

The Uprising in Mexico

By BERTRAM D. WOLFE.

The uprising in Mexico was a development out of the campaign for the election of a president in Mexico to take the place of President Obregon who was assassinated. In the last two decades all presidential elections in Mexico have been decided on the battlefield, and not in the voting booth.

This is due to the lack of a powerful national bourgeoisie with the consequent lack of parliamentarism, the rapid development of Mexican economy with the consequent instability of class forces, the activities of competing American and British imperialisms and their struggle for the rich oil and mineral resources of Mexico, and the development of agrarian labor and anti-imperialist revolutionary forces.

Reactionary Uprising.

The uprising is quite clearly reactionary in character. Its leading figure or candidate for the presidency is Gilberto Valenzuela. He is supported by the rebel generals, Escobar (military chieftain of the uprising), Manzo, and Aguirre, and apparently by the renegade agrarians, Manrique and Soto y Gama.

His chief slogan during the "peaceful" or propaganda period of the election campaign was "religious freedom." The immediate content of this slogan is freedom for the Catholic Church (which is forbidden by Mexican law to own land, participate in politics, carry on religious education for the young, etc.)

Behind the Church stand the big *landowners*, particularly the older Spanish families of semi-feudal landowners. They have been the backbone of all of the recent counter-revolutionary uprisings in Mexico. The Communist Party of Mexico and the Worker-Peasant Bloc, largely under Communist leadership, have already issued a declaration branding the uprising as counter-revolutionary.

Leagued with the landowners appear to be a larger proportion than heretofore of the rising capitalist

Shadow of Anglo-American Antagonism In the Background

elements and modern landowners who have been enriched in the course of the revolution.

The rebel generals and the former agrarian politicians, Manrique and Soto y Gama and the presidential candidate Valenzuela are all so-called "men of the revolution." They were revolutionaries in the early stages of the development of the bourgeois democratic revolution in Mexico who enriched themselves in the course of the revolution after coming to places of power in the unstable petty-bourgeois government that resulted from the first stages of the long revolutionary development through which Mexico has been going.

They have become landowners on a large scale and formed also the beginnings of a native bourgeoisie. They are capitalist and semi-capitalist, in contradistinction to the older semi-feudal landowners. The fact that such a large number of former Obregonistas and "men of the revolution" could have made an alliance with the older landowning class and Catholic Church symbolizes the growing crystallization and sharpening of class forces in Mexico and the development of differentiations inside the unstable petty bourgeois elements that have thus far led the bourgeois-democratic revolution and dominated the recent Obregon-Calles government.

Classes Crystallizing.

Calles himself, has symbolized his support of the Central Government of Portes Gil by taking over the post of Minister of War. Rubio, the candidate for president who was favored by the government, and Saenz, the candidate who withdrew in favor of Rubio, have both declared their support of the central government. Thus the break in the

old Obregon group is deep-going.

At the other pole the crystallization of class forces is manifested in the growing independent role of the workers and peasants under the leadership of the small but increasingly influential Mexican Communist Party. The workers and peasants, particularly the latter (since Mexico is predominately an agrarian country) have formed the bulk of the fighting forces of all of the various revolutionary movements from 1910 to the present time. But they have until recently always accepted the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie that make up the bureaucratic and military apparatus of the Mexican government.

Workers Own Party.

The maturing of class forces, the growth in the agrarian movement, the growth in the anti-imperialist movement, the growth of the labor movement, the development of industry, the rift in the petty bourgeoisie and the beginning of a larger bourgeoisie, the vacillation and treachery of the petty bourgeoisie, their attempts to block the agrarian revolution, their violation of pledges, their attacks upon the labor movement, their surrender of post after post to American imperialism, and above all the existence and growth of the Communist Party, have all served to disillusion the masses with the petty bourgeois leadership of the past, to hasten their leftward development and to make them appear more and more as an independent force under the leadership of the proletariat and the Communist

For the first time, in the present presidential campaign, the workers and peasants have had a candidate of their own as the candidate of the Worker-Peasant Bloc which is largely under Communist leadership. Undoubtedly, the Communist Party

will utilize its big and growing influence among the workers and peasants to mobilize them as independent guerrilla forces against the counter-revolution and for the realization of their own class interests.

Peasantry Armed.

Already large sections of the peasantry are armed. Some of them acquired arms in previous revolutions and have resisted all attempts of the Calles Government to disarm them. Portes-Gil, foreseeing the present uprising has been trying to win peasant support by distributing land and arms. The Valenzuela supporters have also tried this, but to a more limited extent, and it is even possible that the arms that General Aguirre distributed in the State of Vera Cruz will be used by the peasants there, who are the most advanced in the country, against General Aguirre himself.

An important role in the struggle is being played by *American and British imperialism*. Both Central Government and rebels angle for support of American capital. The present government of Mexico has made so many important concessions to American oil interests and financial interests (debt payment) and has demonstrated that it has sufficient popular support, that the American capitalist interests find it profitable to support it as long as it seems to show strength enough to survive.

At the same time, American interests flirt with Valenzuela and cautiously watch developments. British capital has been traditionally allied with the Catholic Landowning movements in Mexico, and Valenzuela was Ambassador to the Court of Saint James.

Thus behind the developments in Mexico at present is the shadow of American military intervention and the shadow of the Anglo-American antagonism—the dominant world antagonism inside the ranks of the imperialists. The present developments in Mexico involve the ripening of the Mexican revolution. They also involve the possibility of world war.