**Obregon’s Presidency**

* Elected to office in special election, assumes control in November 1920
* Pragmatic business approach to government
* Sought accomodation with all groups except reactionary clergy and landlords
* Modern version of “pan o palo”
  + “Bread or Club”
    - With me or against me, basically

**Obregon’s Policies**

* Land reform
* Labor
* Education
* Indigenismo
  + Study of indigenous populations
* U.S. relationship

**Land Reform**

* Agrarian reform was useful safety valve for peasant discontent
* Created national agrarian commission which oversaw state commissions
* Power to expropriate hacendado land for landless villages
* Paid for with 20 year bonds
* Reform proceeded slowly due to:
  + Litigation by landlords
  + Armed resistance by landlords
  + Opposition by clergy
* 3 million acres distributed
* 320 million acres in hands of hacendados
* Even with land, failure occurred as government did not provide: seeds, tools, adequate credit or training

Luke Notes: *Large land owners tried to slow the process of the distribution of land (which was taking away their land) by using the slowness of the court system as an anti-catalyst.*

*The laws of the constitution was supposed to take the power away from the large landowners, but since they were using the court system itself it was largely successful*

*The church was not worth money per se, but land gave people power.*

**Labor**

* Encouraged labor to organize
* Confederacion Regional Obrera Mexicana (CROM) - labor union headed by Luis Morones
* Ties to Samuel Gompers and the AFL in the United States
* Semi-official status, supported by the government
* Co-opted by Obregon

Luke Notes: *Labor unions not part of CROM did exist, but weren’t very influential. Due to this, CROM had all the power and was able to decide which strikes were successful and which were not.*

*Unions were fighting for equal pay, benefits, etc., which seemed very communist the the US: there was*

**Education**

* Jose Vasconcelos - Secretary of Education
* Created new type of rural school, La Casa del Pueblo (The House of the People)
  + Designed to serve all of village
  + Three Rs, art, music, sports, theater, instruction in sanitation and agriculture
  + Idealistic but at times unprepared teachers
  + Itinerant teachers were sent to train those in the village
* Murals on public buildings
* Conflict between new secular schools and religious schools
  + Priest denounced secular education
* Obregon did not enforce Article 3 of the Constitution (ban on religious primary schools)
  + In the absence of state resources better to be taught by priest than stay illiterate

Luke Notes: *Vasconcelos wanted to keep classes separate, which was largely decided by race. This was done by giving worse education to lower class citizens. Not that the education was very good in the first place. Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic were taught, but nothing else. Sanitation was pretty bad and people died.*

*Murals had themes of aztec mexico, prosperity, colonialism: where we come from and where we go.*

*Changes in education happened too quickly, and weren’t organized. Obregon decided that even a bad education was better than no education. This also got church leaders to be the teachers despite the separation of church and state.*

**Indigenismo**

* Reassessment of Indian cultural heritage, pushing the greatness of old Indian arts
* Manuel Gamio - director of Office of Anthropology (1st in Americas)
* Study of Teotihuacan
* Preserve & restore cultural heritage
* Amass data for sound plan of economic and social recovery
* Partisans of Revolution idealized Mexico

Luke Notes: Instruments used to represent the “time of glory” in Mexico, which people wanted to go back to (never happened). “Pure Mexicans” were considered to have more purity and were placed in the light of the aztecs.

**U.S. Relationship**

* U.S. withholds diplomatic recognition of the Obregon government
* Obregon compromises
  + Threat of counter-revolutionary coup against selection of Plutarco Calles as a successor
* Bucareli Agreement - August 1923
  + The agricultural properties expropriated from U.S. would be paid with bonds, if it weren’t greater than 1755 hectares
  + The properties that exceed that length, the payment would be immediate and in cash
  + It would create a commission to be responsible for reviewing the claims pending since 1868, claims arising out of the Revolution would be solved separately
  + Regarding oil, article 27 was not retroactive to the Americans who had acquired their leases before 1917, allowing them to continue exploiting the oil freely
* U.S. gives formal recognition to Obregon government
* Coup attempt - December 1923
  + Put down coup with military supplies purchased from the U.S.

Luke Notes: *US didn’t like the subsoil rule of article 27, since it took away their oil rights. Obregon was like “ughhh” because he needed American weapons, so he said “jk” and gave them subsoil rights. This fixed the problem. Essentially, article 27 was repealed. Revenue from oil fields was used to pay of debts that Mexico had.*