and books.⁴

¹Charles C. Cumberland, Mexican Revolution: Genesis Under Madero (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1952), pp. 47-48; Stanley R. Ross, Francisco I. Madero: Apostle of Mexican Democracy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), pp. 46-48; Agustín Casasola, Historia Gráfica de la Revolución, 1900-1946 (Mexico, D. F.: Archivo Casasola, 194-), vol. 1, p. xv.

²Cumberland, Mexican Revolution, pp. 47-48; Ross, Francisco I. Madero, pp. 46-48.

³Cumberland, Mexican Revolution, p. 48.

⁴Ross, Francisco I. Madero, pp. 48-49.

In the meantime those groups that had political aspirations remained silent. The Reyistas watched developments closely, but took no action; Díaz himself remained silent on his intentions. The científicos, uncertain of Díaz' intent, organized to persuade him to run again. Finally on May 30, 1908, the suspense as to who was to be the next President of Mexico was broken by Díaz himself when he permitted José Yves Limantour, Corral, and Olegario Molina to "convince" him that it was necessary to accept another presidential term.⁵ The dictator had spoken. He would be the President, but the office of Vice-President was supposedly open. Thus Díaz withdrew his promise to step down. Later he would again support his loyal adherent, Corral, for the vice-presidency, leaving politics as closed as ever. No immediate popular demonstrations followed Díaz' decision to run again, but the politicians hurriedly proclaimed their support. Bernardo Reyes, who still hoped to be Díaz' choice for Vice-President, was among those who proclaimed in favor of Díaz. On July 26, 1908, in an interview with his friend and supporter, Heriberto Barrón, editor of La República, Reyes stated that in his opinion, the well-being of Mexico depended on Díaz' re-election; and, even though blood might have been shed in the past, what was needed now was peace so that Mexico could realize a political unfolding. He continued by saying that the political evolution of Mexico depended on Díaz' continuation in power; and the political parties that would begin to appear had to conduct them-

⁵ José Yves Limantour, Apuntes sobre mi vida pública 1892-1911 (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, s. a., 1965), pp. 162-163; José López Portillo y Rojas, Elevación y Caída de Porfirio Díaz (Mexico: Librería Española, 1943), p. 399; Alfonso Taracena, Mi Vida en el Vertigo de la Revolución Mexicana (Anales Sintéticos.-1900-1930) (Mexico, D.F.: Ediciones Botas, 1936), p. 23; Cumberland, Mexican Revolution, pp. 48-49.

selves in a peaceful manner, without any disturbances. Reyes added that in the sad case that Díaz died, all Mexican patriots should support the Vice-President. He concluded that the candidate for the vice-presidency should be found among the friends of Díaz--friends whom Díaz trusted--and the candidate should be someone who shared the secrets of state with the President.⁶

It seems that Bernardo Reyes was eliminating himself from the candidacy because he was not in the close "circle of friends" of Díaz. A Corral or a Limantour shared the secrets of state, yet Reyes would not have endorsed Corral. Niemeyer, Reyes' biographer, suggests that Reyes probably expected Díaz to select him as his running mate because of Reyes' popularity.⁷ But, Reyes' thinking here was in error. Díaz would have never selected a man with popular following sufficient to present a challenge to him--much less a Reyes, who was not only popular but also a military man. Perhaps this was Reyes' greatest mistake. He was unwilling to defy Díaz openly, yet his principles could not allow him to support a man like Corral, whom he saw as a member of the hated científicos.

The adulation given to Díaz by his close circle of friends, coupled with the fear of the científicos that a man like Reyes might become Vice-President and Díaz' own vision of himself as President, convinced the old

⁶Eberhardt V. Niemeyer, Jr., El General Bernardo Reyes, trans. Juan Antonio Ayala (Monterrey, Mexico: Gobierno del Estado de Nuevo León Centro de Estudios Humanísticos de la Universidad de Nuevo León, 1966), pp. 148-149; Anthony T. Bryan, "Mexican Politics in Transition, 1900-1913: The Role of General Bernardo Reyes," (Ph. D. diss. University of Nebraska, 1969), pp. 218-220; Ramón Prida, De la dictadura a la anarquía, 2d ed. (Mexico: Ediciones Botas, 1958), pp. 211-226.

⁷Niemeyer, El General, pp. 148-149.

man that he could continue in power for another six-year period. Díaz' candidacy was set in motion November 17, 1908, when the Círculo Nacional Porfirista announced that they had asked Díaz to accept their nomination for another term as President.⁸ Originally this group did not support Corral.

The position of the Círculo Nacional Porfirista was attacked by an article in El Tiempo; but Barrón, a Reyista, defended them, saying that though Díaz would continue as President, the younger generation desired democracy and liberty and therefore the next Vice-President should represent the young and the future. Barrón, according to Niemeyer, was saying that if one could not get rid of Díaz, then let's have a Vice-President that will not continue the policies of the old dictator. Since Corral was tied in with the Porfiriato, Barrón suggested Reyes. Political parties, said Barrón, should be organized for the nomination of vice-presidential candidates, and the nation should elect the Vice-President.⁹

Acting on the premise that there would be free elections for the vice-presidency, a group of anti-científicos met in December, 1908, and organized the Club Organizador del Partido Democrático (C.O.P.D.). This club reorganized itself in January, 1909, into the Partido Democrático. Members of this party included Benito Juárez Mata, Francisco Vázquez Gómez, Juan Sánchez Azcona, Diodoro Batalla, José Peón del Valle, Jesús Urreta, Heriberto Barrón, and others who agreed that científico domination should end, that Ramón Corral should not be re-elected, and that a political party based on principle should be formed.¹⁰

⁸Ibid., p. 151.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.; Bryan, "Mexican Politics in Transition," pp. 221-222.

The platform of the Partido Democrático was issued on April 10, 1909. It called for political and municipal liberties, abolition of the institution of jefe político, observance of the laws of the Reform, complete freedom for the judicial branch, a law guaranteeing civil responsibility for employees in accidents that occurred during work, and many other reforms.¹¹ The nucleus of the Partido Democrático preferred Reyes as Vice-President and Díaz as the chief executive. The Partido Democrático was primarily concerned with the election of Reyes as Vice-President. On this point, they met serious opposition from the científicos, who supported Corral. Not only were the científicos very close to Díaz, but they also dominated the official policy-making group, having among the decision makers at least three secretaries in the cabinet--Limantour, Corral, and Sierra --eight of the subsecretaries, twelve governors, twenty-five senators, and 118 of the 230 deputies.¹²

The Reyistas met with heavy opposition from the científicos and from Ramón Corral, who used his post as Ministro de Gobernación to further his own candidacy. Corral kept informed on clubs which formed in favor of Reyes and on popular demonstrations supporting any political candidate. In February, 1910, when Reyista clubs were being formed in Jalisco, the Governor of Jalisco, Miguel Ahumada, wrote to Corral stating that the

¹¹José R. del Castillo, Historia de la Revolución Social de México (Mexico, 1915), p. 184; Ross, Francisco I. Madero, p. 65; "Manifiesto del Partido Democrático de la Nación," in Fuentes para la Historia de la Revolución Mexicana: Manifiestos Políticos (1892-1912) ed. Manuel González Ramírez (Mexico, D. F. : Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1957), vol. 4, pp. 50-55.

¹²Ross, Francisco I. Madero, pp. 70-71.

number of clubs established in Jalisco by the Reyistas to support the candidacy of Díaz was currently eighty-nine, with each one having a membership of 350-400 persons.¹³ The Reyistas were proposing Díaz as President and hoped thereby to convince Díaz to support Reyes.

The científicos were entrenched in power by 1909, and had no desire to see any one but their candidate, Ramón Corral, elected as the apparent successor to Díaz. Their political campaign plan was to support Díaz and in turn demand his support for Corral. Enrique Creel, who was Governor of Chihuahua until joining the cabinet in 1910, had started the re-election bid for a Díaz-Corral ticket late in 1908. In December of that year he wrote to Corral stipulating that he had received an answer from all of the governors, manifesting their agreement to a convention of delegates to be held in Mexico City in April of 1909. Creel stated that great importance should be placed on the convention in April, and that all the necessary preparations should be made for it.¹⁴ To prepare for a Díaz-Corral ticket, supporters of the two gathered at the house of Pedro Rincón Gallardo and re-organized the Club Re-Eleccionista. Among the more than 150 men who attended the meeting at General Gallardo's house were many friends of Ramón Corral, including Manuel R. Uruchurtu, who wrote a biography of Corral the following year, Rosendo Piñeda, and Diego Redo. Joaquín D. Cassausus spoke to the men gathered at Gallardo's house, stating

¹³Miguel Ahumada to Corral, 3 February 1909, Centro de Estudios de Historia de México, (Mexico, D. F.), carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 1, doc. 17. (hereafter cited as CEHM).

¹⁴Enrique Creel to Corral, 29 December 1908, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 1, doc. 33.

that the objectives of the reunion were to deal with the re-election of Porfirio Díaz for the period of 1910-1916, and to prepare a grand convention where a candidate for Vice-President would be chosen. A planning committee was named, with Gallardo as president. The planning committee decided that the grand convention of the Re-Eleccionistas would be held at the Fabregas theatre on March 25, 1909.¹⁵

Meanwhile, Corral was preparing his delegates to the convention. He and Bonifacio Olivares, a strong Corral supporter from Guadalajara, exchanged correspondence on several occasions treating the subject of delegates to the convention in March, 1909. Corral also received a letter from José Sabas de la Mora of Sinaloa asking Corral if he would like for Mora's newspaper, Voz del Norte, to be the first to postulate him as it had the previous time.¹⁶

The date the convention was to meet had been changed from April 2, 1909, to March 25, 1909, because several people were confused on this issue. The confusion stemmed from the fact that the Círculo Nacional Porfirista intended to meet on March 15 and ask Díaz to be their candidate. The Re-Eleccionistas were to meet on March 25 and intended to ask Díaz to accept their nomination on April 2. The confusion was avoided when the Círculo was persuaded to delay its meeting until April.¹⁷

¹⁵Casasola, Historia Gráfica, vol. 1, pp. 116-120

¹⁶Bonifacio Olivares to Corral, 3 March 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramon Corral, no. 1, doc. 53; Olivares to Corral, 12 February 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 1, doc. 40; Olivares to Corral, 10 February 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 1, doc. 39; Olivares to Corral, 5 March 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 1, doc. 55; José Sabas de la Mora to Corral, 13 February 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 1, doc. 41.

¹⁷Miguel Ahumada to Corral, 5 March 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 1, doc. 54; Niemeyer, El General, pp. 153-155.

In the meantime, Creel, the head organizer of the Corral campaign, continued to inform Corral as to the different clubs established in each state and which delegates would attend which meeting, either that of the *Círculo Nacional Porfirista*, or that of the *Convención Re-Eleccionista*.¹⁸ Ahumada also kept Corral informed; four days prior to the *Re-Eleccionistas'* convention, Ahumada informed Corral that the *Club Re-Eleccionista* from Guadalajara had decided on Corral as Vice-President.¹⁹

The *Convención Re-Eleccionista* opened in Mexico City on March 25, 1909, with over 700 delegates in attendance at the Fabregas theatre. After winding up much of the routine business, the convention finally discussed candidates for President and Vice-President. Díaz and Corral were both re-nominated.²⁰ Both accepted.

After the nomination, General Gallardo and a commission of delegates went to Corral's house on the Calle de Artes and presented the Vice-President the candidacy. The following day there were pro-Corral demonstrations as newspapermen, friends, political clubs, and others paraded in front of the National Palace. Corral had triumphed, and the delegates from Sonora and Sinaloa gave a dinner in his honor on April 6.²¹ To complete Corral's triumph, the *Círculo Nacional Porfirista* met about this time and endorsed Díaz and--with some reservations--Corral.²²

¹⁸ Enrique Creel to Corral, 16 March 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 1, doc. 66.

¹⁹ Miguel Ahumada to Corral, 21 March 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 1, doc. 71.

²⁰ Casasola, *Historia Gráfica*, vol. 1, p. 120.

²¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 121-123, 151.

²² Niemeyer, *El General*, p. 155.

After Corral's nomination by the Re-Eleccionista convention, Creel, who had directed Corral's campaign, wrote to congratulate him on the successful convention. If he had contributed in any manner to Corral's victory, he wrote, he had done it joyfully because of his convictions and principles, and because of his ties with Díaz and his long friendship with Corral.²³

After the two conventions, the Reyistas expected some leadership from their candidate, but Reyes remained silent. Nevertheless, the Partido Democrático began to form Reyista Clubs in Mexico City. The first was the Club Central Reyista 1910, formed on May 23, 1909, with Jesús Guzmán and Raz Guzmán as presidents.²⁴ The most important club (because of the prominence of its members) to support Reyes was the Club Soberania Popular. Francisco Vásquez Gómez, a physician to some of the most prominent people in Mexico City, including Díaz himself, was elected president of the club; José López Portillo y Rojas, a well known politico, was vice-president; and Heriberto Barrón, a long time friend of both Díaz and Reyes, became secretary.²⁵

Again the Reyistas were operating under the assumption that if Reyes' popularity were overwhelming, Díaz would have no choice but to support their candidate. This assumption by the followers of Don Bernardo raised the hopes of the Reyistas, but Reyes himself made it difficult for them

²³ Enrique Creel to Corral, 7 April 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 75.

²⁴ José C. Valadés, ed. "Los secretos del Reyismo; diez años de intensa lucha," La Prensa (San Antonio, Texas), 23 October 1932, section 2, p. 1.

²⁵ Niemeyer, El General, pp. 155-156; Ricardo Garcia Granados, Por que y como cayo Porfirio Díaz (Mexico, D. F.: Andres Botas e hijos, 1928), p. 64.

by refusing to announce his candidacy. The supporters of the ex-minister of war should not have expected Díaz to support a popular, energetic, and relatively young general as his second in command: Díaz' policy over the past thirty-odd years had been to suppress anyone who was likely to rival his popularity and power. Reyes, who knew Díaz well, was unwilling to announce his candidacy unless he had some assurance that Díaz might accept him.

Since it seemed unlikely that Díaz would accept the Governor of Nuevo León as his running-mate, the Reyistas proposed a dual vice-presidency. The proposal, initiated by Barrón, stated that, since there were two well defined political groups in the country, this compromise would satisfy both parties. The reform suggested that, of the two men running for the vice-presidency, the one who received the highest number of votes would succeed the President in case of his death, and the one with the least number of votes would be the next successor. The científicos, however, were not interested in Barrón's proposal; the measure received no consideration.²⁶

Reyes' popularity was increasing throughout the republic in 1909; but, without the support of Díaz, he still refused to throw his hat in the ring. Reyes felt obliged to write to Corral stating that he had no intentions to become a candidate for the vice-presidency. Corral responded that Reyes' followers, especially Barrón, did not follow the recommendations of General Reyes and that this would do more harm than good to Reyes.²⁷ Again, though Reyes did not publicly proclaim or deny his

²⁶Niemeyer, El General, p. 156.

²⁷Bernardo Reyes to Corral, 2 May 1909 and Corral to Reyes, 25 May 1909, in "El Archivo de Don Ramón Corral," La Prensa (San Antonio, Texas),

candidacy, his followers were conducting an intensive political campaign throughout Mexico. Corral, feeling the threat of Reyismo, felt compelled to keep a close watch on the activities of Reyes and the Reyistas. His sources of information included not only officials such as the governors of the various states, but even spies that Gobernación paid to keep track of the activities of the Partido Democrático.²⁸ Díaz was also kept abreast of the activities of the Reyistas and of the feelings of the nation towards Corral. Often he would receive reports stating that the candidacy of Corral was not desirable to the country, or accounts of the activities of the Reyistas.²⁹

Since Díaz had not as yet announced support for either Reyes or Corral, the contest for the vice-presidential office became so heated that Reyes wrote to Corral suggesting that if Corral wished to discuss the newspaper accounts in which Reyes' name was mentioned as a vice-presidential candidate, he was willing to do so, for he was only interested in following the policies of Don Porfirio.³⁰ The following day, Corral sent a telegram to Governor Ahumada of Jalisco stating that Rosendo Piñeda

ed. José C. Valadés, 17 October 1937, section 2, p. 1. See also Bernardo Reyes to Corral, 21 May 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 87; Corral to Reyes, 25 May 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 89.

²⁸Governor of Yucatán (signature illegible) to Corral, 27 April 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 81.

²⁹Unsigned informe to Díaz, n. d., Colección General Porfirio Díaz, University of the Americas, Cholula, Puebla, reel 262, docs. 13351-13352. (hereafter cited as CGPD).

³⁰Bernardo Reyes to Corral, 21 May 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 87.

had given orders to disrupt a group of Reyistas who would arrive in Guadalajara shortly to organize a club. Two days later Ahumada replied that he made all the arrangements to interfere with such a group. He also stated that the newspapers would occupy themselves in ridiculing the Reyistas and that the Correo de Jalisco had already begun to do so.³¹

Corral replied to Ahumada's letters on May 27, and on June 1, 1909. Ahumada wrote back that the Reyistas were really not very strong in Guadalajara. His government had not used force against the Reyistas because he wanted to prevent a scandal; but he was ready to do so if necessary. Ahumada also indicated that several officers of the artillery who were being sent to Sonora (because of their pro-Reyes sympathies), had arrived in Guadalajara, and a small but jubilant demonstration had been staged in their favor by the Reyistas.³²

The Reyistas found wide support for Reyes, but were frustrated by their own man, who refused to proclaim himself a candidate without the support of Don Porfirio. Time after time Porfirio received letters describing popular manifestations in support of Reyes; he also received letters from

³¹Miguel Ahumada to Corral, 24 May 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 88; Ahumada to Corral, 24 May 1909, in ARC, ed. Valadés, 26 September 1937, section 2, p. 1.

³²Ahumada to Corral, 1 June 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 90. The moving of officials from one part of the country to another was used by Diaz to prevent strong allegiances from forming among the officers. In the case of the Reyista campaign in 1909, officers who proclaimed in favor of Reyes were sent to Quintana Roo, Yucatán, or Sonora, which were some of the more undesirable places in the republic.

the supporters of Corral playing down Reyismo. The typical Reyista letter concerned only the struggle for the vice-presidency and basically opposed the científicos.³³

The campaign became even hotter, and finally Reyes was not able to stand aside and allow the científico-dominated press to abuse and misuse his name. On June 12, 1909, he addressed a letter to Corral, with a copy to President Díaz, stating that the semi-official government newspaper, El Imparcial, linked him to a group of officers who had made a pro-Reyes manifestation; since El Imparcial was recognized as a government newspaper, he said, it should not be allowed to conduct itself in such an underhanded fashion.³⁴ Reyes added that he was disposed to adhere to Corral's candidacy for the vice-presidency and that the Nuevo León clubs had already voted for Corral in the convention held in the capital a short period before. "It is against my wishes that I have been postulated by various groups and [I] have advised them that the postulation is against my desires," he stated. Reyes concluded by saying that he protested strongly against the treatment he received in El Imparcial.³⁵

Corral responded to Reyes' protest against El Imparcial on the 15th of that same month. He informed Reyes that the editors of El Imparcial had written the article without the knowledge of the government, and that the editors of the paper claimed that they had said nothing against Reyes personally in the article, only against his friends and supporters. Corral

³³Manuel Garza Aldape to Díaz, 11 July 1909, CGPD, reel 261, docs. 11848-11850.

³⁴Bernardo Reyes to Corral, 12 June 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 92; for a copy of this letter see Reyes to Díaz, 12 June 1909, CGPD, reel 260, docs. 9671-9672.

³⁵Ibid.

told Reyes that he would recommend that his friends not attack him too vigorously; but, since he was primarily concerned with his functions as a government official, he did not have much time to deal with these problems; furthermore, he continued, it was sometimes difficult to restrain friends during a political contest. He added that he was satisfied with the fact that Reyes had influenced all the papers in Nuevo León to come out for Corral's candidacy. Corral concluded that he would make all efforts possible to restrain his friends, and wished that Reyes would do the same.³⁶

The Re-Eleccionistas were having problems keeping the popular support for Reyes to a minimum. As each day passed, Reyes' support increased; and the official government bureaucracy did its best to combat it. In Jalisco, for example, Governor Miguel Ahumada announced that a group of Re-Eleccionistas would arrive in Guadalajara on June 13. The announcement in the local press was a fake, designed to flush out the supporters of Reyes. As it happened, many students gathered at the railroad station on the evening of the 13th to protest the Corralista's arrival. Forty students were arrested, reprimanded, and then set free.³⁷ In Tepic, General Mariano Ruiz warned a few people who wanted to proclaim for Reyes that if they supported the ex-minister of War, they might see themselves in difficulties.³⁸ The formula was to get prominent people of the state

³⁶Corral to Reyes, 15 June 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 95.

³⁷Miguel Ahumada to Corral, 14 June 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 93.

³⁸Mariano Ruiz to Díaz, 17 June 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 96.

to support the candidacy of the government; otherwise the government might remove them from its list of supporters.

Opposition was relentless. The people interested in change sought all means to change the government legally through elections. But Corral had the upper hand. As Minister of Government he was in a position to further his candidacy in ways unavailable to his opponents. In June the newspapers supporting Reyes began to demand that Ramón Corral leave his cabinet post. Jesús Urueta, who was the editor of El Partido Democrático, charged that Corral was not only Minister of Government and candidate of a group of conservatives for the vice-presidency, but also an intimate friend of Don Porfirio who enjoyed his confidence. Urueta charged that Corral as Ministro de Gobernación had a privileged position that no other candidate enjoyed. He referred to William H. Taft's resignation as American Secretary of War when he accepted the Republican candidacy for the United States presidency, and urged that Corral do the same. Urueta concluded by saying that Corral was in charge of the cabinet post which centralized the functions of the bureaucracy: the one in charge of false elections, the giver of parliamentary instructions, the immediate conduit for the transmission of orders to the governors; and he had direct power to act in the Federal District and the territories of Baja California, Tepic, and Quintana Roo.³⁹ The newspaper also stated that the effects of Corral's privileged position were beginning to be felt; and no one doubted that, either with or without Corral's instructions, the governors of the states were actively working for him. The paper added that the

³⁹Jesús Urueta, "El Sr. Don Ramón Corral Debe Separarse Del Gabinete," El Partido Democrático (Mexico, D. F.), 5 June 1909, p. 1.

question of Corral leaving his post was a personal question for Corral to decide, and that if he did leave he would be doing the nation a favor and would deserve applause.⁴⁰ On June 16, 1909, President Tomas Rosales of the "Club Jalisciense Del Partido Democrático" also urged Díaz to tell the governors and jefes políticos to remain neutral and to try to keep the foreign press out of the elections.⁴¹

There is no question that Corral used his position to advantage and that the governors of the states, or at least the majority of them, were working for the candidacy of Corral as well as Díaz. One only has to look at the correspondence between Corral and the governors to ascertain this fact. Frequently they wrote to Corral informing him of the activities of the Reyistas and what was being done by themselves to counteract the threats of Reyismo.⁴² Occasionally even private citizens wrote to Don Porfirio himself asking his advice on the vice-presidential question.⁴³

The clash between the Reyistas and Re-Eleccionistas in Guadalajara eventually became heated, and Governor Ahumada finally considered the situation critical. After a mass meeting in June, 1909, where the Reyistas shouted vivas for Reyes and muerte to Díaz and Corral, Ahumada took the

⁴⁰Ibid. The article was reprinted in the Diario Del Hogar (Mexico, D.F.), 8 June 1909, p. 1, a newspaper edited by Filomeno Mata an old opponent of the Porfiriato.

⁴¹Tomas Rosales to Díaz, 16 June 1909, CGPD, reel 260, doc. 9978.

⁴²Miguel Ahumada to Corral, 22 June 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 103; Governor of Guerrero (signature illegible) to Corral, 20 June 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 98.

⁴³Adolfo Santos Lopez to Díaz, 19 June 1909, CGPD, reel 260, doc. 10556.

necessary measures to quiet them down. First he threatened expulsion from school to the young supporters of Reyes; he carried out his threat when some of them still protested.⁴⁴ Reyista supporters were limited in the exercise of their political "rights"; and, even though by June of 1909 there were five major national clubs working openly for Reyes, Reyismo was seriously handicapped by the failure of Reyes to proclaim himself a candidate.⁴⁵

By mid-1909 Mexico was seething with complex political activity. Two parties--the Corralista Re-Eleccionistas and the Reyista Partido Democrático--contended for power. Both supported the re-election of Porfirio Díaz, but differed on the vice-presidential choice. The Re-Eleccionistas wanted Díaz and Corral; the Partido Democrático advocated Díaz and Reyes, though Reyes would not admit he was even a candidate. Díaz, though apparently leaning toward Corral, had not yet indicated his vice-presidential choice. To complicate matters even more, a third party, the Anti-Re-eleccionistas which wanted neither Díaz nor either of the two vice-presidential hopefuls, was in the process of organizing.

The leader of this third party, Francisco Madero, had been one of the instigators of the Partido Democrático, but had abandoned it because of Reyes' influence in it. Madero was a rich hacendado from Coahuila. In 1892, after completing his studies in Paris, Madero returned to Mexico. The following year he enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley; and, in the fall of 1893, the twenty-year-old Madero returned to Mexico

⁴⁴Miguel Ahumada to Corral, 22 June 1909, CEHM, carpetón Ramón Corral, no. 2, doc. 103.

⁴⁵Niemeyer, El General, p. 157.

to assume his place in the economic affairs of his family. He displayed great ability in cultivating the land that his father had assigned him; but the young Madero was extremely disturbed by the spectacle Mexico presented under the so-called "political stabilization of Mexico" of the Porfirian regime. Madero became convinced that the prolonged dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz was the explanation for the conditions in which Mexico was engulfed. His belief in democracy and spiritualism contributed to his decision to enter politics. When he became interested in politics in 1900, his conservative friends were first amused and then pained by his liberal views. In 1909, he became nationally known with the publication of his book, La sucesión presidencial en 1910. The book revealed some of the evils of the Díaz regime and Madero's profound faith in the democratic process of government. Madero reiterated the need for legal and peaceful change in Mexico and called for the re-establishment of the political principles of the Constitution of 1857. Although he accepted without harsh words the fact that Díaz would run for the seventh consecutive time, he advocated that the Vice-President be selected by the honest vote of the people.⁴⁶

The Díaz government kept an eye on the Madero groups, though it was slow in taking the group seriously because it seemed unlikely that an anti-Díaz organization could gain much of a following. Though Corral heard rumors to the effect that Madero was distributing arms to his men at San Pedro, Coahuila, he discounted them. However, in 1910, he did

⁴⁶Cumberland, Genesis Under Madero, pp. 55-61; Ross, Francisco I. Madero, pp. 57-60; Richard B. Phillips, "Jose Vasconcelos and the Mexican Revolution of 1910," (Ph. D. diss., University of Texas, 1953), pp. 52-63.

order Jesús Valle to search one of the Madero holdings in Parras, Coahuila, and to confiscate any arms and ammunition that were found.⁴⁷

Anti-Re-Eleccionist sentiment began to gain popularity in the summer of 1909. Originally Madero had been willing to accept the re-election of Díaz. In early January, 1909, he suggested that in case their program ran into snags, they could always change their slogan from "free suffrage and no re-election," and allow Díaz to continue as President as long as the Vice-President were chosen by the nation.⁴⁸ The Maderistas started to gain prominence in June, 1909, after Madero began a campaign trip into the states of Veracruz, Yucatán, Campeche, Tamaulipas, and Nuevo León to advertize the impending creation of his party. In Veracruz, a state with a tradition of opposition and strong feeling of liberalism, Madero was well received. In Campeche and Tampico, the turnout for Madero was poor, but this did not discourage him. In Tampico he learned that the poor turnout was due to the federal government's opposition, rather than apathy among the people. After the disastrous result in Tampico, Madero left for Monterrey for his final campaign tour; here he was well received by a crowd of about 3,000.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Corral to Reyes, 25 May 1909, ARC, 17 October 1937, section 2, p. 1; Corral to Jesus Valle, 4 June 1910, Sección Francisco I. Madero, reel 22, doc. 3962, Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Historia, Mexico, D. F. (hereafter cited as FIM/INAH).

⁴⁸Francisco I. Madero to Emilio Vásquez [Gómez], 8 January 1909, FIM/INAH, reel 8, doc. no n.

⁴⁹Cumberland, Genesis Under Madero, pp. 70-75, has an excellent discussion of Madero's preconvention campaign.

Bernardo Reyes, meanwhile, was resting in his Galeana estate in the southern part of Nuevo León. In the months of May and June his supporters urged him to proclaim his candidacy, but he refused to make his position known. Finally on July 6, 1909, the Club Central Reyista requested Reyes' decision on the vice-presidential matter. Reyes' reply was that he was unconditionally supporting Corral since Corral had the backing of Porfirio Díaz.⁵⁰ Shortly thereafter, Díaz removed Reyes as commander of the Third Military Zone and replaced him with General Geronimo Trevino, an old and ardent foe of Reyes. After this incident, Reyes, who had been hibernating in his Galeana estate for almost two months, showed up in Monterrey; but it was obvious that his popularity had waned and Reyismo, as a political factor, was declining.⁵¹

Reyes continued as Governor of Nuevo León through September, 1909. In October he was called to the capital and was informed that he was "exiled" to Europe under the guise of heading a military mission. Reyes, as Cumberland suggests, "did not have the courage to maintain a struggle against Díaz,"⁵² On the other hand, having been a Díaz supporter all his life, he may have refused to oppose Díaz for fear his actions might lead Mexico into another bloody civil war.⁵³ Whatever the reason for Reyes'

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 83; Castillo, Revolución Social, p. 212; Niemeyer, El General, p. 169.

⁵¹Geronimo Trevino to Corral, 30 September and 20 October 1909, ARC, 10 October 1937, section 2, p. 1; Miguel Ahumada to Corral, 14 October 1909, ARC, 10 October 1937, section 2, p. 1.

⁵²Cumberland, Genesis Under Madero, p. 85.

⁵³Niemeyer, El General, pp. 171-172. Niemeyer discusses various reasons as to why Reyes did not break with Díaz.

refusal to break with the old dictator, he accepted the military mission abroad--Reyismo was dead. With the waning of Reyes, his supporters split into three groups. One of the factions still supported Reyes; another faction shifted their allegiance to Teodoro Dehesa, popular Governor of Veracruz and an avowed anti-científico; the rest picked up the banner of the Anti-reeleccionistas.⁵⁴ The "exile" of Reyes clarified the political situation. Previously the options had been Díaz and Corral, or Diaz and Reyes, or--if the Anti-Reelectionists ever got organized--a slate that included none of the three. Now, it was either Díaz and Corral, or an as yet unchosen Anti-Reeleccionista ticket.

With his campaign tour of 1909 Madero had aroused the populace in Mexico; and, now that Reyes was outside the political arena, the lines of political struggle were drawn between the Maderistas and the Re-Eleccionistas. Corral as a government candidate was strong because of the entrenched Porfirian bureaucracy. But he was not a popular candidate. This was due to the unfavorable treatment of him which Díaz had allowed to flourish in the press, and his association with the Porfiriato. Madero, on the other hand, seemed to be gaining prestige. When he arrived in San Pedro, Coahuila, after his first campaign tour, he wrote his father, explaining how well he had been received. Madero added that Corral's candidacy was judged to be very dangerous in all of the republic. He stated that, now that the people had been awakened, they would not support Corral. Since Corral had a formidable foe in Reyes (who had not yet been "exiled"), it was undoubtable that once Diaz was gone serious disturbances

⁵⁴Taracena, En el Vertigo, p. 48; Cumberland, Genesis Under Madero, p. 45.

would occur. Madero continued, saying that, due to these factors, Díaz would not support Corral. He added that the problem lay in the fact that one danger (Reyes) might be substituted for another (Corral). Madero added that his group's cause was tied in with law and order, and that its attacks were not aimed at Díaz but at his successor, who, once in power, might not use that power as moderately as had Díaz. He concluded by saying that one thing he wished to assure was that the successor to Díaz should not have the immense power of the old dictator because there were few men like Porfirio Díaz.⁵⁵

Madero had a firm grasp and view of what would probably happen in the vice-presidential struggle. In a letter written to Heriberto Frias in late July of 1909, he predicted that Reyes would never gain power because he did not have the courage to oppose Díaz; the only reason that the Reyes candidacy carried prestige was due to Corral's lack of prestige.⁵⁶ Four days earlier Madero had written to Francisco Naranjo stating that the candidacy of Corral was considered doomed by the Mexican Republic, and that of Reyes would fail within two or three months.⁵⁷

With Reyes' political aspirations in decline, the only other political party to contend with was the Anti-Reeleccionistas, and the governmental machinery soon began to use muscle against them. On September 30, 1909, the headquarters of the Madero newspaper, El Anti-Reeleccionista,

⁵⁵Francisco I. Madero to Evaristo Madero, 20 July 1909, FIM/INAH, reel 9, doc. 7609.

⁵⁶Madero to Heriberto Frias, 27 July 1909, FIM/INAH, reel 9, doc. 7682.

⁵⁷Madero to Francisco Naranjo, 23 July 1909, FIM/INAH, reel 9, no n.

was raided and the paper shut down. Party spirit began to fail; Madero, sick with a serious attack of fever, could do little to revive his party's spirit. Finally, in October, Madero went to Tehuacán, Puebla, to recover his health. From Tehuacán he wrote letters of encouragement to his friends; he also wrote Limantour asking him to convince the government to allow the Anti-Reeleccionistas greater political freedom.⁵⁸

Madero went from Tehuacan to Mexico City with plans already made for another tour of the country. He had planned a trip to Oaxaca; and, in early December, he went to Díaz' native state, although his visit there did not meet with any great success.⁵⁹ Shortly thereafter Madero returned to the capital to make plans for the Anti-Reeleccionista nominating convention of April 15, 1910. After meeting with the Anti-Reeleccionistas in the capital, Madero began his political tour through the western states of Mexico. His first stop was in Queretaro. From there he toured Jalisco, Colima, Sinaloa, Sonora, and Chihuahua. In most of the cities that he visited in the western states, Madero experienced difficulties with the local authorities. In Sonora, he and his party were refused rooms; and Madero was even refused permission to speak. However, the tour did bring Madero into contact with the opponents of Díaz, allowed him to make friends with prominent people in the different states, and resulted in the formation of Anti-Reeleccionist clubs.⁶⁰

⁵⁸Cumberland, Genesis Under Madero, p. 87.

⁵⁹Emilio Pimentel to Corral, 4 December 1909, ARC, 2 January 1938, section 2, p. 7.

⁶⁰Cumberland, Genesis Under Madero, pp. 95-100.

In late January of 1910, Madero returned to San Pedro, Coahuila, for a rest before taking up his campaign through the northern and central states. He went to the capital in February to confer with his supporters; and it was decided that he should tour Durango, Zacatecas, Aguascalientes, and Guanajuato. Madero took the advice and began his trip in March, going first to Torreón and then Durango. From Durango the campaign was extended to Zacatecas, where Governor Francisco de P. Zárate gave them little importance, though he refused to let Madero speak on the grounds that he could cause a political disturbance.⁶¹

From Zacatecas the Maderistas traveled to Aguascalientes; from there the party went to San Luis Potosí, where they had their difficulties with the local authorities. On April 1, 1910, Madero's party reached León, Guanajuato, where a small group appeared to greet them. From León the party continued to Guanajuato, Guanajuato, where the campaign came to a close as the date for the nominating convention for the Anti-Reeleccionistas drew near.⁶²

The Anti-Reeleccionistas' convention opened as scheduled on April 15, 1910, at the Tívoli del Eliseo. Vice-President Corral followed the activities of the Anti-Reeleccionistas closely; and, since his post as Minister of Government gave him command of the police in the Federal District, he assigned agents to attend the convention. Among the agents who kept Corral informed was Francisco Chavez, who constantly submitted

⁶¹Ibid.; Francisco de P. Zárate to Corral, 24 March 1910, ARC, 2 January 1938, section 2, p. 1.

⁶²Cumberland, Genesis Under Madero, pp. 95-100.

reports to the Governor of the Federal District, who passed them on to Corral.⁶³ Another spy whom Corral employed was Francisco Beltrán, who managed to infiltrate the Maderista group and kept Corral informed of the leaders and plans of the Anti-Reeleccionistas; he frequently supplied the Ministro de Gobernación with information about military men who had joined, or were in sympathy with, the Anti-Reeleccionistas.⁶⁴ Due to the stature Madero had developed in his political tours of 1909 and early 1910, and to his courage in speaking out against the Porfirian regime, the Anti-Reeleccionistas nominated him as their presidential candidate, with Francisco Vásquez Gómez, who had switched to the Maderistas when Reyes was exiled in November of 1909, as the second man on the ticket.

Corral had plans to arrest Madero on the eve of the convention on a charge stemming from a land dispute in Coahuila, but Madero got wind of the intent of the Vice-President and hid at a friend's home. Madero arranged an interview with Díaz for the date set for the opening of the convention, but Díaz postponed the meeting until the following day, April 16. By this time Madero was already the candidate of the Anti-Reeleccionistas' convention; and, at the interview with Díaz, he was promised that his opposition party would be free to carry on the campaign; the

⁶³Francisco Chávez to the Governor of the Federal District, 15, 16, 17 April 1910, ARC, 31 October 1937, section 2, p. 1.

⁶⁴Francisco Beltrán to Corral, 4, 21, 22, 31 December 1909, ARC, 7 November 1937, section 2, p. 7; Beltrán to Corral 28, 30 January; 8, 16, 19 February and 10 March 1910, ARC, 14 November 1937, section 2, p. 1. Beltrán at one time was also employed to keep an eye on the Reyistas.

Anti-Reeleccionistas were assured a free and fair election. The charge against Madero was either dropped or ignored, because it was not brought up again.⁶⁵

After the interview with Díaz, which had been arranged by Teodoro Dehesa, Madero and Vázquez Gómez accepted their candidacies for President and Vice-President. Then the party's electoral committee decided that Madero should make still another tour through the most populous regions of the states of Jalisco, Puebla, Tlaxcala, and Veracruz. In Guadalajara and Puebla, Madero was met by thousands of people who cheered him on. From Puebla he went to Jalapa, Veracruz, and again was overwhelmed by the reception. But in the city of Veracruz only a small handful of citizens turned out to receive him. Other stops were made in Veracruz, including Córdoba, Fortín, and finally Orizaba, where the Anti-Reeleccionistas were welcomed by about 20,000 people.⁶⁶

The Madero campaign was accelerating and Madero himself was not molested, though his supporters were harassed by government and state officials. Also in early June of 1910, Dehesa wrote Díaz stating that Corral was not acceptable to the majority in the country. Dehesa realized that he was himself a possible candidate for the vice-presidency, and he did not fail to impress on Díaz that Madero had asked him if he would

⁶⁵Cumberland, Genesis Under Madero, pp. 104-105; Ross, Francisco I. Madero, pp. 96-98, Ross has an excellent discussion of the charge of theft against Madero and how it was developed and pressed by Corral.

⁶⁶Ross, Francisco I. Madero, pp. 102-104.

take the office. Dehesa informed Díaz he had declined, and that Madero had responded by saying that Díaz was acceptable but not Corral.⁶⁷

In early June, Madero and his party began their fourth, and last, political campaign before the elections were held. Juan R. Orci, one of Corral's agents assigned to follow the activities of the Maderista group and report to Corral, went along.⁶⁸ The first stop was at San Luis Potosí, where Madero and his secretary, Roque Estrada spoke without any interference. The next train stop was Saltillo; there the local police force tried to disperse the crowd that gathered to hear Madero, but failed in their efforts. Before Madero's departure for Monterrey from Saltillo, preparations were made and circulars distributed by the Anti-Reeleccionistas about the planned demonstrations for Madero there.⁶⁹ Thousands gathered at the station in Monterrey to hear this rich hacendado speak out against the Díaz oligarchy, but the police only allowed those with train tickets to gather around the station. A crowd which attempted to escort Madero to his father's home was dispersed; only a handful remained to hear Madero and Estrada speak against the Porfiriato. Estrada started speaking after Madero had delivered his speech; and, at this juncture, the chief of police ordered Estrada to stop. Estrada refused, and a heated exchange of words

⁶⁷Teodoro Dehesa to Díaz, 1 June 1910, CGPD, reel 271, docs. 8652-8658.

⁶⁸Cumberland, Genesis Under Madero, pp. 110-112; Ross, Francisco I. Madero, pp. 104-106; Juan R. Orci to Corral, 4 June 1910, FIM/INAH, reel 22, doc. 3967; Orci to Corral, 7 June 1910, FIM/INAH, reel 22, doc. 3970. On the bottom of this telegram Corral wrote "have received your message, see the one that I sent the governor." For occurrences in Saltillo see Jesús Valle to Corral, 5 June 1910, FIM/INAH, reel 22, doc. 3973.

⁶⁹Idelfonso Zambrano to Corral, 4 June 1910, ARC, 23 January 1938, section 2, p. 1.

ensued. The next day Estrada was accosted by two plain clothesmen who came to arrest him; Madero intervened to examine their credentials, and Estrada escaped. Madero continued to the railroad station where he was to board a train for San Pedro; but, after he got on board, he was arrested because Estrada could not be found. Madero was charged with aiding in his escape.⁷⁰

Orci, who had been following Madero, was given the job of testifying against him. Corral, Orci, and José María Mier, Reyes' replacement as Governor of Nuevo León, all worked together to make Madero's arrest appear legitimate. The day after the arrest, June 7, 1910, Corral wrote Mier stating that the government wanted Madero arrested because they were afraid of him, and this was the only way to get Madero out of the election. It was necessary, Corral cautioned, that Madero's apprehension be legal and justified as being in the public interest. Corral added that he hoped that Orci would be able to testify against Madero. He concluded by pointing out that Estrada's statements were not strong enough to justify apprehending Madero, but that he was sure that Mier would find proper grounds to try him, because now that Madero had been arrested, it would look bad if the government had to allow him to go free.⁷¹ In the meantime, Estrada had surrendered on hearing of Madero's arrest.

⁷⁰Roque Estrada, La Revolución y Francisco I. Madero (Guadalajara, Mexico: Imprenta Americana, 1912), pp. 236-239; Idelfonso Zambrano to Corral, 7 June 1910, ARC, 23 January 1938, section 2, p. 7.

⁷¹Corral to José María Mier, 7 June 1910, AFM/INAH, reel 22, docs. 3989-3990.

Madero was not allowed to go free. Orci made his declarations against Madero, and José María Mier, along with the local judge, found more than enough reason to keep him in jail. The arrest of Madero was directly connected with the actions of Ramón Corral! After Juan Orci had charged Estrada and Madero with trying to incite a rebellion in San Luis Potosí, the two Anti-Reeleccionistas were transferred there and kept prisoners until July 19, when they were released on bail.⁷²

Madero's arrest was a political blunder; it only served as one more reason for opponents of the Porfiriato to join Madero. Once in prison Madero became the object of sympathy, and his popularity increased. While Madero was in jail, mail poured into his cell; his arrest, if anything, had made him a martyr. His imprisonment made Madero more defiant and determined to carry on the struggle. From his prison cell Madero continued to carry on a substantial volume of correspondence with people throughout Mexico. When he learned that Vázquez Gómez, his vice-presidential running-mate was trying to reach a compromise with Díaz, Madero wrote to him, "It is indispensable that you and I maintain our prestige, not only as honorable men, disinterested and patriotic, but as firm men."⁷³

While Madero was still in prison and discussing plans for armed rebellion with his associates, especially his brother, Gustavo, and a close friend, Dr. Rafael Cepeda, the government held the secondary elections on July 8. These elections affirmed the triumph of the Porfiristas

⁷²Juan R. Orci to Corral, 8 June 1910, AFM/INAH, reel 22, doc. 3999.

⁷³Francisco Madero to Francisco Vázquez Gómez, 30 June 1910, AFM/INAH, reel 9, no n.

at the polls. Madero became restless to get out of jail, and finally his friends and family were able to secure his release. On July 19, Madero and Estrada were granted their conditional release under bail bond, with the stipulation that they maintain residence in San Luis Potosí.⁷⁴

After his release on bond, Madero continued with his correspondence. On July 30, he wrote to Candido Aguilar, one of his supporters in Veracruz, stating that he was pleased with Aguilar's energy and resolution to oppose Díaz. Madero encouraged Aguilar to continue fighting until the triumph of their principles had been attained, adding, "The Díaz government re-electing itself is not a victory but merely an unimportant episode."⁷⁵ In August, Madero also wrote to José Maria Pino Suárez, who later became his Vice-President. He told Pino Suárez that they should not consider themselves beaten and should wait for any occurrences that might arise. He added that Don Porfirio, as everyone knew, was very old, although he made great efforts to appear vigorous. Corral, he told Pino Suárez, was extremely sick with a blood disease; and, although this illness could prolong itself, it always destroyed the organism. And besides this, there were a lot of other things that could occur that could

⁷⁴Justino N. Palomares, Anecdotalario de la Revolución (Mexico, D. F.: Talleres de la Editorial Agrícola Mexicana, 1954), p. 43; Cumberland, Genesis Under Madero, p. 115 has 22 July 1910 as the date they were set free on bond.

⁷⁵Francisco I. Madero to Candido Aguilar, 30 July 1910, FIM/INAH, reel 9, doc. no. n.

change the orientation of politics in the country. What was necessary, Madero concluded, was continuity of organization so as to be ready to take the initiative if an opportunity should arise.⁷⁶

The opportunity finally came. After Congress had legally declared Díaz and Corral elected, Madero made plans to escape to the United States. In San Luis Potosí he made a practice of taking long walks about the city. On October 5, on one of his customary strolls with his man-servant, Julio Peña, Madero and Peña escaped. Dressed as a mechanic, Madero boarded a train to Laredo, Texas. Two days later he crossed the bridge at Laredo into the United States.⁷⁷

The elections in Mexico in 1910 were a complete farce, as the civil rights of citizens were openly abused. The Maderistas presented the federal congress a list of affidavits concerning injustices committed by state governments on election day, along with a request that the elections be annulled; but this did not occur. Díaz and Corral were dutifully elected President and Vice-President respectively.

A sample of what happened on election day can be gleaned from an article by John Kenneth Turner found in the Díaz Collection.

Aguascaliente--The election boards made out the ballots themselves, copying the names from the tax lists. Anti-re-electionists presenting themselves at the polls were driven away with clubs by the police.

⁷⁶Madero, to José Maria Pino Suárez, 8 August 1910, AFM/INAH, reel 9, doc. 8316.

⁷⁷San Antonio Light and Gazette, 8 October 1910, p. 1; Luther T. Ellsworth to the Secretary of State, 8 October 1910, Records of the Department of State relating to the Internal Affairs of Mexico, 1910-1929, 812,00/351, reel 10.

Chiapas--The ballot-boxes were stuffed the previous day at the city hall and during election day they were guarded by federal soldiers. Open threats of assassination prevented anti-re-electionists from attempting to vote...

Chihuahua--Soldiers held all the voting booths. At the town of Santa Barbara the chief of police and a body of assistants smashed in the door of the Anti-re-electionist club headquarters on the eve of election day, broke up a meeting arrested all present, levied a fine on each one, and informed them that any of their number appearing at the voting booths the following day would be imprisoned.

Coahuila--At Ciudad Porfirio Diaz all the known members of the Anti-re-electionist Party were arrested. Announcement was made that all members of the opposition would be drafted into the army, in fear of which hundreds fled across the American border. At Monclova only one booth was accorded to two thousand voters and ballots were given only to those believed to be favorable to Diaz...

Puebla--At Puebla, the capital, soldiers patrolled the streets and voting booths. Opposition voters were arrested. Scores of ridiculous frauds were perpetuated all over the state, in many cases citizens being compelled to write in the names of the official candidates at the point of the bayonet.

San Luis Potosi--At the capital more than forty mounted anti-reelectionists were jailed on the eve of election, which had the desired effect of keeping their fellow partisans within doors the following day...

Sonora--At Nogales no ballots were distributed and the police did not allow the people to approach the polls. At Guaymas the same thing happened. At Cananea there were many arrests, wholesale fraud, and a number of citizens were impressed into the army. Armed

force was used generally throughout the state to prevent the use of the franchise by the independents.

Tlaxcala--Ballots were generally forged and in some cases citizens were forced to cast ballots that had been prepared for them. The soldiery [sic] was much in evidence.

In the states of Oaxaca, Morelos, Sinaloa, and Guanajuato the elections were generally a farce, according to many affidavits. Force prevailed.

Veracruz--In Jalapa, the capital, the general system, ordered by the jefe politico, was to seize all anti-reelectionists who presented themselves, and with dire threats--such as that they would be sent to the penal colony of Tres Marias--compel them to vote for the official candidate...

Yucatan--Hundreds of citizens were impressed into the army on the day preceding election. The jails were filled. Ballots were not given to the people and all voting booths were installed either in army barracks or in police stations. From which causes none of the anti-reelectionists attempted to vote.

Zacatecas--At Nieves 804 votes were reported, though Madero watchers counted only 60 citizens entering the polling places.⁷⁸

Force, intimidation, and fraud were the order of the day rather than the exception. The Díaz-Corral ticket was triumphant, but its political victory served to unleash the pent-up discontent in the Mexican Revolution that followed.

Díaz and Corral were sworn in by the Congress on December 1, 1910. After the election the rumors that Madero had heard of Corral's illness

⁷⁸John Kenneth Turner, "Election Day in Mexico," 8 October 1910, in CGPD, reel 274, doc. 14908.

were verified. In the early part of November, Ramón Corral went to El Riego, a tiny community near Tehuacan, trying to recover his health. He wired Díaz that he was beginning to feel better. Corral remained at El Riego at least until late February, 1911.⁷⁹ He had worked hard and unscrupulously to retain his vice-presidency and with it the opportunity to rule Mexico. His activities in 1909-1910 had served to increase the general hostility to the regime he served to the point where it could no longer be contained. Corral himself was too ill to help in the attempt to contain it. With Madero in full revolt, and with his prospects of victory improving, Corral decided to leave the country. In early April Ramón Corral, still weak and ill, boarded a train enroute to Veracruz; on April 11, 1911, he took passage on a French liner, the Espagne. The following day Corral wired Díaz to say goodbye, knowing perhaps that he would never return to his native land.⁸⁰

⁷⁹Corral to Rafael Chousal, 22 February 1911, CGPD, reel 368, doc. 4152.

⁸⁰Corral to Díaz, 12 April 1911, CGPD, reel 369, doc. 8464.

PART III
EXILE AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER VII
DEPARTURE AND EXILE

Though the revolution was spreading throughout Mexico, Corral decided to leave his native land and go to Paris for health reasons. On March 28, 1911, he wrote to his son, Ramón Corral, Jr., who was studying in Philadelphia, about his plans. In the letter Corral indicated to Ramón, Jr., that Amparo, his oldest daughter, and Guillermo Obregón, Jr., were getting married on April 8 and that the couple would join the Corral family on the 10th in Veracruz, where the group was to board a French liner and depart for Paris. Corral informed his son that in Paris they were to meet Adolfo Bulle who would accompany the Corral's to Berlin so that Bulle could act as an interpreter with the doctors Corral would consult there. After Berlin, Corral added, he would take up residence wherever the doctors recommended; the family would also live near by. He advised his son that when his school vacations came up, he should stay in Philadelphia until his daughters in California were given vacations, at which time Ramón, Jr. should meet his sisters in New York and all of them should take passage to Europe.¹

The Corral family left for Veracruz from Mexico City on April 11, 1911. The party included Ramón Corral, his wife Amparo, his daughter Amparo and her new husband Guillermo Obregón, Jr., Carmen Corral (daughter), Josefina Escalante (a friend), Refugio Villa (Corral's servant), Margarita

¹Diary of Ramón Corral, 28 March 1911 to 4 July 1912, copy in possession of the author, p. 1. (hereafter cited as Corral, "Diary").

Morales (the children's maid), Ignacio Vidaurreta and his son Valentín, and Gabriel Ortiz. A small party was at the station to bid the Corral's farewell when they left for Veracruz. Among the party was Ramón Prida, a noted científico.²

In Veracruz the Corrals were received by the military commander, General Joaquín Maas, and other military officials. The Corrals boarded the Espagne that evening, and the following day around 11 A.M. the ship set sail for the port of St. Nazaire, France. Corral's reminiscent note of the departure was sad: "Perhaps some of my friends are left with the impression that we will not see each other again because of my state of health."³

Two days after the departure, the Espagne arrived in Havana, where Corral was greeted by Mexican officials. Corral went ashore in Havana and was immediately confronted with reporters. He granted them an interview; but stated that because of his poor health which had kept him away from public matters for six months, he was not as well-informed as he should be. Corral entered his impressions of the event in his diary in a way that clearly illustrates his keen powers of observation. The Corrals departed from Havana on the eve of the 15th.⁴

After stops at Coruna and Santander in Spain, the Espagne reached St. Nazaire on April 27, 1911. At Sandander, Corral went ashore and talked to a personal friend, Ínigo Noriega. In the conversation Corral expressed his views on the armed rebellion. He reportedly told Noriega

²Corral, "Diary," p. 3.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., pp. 4-5.

that the Americans had stimulated the revolution and their intentions were intervention and conquest. He added that the government of Mexico could quell the revolution, but if intervention occurred the rebels would side with the government. When the United States government got wind of this, they demanded an explanation; Henry Lane Wilson, United States Ambassador to Mexico, reported that no one believed in the authenticity of the statements attributed to Corral.⁵

The trip from Veracruz to St. Nazaire had been a pleasant one except for those members of the Corral party who became seasick. From St. Nazaire, the party took a train to Paris, where the Corrals were met by a group of friends. The Corral family then took up residence at the Royal Palace Hotel. During his first few days there Corral visited with old friends and well-wishers, visited tourist attractions in the city, and attended social functions; but after several days he began to lament about his illness.⁶ Corral's illness--a high fever, cold, and other pains--continued. In early May he consulted a Colombian physician. The doctor examined Corral and diagnosed the illness as a gall-bladder ailment. For the next few days, Corral remained ill and spend most of his time in the hotel while his family visited throughout the city. The accounts that he writes are those of a sick man ready for the grave. Several days after his examination by the Colombian physician, a Dr. Chauffard, who was a renowned specialist on illnesses of the liver, examined Corral and placed him on a strict diet for the purpose of making urinary analyses.⁷

⁵Daniel Cosío Villegas, Historia Moderna de México, El Porfiriato: La Vida Política Exterior Parte Segunda (Mexico: Editorial Hermes, 1963), vol. 6, pp. 458-459.

⁶Corral, "Diary," pp. 11-12.

⁷Ibid., pp. 12-13.

While in his Paris apartment treating his illness, Corral received news of the Revolution in Mexico. His written statements were those of a man who saw the whole cause lost. Corral wrote, "a new concession to the enemy, a new error, I don't want to think of those things."⁸

The Sonoran native was seriously ill and a dying man. Thus he consulted almost any doctor that he thought could alleviate his ailments, one of which was incurable--cancer.⁹ As a result he visited several doctors in Paris and underwent chest X-rays (an invention unknown in Mexico at the time), urinalysis, and even a Wassermann test.¹⁰

On May 17, Corral received a telegram from Díaz by way of the Mexican consul in Paris, José Maria Vega Limon. In the telegram Díaz asked Corral for his resignation; Corral sent it to Francisco León de la Barra, Minister of Foreign Relations, so that it would be presented at the same time Díaz presented his own resignation.¹¹ Corral also speculated on reports he had received stating that Díaz was sick, and that even Díaz' old age did not explain his debility and the panic that seemed to have taken hold of him.

After several more visits with doctors, Corral began to realize that his illness might not be curable.¹² Eventually the doctors prescribed an operation, and Corral had a long discussion with them before he allowed

⁸Ibid., p. 14.

⁹Interview with Hortencia Corral, Viuda de Antillón, Mexico, D. F., 28 November 1971. She confirmed that her father's illness was cancer.

¹⁰Corral, "Diary," pp. 15-16.

¹¹Ibid., p. 17.

¹²Ibid., p. 18.

the surgery. Corral believed that he did not have cancer, but then added, "if I do, the operation will not do any harm." Finally four doctors met with Corral in his hotel room on May 25, 1911, and decided that surgery was necessary.¹³

The following day, Corral read about Díaz' resignation. The next morning, on the 27th, he knew that all of the ministers had resigned and that Díaz was to leave for Paris.¹⁴ On the 28th, he read further newspaper accounts of Díaz' departure for Veracruz and wrote in his diary that he did not want to believe this news, since it did not correspond with the ideas and temperament of Díaz, who never had been afraid of trouble. If these stories were true, Corral wrote, it all occurred because the government showed a weakness it did not have, and because it employed a policy of conciliation to the enemy. What occurred, Corral thought, was that the government lost the respect of the people. Corral concluded his entry by writing that the most serious thing he feared after the fall of Díaz was that anarchy would result in Mexico. His fear was justified by later events.¹⁵

The ex-Vice-President entered the hospital for his operation on the day he read of Díaz' resignation. His entry in his log for that day indicated despair by asking, "When will I be able to leave and how?" He remained in the hospital until mid-June, 1911.¹⁶ After his departure

¹³Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 20-21.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁶Ibid.

from the hospital, Corral took up residence in a four-bedroom house at Number 17 Rue D' Astorga. Two days later Díaz paid a visit to the Corral residence, but Corral was out. That evening Corral returned the visit. In writing of his conversation with Díaz, he noted that the ex-President was in a state of deep disappointment, and for that reason the conversation centered as little as possible on the political situation in Mexico.¹⁷

Five days after his conversation with Díaz, Corral went to the railroad station in Paris to greet Limantour, who was arriving from New York. Díaz did not attend the welcoming session since he had already left for Germany. Corral lamented that the Díaz family perhaps had not gone to meet the ex-finance minister because Díaz attributed his fall to Limantour. He added in his notes that, judging Limantour benevolently, he believed that the man had tried to work out a solution, but that he was incapable of fighting; because of this, Limantour made an error in judgement and began to grant concessions to the revolutionaries, believing that in this manner the revolution would end sooner and the danger of foreign intervention could be avoided.¹⁸

Corral paid another visit to Limantour two days after the finance minister's arrival. Limantour wasn't home, but that evening he returned the call and the two former powers sat and discussed the political situation in Mexico prior to their downfall. Limantour informed Corral that in the latter days of the Porfiriato and just prior to the downfall, it

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 22-23

¹⁸Ibid., p. 24.

was the wish of the people that Díaz resign as the only means to establish peace. He added that Díaz did not want to step down from his seat of power and that his wife, Carmelita, urged him to stay on. Eventually, Limantour added, he was able to persuade Díaz to vacate the office and put the government under an interim President.¹⁹

Limantour told Corral that if Díaz had not resigned, the results would have been disastrous, since the revolutionary forces, which numbered about 16,000, would have attacked the capital, and looting and pillaging would have resulted. Even though the government could have defended itself by shedding blood, the final outcome would have been the fall of Mexico City to the rebel soldiers. As a result, Limantour continued, the poor would have shared in the pillage. At that time the banks of Mexico City and the federal treasury had about 80,000,000 pesos in metallic reserves which belonged to the government, institutions of credit, and to foreigners; the prospect of foreign intervention, should this money be lost to pillagers, scared him. The ex-finance minister backed up his arguments by stating that only 2700 soldiers were in the capital, and among them they only had two machine guns. He added that out of the 2700 men, 1500 were indispensable for the security of the jails, penitentiary, and munitions deposits in the city. That left only 1200 men to combat the rebels. Limantour agreed with Corral that perhaps, in the beginning, the revolution could have been stopped if the government had not made concessions. But, he added, he had co-operated in this concession policy and

¹⁹Ibid., p. 25.

defended it; and though he might have been in error, there was nothing anyone could do during the last days of the regime.²⁰

Two days later the two met again in the presence of Pablo Macedo and Roberto Nuñez, all old científicos. Again Limantour agreed that he was responsible for making concessions to the Maderistas. Limantour then condemned Madero and agreed that perhaps a new government could be created by the men who had been deposed from power.²¹

The second conference with Limantour was on July 3, 1911. Eight days later Corral and his family left for a trip through the Rhineland. They met Díaz and his wife on July 15 at Nauheim, Germany.²² Corral wrote that in their conversation both Carmelita and Porfirio constantly talked about Mexico. After their visit with the old dictator, the Corrals returned to Paris in the middle of July; four days later they headed to Liverpool to meet their daughters, who were arriving from New York.²³ On the 25th of that month the Lusitania arrived in Liverpool carrying Corral's daughters, Hortencia, Leonor, and Amalia; his son, Enrique; and Petronila Velasco, the girls' chaperone. Ramón, Jr., had already come to Europe. The Corral party then spend a few days in London and returned to Paris at the end of July, 1911.²⁴

²⁰Ibid., pp. 25-26.

²¹Ibid., pp. 26-27.

²²Ibid., pp. 33-34.

²³Ibid., p. 35.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 38-42.

Apparently the Corrales were not short of money, since they bought a Panhard car in early August. After the purchase of the automobile, the Corrales took a trip through Europe in their new acquisition. Corral's descriptions of the roads, places, monuments, and everything else he saw, are uncannily detailed and reflect his keen powers of observation. After touring parts of Europe, the Corrales returned to Paris early in September.²⁵ From there Corral went to Berlin to see yet another doctor. He stayed in Berlin a couple of days, and on September 15, he wired Díaz at the Hotel Royal in Ems, where Díaz was staying. Corral wished Díaz well on Independence day. Then in his diary he reflected on the past and noted how much change a year made.²⁶

By this time, Corral had visited two or three doctors in Berlin who reassured him as to the progress of his recovery. He then decided to go to Dresden, Vienna, and then return to Paris in early October. He made the trip and was back in Paris on October 7, and then departed for Hamburg in the middle of the month. During their stay in Europe, the Corrales toured frequently to see as much of Europe as possible. Corral and family left Hamburg in the latter part of October for Berlin, where the ex-Vice-President spent his time at zoos, plays, theaters, and sight-seeing. He stayed in Berlin for two weeks; then the party departed for Brussels, and, finally, back to Paris.²⁷

²⁵Ibid., pp. 45-73. These pages give a detailed account of his trip and his vivid descriptions of the places he visited.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 85-86.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 91-141.

In late November, Corral began to suffer from high fever, congestion of the throat, and a bile infection. For ten days he remained in his hotel without going out. He was still ill when he received word that Francisco León de la Barra, the man who replaced Díaz as interim President, had arrived in Paris on November 30, 1911.²⁸ Corral paid a visit to the man who had, for a brief period of time, occupied the position that Corral had seemed destined for; however, the conversation with de la Barra in his suite at the Carlton Hotel, was shortlived because of other company.²⁹

After the visit with de la Barra, the Corrals toured much of Italy, going to Nice, Genoa, Turin, Milan, Venice, Florence, Rome, Naples, Palermo, back to Naples, Florence, Milan, and on to Paris, arriving in the city on February 16, 1912.³⁰

Corral spent much of his time at home, going out once in a while to the theatre. His daily entries in his diary become shorter; once he reflected back on his marriage, stating that he had a big family and a granddaughter and that life was beginning to end; he added that a lot of things had occurred since he was first married 24 years ago.³¹ From the notes, it appears that Corral's spirit was flagging; he found himself lost in a strange land, perhaps bored. He often walked the boulevards of Paris either alone or with his friend, Crespo Chato, just to occupy his time.

²⁸Ibid., p. 142-144.

²⁹Ibid., p. 145.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 146-260.

³¹Ibid., p. 265.

Often he would enter notes such as "there is nothing to say," or, after his granddaughter's baptism he would write, "we don't have a house to celebrate nor is there humor for fiestas."³²

On March 5, 1912, Corral wrote that the news arriving from Mexico was alarming; that the states of Puebla, Tlaxcala, Guerrero, and Mexico were under attack in the name of Zapatismo; in other areas like Chihuahua, Durango, and Veracruz, people were proclaiming Emilio Vásquez Gómez for the presidency. "The curious thing," Corral continued, "is that all are proclaiming the Plan of San Luis, the plan with which Madero triumphed. These rebels all charged that the plan has not been fulfilled, but one must note that the Zapata revolt started before Madero was President."³³ Corral remarked that, "in another sense the plan, like all revolutionary plans, was not possible of fulfillment," especially "in a half-civilized country like Mexico. In the four months that Madero has been President," he stated, "nothing had been accomplished."³⁴

Corral continued expounding on Maderismo, writing that the revolt had been born and augmented due to the errors of Madero, his incompetence for the presidency, his ineptitude with his followers, and because of the demagogic ideas of the men involved in the revolution who proclaimed that Mexico could govern itself.³⁵ He added that when these ideas were put into practice by Madero during the interim government of León de la Barra,

³²Ibid., p. 269.

³³Ibid., p. 270.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

all respect for authority was lost and everyone desired that his own ideas should rule. As a result, the discontents in every election, whether for governor, jefe politico, or ayuntamiento president, considered it their right to rebel when their candidate was not elected. Corral added that since the government tried to disarm them with promises, its prestige was weakened and the factions multiplied. He continued, saying that some groups even proclaimed Bernardo Reyes for President since Reyes was in San Antonio, Texas, encouraging the rebellion.³⁶

Corral held a dismal view of the future of Mexico. Reyes had given himself up after an unsuccessful revolt and was now in prison. "Reyes was not a leader," wrote Corral, "but a banner of rebellion."³⁷ Reyismo declined, but Zapatismo grew in alarming proportions and the spirit had taken such a hold of Mexico that Madero adopted energetic and repressive measures. It was too late, Corral predicted; it was too difficult, if not impossible, to control revolution, he wrote.³⁸

Corral predicted that Madero would fail like Díaz. He stated that Díaz fell because he never listened to advice from others. "I remember perfectly that when I spoke to him about organizing force and increasing the army, he said, 'it can't be done, there is no one who will join voluntarily and I don't want forced soldiers. The governors don't help, don't want to help, and then they want me to do everything.'"³⁹

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

Corral added that he had advised Diaz to send money and arms to the governors--especially arms which the government had in abundance--and jefes to help recruit the troops necessary to defeat the rebels. To this Díaz had responded that "there were no jefes qualified, and if the government spent money then there would be nothing left."⁴⁰ "With this view," Corral added, "it was inevitable that Díaz should fall. The weaknesses of the government gave Madero strength and popularity and an illogical triumph that he should never have reached."⁴¹ Corral concluded that the same weaknesses and ineptitude demonstrated by Díaz in his latter days were being exhibited by Madero, and that the rebellions were weakening Madero's popularity. The difference between Madero and Díaz, Corral said, was that Madero had taken some strong measures that might save him, while Díaz remained weak in his last days until the overthrow of his government. Corral stated that the newspapers were publishing reports of a mass exodus of Americans from Mexico and that the French government had ordered the ship Descartes to Mexican waters. This news, said Corral, frightened him. The situation in Mexico, instead of getting better, was becoming worse; and this could serve as a pretext for foreign intervention, "the only shame that we lack."⁴²

On March 10, 1912, Corral's good friend and biographer, Manuel Uruchurtu, who had just arrived from Mexico, visited Corral and confirmed

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 271.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

Corral's notions that Madero's government was in trouble and likely to fall. Uruchurtu also warned Corral that Mexico could possibly be invaded.⁴³

Corral spent the rest of the month of March in Paris visiting art galleries, walking through the streets of Paris, writing letters, and dining with friends like Uruchurtu. Daily he would record the things he saw, the changes in climate, places that he visited and any news that he thought was of interest.⁴⁴ The record in the dairy suggests a weary and lonely man reminiscing about the past events and places of Mexico. On April 2, for example, he wrote that this was the anniversary of the assault on Puebla, one of Díaz' big battles. He then reflected on Mexico and commented,

Díaz lost it all due to his own fault; first, for not wanting to understand that he should retire from power; second, for the methods he employed to continue as president and until his [political] death; he fooled everyone to maintain an impossible equilibrium among all for the purpose of floating by himself, faultless and clean above the disaster of the rest; the imposition of governors and functionaries whose first quality was their unconditional loyalty to him, although they were hated by the people and even though he [Díaz] knew that they exploited their power for personal reasons; the error of trying to appear as a democrat so that he could obtain with that new title, the support of the people in his latest re-election; an error which made him publish the famous Creelman interview, stimulating the creation of opposition parties who with speeches and

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 272-287.

newspapers moved and excited the public spirit, awakening ideas of democracy incompatible with the continuation of General Diaz in power; and lastly his military blunders in trying personally to direct, from Mexico, with the collaboration of his son Porfirio, and his minister of war General González Cosío, the campaign against the Maderista revolution, and his fear and his debility which made him begin to look to the enemy for negotiations..., to the point where his friends were sacrificed so he could save himself, believing that everyone else except himself was unpopular, and finally turning over the government to a revolutionary force which controlled only Ciudad Juárez.⁴⁵

Corral concluded that even though Díaz was responsible for his own downfall, no one could forget his services to his country, and that the punishment of exile was hard and difficult. He stated that Díaz should not have been required to spend the rest of his years in exile, nor "forgotten like Santa Anna."⁴⁶

In April, 1912, Corral was again walking the streets of Paris and continuing his visits to cathedrals, theatres, and tourist centers. On April 16, he received news of the sinking of the Titanic. This caused him a grave and personal loss, because his good friend, Manuel R. Uruchurtu, was one of the passengers who drowned.⁴⁷ After lamenting for several days on Uruchurtu's death, Corral traveled to Nice, Milan, Venice, Florence,

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 287.

⁴⁶Ibid.

Rome, and Naples. Having spent almost a month in Italy, Corral returned to Paris on May 18, 1912.⁴⁸

Back in Paris, Corral was visited by Lorenzo Torres, one of his old associates from Sonora. Later Corral met Justo Sierra, who also arrived in Paris. On May 27, Corral wrote that the sensation of the day was an article in the French paper, Le Matin, stating that Limantour had been accused in the Mexican Congress of securing loans in 1908 and 1911 without authorization of Congress, and that Limantour had used the money to obtain the elections of his candidates.⁴⁹

After the article appeared, Limantour called Corral, Pablo Macedo, and Roberto Nuñez to consult with them. They all decided to telegraph friends in Mexico to investigate the charges against Limantour. Corral pointed out that Congress had only four days left in its regular session; and if the Limantour business was not taken up during those four days, the business would pass to the Congress to be elected in June. Limantour feared the newly-elected chamber would contain more of his enemies, and that it would not render a fair decision.⁵⁰

Perhaps sensing that the end was near, Corral, in mid-June, frequently entered comments in his diary such as "I am without humor, and with energy for nothing, I feel sick, I have made several visits to kill time."⁵¹ The ex-Vice-President was like a prisoner who often engaged himself in the minutest detail just to allow time to fly by and occupy his mind.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 297-322.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 323.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 323-324.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 331.

In the latter part of June, Limantour, Pablo Macedo, and Roberto Nuñez visited Corral, and the foursome quickly fell into conversation about the political situation in Mexico. They spoke of Madero and the Revolution he had fomented; Corral once again reiterated his belief that the Díaz regime had not been defeated by force, but rather by concessions and indecision. Corral told Limantour that when he (Limantour) had returned from Paris with his ideas of concession, he had opposed them and had so told Díaz. He informed the ex-finance minister that one of his (Limantour's) errors was to have allowed Díaz to sacrifice friends from the científicos to save his own (Díaz's) political hide.⁵²

Corral wrote that Limantour responded by saying that Díaz was to blame for all that had occurred. He also added that Díaz never followed his (Limantour's) lead unless he agreed with him. And, Limantour added, if he had stayed with Díaz until the end it was because of his loyalty and because he did not want it to be said that he deserted Porfirio in time of need.⁵³

The entries in the Corral diary cease in July. Four months later, on November 10, 1912, Ramón Corral died. Neither Díaz nor Limantour were present at the funeral.⁵⁴

⁵²Ibid., p. 339.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Diccionario Porrúa de historia biografía y geografía de México, 2d ed., n. v. "Corral, Ramón." Interview with Hortencia Corral, Viuda de Antillón, Mexico, D. F., 28 November 1971. According to Mrs. Corral, Limantour was in London and Díaz in Spain during Corral's funeral. Mrs. Corral showed me the numerous telegrams the family received at the time of her father's death and stated that the doctors had said that Corral died from cancer.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

The Madero movement, considered as a political wave, rolled up by agitation against economic abuses, need not have been permitted to overwhelm the government. It is my opinion that the elimination of Corral alone would have sufficed. Unquestionably it was essential, and no plan to save Diaz which did not have this as its first article, can be said to have been good. In fact I have the greatest difficulty in understanding how a plan which lacked this feature could have been conceived in sincerity. Everybody knew that Corral must be thrown overboard. No other Jonah was ever so reliably guaranteed to sink a ship of state.¹

By 1910 it seemed that most everyone in Mexico, and outside it, who was not directly associated with the Díaz regime, claimed that Corral was more of a liability to the government than an asset. It was apparent that Díaz was not fond of him; Díaz did not want a Vice-President. Porfirio was reluctant to accept Corral as Vice-President in 1904, slow in endorsing him for re-election in 1910, and lax in protecting him from hostile news comment. By 1910 Corral had acquired an unenviable reputation. Carleton Beals called him "...a Yaqui slave trader who had slipped down from Sonora to a riotous life in the capital..."² William Weber

¹Edward I. Bell, The Political Shame of Mexico (New York: McBride, Nast and Company, 1914), p. 99.

²Carleton Beals, Porfirio Diaz: Dictator of Mexico (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1932), p. 357.

Johnson says that "He was regarded as the protector of commercialized vice in Mexico City and suffered from a far advanced social disease."³ He was called "...the most-hated man in the country [Mexico];"⁴ and a variety of lesser superlatives.

Since much of this black reputation is supposedly warranted by his career before he came to the Federal District, that portion of his life and the black elements in his reputation which supposedly relate to it, will be examined first. Corral was largely unknown outside of Sonora and neighboring states when he came to the Federal District in 1910. He did not have a black reputation then--he had little reputation at all.

During his long career as a state politician in Sonora, Corral prospered. He was not rich when he entered politics, but he became rich. He fattened himself at the public trough in a manner common to most politicians of the Porfiriato. This he did by using his public position to award contracts for such things as electrification, construction, etc., to companies controlled by himself and his friends. He accepted retainers from domestic and foreign companies which did business in Sonora. Corral knew the political and economic system well, and he knew how to make it work to his advantage. In that, he was not unique. Corral deserved censure, perhaps, for using public power to enrich himself--but no special censure beyond a general condemnation of all Porfirian politicians seems called for.

³William Weber Johnson, Heroic Mexico, The Violent Emergence of A Modern Nation (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1968), p. 16.

⁴Ibid. ; Henry B. Parkes, A History of Mexico, rev. ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1950, p. 313. Parkes states that Corral "had been picked partly because nobody would ever want to kill Diaz in order to make Corral President."

Corral's role in the Yaqui affair redounded to his discredit. He was closely associated with the movement to deprive the Yaquis of their lands, with their deportation, and with their relocation (or sale). He profited personally from their loss, and was accused of profiting from their relocation.

These aspects of his career were largely unknown at the time he arrived in Mexico City to assume control of Federal District governorship. He was at that time a political unknown outside the northwest. Indeed, the darker side of his reputation did not begin to emerge until the succession crisis of 1903-1904. When Corral was catapulted into the position of contender for the vice-presidency in 1904, his opponents used his past, and the fact that it was generally unknown, to paint him as blackly as possible. Porfirio Díaz, who objected to being coerced into accepting a Vice-President and who preferred Mariscal if he had to have anyone, did not protect Corral from hostile comment in the press. It almost seemed as if Díaz enjoyed the discomfort of the man who was being foisted off on him as a potential successor.

While serving as Vice-President, Corral also filled the office of Minister of Government--the hatchetman of the Díaz administration. His strong-arm tactics, his high position, and the jealousy with which other ambitious men viewed his probable succession to the presidency, produced the most unfavorable comment ever levelled against a high-ranking member of the Díaz hierarchy. Díaz was protected from criticism; Corral was not. It seems likely that much of the hostility directed against Corral was aimed at Díaz.

Bell and others, who claim that the abandonment of Corral could have saved Díaz, are overstating the position the man held. Corral--or any Vice-President, especially if he also held the Ministry of Government--could not escape accusations by enemies of the Porfiriato and rival pretenders. Díaz could have dumped Corral, but that would not have saved him. The anger expressed by the Mexican people in the Revolution did not build up solely in the last ten years of the Porfiriato. By 1910, nothing except defeat at the polls, retirement, or death could have saved Porfirio Díaz from being overthrown.

As for Corral, nothing could have saved him. Even had he not been dying at the end of 1910, it is unlikely that he--or anyone else--could have held the Porfirian system together. Corral was a great administrator; but he did not have the acceptance of his leadership necessary to contend with rivals. Díaz never allowed anyone to gain that degree of power.

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