



UCBMUN XXI



# The Porfiriato: Mexico's Anti-Revolution

Head Chair: Noah Gerber  
Crisis Director: Aric Chang

# Table of Contents

I. Introduction	3
A. Committee Overview	3
B. Message from the Dias	4
C. Modified Rules	6
II. Historical Information	7
A. Formation of the Porfiriato	7
B. Political Consolidation	7
III. Topic 1: Business and Commerce	10
A. Effects of Railroads	10
B. Institutional Safeguards	10
IV. Topic 2: The Peasant and Indigenous Problem	11
A. Undermining the Village Economy	11
V. Natural Resources and Industry	12
A. The Burden of Trade with the US	12
VI. Topic 4: Where we are Now	13
A. Emiliano Zapata	13
B. Pancho Villa	13
C. Francisco Madero	13
VII. Character Descriptions	15

## **Introduction**

### **Committee Overview**

Hello and welcome to the meeting of the mightiest minds Mexico has to offer! Although trouble is stirring around us, we have the capabilities to lead the ship that is our Republic through the turbulent waters and roaring winds of internal discord. Despite the fact that we, as the Porfiriato, have enjoyed decades of stability under our loving leader's direction, he is growing old, and the people restless.

We must remember that Don Porfirio helped remove the puppet emperor Maximilian and wrested control of this country away from the French. Not only is he a glorious war hero, but he has also helped to advance this country from being the peasant farming garbage it was before. He has helped to bring in foreign investors to finance glorious building and industrial projects that have advanced our country and made us quite rich. He has also been a master diploma, balancing American investing with European investing and thus repairing our relations with Spain and France. We have never had such a growth in industry and finance and this influx of wealth is all thanks to President Diaz.<sup>i</sup>

We as the científicos have benefited from our President's success and he has done right by us. He has gifted many of use

with rich and influential contracts that have helped us to secure our positions in the government. He has ensured that we as a body have our hand in every part of Mexico's workings. We control the oil fields, the textile mills, the farms, the law, and best of all: the people. With Don Porfirio's success has come our success, and we as his faithful colleagues and advisors must work to ensure that his legacy continues one. Many would love to see us fall, but we will work to make sure that does not happen and will stop anyone who attempts to get in our way.

However, with growing discontent fissures have begun to form in the country to and put our commercial and political interests in peril. We must work together as Mexico's elite to ensure that our interests are maintained, foreign incursion is prevented, and stability returns to our country. As we combine resources and ideas, we can work to ensure that insurrectionists do not gain a foothold in this country and that we will maintain power. There are many in the peasantry who would like to see our leadership come to an end and we cannot allow that. So gentlemen, let us face the task that has been set before us and work to ensure the future glory of Mexico!

## Head Chair Welcome Letter

Hello and welcome to Porfiriato: Mexico's Anti-Revolution committee at UCBMUN XXI! My name is Noah Gerber and I have the honor of serving as your head chair. I am a third year at Cal, double majoring in history and political sciences. This is my sixth year in MUN and my first time serving as a head chair (though I have vice chaired a couple of committees). Aside from MUN, I enjoy playing my guitar, reading any good fiction and non-fiction, geeking out to DC and Star Wars, and unwinding to some indie/alt tunes. So any recommendations for new bands are greatly appreciated!

This committee seeks to examine the tumultuous beginnings of the Mexican Revolution. While seemingly simple, the Revolution embodied the interests and mindsets of various revolutionaries and politicians. Delegates will work to understand the interests of the people and do their best to keep the regime in place. Given this, delegates should be prepared for a fast paced committee that will deal with diplomatic, military, and personal problems. It is expected that delegates will come into committee with an accurate understanding of the history of Mexico up until this point and what the various causes are that started the Revolution. Of course, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. I look forward to conference!

Noah Gerber

Head Chair

Porfiriato: Mexico's Anti-Revolution

[noahhgerber@berkeley.edu](mailto:noahhgerber@berkeley.edu)

### Crisis Director Welcome Letter

Welcome to the “Porfiriato: Mexico’s Anti-Revolution” committee at UCBMUN XXI! My name is Aric Chang, and I am honored to serve as your Crisis Director. I am a third-year; I am a Political Science major with a concentration on International Relations, and an Asian Studies major with a concentration on China. This is my third year with UCBMUN. Last year, I was the Crisis Director for the Battle of Red Cliff committee. Outside of MUN, I am an editor for the Berkeley Student Journal for Asian Studies and the Pledge Educator for Alpha Kappa Lambda Fraternity. I am also in the Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program at my school, in which I conduct research with one of the professors from the Political Science Department. My interests include listening to hours of EDM on Soundcloud, going to concerts and festivals, and partying at my fraternity. Unfortunately, there is no way for me to sound less basic.

This committee is set as the cabinet of *científicos* of Porfirio Diaz in 1910. As the technocrats of a ruthless ruler, you must maintain control over a rebellious nation. Labor strikes in the north, peasant rebellions in the south, and United States intervention are just three of the many issues your cabinet must resolve in order to survive. Also, there will be a lot of war. Successful delegates must be able to maintain order over Mexico and also win battles against enemies you are bound to make in the north, the south, and abroad. Many of the crises will be time-sensitive, and be prepared to make or break unexpected alliances. I expect you all to be as cunning as *científicos*; I want to see communiqués, joint-personal directives, backstabbing, and assassinations. The more creative and the more daring your plans are, the more likely I’ll have them pass. However, though I love crazy crisis plans, it is very important that you set up your plans and assassinations with due preparation. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I wish you all the luck in maintaining the power of the Porfiriato.

Aric Chang

Crisis Director

Porfiriato: Mexico’s Anti-Revolution

arichang909@berkeley.edu

**Modified Rules**

For the most part committee will follow UC Berkeley Model United Nation's rules. There are a few specific situations however that we have worked to clarify what exactly is and is not allowed.

The first situation is what can and cannot occur in the event of suspected sabotage or enemy collusion by a delegate in committee. What is allowed is the removal of said delegates voting rights for 20 minutes. A vote must take place to remove voting rights and it must pass by a simple majority. Within those 20 minutes, guilt must be established via information from Crisis or admission by said delegate. Should a trial/Q&A be voted upon, the chair will select delegates at random to ask questions. The accused delegate is required to answer all questions asked, but said delegate has the choice to be truthful or not. No questions on delegate character will be tolerated. The Q&A will be considered sufficient means of proof (especially if the delegate does not confess and nothing can be gained from crisis) and guilt can be decided by a simple majority upon the completion of the Q&A. Should guilt be established, according action must be taken. By according action, we mean execution, exile, jail, etc. Punishment must also be voted upon and can occur with a simple majority. If guilt is not established

within those 20 minutes the delegates full voting rights are returned and the delegate will be assumed to be innocent until further evidence is discovered. What is not allowed is the removal of the delegate from the room, silencing of the delegate, or removal of delegate's ability to send and receive notes.

The next situation we have defined is in the event of a coup. It is acceptable for a delegate or delegates to work to remove President Diaz from power. A coup can only occur via directive (personal, joint, or committee wide). The execution of President Diaz is permissible along with the establishment of a committee member as the new president (must be elected by 2/3 vote). The newly elected leader can select a Vice President and may grant new portfolio powers to other members of committee (within reason). The new leader is not allowed to remove any other delegate's portfolio powers however and cannot veto directives passed by the committee (unless the committee votes to allow the new president veto powers).

If any questions arise before or during committee about these rules please feel free to contact the head chair via email (before committee) and notes to the dais (during committee).

## Historical Information

### **The Formation of the Porfiriato**

Upon the execution of Emperor Maximilian in 1867, General Diaz was still under the thumb of President Juarez.



President Juarez would begin to implement many of the policies that Diaz used during his reign. Most notably, President Juarez stuffed ballot boxes, increased the central authority of the government and gave liberal landowners even more land.<sup>ii</sup> After President Juarez's reelection in 1871, General Diaz's frustrations grew due to the thwarted attempts to win the presidency. These frustrations led General Diaz to form his own rebellion known as the Revolution of La Noria. The rebellion stemmed mostly from Diaz's home state of Oaxaca but also included other disgruntled, opportunistic *cuadillos* from throughout the country.

It was a short lived revolution that ended with President Juarez's sudden death due to a heart attack. This led the chief justice of the Supreme Court,

Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, to call for new elections. Following Juarez's example, Lerdo rigged the elections and maintained political unity by leaving a lot of *Juaristas* in power. Again, frustrated, Diaz called for revolution and launched the Rebellion of Tuxtepec. With more experience this time around, Diaz won the presidency on the battlefield and in 1876 he was elected president.

### **Power Consolidation**

Like his predecessors before him, Diaz began a major program of political consolidation. He removed many provincial governors and replaced them with his own lackeys. A lot of these initial appointments were generals within the army, further solidifying Diaz's connection with the military. These governors were allowed considerable discretion in ruling their provinces so long as they remained loyal to Diaz. Along with control over the provinces themselves, Diaz recognized that his success was also reliant upon control on a village level. The traditional village autonomy that was prevalent throughout the country allowed villagers to choose leaders and hold their own levels of judicial control. Diaz encouraged his provincial governors to appoint municipal heads and police chiefs so as to solidify their control. Often these officials were from outside the community and rarely performed the duties that were



required of them. They were notorious for exploitation, rape, grafting, and extortion which sometimes led locals to respond with violence.

Along with his success in the countryside, Diaz further consolidated his control by expanding his interests into the National Congress. Diaz viewed all three branches of government as under his control and he especially expressed that in congress by selecting congressmen and ensuring their election. The only characteristic Diaz cared for was loyalty and would often select congressmen who did not even live in the congressional districts they were supposed to be representing. As a result, many congressmen ignored the needs of their constituents and merely saw office as a means of amassing wealth and power. Diaz sought control of the Federal Judiciary and thus installed or dismissed federal judges at will based solely off of their loyalty to him. Diaz even nominated judges to the Supreme Court. Local judges maintained some degree of honesty and safety, but their degrees of honesty and competency varied widely. Along with all of this, the federal bureaucracy ballooned and took on the trappings of a modern bureaucracy. However, despite its growth, it remained a mostly incompetent body that refused to do even the simplest of tasks.

In 1880 Diaz was forced to leave the presidency due to his own slogan of no-reelection. Diaz therefore stepped aside and hand selected his successor: General Manuel Gonzalez. Diaz remained within the cabinet but did not tell Gonzalez what to do, mostly because Gonzalez continued Diaz's process of political consolidation. In 1884 Diaz ran again and was reelected. Upon his reelection, he and his cronies passed an amendment that allowed for a president to succeed himself.

After his reelection Diaz sped up the pace of his political consolidation. His next goal was to strengthen the rural police corps which had been established by Juarez. They were designed to help protect the countryside from bandits and were often praised by foreigners whose investments they were there to protect. In all reality they were a corrupt and inefficient bunch with many of them being former bandits. They proved effective in hunting down solitary criminals and suppressing striking workers, but were less impressive when dealing with





the task of ensuring physical security to the lives of rural Mexicans, whom they themselves often exploited.<sup>iii</sup>

Diaz's next problem was the military. Although he recognized that a lot was to be gained through loyal military members, such as General Gonzalez, he also knew that many coups that occurred in Latin America came from the army. Therefore, Diaz began a process of reducing the army (reduced it from 30,000 soldiers to 14,000), professionalizing the officer corps, and reducing the number of generals. He also began to replace many of the military governors. Along with dealing with the army, Diaz also had to deal with the Catholic Church. Diaz refused to return land seized from the Church during La Reforma and left all of the laws created against the Church on the books. However, he did allow the clergy to again engage in public ceremonies, wear religious garb in public, teach catechism in schools, and engage in their social welfare programs.

One last major obstacle remained and that was Mexico's relations with the US and Western Europe. These relationships were extremely hostile due to perceived losses on both sides due to the number of wars and disputes Mexico, the US, and Europe had all engaged in. The first major step Diaz took to repair relations was pay off the nation's debt. In 1888 the Ministry of

the Treasury negotiated an agreement with Britain and Germany called the Dublan Convention which sold Mexico's debt to Germany in terms of pounds sterling. This helped restore Mexico's credit and allowed for investment to come in.<sup>iv</sup>

reward with shipping costs dropping by 90%.<sup>vii</sup> Railroads also increased land value and helped bring Mexico into the global economy.

## **Topic 1: Business and Commerce**

### **Effect of Railroads**

Along with the many internal legislative issues preventing development, Mexico lacked the necessary infrastructure to allow for growth. Mexico's difficult terrain



prevented shipment of goods throughout the country and elsewhere.<sup>v</sup> Juarez and Lerdo recognized the importance of railroads and began construction of some, but major railroad construction had to wait until more stable times. Thus, as Diaz stabilized Mexico's finances, he signed a number of contracts with U.S. firms authorizing the construction of private railroads throughout Mexico. In total, 24,560 km of track were laid between 1880 and 1910.<sup>vi</sup> This construction project would cost the government dearly as large amounts of land was given away to U.S. construction firms along with large concession payments. However, the railroads fostered political consolidation and economic development. With increased communication ability Diaz was better able to control his governors. Railroad construction also saw immediate

### **Institutional Safeguards**

The Diaz government also implemented new commercial codes which permitted the formation of corporations based on shares; new legislation limited the ability of states to tax corporations; new banking laws facilitated lending; commercial treaties with the U.S. and Western Europe encouraged overseas trade; and new mining codes permitted foreigners to own subsoil rights and acquire land on the border.<sup>viii</sup> These institutional safeguards helped to transition Mexico into a modern industrial economy. Diaz encouraged further investment via special concessions, tax breaks, and enhanced police protection. However, with all of this open conceding to foreign corporations, national firms were ignored. With all of this growth also came the loss of Mexican territory to foreign companies and foreign control over key sectors of the economy. This naturally led to a nationalist backlash.

The elite expressed little to no concern that land consolidation and agricultural commercialization deprived villagers of economic security and disrupted paternalistic methods of social control.<sup>ix</sup> Few

safety nets existed for displaced peasants beyond working as wage laborers (if they could find it) or the limited charity of church-run institutions.

## **Topic 2: The Peasant and Indigenous Problem**

### **Undermining the Village Economy**

As investment flooded the Mexican economy with the possibility of new business ventures, Mexican businessmen began to transform Mexico's agriculture. What had once been a production source largely dominated by small village farmers now became a system of large plantations known as hacendados. These giant farms formed on the basis of consolidated lands under President Diaz's instruction. As a result, many villagers lost one of their main sources of income. More importantly, these small forms also served as the basis of village culture and tradition and further undermined the indigenous population's



way of life.<sup>x</sup>

The village economy was further undermined through the forced

disentailment of communal property. What initially began as a means of redistributing Church property back to individual farmers spread to become a massive buy up of all communal property and placing it into the hands of major hacendados and other corporate figures. This loss of communal property placed further pressure on the indigenous population due to the fact that agricultural businessmen invested in commodity crops rather than staple crops. Along with this, peasants also were unable to keep up with the rising prices of commodity crops and therefore could not even pay for those to help support their living.

As a result, various groups responded accordingly. In Yucatan region, the local Maya population began a protracted guerilla war known as the Caste War. They attempted to dislodge the local elite though ultimately they would lose and suffer roughly 300,000 casualties (approximately half of their total population) ensuring the success of the elites.<sup>xi</sup> Due to the lack of ability to utilize the local Maya population as laborers, plantation owners shipped in rebellious Yaqui Indians from Sonora as forced labor. They would be combined with immigrant Chinese and Koreans to forcibly work the Yucatan often in horrifying and grueling conditions.

peonage, Mexican businesses ensured their own levels of profitability even as they were being undermined by their own government.

### **Topic 3: Natural Resources and Industry**

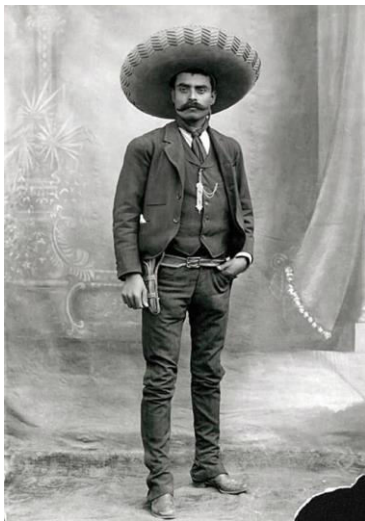
#### **The Burden of Trade with the US**

As Mexican businessmen worked to encroach upon the property and rights of the native population, they themselves were feeling pressure from the weight of international investors and business. The Diaz regime gave undue amounts of favor to outside businessmen, guaranteeing them the best contracts and best tax incentives. As a result, domestic businesses were unable to compete and do as well. A prime example of this was Olegario Molina's secret deal with the International Harvester Company in 1902. In order to ensure sales of Mexican henequen, Molina made a deal selling all domestically grown henequen at a flat rate to the International Harvester Company (a fraction of market value) allowing Harvester to reap most of the profit.<sup>xii</sup> Thus with their own external pressures, Mexican businesses engaged in their own forms of taking advantage of their own situation. By using forced labor as described above and ensuring voluntary labor fell into extreme degrees of debt

## **Where are we now?**

### **Emiliano Zapata**

As tensions worsened between mass agriculture and small peasant farmers, a crisis occurred in the small state of Morelos that would cause unprecedented repercussions. In 1908 Diaz promised the people of Mexico free and fair elections, a



promise many Mexicans took seriously. Diaz had previously installed the unpopular Pablo Escandon as governor of Morelos. In 1908, a local candidate, Patricio Levya, garnered a lot of attention and support from the people of Morelos. In typical Diaz style, the elections were rigged and Escandon was reinstalled as governor. Escandon continue his policies of favoring major farming and crushing small and peasant led farming. These ever

increasingly oppressive conditions pushed the people of Morelos to revolt.

The local farmers turned to an inspiring figure from the village of Anenecuilco, Emiliano Zapata. Zapata's family had a strong reputation amongst the local population do to their armed resistance against the French.<sup>xiii</sup> It is clear that as we head into the election season that he is a force that must be dealt with. His revolutionary fervor combined with his ardent followers indicate a political entity that will cause many problems if they are not dealt with. It is up to you as a body to either rein him in or crush him.

### **Pancho Villa**

Characteristic of his tumultuous beginnings, Jose Doroteo Arango Arambula (aka Pancho Villa) has continued to engage in the banditry and thievery he is famous for. As of right now little is known about him or his political aims, but it is clear that over the last number years, namely since his desertion from the Federal Army in 1903, that his banditry has taken on a seeming purpose. He seems to be more interested in representing and protecting the rights and interests of peasants and the native population. Although he has done little so far to purposefully cross the regime, it is clear that his charisma, ingenuity, and leadership skills can be utilized either for or against us. We must decide quickly how we

should maintain control or get rid of Pancho Villa.

### **Francisco Madero**

Born into a prominent Mexican family, Madero was raised in a family that worked to fight off international interests, mostly in the name of their own personal interests. Francisco's father, Evaristo, had also failed to support Diaz during the Rebellion of Tuxtepec further sully the Madero's status in the political and economic elite in Mexico. As the Diaz regime continued to support foreign interests and undermine domestic business, the Madero's further came to odds with Diaz. This can be seen in the almost two-decade long fight between the Maderos and Diaz. This fighting ultimately culminated in Francisco's revolutionary call to arms in 1910.<sup>xiv</sup>

Now that Francisco Madero has announced his candidacy for presidency it has become ever more important that he is dealt with as a threat. It is unknown who he is working with to help support his candidacy and what he will do to ensure his leadership. Investigation is needed to determine who his allies are and what exactly he wants as president. Once those are established, it is possible for him to be undermined and ultimately disposed of. We must hurry though, elections are almost

upon us and he has gained a lot of popular favor.



Limantour is an intellectual dedicated to the prosperity of Mexico, and supports the Porfiriato because he believes Díaz to be the most equipped to modernize Mexico. In fact, many consider Limantour to be the most likely successor to President Díaz. As a result, Díaz has been growing wary of Limantour as of late. To make matters worse, Limantour and his followers do not necessarily agree with some of Díaz's authoritarian practices.

### **Character List**

#### **Main Científicos**

##### **José Yves Limantour – Secretary of Finance**

Serving as Secretary of Finance to the Porfiriato starting from 1893, Limantour is a highly influential politician of the Porfiriato. Under Limantour's guidance, the business sector of the Mexican economy opened up and prospered. However, many critics say that Limantour only cares about catering to the business elite and filling his own pockets, and that the common people of Mexico are of no concern to him. Limantour is also wary of the growing influence that the US and other countries have over the Mexican economy, and he sometimes finds himself at odds with foreign businessmen.

Limantour is also considered the political leader of the científicos; like them,

##### **Luis Terrazas – Hacendado of Chihuahua**

Terrazas is a true caudillo and hacendado. Terrazas is the largest landowner in Chihuahua, and boasts a huge cattle ranch. He is very protective of his cattle, and constantly worries that the government will appropriate his livestock. When Díaz first came into power, he worked to erode the power of many regional strongmen who did not side with the Porfiriato. Many liberal kingpins of the countryside eventually fell from power from the pressure. However, Terrazas was the only one who was able to resist Díaz's pressure until finally reaching a rapprochement with the president in 1903. Now, Terrazas and Díaz are at an understanding, and the two share a symbiotic relationship. In exchange for his loyalty, Díaz has been accommodating to



Terrazas; Díaz even appointed Enrique Creel, Terrazas' son-in-law, as governor of Chihuahua.

Terrazas has been and still is the regional strongman of Chihuahua. He is a walking vestige of the old Porfirian regime in Chihuahua. As an old Porfirian hacendado, Terrazas intends to keep the Porfiriato in place, to continue the same labor practices that have made him so wealthy, and to put down any peasants who come in the way of progress. Recently, Terrazas has caught wind of potential rebellions in the North, and the mysterious name "Pancho Villa" has been floating around his home state. Terrazas shares a close relationship with his son-in-law, Creel, and will do anything to help him gain more influence in order to maintain control in Chihuahua.

#### **Enrique Creel – Secretary of Foreign Affairs**

Creel is the current Secretary of Foreign Affairs for the Porfiriato. During these tumultuous times, Creel's role is instrumental in maintaining amicable relations with the US. The científicos are cognizant of the fact that the US's objective in Mexico is mainly economic, and the US therefore has no qualms with supporting a revolution if the Porfiriato fails to serve as a lucrative regime. It is Creel's responsibility to find a balance between catering to the US while also not making Mexico a colony

of the US. Additionally, it seems tensions are high in Europe at the moment, and rumor has it that Europe is due for a war. Though the US and Mexico are on the other hemisphere, surely an all-out European war would affect conditions in the West too. Creel would do well to help Mexico ride the waves of this possible conflict to the country's benefit.

Creel is also the son-in-law of Terrazas, and was appointed interim governor of Chihuahua back in 1904 due to Terrazas' relations with Díaz. Before he became Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Creel arranged the municipal land law that permitted the sale of underutilized community land to outsiders. As a result, any villagers became landless laborers, and rancheros saw their autonomy threatened. A Porfirian politician through and through, Creel will not tolerate political insurrections that get in the way of Mexico's prosperity. Creel shares a close relationship with his father-in-law, Terrazas, and will do anything to help him gain more influence in order to maintain control in Chihuahua.

#### **Ramón Corral – Vice President**

Corral is an old científico who has served in many offices throughout the Porfiriato. He was the former governor of Sonora, Secretary of State, Governor of the Federal District of Mexico, and Minister of the Interior. He was appointed Vice

President in 1904. After Díaz stated that Mexico was ready for presidential elections in 1910, Díaz appointed Corral as Vice President again, leading many to think that Corral would be the most likely successor. Many political clubs have recently formed as a response to Díaz's statement, and many people are exalting other formidable candidates such as Reyes and Limantour. However, despite public opinion, Díaz has kept Corral as his running mate.

Corral is a científico loyal to Díaz through and through. He is not associated with a major Mexico City camarilla, and his only political allegiance lies with Díaz. Using his role as Vice President, Corral has come to dominate state politics, and holds considerable influence and connections. His views are not that different from that of Díaz. Like many other Porfirian politicians, Corral is not sympathetic to the indigenous population. In 1887, he was involved in the capture of indigenous Yaqui military leader, Cajemé. Though Corral knows that he is not popular among the public, he knows he still holds immense potential. He is second in line to be President, after all.

#### **Justo Sierra – Secretary of Public Education**

Sierra is the spokesman and leading intellectual of the científico circle. He is an influential Mexican writer, historian, and politician. His intellectual works primarily

focus on sociopolitical histories of the political eras of Juárez and Díaz. His historical works are political and critical, and he is therefore seen as a candid and vocal writer. In fact, his texts on pre-revolutionary Mexico are used as the standard textbook in Mexican public schools.

Now, Sierra has been serving as the Secretary of Public Education since 1905, and is currently the sixth director of the Mexican Academy of Language. He is one of the few científicos within the inner circle who is not secretive about his liberal tendencies. In fact, he greatly dislikes the authoritarian nature of the Porfirian regime. However, Díaz keeps Sierra because Sierra is wise and loyal to the Porfiriato at the moment.

#### **Pablo Macedo – Lawyer and Economist**

Macedo was born into a wealthy family in Mexico City in 1851. In 1879, he married Concepción Estrada Velázquez, the daughter of a wealthy hacendado of the hacienda Ahuehuetes, which is located in the town of Guadalupe in Mexico City. A former professor of political economy and distinguished lawyer, Macedo was astute intellectual, a fierce científico, and a prominent Porfirian politician. In the political sphere, Macedo worked closely with Limantour. An influential financier, Macedo cofounded the National Bank of Mexico among other economic achievements.

Macedo's political views are best encapsulated in his work, *La Evolucion Mercantil*. In it, Macedo emphasized the importance of business, demystified the idea that Mexico was a wealthy state, and strongly stressed the importance of infrastructure for the development of the Mexican economy. His ideas were framed as criticisms of previous financiers who he felt insufficiently directed the Mexican economy. Currently, Macedo sees the problems with the current Mexican economy as well. He shares Limantour's concerns about the growing influence of foreign business. As the son-in-law of a prominent hacendado, Macedo does not necessarily have sympathy for laborers and the indigenous, but Macedo realizes that the economy cannot progress with growing inequalities and a fragmented working class.

#### **Joaquín Casasús – Mexican Ambassador to the US**

An economist, jurist, politician, diplomat, and writer, Casasús is truly a *científico* who's got it all. His crowning achievement is serving as the current Mexican ambassador to the United States. Casasús has an excellent track record when it comes to US-Mexico relations. In 1909, Porfirio Díaz selected Casasús to be president of the Arbitration Commission in the Chamizal dispute with the US.

Ultimately, Casasús managed to win the definite ruling in favor of Mexico, establishing that the Rio Bravo was a part of Mexico, and not a part of the border. Casasús has also published extensive works on economics and politics.

Casasús does not like Henry Lane Wilson, and everyone knows it. Casasús, like many other *científicos*, believes that Mexico's economy lies heavily on American investment, but he is concerned that Mexico might become too dependent on foreign influences. He would like to make moves to equalize the relationship between Mexico and the US. His main objectives are to introduce Mexican investment in the US and to foster more bilateral cooperative measures between both states. As an economist himself, he supports greater economic independence for Mexico and the nationalization of industries.

#### **Aflredo Chavero**

Chavero is a *científico* with strong liberal ideologies. He became a member of the Mexican Congress in 1869, and has remained in his post since then. During his time, Chavero has remained in Congress during the administrations of Benito Juárez, Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada, and Manuel González.

Chavero is not afraid to be critical of the Porfiriato. In 1879, Díaz called for the execution of nine citizens of Veracruz, who

he suspected of conspiracy. Chavero was highly critical of Díaz's unjust actions. As the grand master of a masonic lodge, Chavero suspended Díaz's membership in protest. As a result, Chavero became very popular, but he did lose Díaz's favor. As an avid playwright and writer, Chavero also wrote many plays and essays on indigenous culture and history. For instance, some of his major works include *Quetzalcoatl*. Tragic trial in three acts and verse, and *Aztec calendar: Archaeological essay*. As such, Chavero is quite sympathetic to the indigenous population. Chavero knows that his views put him in a dangerous position, but he will not be afraid to voice his criticisms against the Porfiriato if necessary.

### **Other Científicos**

#### **Olegario Molina – Minister of Development**

Before he became Minister of Development, Molina was a prominent planter-merchant of the *casta divina*, an elite class of planter families that controlled the bulk of Yucatán's henequen industry. Molina is filthy rich; he essentially controls the flow of the henequen industry due to his ownership of important railroads, warehouses, and shipping companies. However, the bulk of his wealth came from his agreement with the US-based International Harvester Company in 1902; in

exchange for controlling the prices of sisal fiber according to Harvester's standards, Harvester granted Molina high commission for every kilogram of henequen he acquired for the company.

Molina was so wealthy that he became a national figure. Díaz was highly impressed with Molina's knowledge of local politics and the regional economy, and thus made him Minister of Development. As a politician, Molina's views are premodern. Though critics say that his agreement with Harvester led to the further marginalization of the indigenous population and strengthened foreign control of Mexico's economy, Molina sees his agreement as a long-term move to stabilize the henequen economy and connect Mexico to the global economy. Individual rights of workers and the preservation of indigenous culture are also not of high concern to Molina. Nevertheless, like Limantour, Molina has recently come to realize that perhaps there is too much foreign control in Mexico's economy, and has recently supported actions to take back control for Mexican businesses.

#### **Bernardo Reyes - War Minister**

As the governor of Nuevo León and War Minister of the Porfiriato, Reyes is a close associate to Díaz. Known for his outstanding administrative skills and undying loyalty to the Porfiriato, Reyes is a

well-connected figure in the inner circles of the cabinet. He has been known to grant special deals and tax breaks to businessmen, largely contributing to the formation of an entire class of foreign business elite in Mexico. A well-connected man, Reyes is loved by many. His policies supporting workers rights made him popular among the middle and working class. As War Minister, Reyes created a military force of 30,000 men called the Second Reserve, which other members of the cabinet criticize as his “private army.”

Reyes’ popularity has gathered him a lot of political support. In fact, the Partido Democrático was formed in order to support Reyes as the next vice presidential candidate for Díaz in the upcoming presidential election in 1910. Though Reyes is fiercely loyal to Díaz, Díaz has been growing suspicious of Reyes’ power. Overall, Reyes is dedicated to the Porfiriato, but he cannot dispute the fact that he has a lot of popular support.

#### **Francisco Bulnes – Intellectual and Writer**

Bulnes is an old politician, writer, and intellectual. Members of the Mexican government look to Bulnes with respect due to his long service. He served in a range of commissions relating to mining, banking, etc., and even served as former Secretary of Foreign Affairs. A strong intellectual (he

was even a professor in the National University of Engineering) Bulnes wrote many books including *El verdadero Díaz y la Revolución* and *The Whole Truth About Mexico: President Wilson's Responsibility*. In *El porvenir de las naciones Hispano-Americanas*, which he published in 1899, Bulnes attributed Mexico’s backwardness to the inferiority of the indigenous people. He divided people into three classes: those of the corn, wheat, and rice. People of the wheat were the superior race, and people of the maize (the indigenous population) were the uncivilized, backward race.

A true científico, Bulnes believed that in order to maintain political stability, Mexico must consider planning for an orderly presidential succession. In fact, in his 1903 presidential nominating speech, Bulnes praised Díaz for providing Mexico with decades of peace, but concluded that Mexico was now prepared for a mature political system with both liberal and conservative political parties.

#### **Luis García Pimental – Hacendado of Morelos**

García is a powerful hacendado from the state of Morelos. He is one of the wealthiest and most influential hacendados in Mexico. His estates, Santa Clara de Montefalco and Santa Ana Tenango, measure to 68,181 hectares, which almost makes up the entire eastern portion of

Morelos. Though the land was dry and hilly and unsuitable for cane cultivation, García was able to reap a profit by receiving substantial income from rental and sharecropping agreements with landless peasants, making villagers economically dependent by monopolizing arable land and water resources. Díaz has invited him to the delegation because he feels that García is representative of many of the hacendados.

García does not understand what the big fuss is about nowadays. Offering dirty peasants permanent employment is an act of kindness on García's part, after all. He doesn't have to hire these plebeians to work on his nice estates. However, the Mexican people seem to be so ungrateful and disobedient recently. All they want is more "rights" and higher "pay." They should be happy that they are able to work at all, right?

#### **Antonio de Labastida – Archbishop of Mexico**

During the 1850s and 1860s, liberals challenged the Catholic Church in La Reforma, an attempt to establish a moderate, secular Mexican state. In response, church leaders bankrolled conservative revolts in the 1850s and welcomed French invaders into Mexico City in 1862. As the bishop of Puebla at the time, Labastida was sent into exile for playing a large role in the conservative movement. When Díaz came

into power, he invited Labastida back into Mexico to preside over Díaz's wedding. The event signified Díaz's attempt to reform a political alliance with the Catholic Church. Both sides reached a rapprochement; the clergy was allowed to stage public ceremonies, wear religious garb in public, teach catechism in public schools, and administer a variety of social welfare programs. Meanwhile, church lands confiscated during La Reforma remained the property of wealthy liberal supporters of the regime, and laws restricting the church's activities and legal status stayed on the books.

Though the legality of the move is questionable, Díaz invited Labastida to the delegation so that he may maintain good relations with the Catholic Church. Labastida knows that he is at an advantage; Labastida has large religious influence over the common Mexican people, and if Díaz wants Labastida on his side, Díaz should start giving the church more power and return the church lands taken during La Reforma. Labastida is also concerned with the religious degradation that has befallen Mexico. Greed pervades the air as the government is selling out the Mexican economy to foreign capitalists. Labastida is also concerned with the large heathen, indigenous population, and he hopes the Porfiriato will allow the church to take action

to enlighten these poor people. He does not care much about the wellbeing of the Mexican working class, but he does know that they serve as a large population that is easily swayed by the church.

### **Victoriano Huerta – Mexican Brigadier General**

Huerta considers himself a self-made man. As a son of a mestizo and a Huichol Indian woman, Huerta would have been a part of the impoverished indigenous population had he not put so much effort into gaining power. In 1872, he attended the Mexican Military Academy and climbed the ranks, even earning special praise from President Juárez. By the time of the Porfiriato, Huerta had already had over a decade of military experience, and he was leading ruthless campaigns to suppress indigenous rebellions in Southern Mexico. He became a decorated soldier for his high-quality service, and was promoted to Brigadier General. Though he retired in 1907 due to his cataracts, Huerta was able to rejoin the Federal Army while keeping his former rank.

Huerta had a streak of self-hate. He was ashamed of his past, and that shame led to a desire to do away with those people who reminded him of who he had been, of who he no longer wanted to be. To some extent, that self-hate reflected itself in the ways in which he was so vicious in his

military campaigns against the indigenous population. Huerta is an opportunist and a manipulator, and he was willing to use and kill people to quench his thirst for power. Seeing this, Díaz sees huge potential in Huerta, and hopes that Huerta will serve to be an asset for the Porfiriato.

### **Emilio Rabasa – Governor of Chiapas**

As the governor of Chiapas, Rabasa made many infrastructural changes in Mexico that was essential to the development of the Mexican economy. In the 1890s, hacendados had acquired most of the fertile bottomlands of Mexico, essentially monopolizing arable land. Rabasa made many political allies by building new highways, abolishing internal tariffs, removing corrupt officials, and sanctioning the expropriation of village land. In effect, Rabasa has the support of many hacendados who remember his good work. Rabasa also signed an agreement with a New Jersey-based company to build a railroad that connected the Mexican coffee zone with the Gulf of Tehuantepec.

Rabasa wrote extensively on Constitutional Law. He was a científico who represented a version of transformed liberalism. He rejected abstract doctrines of natural rights and egalitarian democracy, and supported the centralization of political power and an empirical approach towards economic development. However, he also



believed that government power should be limited, and that it should closely adhere to the confines of the Constitution. Rabasa is a proponent of cold-hard economics and is certainly not a sympathizer of workers' rights and indigenous rights, but he is a staunch naysayer of any illegal and unconstitutional activity.

### **Félix Díaz – Mexican politician**

Félix Díaz is best characterized as a Mexican politician and general from Oaxaca. He is best known for being the nephew of Porfirio Díaz. During his uncle's tenure, Félix held several offices in the government. He is fiercely loyal to the Porfiriato and a conservative politician through and through. Though his credentials are not as flashy as those of the other delegates, Félix is gifted with the Díaz name. Many conservatives and elites look to Félix Díaz as the carbon-copy of Porfirio Díaz, and many people see him as the most favorable successor.

### **Foreigners**

### **Henry Lane Wilson – US Ambassador to Mexico**

Wilson was born in 1857 in Indiana, United States. He became the US Ambassador to Mexico in 1910 after serving as minister in Chile and Belgium. Serving as the main connection between the US and Mexico, Wilson is a force to be reckoned with. As the US ambassador, Wilson has

connections to diplomatic envoys, and the elites of both the US and Mexico. Both a politician and a businessman, Wilson has strong business ties in the US, and maintaining the economic and political climate of the Porfiriato is his main objective. However, Wilson's allegiance to Díaz is in no way permanent. Wilson will do anything to become richer and more powerful, and he is therefore loyal only to himself. However, Wilson is an American diplomat at the end of the day, and he still must answer to the US government. In fact, the State Department has been Wilson's actions more closely lately.

### **William Randolph Hearst – US Newspaper Tycoon**

Born in 1863 in California, Hearst is the biggest media tycoon in the United States. He owns countless media outlets; practically every American has read a magazine or newspaper owned by Hearst. Though he failed while running for Congress, Hearst does not lack the political wherewithal to sway the masses of the US.

Hearst has been invited by Díaz to attend the delegation because Hearst has extensive business interests in Mexico. Hearst owns vast haciendas and cattle ranches in Northern Mexico, and he absolutely loves all the economic concessions that the Díaz regime offers to foreign businessmen. Given that he has a

large economic stake in Mexico, and given that he is the biggest media mogul in the US, Hearst is hoping that he can use his influence in the US as leverage to continue making profit in Mexico. At the same time, Hearst knows that not everything is so simple; many científicos present in the delegation seem to be wary of the growing foreign influence in Mexico.

**Sir Weetman Pearson (AKA Lord Cowdray) – British oil tycoon**

Pearson is an English engineer responsible for the biggest construction projects in Mexico. He developed Mexico's oil fields, drained Mexico City's wetlands, dredged Veracruz's harbor, constructed port facilities in Coatzacoalcos, and built a railroad across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. For his accomplishments, Pearson earned close ties with Díaz and Limantour. In 1906, Pearson was granted the largest petroleum concession in Mexican history, and he founded the *Compañía Mexicana del Petróleo El Águila*, placing several prominent Mexicans on the company's board of directors. With his concessions, Pearson is able to explore for oil around Tampico and import retailed petroleum products.

Pearson was invited to join the delegation because Díaz believes Pearson is a good counterbalance. Without Pearson, Standard Oil would have acquired a

monopoly in Mexico. Pearson has also driven down the price of petroleum products and helped local industrial growth by reducing production and maintenance costs. Additionally, Pearson is Mexico's plug to the United Kingdom. He was elected into the House of Commons, and later named Lord Cowdray by Queen Victoria. Back in the UK, his fellow representatives refer to him as "the member for Mexico."

**F.S. Pearson – Railroad magnate and Construction Tycoon**

Born in 1861, Pearson is an electrical engineer and entrepreneur hailing from Lowell, Massachusetts. During the early days of the Porfiriato, the Mexican government granted huge subsidies to construction companies dedicated to improving the country's infrastructure. As a result, Pearson is a well-known railroad magnate who was granted more than 3.5 million acres in Chihuahua upon completion of the Northwestern Railroad in that state. An entrepreneurial giant, Pearson owns a number of large companies in his business empire including the Mexican North Western Railway, the Mexican Tramway Company, and the Mexican Light and Power Company.

Pearson has dedicated his blood, sweat, and tears into building his empire in Mexico, and he is not about to let petty commoners get in the way of progress. Like

the other foreigners in the delegation, Pearson is here to offer his construction services and to keep the Mexican economy open to foreign investment and business. Pearson is dedicated to developing northern Mexico and to sustain the openness of the economy.

### **Colonel William E. Greene – US mining tycoon**

In the 1890s, Backed by large New York financiers from Wall Street, Greene built his copper mining empire in Cananea and Sonora. The massive government subsidies granted Greene tax exemptions on copper production, construction and operation of his physical plant, and the importation of building materials. These concessions allowed him to make huge capital investments and greatly develop his regions of investment. With his capital, Greene designed a modern mine and smelter, and oversaw the construction of housing, stores, streets, and waterworks, creating entire towns from scratch. He connected Cananea by rail with southern Arizona and shipped massive quantities of

copper to the US. The Greene Consolidated Copper Company became one of the world's ten largest copper companies.

Greene's position is indicative of the awkward position of all the foreign businessmen present in the region. Greene sees himself as developing the Mexican economy and bringing jobs for the Mexican people. After all, the population of Cananea exploded from 100 to 15,000 thanks to his money. However, back in June 1906, three thousand of his Mexican miners issued a manifesto to Greene calling for pay increases, the end to the dual pay scale for Mexican and foreign workers, the hiring of Mexican foremen, and an 8-hour workday. Infuriated, Greene rallied both Mexican and North American expeditionary forces to put down the strike, and many died. Greene has no idea why his workers would rebel against him after all that he has done. Isn't much of Mexico's development the product of foreign investment? Why are these Mexicans so ungrateful?

---

<sup>i</sup> Gonzalez, Michael J. *The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940*. 1st ed. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico, 2002. Print.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid, 11

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid, 15

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid, 20

<sup>v</sup> Ibid, 21

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid, 21

<sup>vii</sup> Ibid, 23

<sup>viii</sup> Ibid, 24

- 
- <sup>ix</sup> Ibid, 27  
<sup>x</sup> Ibid, 28  
<sup>xi</sup> Ibid, 32  
<sup>xii</sup> Ibid, 33  
<sup>xiii</sup> Ibid, 39  
<sup>xiv</sup> Ibid, 42