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The Mexican People are Suited to Communism

Ricardo Flores Magón

September 2, 1911

The inhabitants of the state of Morelos, like those of Puebla, Michoacán, Durango, Jalisco, Yucatán and other states, in which vast areas have been invaded by proletarians who have immediately dedicated themselves to cultivating the lands, have shown the entire world, with their acts, that one doesn't need a society of savants to solve the problem of hunger.

To arrive at this result they took possession of the earth and the instruments of production in Mexico. They didn't need "leaders," nor "friends of the working class," nor "paternal decrees," nor "wise laws" — they didn't need any of this. Their actions did it all and continue doing it all. Mexico is marching toward communism more quickly than the most extreme revolutionaries had hoped for, and the government and the bourgeoisie now find themselves not knowing what to do in the presence of acts they believed were very far from being carried out.

It wasn't even three months ago that Juan Sarabia, in a long, sickening open letter directed to me, which was published in the bourgeois press in Mexico, told me that the working class didn't

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understand what we are advocating and that the people were satisfied with the fruits of Madero's revolt: the electoral ballot. But facts have shown that we members of the PLM [**Mexican Liberal Party**] are not under illusions, and that we fight convinced that our actions and propaganda respond to the necessities and to the manner of thinking of Mexico's poor.

The Mexican people hate, by instinct, authority and the bourgeoisie. Everyone who has lived in Mexico can assure us that there is no one more cordially hated than the policeman, that the word "government" fills the simple people with uneasiness, that the soldier, admired and applauded in all other places, is seen with antipathy and contempt, and that anyone who doesn't make his living with his hands is hated.

This in itself is enough for a social revolution which is economic in nature and anti-authoritarian, but there is more. Four million Indians live in Mexico who, until twenty or twenty-five years ago, lived in communities possessing the lands, the waters, and the forests in common. Mutual aid was the rule in these communities, in which authority was felt only when the tax collector appeared periodically or when "recruiters" showed up in search of men to force into the army. In these communities there were no judges, mayors, jailers, in fact no bothersome people at all of this type. Everyone had the right to the land, to the water to irrigate it, to the forests for firewood, and to the wood from the forests for the construction of small houses. The plows passed from hand to hand, as did yokes of oxen. Each family worked as much land as they thought was sufficient to produce what was necessary, and the work of weeding and harvesting was done in common by the entire community — today, Pedro's harvest, tomorrow Juan's, and so on. Everyone in the community put their hands to work when a house was to be raised.

These simple customs lasted until authority grew strong enough to pacify the country, until it was strong enough to guarantee the bourgeoisie the success of its businesses. The generals of the po-

litical revolts received large grants of land; the *hacendados* [plantation owners] increased the size of their fiefdoms; the most vile politicians received vast tracts of "barren" lands; and foreign adventurers obtained concessions of lands, forests, rivers, of, in sum, everything, leaving our Indian brothers without a clod of dirt, without the right to take from the forests even the smallest branch of a tree; they were left in the most abject misery, dispossessed of everything that had been theirs.

As regards the mestizo population [of mixed Indian and Spanish heritage], which is the majority of the people of Mexico — with the exception of those who inhabited the great cities and large towns — they held the forests, lands, and bodies of water in common, just as the indigenous peoples did. Mutual aid was also the rule; they built their houses together; money was unnecessary, because they bartered what they made or grew. But with the coming of peace, authority grew, and the political and financial bandits shamelessly stole the lands, forests, and bodies of water; they stole everything. Not even twenty years ago one could see in opposition newspapers that the North American X, the German Y, or the Spaniard Z had enveloped an entire population within the limits of "his" property, with the aid of the Mexican authorities.

We see, then, that the Mexican people are suited for communism, because they've practiced it, at least in part, for many centuries; and this explains why, even when the majority are illiterate, they comprehend that rather than take part in electoral farces that elect thugs, it's better to take possession of the lands — and this taking is what scandalizes the thieving bourgeoisie.

All that's left to be done is that the workers take possession of the factory, the workshop, the mine, the foundry, the railroad, the ship, in a word, everything — that they recognize no bosses of any type. And this will be the culmination of the present movement.

Forward comrades!