Chapter 5. National Security

Mexican revolutionary soldiers adapted from a painting by David Álfaro Siquieros

MEXICO'S EXTERNAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT is peaceful. Mexico has no foreign adversaries and little ambition to impose itself upon other nations. It repudiates the use of force to settle disputes and rejects interference by one nation in the affairs of another. It sees no regional security problems justifying military alliances.

The traditional Mexican definition of national security has constrained the role played by the armed forces. The military is essentially passive in matters of external defense. It has been relegated to internal missions of guaranteeing domestic political stability, contributing to the antinarcotics campaign, and carrying out development-oriented civic-action programs in fulfillment of its duties as the "servant of the people." Since the end of World War II, a succession of civilian presidents has divested the military establishment of political power. The ruling civilian elite that guides national security policy focuses on maintaining social order and overcoming local uprisings.

Because of these limited national security goals, Mexico long maintained a military establishment that was relatively small for a regional power. The picture began to change in the late 1970s, however. The discovery and exploitation of new petroleum reserves gave Mexico added stature as a world energy supplier. Violence in Central America brought tens of thousands of refugees, mainly Guatemalans, to Mexico. This influx of refugees was part of a regional upheaval that Mexico feared might spread northward to Mexican soil. Given the situation, the nation's armed forces, which until the 1970s were one of the most poorly paid and ill-equipped in the Western Hemisphere, took on new significance.

As a result, Mexico launched an ambitious military modernization program with the goals of increasing the size of the armed forces, improving education and training, and upgrading military equipment. The plan had to be scaled back because of a serious international financial crisis and domestic economic distress in the 1980s, but important changes were realized. The number of armed services personnel doubled in less than two decades, reaching 175,000 in 1996. In addition to keeping independent regiments and battalions in garrisons throughout the country, the army formed an armored brigade, bringing its combat forces to six brigades. There was also an

elite Presidential Guard brigade. The army also enlarged its inventory of armored vehicles, although it still had no tanks. The air force expanded by adding a jet fighter squadron, in addition to less sophisticated planes, and armed helicopters that have been used in counterinsurgency operations. The navy acquired modern patrol vessels to provide increased protection of offshore oil installations and the country's fishery resources.

Violence in nearby Central American countries slackened in the early 1990s. A 1994 peasant rebellion in the southernmost state of Chiapas, however, demonstrated the potential for revolutionary activity by people not sharing in the country's economic and social progress. Although the lightly armed insurgents inflicted relatively few casualties, troop units were heavily deployed in the area. The possibility that localized uprisings could become more widespread underscores the need for modern, well-trained armed forces to ensure the country's stability.

History and Traditions of the Armed Forces

Mexico's military claims a rich heritage dating back to the pre-Columbian era. As early as the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Aztec army achieved a high degree of military organization that included formal education and training, weapons production, war planning, and the execution of coordinated operations (see The Aztec, ch. 1). The importance of military service was impressed upon each young male in the ritual of declaring to him, shortly after birth, that his destiny was to be a warrior and to die in combat, the most honorable death in Aztec culture. The powers of the Triple Alliance, formed by the urban centers of Tenochtitlán, Texcoco, and Tlacopán (now known as Tacuba)—all three of which are in the area of present-day Mexico City—reportedly could assemble a force of between 16,000 and 18,000 combatants, roughly 10 percent of the male population, on an hour's notice. Evidence of this indigenous influence on the modern military is found in the profile of an eagle warrior, the name given Aztec society's fighting elite, on the insignia of the Superior War College (Escuela Superior de Guerra).

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the forces of the Triple Alliance were at the peak of their military development. Nevertheless, when the Spanish conquistadors under Hernán Cortés arrived in 1519, the native warriors put up little resis-

tance. The two decisive factors in the Spanish victories were the conquistadors' possession of firearms and the mobility they gained from horses, elements of battle hitherto unknown to the Aztec. The cruelty of the Spanish induced the Aztec to rebel in 1520, and Cortés was forced to abandon the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán. After launching a new offensive, the Spanish regained control, destroying the magnificent city (see The Spanish Conquest, ch. 1). An alliance with indigenous peoples opposed to the Aztec; the belief of Aztec ruler Moctezuma II (Montezuma) that Cortés was a Toltec god, Quetzalcóatl, whose return was predicted by legend; and the rapid spread of smallpox, which had been carried by the Spanish, also contributed to the Spanish victory. Despite the Aztec's continued battles and subterfuge, the Spanish succeeded in superimposing their own theocratic-militaristic traditions on the conquered society.

The Spanish organized the new colony as the Viceroyalty of New Spain and established an army there in the latter part of the eighteenth century. By 1800 the army's main components were four infantry regiments and two dragoon regiments rotated periodically from Spain. These were supported by ten militia regiments of infantry and nine regiments of dragoons recruited locally. In all, the army numbered about 30,000 members.

After independence, the Mexican armed forces gradually eliminated many practices of the Spanish colonial army. The practice of granting military officers special rights or privileges (*fueros*) that enabled them to "make sport of justice, avoid payment of their debts, establish gambling houses, and lead a dissolute life under the protection of their epaulets" was abolished in 1855. The military also phased out the nineteenth-century practice of forced conscription, which often filled the ranks with criminals or other social undesirables whom local caudillos (strongmen) wished to be rid of. These practices led to a sharp division between the officer corps and the enlisted ranks, a division that has slowly abated in the twentieth century in response to the egalitarian influence and myths of the Mexican Revolution (1910–20). Two legacies still remain from the years of colonial rule, however: the use of Spanish military ranks, some of which have no direct equivalent in the United States armed forces, and the high prestige traditionally accorded to cavalry units.

The Wars of Independence, 1810–21

According to one historical account, the struggle for independence involved four phases of military operations. In the first phase, Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, a parish priest, formed the precursor of the first independent Mexican military force when he issued the now-famous Grito de Dolores on September 16, 1810, calling for an end to Spanish rule (see Wars of Independence, 1810–21, ch. 1). Hidalgo led a poorly armed force of native and mestizo peasants in disorganized attacks on Spanish-controlled towns and villages throughout central Mexico. The second phase began after Hidalgo's capture and execution in 1811, when Father José María Morelos y Pavón assumed leadership of the independence movement. Morelos led guerrilla-style operations at the head of a small army equipped with weapons captured from the Spanish. He was able to establish an independent republic from central Mexico to the Pacific coast and to encircle Mexico City by early 1813. The third phase, following Morelos's capture and execution in 1815, consisted of attacks by uncoordinated rebel bands led by guerrilla chieftains—among them Guadalupe (Manuel Félix Fernández) Victoria and Vicente Guerrero, both of whom later became presidents. Their operations further undermined Spanish control.

The final phase of the independence struggle began in 1821, when a loyalist officer, Augustín de Iturbide, revolted against his superiors and formed a tenuous military alliance with Guerrero. The temporary establishment of a liberal monarchy in Spain had provoked many Mexican conservatives like Iturbide to switch their sympathies to the revolutionaries. Iturbide's Army of the Three Guarantees, composed of approximately 16,000 men, quickly succeeded in routing those of the regular Spanish forces who resisted (see Iturbide and the Plan of Iguala, ch. 1). Full independence in 1821 was followed by the 1822 coronation of Iturbide as the "constitutional emperor" of Mexico. The revolutionary force became the first standing Mexican military body. Known as the Mexican Imperial Army, it was almost an exact copy of the Spanish colonial militia. Its officers were of direct Spanish descent, but the rank and file were mainly peasants recruited by raids on villages in the mountains and brought down in chains to the cities. The desertion rate was high among these "recruits," who remained ill-trained and poorly equipped for military action.

For the first thirty years following independence, military officers dominated the country's chaotic political life (see Empire and the Early Republic, 1821–55, ch. 1). Repeatedly, groups of generals led by a caudillo issued "pronouncements" (*pronunciamientos*) denouncing the government and promising reform and rewards for those who would join their revolt. One of the most vilified and cunning of the military caudillos was General Antonio López de Santa Anna Pérez de Lebrón, who led the first revolt against Iturbide and, between 1833 and 1855, served as president on eleven different occasions.

War with the United States, 1846

In spite of his military talents, Santa Anna is most remembered for his defeats that led to the cession of roughly one-half of Mexican territory to the United States under the 1848 peace settlement (see Centralism and the Caudillo State, 1836–55, ch. 1). After Texas declared its independence in 1836, Texan forces initially suffered a series of military reverses that culminated in the disaster at the Alamo in San Antonio. But later, bolstered by volunteer fighters from throughout the United States, they soundly defeated the Mexicans and captured Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto. After nine years of independence (unrecognized by Mexico), Texas was admitted to the United States in 1845. The next year, the administration of President James K. Polk, eager to fulfill the United States claim to "manifest destiny," found a pretext to declare war on Mexico. After occupying Santa Fe without a struggle, United States forces under General Stephen Kearney advanced west to present-day California, while forces under Alexander Doniplan occupied Chihuahua. Another United States force under General Zachary Taylor defeated Santa Anna's army at the Battle of Buena Vista near Monterrey. The decisive battles, however, were waged by General Winfield Scott's 15,000-man Army of Occupation after it opened another front by landing at Veracruz. Scott's army continued toward the Mexican capital, winning a series of engagements with Santa Anna, who had assumed the Mexican presidency. United States forces took Mexico City after a three-week siege that culminated in the decisive Battle of Chapultepec. By Mexican accounts, some 1,100 Mexican troops and cadets fought in hand-to-hand combat against 7,000 United States soldiers at Chapultepec Castle, the site of the Heroic Military College on the western outskirts of the city. The legend of the Boy Heroes (Niños Héroes) was

born when young cadets, among the last defenders of Chapultepec, reputedly threw themselves over the ramparts to their deaths rather than surrender to Scott's troops.

The internal disorder that followed Mexico's defeat depleted the country's treasury and destroyed much of its commerce and agriculture. Mounting unpaid foreign debts created a pretext for Britain, France, and Spain to land troops at Veracruz in 1861. Dreaming of expanding his influence to the New World, the French ruler, Napoleon III, sent an expeditionary force inland to capture Mexico City in early 1862. Although initially defeated at the bloody Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862, the French, aided by Mexican conservative troops, eventually succeeded in installing the Habsburg archduke Ferdinand Maximilian Joseph as the second emperor of Mexico (see Civil War and the French Intervention, 1855–67, ch. 1). By late 1862, the legitimate government of Benito Juárez was left with control of only a small enclave along the border with Texas.

General José de la Cruz Porfirio Díaz had played a decisive role in the early victory of Juárez's forces at Puebla and commanded troops in the republican stronghold of Oaxaca until it was captured by the French in 1865. After escaping from a French military prison, Díaz commanded republican troops in the final campaigns leading to the surrender of Maximilian's remaining forces at Querétaro in 1867. After Juárez was returned to the presidency, Díaz managed to slowly parlay his military prowess into political strength.

Díaz's allegiance to Juárez ended soon after the restoration of the republic when the newly reinstalled president discharged two-thirds of the 60,000- to 90,000-member army. During the next several years, Díaz championed the cause of the dismissed troops and unsuccessfully challenged Juárez in the 1867 and 1871 presidential elections. The presidential succession after Juárez's death finally provoked Díaz to move against the government by issuing the 1876 Plan of Tuxtepec. Using recruits and funds gathered in the United States, Díaz defeated the government troops and, in November of that year, assumed the presidency, a position he would hold for all but four of the next thirty-four years (see The Restoration, 1867–76, ch. 1).

Established as the national caudillo, Díaz based his power on military might as he ruthlessly eliminated those who challenged his authority. When the United States and Mexico came close to war in 1877 over raids into United States territory by Mexican bandits and cattle rustlers, Díaz halted the brigandage

and averted war by sending in federal army troops and the *rurales*, the feared paramilitary corps composed largely of criminals that also served as a counterweight to the regular military's power. Díaz resumed the practice of forced conscription and used his troops to brutally suppress antigovernment riots in Mexico City. Although state governorships were regularly offered to loyal officers, Díaz rotated the command of the army's military zones as a means of preventing generals from acquiring a local power base.

The Military Phase of the Revolution, 1910–17

Opposition to Díaz grew during the later years of Díaz's rule, and liberal reformers rose against Díaz in 1910, following yet another fraudulent reelection. Using the United States as a base of operations, the liberal democratic opposition forces laid siege to the federal garrison at Ciudad Juárez. Díaz's liberal presidential opponent, Francisco I. Madero, issued a manifesto in San Antonio, Texas, declaring himself provisional president and creating the Army of Liberation, which later became the Constitutionalist Army (see The Revolution, 1910–20, ch. 1).

Regional caudillos, some of whom were little more than bandits, soon joined the movement. Rebels led by Pascual Orozco and Francisco (Pancho) Villa, armed with Winchester rifles smuggled from the United States, quickly gained the advantage over federal troops, who depended on long supply lines from the capital. As rebel successes mounted, government troops began deserting. Under pressure, Díaz resigned in 1911 and fled to exile in France.

The Madero government, which succeeded Díaz, was forced to deal with uprisings throughout the country. Rebel military leaders (most notably Orozco) were dissatisfied with the rewards that the new Madero government offered them for defeating the dictatorship. A coup ousted Madero in 1913 and set the Mexican Revolution on a bloody course that would last for the next four years.

Various rival factions struggled for supremacy in confused fighting. The principal leaders were Villa, Orozco, Emiliano Zapata, Venustiano Carranza, and Álvaro Obregón. Villa deliberately provoked United States intervention by launching cross-border raids. A 7,000-man expeditionary force under United States General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing was dispatched in 1916 but failed to capture Villa. In spite of the chaotic conditions, the military phase of the Mexican Revolution

provided the Mexican armed forces with a unifying ideology. This new ideology stressed the military's peasant origins and established the military as the defender of the popular will. Drawing on this heritage, the modern Mexican military identifies itself as the "silent and anonymous guardian" that has provided the security essential to the subsequent development of the nation.

Professionalization of the Armed Forces, 1920–46

The first serious efforts at depoliticizing and professionalizing the military began in 1920 under the government of Obregón, himself a general who had been elected president with the support of the old revolutionary chiefs. Obregón saw the need to consolidate his political position by diminishing the power and influence of the regional caudillos. Military uprisings in 1923, 1927, and 1929 resulted in purges of large numbers of rebellious generals. The army was reduced by two-thirds, to 14,000 officers and 70,000 troops in 1921. The demobilization principally dismantled the excessive number of cavalry regiments. Pay and living conditions of the enlisted ranks were improved, and the military's share of the national budget was slashed from 61 percent in 1921 to 25 percent by 1926. Many officers and men were weeded out by new laws on competitive promotion and mandatory retirement ages. Nevertheless, unqualified revolutionary-era generals continued to be carried on the rolls. The Organic Law of 1926 provided the legal base for the army, defined its missions, and established regulations and formal procedures.

General Plutarco Elías Calles (president, 1924–28) continued Obregón's efforts to reduce the political influence of the military and ensure the army's loyalty to the central government. Calles's policies were carried out by General Joaquín Amaro, the secretary of war and navy. Amaro promoted education of officers and enlisted men in the belief that it would increase loyalty and obedience to civilian authorities. Officers were sent for professional training in the United States and Western Europe. The curriculum of the Heroic Military College, founded in 1823, was reformed, and the Superior War College, a command and general staff college for promising officers, was created. Schools providing specialized training in the various service branches also were established (see Education and Training, this ch.).

General Lázaro Cárdenas, who assumed the presidency in 1934, divided the Secretariat of War and the Navy into two autonomous defense ministries, the Secretariat of National Defense (Secretaría de Defensa Nacional), which controlled the army and air force, and the Secretariat of the Navy (Secretaría de Marina Armada). As the possibility of Mexican involvement in World War II increased, Cárdenas drafted the Law of National Military Service, which established, through a lottery system, compulsory basic military training for eighteen-year-old males.

The Mexican Military in World War II

General Manuel Ávila Camacho, who came to office in 1940 and was the last general elected president of Mexico, continued Cárdenas's and Obregón's efforts to institutionalize the army and remove the military from politics. In February 1942, soon after the Japanese attack on United States forces at Pearl Harbor, the Joint Mexican-United States Commission on Continental Defense was established. The commission coordinated planning for the defense of Mexico and the adjacent southwestern United States. The sinking of two Mexican tankers in the Gulf of Mexico by German submarines provoked Ávila Camacho to declare war on the Axis powers in May 1942. In response to the Mexican government's expressed desire to fight the Japanese, a Mexican air squadron was readied for duty in the Pacific theater. After a year's training in the United States, Squadron 201 of the Mexican Expeditionary Air Force arrived in the Philippines in April 1945. Flying P–47 Thunderbolt fighters, the Mexican pilots participated in bombing and strafing runs to support ground forces and in long-range reconnaissance missions over Taiwan. Of thirty-two pilots in the expeditionary squadron, seven were killed.

The immediate postwar years were a peak period of United States influence on the Mexican armed forces. The Mexican military reorganized, using the United States armed forces as a model. The military training program incorporated United States army field manuals. United States arms transferred to Mexico just after World War II were the country's last major acquisitions of military hardware for a period of three decades, however. In the mid-1970s, the government accepted the need for a larger, modernized army because of growing concerns over potential threats to its oil resources.

The Military in Civilian Politics

Despite the military's prominent role in the history of the country, the Mexican armed forces have steadily retreated from direct involvement in political matters since the 1940s. The typical Mexican officer is deliberately removed from political issues, and there has been a decline in military representation in government offices outside the armed services. Since World War II, the number of persons with military backgrounds serving in the cabinet, subcabinet, state governorships, and in the bureaucracy has steadily declined.

Mexican political observer Adolfo Aguilar Zinser believes there is little reason to expect the officer corps to change its deeply rooted loyalty to civil authority. Serious domestic turmoil might cause a conservative middle class and business interests to pressure the army to intervene in the government. As long as the military remains assured of the civilian leadership's ability to deal with any crisis threatening the established system, however, the military is unlikely to be drawn into political affairs.

National Security Concerns

Under the constitution of 1917, the armed forces have responsibility for defending the sovereignty and independence of the nation, maintaining the constitution and its laws, and preserving internal order. At various times during the first century of independence, Mexico was subjected to foreign attacks by the United States, France, and, for a brief period, Spain and Britain. Mexico's principal national security concerns since 1910 have been to preserve domestic political stability and to prevent foreign economic domination. The last time Mexico faced a foreign threat was when it joined the war against the Axis in World War II. During World War II and in the subsequent years of the Cold War, however, Mexico's proximity to the United States allowed it to fall under the protective shield of its northern neighbor.

Bilateral relations with the United States have been strongly affected by the bitter legacy left by Mexico's loss of more than one-half of its territory in 1848 and subsequent incidents of United States infringement of its sovereignty. General Winfield Scott's 1847 siege of the capital, the United States marines' 1914 occupation of Veracruz, and General Pershing's 1916 punitive expedition in northern Mexico against Pancho Villa

were traumatic episodes in Mexican history. Even in the post-World War II era, most Mexicans viewed United States domination, not Soviet-Cuban designs in the Western Hemisphere or revolutionary regimes in Central America, as the major foreign threat to national sovereignty. Although fears of armed intervention by the United States have receded, concerns over United States economic and political penetration persist.

The Mexican military is primarily organized to meet challenges to internal order and the existing political system. Since the 1940s, Mexico has remained remarkably free from domestic upheaval, perhaps more so than any other Latin American nation. For the most part, the military has been reluctant to become involved in law enforcement. The armed forces have given the responsibility of preventing violence to federal and state police authorities except when faced with a large-scale breakdown of civil order. Troops are not fully equipped or trained to deal directly with protesters, and, with its reputation at risk, the military leadership seems inclined to register its influence more as a presence than an active force.

In 1968 the military was called upon to put down massive student-led protests associated with strongly felt economic grievances. Fearful of losing control of the situation, the army violently suppressed the movement by opening fire on thousands of demonstrators at Tlatelolco, in northern Mexico City. The brutality of the action, in which hundreds of demonstrators were killed or wounded, was severely criticized and had a lasting effect on the public's perception of the military.

The January 1994 uprising in the state of Chiapas by a previously unknown guerrilla group, the Zapatista National Liberation Army (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional—EZLN), has been the only outbreak in recent years that has necessitated major troop deployments (see Public Order and Internal Security, this ch.). Both army and air force units were shifted to the scene to drive the insurgents out of towns they occupied. After widespread skirmishes in which several hundred persons were reportedly killed, the army was able to regain control of most towns in the area within a matter of hours, forcing the guerrillas to retreat into remote mountain strongholds. Except for a brief army offensive in February 1995, several consecutive cease-fires prevented any further fighting after the initial actions of 1994. By early 1996, the military situation in Chiapas was stalemated: the army occupied the towns, and the rebels were largely confined to the thinly populated highlands.

In dealing with potential regional hostilities, the Mexican military has adopted a reserved posture that reflects the country's foreign policy traditions. Neither Cuban-style communism nor the possibility of conflict spreading northward from Central America has been regarded as directly threatening to Mexico. No effort has been made to erect defenses along the 3,200-kilometer land border Mexico shares with the United States. Mexico's 970-kilometer border with Guatemala also remains unguarded despite occasional clashes between Mexican and Guatemalan forces. When Guatemalan army units carried out raids in the early 1980s against Guatemalan refugees and Mexican communities that were aiding them, the Mexican military reacted mildly to avoid confrontation. Mexican coastal areas and its 320-kilometer Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) are lightly patrolled by Mexican fleet units. The security of Mexico's coasts is effectively guaranteed since they are within the orbit of United States hemispheric defense.

Tasks and Missions

In the half-century following World War II, the Mexican armed forces have never been called upon to exercise an external defense role. Their primary mission has been to deter and prevent violence threatening public order, including outbreaks arising from strikes and protests, rural political grievances, guerrilla insurgency, and urban terrorism. Since the 1920s, the military has devoted a considerable share of its resources to civic-action programs to improve socioeconomic conditions and relieve human distress, particularly in rural areas that otherwise have little contact with government representatives (see Civic Action, this ch.). The army has often been called upon to respond to natural disasters, its responsibilities set forth in a plan known as National Defense III (Defensa Nacional III—DN III), and to coordinate the work of other agencies during the course of the emergency. The army took charge of relief operations after the volcanic eruption in Chiapas in 1982. When parts of the capital were devastated by the powerful earthquake of 1985, however, the army played a lesser role because the civil authorities did not wish to appear incapable of dealing with the crisis without military help.

The army assigns large numbers of personnel to the antinarcotics campaign, carrying out crop eradication as well as supporting law enforcement agencies in interdiction missions. The navy is responsible for maritime drug interdiction, and the

ground-based radar system of the air force supports air interdiction efforts (see Narcotics Trafficking, this ch.).

Under the Mexican code for federal elections, the army has a limited but important part in the administration of elections, monitoring polling stations and protecting ballot boxes on election day. Although the military has generally remained impartial in carrying out its election duties, it faced accusations in 1985 and 1986 that it assisted in manipulating ballot counts in the northern states to ensure victories by the government party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional—PRI).

As part of its domestic security functions, the army is also responsible for protecting strategic economic installations such as electric power plants, oil fields, petroleum complexes, ports, and airports. All regions where the country's petroleum reserves are located are regarded as of high strategic significance. Petroleum fields are found primarily in the southeastern states of Veracruz and Tabasco and offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. The threat of spreading conflict in Central America and the strategic importance attached to Mexico's oil fields were the decisive factors in the government's decision to assign additional military personnel to the southernmost areas in the mid-1980s and to relocate Guatemalans living in refugee camps there so as to remove any pretext for Guatemalan border incursions.

Along with protection of Mexico's fisheries and detection of vessels transporting contraband, the Mexican navy is charged with the defense of offshore oil installations and other maritime resources. The campaign against drug smuggling has placed an increasing burden on the navy's resources. These heightened priorities led the government to dedicate a significantly greater portion of its budget to the Secretariat of the Navy during the 1980s. Between 1980 and 1984, the United States and Mexico were at odds over the Mexican navy's apprehending of United States fishing vessels—mainly tuna boats—within Mexico's EEZ. In 1993 three smuggling ships carrying several hundred illegal Chinese immigrants were forced to land in Mexico after the ships had been detected off the California coast, adding another dimension to the navy's mission.

United States Concerns

Mexico has enjoyed peaceful relations with its northern neighbor for many decades. In the United States, national

security issues involving Mexico gained increased attention during the 1980s because of the growing importance of Mexico's oil reserves and installations and because of the fear that leftist-inspired turbulence in Central America might spread northward. Mexico's economic difficulties and societal frictions intensified fears that the long period of stable border conditions might be ending. By the early 1990s, however, unrest had abated in Central America. Radical movements were no longer threatening the government of El Salvador, and the leftist Sandinista (see Glossary) government was out of power in Nicaragua. In Guatemala, the civilian government had largely overcome the left-wing insurgency and had begun to engage in serious peace negotiations under United Nations auspices. The Mexican military leadership, although conservative and anticommunist in outlook, had never been persuaded that it faced a security threat arising from the spread of violence in Central America or that popular discontent in Mexico had gathered sufficient force to provoke widespread domestic disorder and revolutionary violence.

Historically, relations between the military establishments of Mexico and the United States have not been close. Cooperation reached its peak for a brief period during and after World War II. In the Cold War atmosphere that followed, Mexico opposed the United States concepts of regional security; in particular, it did not support the United States intervention in Guatemala in 1954 and the trade embargo imposed against Castro-led Cuba in the early 1960s. The country's leaders felt that the roots of violence in Central America could be found in social and economic problems and in right-wing dictatorships, rather than any Cuban and Soviet subversion. The defense commission with the United States formed in World War II became inactive, and military assistance—under which the United States transferred US$40 million worth of modern equipment to Mexico in the late 1940s—ended in 1950.

By the late 1980s, relations between the military establishments of Mexico and the United States became somewhat warmer as cooperation expanded in the fight against illicit drugs. Purchases of United States military items, which had amounted to US$140 million in the five-year period 1982 to 1986, rose steeply to US$410 million over the period from 1987 to 1991, accounting for three-quarters of all of Mexico's arms imports. Numerous Mexican officers received training in the United States and became well acquainted with United States

military doctrine. On the whole, however, the Mexican armed forces were less influenced by the United States military than were the armed forces of other countries of Latin America. In the mid-1990s, military assistance and concessional military credits from the United States to Mexico still had not been resumed. About US$500,000 was allocated by the United States government for military education and training each year, enabling more than 900 Mexican officers to attend United States military institutions between 1977 and 1991. This figure was exclusive of training funded by Mexico in connection with weapons procurements.

Treaty Obligations

Mexico is a signatory to the principal defense-related multilateral treaties and agreements in the Western Hemisphere but has refrained from entering into alliances or collective security arrangements that could be viewed as inconsistent with its principles of nonintervention and self-determination. In early 1945, Mexico, along with nineteen other nations of the hemisphere, signed the Act of Chapultepec. Under the act, the first hemispheric defense agreement, signatory nations agreed that if any aggression across treaty-established boundaries occurred or was threatened, a meeting would be convened to determine what steps, up to and including the use of armed force, should be taken to prevent or repel such aggression.

Mexico signed the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, also known as the Rio Treaty, in September 1947. The Rio Treaty, which expanded the responsibilities of nations under the Act of Chapultepec, emphasized the peaceful settlement of disputes among Western Hemisphere nations and provided for collective defense should any signatory be subject to external aggression. Although the treaty was conceived as a means to protect the nations of the hemisphere from possible communist aggression, Mexico chose to interpret it as a juridical association of states, not as a military alliance. Each time that the treaty has been invoked, Mexico has voted against the adoption of collective security measures (see Foreign Relations, ch. 4).

Upon formation of the Organization of American States (OAS) in April 1948, Mexico actively opposed proposals to create a standing military force under OAS supervision. Mexico insisted on limiting the newly created OAS defense body—now known as the Inter-American Defense Board—to serving in a

consultative capacity to OAS member nations. Subsequent amendments to the charter have underscored the goal of peaceful resolution of disputes among member states.

Mexico initially proposed and then became a signatory to the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco, which prohibits the introduction of nuclear weapons into Latin America. Similarly, it is a signatory to the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which limits the application of nuclear technology to peaceful purposes. Mexico has accepted the safeguard agreements of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which include the accounting and control of nuclear reactor by-products that could be used to make weapons, but has refused to permit on-site inspections of its nuclear facilities.

Armed Forces

Constitutional and Legal Basis

The constitution of 1917 established the guiding principles for the armed forces and placed restrictions on their activities. Article 89 places the military under the control of the president of the republic, who, as commander in chief, is responsible for seeing that the armed forces fulfill their obligation to guarantee "internal order and external defense." The restriction on peacetime interference by military authorities in civilian affairs or other activities not "directly connected with the military discipline," set forth by Article 129, has often been abused, however, usually on the order of the president. The final constitutional provision for establishing government control of the armed forces, Article 132, places all military facilities and properties under federal jurisdiction.

A series of laws enacted in 1926 further shaped the armed forces. The most important of these, the Organic Law, gave them a threefold mission: "to defend the integrity and independence of the nation, to maintain the constitution, and to preserve internal order." The basic law subsequently has been modified to keep pace with political, economic, and social changes in the Mexican state.

Three additional laws enacted in 1926 also sought to regularize military practices. The Law of Promotions and Compensation established a pay scale for each rank and competitive examinations for promotion. The Law of Military Discipline further defined the obligations of the armed forces to society, requiring that each soldier, "in fulfillment of his duties, sacri-

Headquarters of Secretariat of National Defense
Courtesy Arturo Salinas

fice all personal interests to the sovereignty of the nation, to loyalty toward its institutions, and to the honor of the National Army." The Law of Pensions and Retirements set a mandatory retirement age and provided pensions for military retirees and allowances for military dependents. Although all of these laws have been modified to meet the needs of changing times, they remain the institutional foundation of the Mexican military.

Organization of National Defense

The organization of the Mexican armed forces at the cabinet level is distinct from that of many other Latin American nations. Instead of a single ministry consolidating the command of the army, navy, and air force, two government ministries are directly responsible for national defense: the Secretariat of National Defense and the Secretariat of the Navy. The head of each of these secretariats is a military officer who holds cabinet rank and has regular, direct access to the president of the republic, who is the supreme commander of the armed forces.

After President Carlos Salinas de Gortari took office in 1988, five cabinet-level councils were created within the offices of the

president to oversee principal policy areas. One of these is the National Security Council, which includes representatives of the secretariats of government, foreign relations, national defense, and the navy, as well as the attorney general's office. Narcotics control is one of the topics dealt with in the council.

The secretary of national defense (General Enrique Cervantes Aguirre as of 1996) is selected by the president from the ranks of active army general officers. The secretary normally serves for six years, the same term as the president's. Similarly, the secretary of the navy (Admiral José Ramón Lorenzo Franco in 1996) is chosen from the ranks of active admirals. Operating through the General Staff, the secretary of national defense commands army and air force units, the army zonal commands, and logistics and administrative directorates. Under the secretary of the navy are the chief of naval operations, the chief of naval staff, and the naval zones that control operational forces.

The army is by far the largest service branch. Of some 175,000 active armed forces personnel in 1996, 130,000 were in the army, 8,000 in the air force, and 37,000 in the navy. The army total at any one time included about 60,000 conscripts. No conscripts were assigned to the air force or navy. A "reserve" force of 300,000 is claimed, although this number is a manpower pool rather than an existing trained force.

The size of the armed forces is modest considering Mexico's size and importance. Mexico has the smallest number of military personnel per capita of any country of Latin America. According to the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), Latin America as a whole had 3.5 soldiers per 1,000 population in 1991. The corresponding figure for Mexico was 1.9 soldiers per 1,000 population. In spite of the steady increase in the armed forces—they have roughly doubled in size since the mid-1970s—the number of soldiers per capita has remained remarkably steady because of the parallel increase in population.

Army

The principal units of the Mexican army are six brigades and a number of independent regiments and infantry battalions. The brigades, all based in and around the Federal District (encompassing the Mexico City area), are the only real maneuver elements in the army. With their support units, they are believed to account for 40 percent of the country's ground

forces. According to *The Military Balance*, published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, the army in 1996 had seven brigades: one armored, two infantry, one motorized infantry, one airborne, one combined military police and engineer brigade, and the Presidential Guard Brigade. The armored brigade is one of two new brigades formed since 1990 as part of a reorganization made possible by an increase in overall strength of about 25,000 troops. The brigade consists of three armored and one mechanized infantry regiment.

Each of the two infantry brigades consists of three infantry battalions and an artillery battalion. The motorized infantry brigade is composed of three motorized infantry regiments. The airborne brigade consists of two army and one air force battalion. The elite Presidential Guard Brigade reports directly to the Office of the President and is responsible for providing military security for the president and for visiting dignitaries. The Presidential Guard consists of three infantry battalions, one special force battalion, and one artillery battalion.

Distinct from the brigade formations are independent regiments and battalions assigned to zonal garrisons. These independent units consist of one armored cavalry regiment, nineteen motorized cavalry regiments, one mechanized infantry regiment, seven artillery regiments, and three artillery and eight infantry battalions. Infantry battalions, each composed of approximately 300 troops, generally are deployed in each zone. Certain zones also are assigned an additional motorized cavalry regiment or one of the seven artillery regiments. Smaller detachments often are detailed to patrol more inaccessible areas of the countryside, helping to maintain order and resolve disputes.

The cavalry historically has been the most prestigious branch of the army; in 1920, there were more cavalry squadrons than infantry companies. By the early 1980s, all mounted cavalry had been transformed into motorized units—except for one squadron retained for ceremonial purposes. The engineers, air defense, and combat support and service units was organized into separate regimental, battalion, and company units, which are distributed among military zone installations.

Mexico in 1996 was divided into twelve military regions with thirty-nine military zones. Zone boundaries usually correspond with those of the country's thirty-one states, with the headquarters of the military zone located in the state capital. Some

states, including Veracruz, Guerrero, and Chiapas, which have been the scene of disturbances by peasant and Indian groups, have more than one military zone apiece. The Federal District, where Mexico City is located, is the seat of the First Military Zone and also serves as headquarters of the First Military Region.

Military zone commanders are appointed by the president, usually on the recommendation of the secretary of national defense. The senior zone commander in a given area also acts as the commander of the military region in which the zone falls. Zone commanders hold jurisdiction over all units operating in their territory, including the Rural Defense Force (see Rural Defense Force, this ch.). They occasionally have served the federal authorities as a political counterweight to the power wielded by state governors. Zone commanders provide the secretary of national defense with valuable intelligence regarding social and political conditions in rural areas, and traditionally have acted in close coordination with the Secretariat of National Defense on resource planning and deployment matters.

Under a modernization program initiated in the late 1970s, the army purchased a significant amount of new equipment, in many cases replacing equipment that dated from the World War II period. The army's inventory of armored vehicles was expanded and updated. The Panhard ERC–90 Lynx six-wheeled reconnaissance car and the Panhard VBL M–11 light armored car were acquired from France. Older designs, such as the German HWK–11 tracked armored personnel carrier (APC), remained in the inventory in 1996 (see table 13, Appendix). Several domestic versions, the DN–3 and DN–5 Caballo and the Mex–1, have been added since the mid-1980s. The M4 Sherman medium tank and several models of light tank transferred by the United States after World War II were retired, leaving Mexico without any tanks in its inventory. Plans for a major expansion of the country's own armament industry, which might have included a domestic tank design, were curtailed as a result of the debt crisis of 1982 (see Domestic Defense Production, this ch.).

Except for five self-propelled 75mm howitzers, in 1996 the army's artillery consisted mainly of towed 105mm howitzers. The army's principal antitank weapons are French Milan missiles, some of which are mounted on the VBL M–11s. Antiaircraft weapons systems are limited to 12.7mm air defense guns.

Panhard ERC–90 Lynx tank
Courtesy Panhard

The army has no units equipped with tactical air defense missiles.

Air Force

The Mexican armed forces saw the value of air power early. In 1911 the Madero revolutionaries flew an airplane on a bombing mission using grenades, and a year later, after Madero became president, three military pilots were sent to the United States for training. Shortly thereafter, one of the rebel groups acquired several airplanes, which, flown by foreign mercenary pilots, supported their ground forces during the advance southward in 1914. Unable to obtain additional aircraft because of the war in Europe, the Carranza government successfully developed and produced a biplane trainer and subsequently a series of other models from both local designs and from modifications of foreign planes.

During the 1920s, the army bought various war-surplus bomber, reconnaissance, fighter, and training aircraft at low cost, although the local aircraft industry continued to produce its own models. In 1932 an air regiment was formed, consisting of one squadron each of Vought Corsair, Douglas, and Bristol

fighters. After the United States and Mexico entered World War II, the United States transferred a considerable number of primary and advanced trainers to Mexico, followed by light bombers and amphibious reconnaissance planes that were used to conduct antisubmarine patrols in the Gulf of Mexico. The Mexican air force received additional trainers, bombers, and transport aircraft after the signing of the 1947 Rio Treaty. It acquired jet fighters from Canada and armed jet trainers from the United States in the late 1950s.

The air force, organized into two wings and ten air groups, had a personnel complement of 8,000 in 1996, including 1,500 assigned to the airborne brigade. The air force's principal air base, Military Air Base Number 1, is located at Santa Lucía in the state of México. Other major air bases are located at Ixtepec in Oaxaca, Isla Cozumel in Quintana Roo, Zapopán in Veracruz, and Mérida in Yucatán, as well as El Ciprés and La Paz (both in Baja California Sur) and Puebla and Píe de la Cuesta (both in Guerrero).

Delivery, beginning in 1982, of ten F–5E Tiger II fighter aircraft and two F–5F two-seater trainers from the United States enabled Mexico to form a supersonic air defense squadron armed with Sidewinder missiles. As part of a construction agreement with the United States, the runways at the Santa Lucía air base were lengthened and facilities renovated to accommodate the new planes. In 1982 the air force also acquired the first of some seventy Pilatus PC–7 turboprop planes from Switzerland. In 1996 forty of the PC–7s were organized into three counterinsurgency squadrons, and the remainder are available for both training and counterinsurgency operations. Also capable of being armed for counterinsurgency tasks is one squadron of twelve AT–33s (Lockheed Shooting Star), a much older aircraft used mainly as a jet trainer. One squadron of Bell 205, 206, and 212 armed helicopters also is designated for a counterinsurgency role. One squadron of IAI 201s (the Israeli Arava, a short-takeoff-and-landing utility transport) is assigned to search-and-air rescue, and a photo reconnaissance squadron is made up of Rockwell Commander 500Ss. Five transport squadrons are equipped with C–47s, C–118s, C–130s, and some small aircraft. The Presidential Transport Squadron, based at the Benito Juárez International Airport in Mexico City, has seven Boeing 727s and one Boeing 737, together with smaller transport planes and a number of helicopters (see table 14, Appendix).

A Westinghouse mobile radar system purchased in 1988 was activated at the close of 1991 to track suspicious aircraft in Guatemalan air space flying toward the Mexican border. The system was introduced both as a security measure to survey air activity along the Guatemalan border and to track planes smuggling narcotics from South America.

In early 1996, the air force acquired twenty-nine UH–1H "Huey" and eighteen Bell 206 helicopters from the Federal Judicial Police for use in military-assisted counternarcotics operations. In a sign of the growing militarization of Mexico's drug war under the administration of President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León, in May 1996, negotiations were underway for the permanent transfer of an additional seventy-three surplus "Hueys" from the United States to the Mexican air force.

Rural Defense Force

The Rural Defense Force (Guardia Rural), composed entirely of volunteers, augments the military presence in the countryside. The corps was formally organized under army jurisdiction according to the Organic Law of 1926. Its origins, however, date back to the period when the revolutionary agrarian reform program was first implemented in 1915. In efforts to protect themselves against the private armies of recalcitrant large landowners, rural peasants organized themselves into small defense units and were provided weapons by the revolutionary government. Until 1955 enlistment in the Rural Defense Force was restricted to peasants working on collective farms or *ejidos* (see Glossary). After 1955 participation in the Rural Defense Force was expanded to include small farmers and laborers. All defense units, however, were attached to *ejidos*, possibly as a means to guarantee control.

The Rural Defense Force numbered some 120,000 in 1970, but was being phased out in the 1990s. *The Military Balance* listed the corps as having only 14,000 members in 1996. The volunteers, aged eighteen to fifty, enlist for a three-year period. Members do not wear uniforms or receive pay for their service but are eligible for limited benefits. They are armed with outmoded rifles, which may be the chief inducement to enlist. Rudimentary training is provided by troops assigned to military zone detachments.

The basic unit is the platoon (*pelotón*) of eleven members under immediate control of the *ejido*. Use of the unit outside

the *ejidos* is by order of the military zone commander. One asset of the corps is the capacity of its members to gather intelligence about activities within the *ejidos* and in remote rural areas seldom patrolled by military zone detachments. Corps members also act as guides for military patrols, participate in civic-action projects, and assist in destroying marijuana crops and preventing the transport of narcotics through their areas.

Civic Action

Civic-action programs designed to improve socioeconomic conditions and develop public facilities traditionally have been an important mission of the armed forces. As early as 1921, labor battalions created by order of President Obregón were employed in road construction, irrigation projects, and railroad and telegraph maintenance. The Organic Law of the Armed Forces directs the army and the air force to "aid the civilian population, cooperate with authorities in cases of public necessity, [and] lend assistance in social programs." Programs designed to meet these aims have been given high priority since the 1960s.

By the 1980s, civic-action programs encompassed a wide range of activities carried out by military zone personnel, often in coordination with government agencies. These programs reinforced the army's ties to the country's rural inhabitants and promoted national development. The army was placed in charge of coordinating disaster relief in 1966 under Plan DN III. Military zone personnel assist the rural population in literacy programs, road building, bringing electricity to rural villages, repairing equipment, school restoration, immunization, and dental care, and in some cases provide emergency surgery in military hospitals. Military personnel also serve as escorts on the national railroads, patrol federal highways on national holidays, and participate in campaigns to eliminate livestock disease and crop damage caused by insect infestations.

Secretariat of the Navy

Mexico created a modest navy after gaining independence from Spain in 1821. At the time of the war with the United States in 1846, the fleet was still very small and was forced to remain in port to avoid destruction. Around 1875 several large gunboats were acquired from Britain, and the naval academy was established at the main Gulf of Mexico coast base of Veracruz. Although a number of gunboats and cruiser/transports

were added after the turn of the century, the navy played only a limited role in the Mexican Revolution. After World War I and again after World War II, the navy expanded by purchasing surplus gunboats, frigates, and corvettes from the United States and Canada.

To meet its broadened responsibilities, the navy has more than doubled in size since the mid-1970s. According to *Jane's Fighting Ships*, the navy's active-duty personnel numbered 37,000 in 1996. Of these, some 1,100 were assigned to naval aviation, and another 8,600 were marines. Also falling under the command of the navy are members of the coast guard and merchant marine, who support the country's growing maritime fleet.

The navy is entirely a volunteer force. Its personnel are dispersed among various naval zones and port installations. As with the secretary of national defense, being appointed the secretary of the navy requires not only a distinguished service record but also a personal relationship with the president. Although the general headquarters of the Secretariat of the Navy is in Mexico City, naval command is divided between the country's two coasts. The commanding headquarters of the Pacific fleet is at Acapulco; the Gulf of Mexico coast command is at Veracruz. Both commands are organized into three naval regions each. There are seventeen naval zones, one for each coastal state. Some of the naval zones are further subdivided into sectors. Through coordination within each coast command, patrol operations are carried out by the respective naval zones along the country's approximately 9,300 kilometers of coastline and the nearly 3 million square kilometers of ocean that make up Mexico's territorial waters and EEZ.

The navy's primary mission is to protect strategic installations and natural resources. This assignment translates into safeguarding the country's strategic oil installations (both at port facilities and offshore), apprehending foreign vessels that are fishing within Mexico's EEZ without proper permits, and interdicting shipments of drugs, weapons, and other contraband. Although foreign fishing poachers have been a persistent problem for the navy, expanded efforts to conduct maritime surveillance and intercept narcotics traffickers absorb a growing amount of naval resources. Naval personnel also participate in disaster relief efforts and in clean-ups to prevent environmental damage from spills of oil and other toxic substances. The Secretariat of the Navy supervises the dredging

of port facilities, the repair and maintenance of vessels assigned to the fleet and to the maritime industry, the conduct of oceanographic research, and the preparation of nautical charts.

During the 1980s, the navy benefited substantially from the acquisition of new vessels and other equipment. Considerable funds also were used for construction of new ports, renovation of existing facilities, and development of shipyards and dry-docks for repairs and maintenance. Many of the navy's combat vessels are World War II ships originally part of the United States Navy, which have been modernized by the addition of new weapons, electronic warfare and communications gear, and the replacement of propulsion systems.

Purchases during the 1980s included two World-War-II vintage Gearing-class destroyers, which joined a Fletcher-class destroyer transferred from the United States Navy in 1970. The Gearing-class vessels are armed with 127mm (5-inch) guns and Bofors 40mm guns for air defense. They also are mounted with antisubmarine rocket (Asroc) homing missiles (see table 15, Appendix). In 1982 and 1983, Mexico acquired from Spain six new Halcón-class large patrol vessels. The new ships are equipped with platforms and hangars for German Bo–105 helicopters and are designed primarily to patrol the EEZ. The navy commissioned four Holzinger-class fisheries-protection vessels constructed at Tampico between 1991 and 1993. Sixteen Auk-class patrol boats built in the United States during World War II are reaching the end of their useful service life. All twelve Admirable-class patrol boats were modernized in 1994. Thirty-one Azteca-class twenty-one-meter inshore patrol boats are used for fishery patrols. The first twenty-one of these were built in Britain and the remainder in Mexico; Mexico modernized the British-built vessels in 1987. The Mexican fleet also includes small patrol craft, a number of river patrol vessels, and survey ships and logistic support vessels. Naval cadets man the Spanish-built sail training ship, the *Cuauhtémoc.*

Despite improvements, the Mexican navy in 1996 was not as well equipped to protect its territorial waters and coasts as were the navies of other large Latin American countries. The navy lacks submarines and missile-armed, fast-attack craft. In addition, Mexico's larger vessels are without modern surface-to-air missiles for air defense.

The naval aviation arm has as its primary missions coastal surveillance and search-and-air rescue operations. Maritime

reconnaissance is performed by Bo–105 helicopters armed with machine guns and rockets, most of which operate off ship platforms. In 1994 the naval aviation arm purchased four MD500s, used for training purposes; four Fennée; and eight Russian Mi–8 helicopters. In May 1996, the navy announced it would purchase an additional twelve Mi–8s. Coastal patrols and air rescue are carried out by six HU–16 Grumman Albatross aircraft and nine Spanish-built C–212 Aviocars. A variety of small transport, utility, and liaison planes complete the naval aircraft inventory.

The marine force consists of a paratroop brigade of three battalions, a battalion attached to the Presidential Guard Brigade, three battalions with headquarters in Mexico City, Acapulco, and Veracruz, and thirty-five independent companies distributed among ports, bases, and zonal headquarters. The marines are responsible for port security and protection of the ten-kilometer coastal fringe. In addition to having light arms, the marines are equipped with eight 105mm towed howitzers, 60mm and 81mm mortars, and 106mm recoilless rifles, as well as Pegaso VAP–3550 amphibious vehicles.

Defense Spending

The government sets the overall size of the military budget, but the actual allocation of funds to various activities and purchases is largely determined within the defense ministries. Little information is made available on individual expenditure categories.

Because of exchange-rate variations and scarcity of data, it is difficult to establish budgetary trends and annual expenditures on defense. According to *The Military Balance,* the defense budget for 1996 was 16.6 billion new pesos (NMex$; for value of new peso—see Glossary), equivalent to US$3.0 billion. This figure compared to budget estimates of 1.577 trillion pesos (US$641 million) in 1989 and 1.908 trillion pesos (US$678 million) in 1990. No explanation was offered as to why the defense budget appears to have more than quadrupled between 1990 and 1996.

Data published by the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) show higher levels of spending on defense, which, according to ACDA figures, averaged about US$1.5 billion annually during the decade 1983–93. The peak levels of spending were between 1985 and 1987, when levels of about US$2 billion were recorded. As ACDA notes, data on mil-


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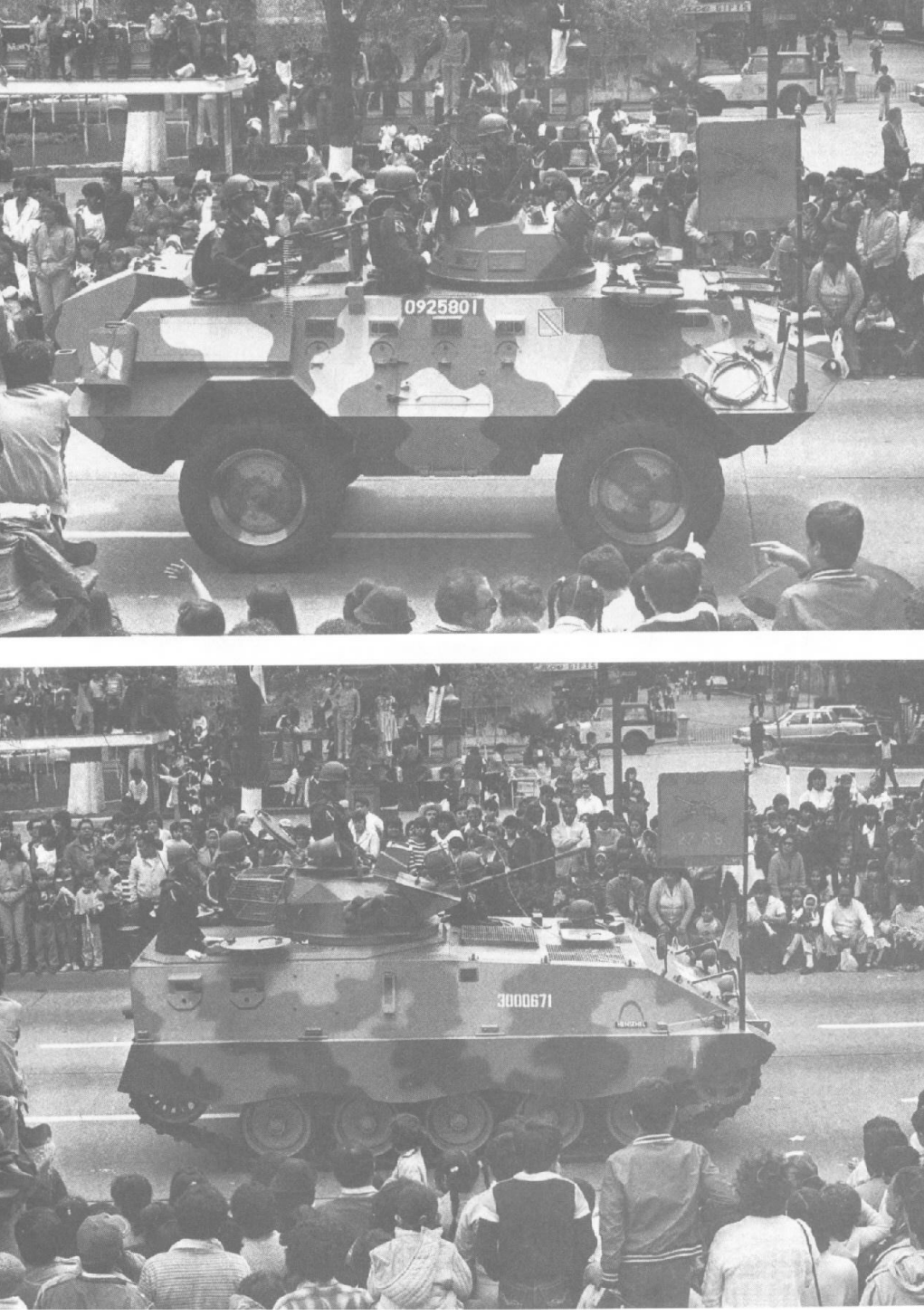


Various armored vehicles at Independence Day parade
Courtesy Arturo Salinas

itary expenditures are of uneven accuracy and completeness. In addition to accuracy problems caused by sharp variations in exchange rates, capital spending and arms purchases may be omitted in official data.

Based on data from *The Military Balance*, military expenditures were 0.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP—see Glossary) in 1995. Military expenditures amounted to US$17 per capita in that year, reversing a declining trend that saw per capita expenditures drop from US$20 in 1985 to US$13 in 1991. The economic burden of the Mexican military establishment is comparable to the average expenditure for Central American countries.

Domestic Defense Production

Mexico has had a small defense industry since before the Revolution. In 1996 the defense industry consisted largely of the production of small arms, ammunition, propellants, and uniforms in government factories. As part of the modernization program launched in 1976, the armed forces redirected their efforts toward attaining a degree of self-sufficiency. The General Directorate of Military Industry drew up plans for production of large military systems, in cooperation with foreign arms manufacturers. The major expansion originally envisaged had to be curtailed, however, because of the economic difficulties of the early 1980s, and projects discussed with West German, Israeli, and Brazilian defense industries involving coproduction of armored vehicles were abandoned. The country's military industry has never reached the level of Brazil and Argentina, the other major Latin American producers of defense-related matériel.

Under a coproduction agreement with West Germany, the Mexican defense industry began mass-producing the standard infantry G–3 automatic rifle in the early 1980s. At the same time, the state-owned Diesel Nacional truck factory began manufacturing three-quarter-ton trucks for military use as well as the DN–3 and DN–5 armored car, derived from the United States Cadillac-Gage V–150 Commando. There were periodic reports of negotiations with foreign producers to cooperate in the manufacture of light and medium tanks, but questions of financing and the availability of special steel intervened.

Between 1972 and 1982, the government allocated considerable funds to the industrial sector for scientific and technical development related to military uses. In 1982 a telecommuni-

cations network using telex equipment was built to link military zones with the headquarters of the Secretariat of National Defense in Mexico City. The armed forces also began developing short-range, three- to twelve-kilometer, surface-to-surface missiles, but never reached the production stage.

Since the Revolution, Mexico has had an aircraft industry that produced a number of military models—both original designs and licensed manufactures—that formed part of the air force inventory until the 1960s. In an effort to revive the local aircraft industry, Mexico held discussions with both Brazil and Israel to produce trainer and light transport aircraft under license, but plans had to be shelved for financial reasons.

Mexico's major shipyards at Tampico on the Gulf of Mexico and Salina Cruz on the Pacific Ocean have been involved in the construction of patrol craft and auxiliary vessels. The largest program, involving the manufacture of Azteca-class patrol craft, was carried out under a licensed production agreement with a British firm.

Personnel

Recruitment and Conscription

Only volunteers serve in active units of the Mexican armed forces. Most recruits are of a poor or indigent background; for them, induction into the military is often seen as a source of employment and as a means of upward social mobility. Soldiers' pay is slightly higher than established minimum wages, and recruits can hold second jobs. Vocational and literacy training for armed forces personnel improves their chances of employment when their term of enlistment is completed.

The basic requisites for induction into the armed forces are Mexican citizenship by birth, completion of primary schooling, and absence of a criminal record. Initial recruits are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one. Enlistment is conducted at military zone headquarters and other military installations. Accordingly, most of the recruits tend to originate in the Federal District and central states, where bases are clustered. Vacancies in local units are often filled by youths completing their national military service.

Recruits enlisting for their first three-year term of service receive basic training at the local unit to which they are assigned, which usually is not far from the individual's home. During the first term of enlistment, the emphasis is on develop-

ing basic military skills using an on-the-job training approach. There is a high retention rate for first-term recruits, who often elect to enlist for another three years. Recruits usually complete subsequent terms of service away from their districts. Persons completing this second term of service can hope to attain the rank of sergeant. An increasing number of enlisted personnel serve until they are eligible for retirement, which comes after twenty years. The small noncommissioned officer (NCO) corps is concerned primarily with indoctrinating and molding new recruits and serving in specialist functions. With a high ratio of commissioned officers to NCOs, commissioned officers tend to exercise most leadership responsibilities in troop units.

Applicants aspiring to become commissioned officers apply for admission to one of the three service academies. The oldest and most prestigious is the army's Heroic Military College. To be eligible for entrance, an applicant must be a male Mexican citizen by birth, unmarried, and between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one. Most candidates are sixteen to eighteen years of age. Besides paying a processing fee, candidates are required to pass a series of aptitude, psychological, and physical examinations. Screening is rigorous; only top performers are accepted, although those not selected are permitted to retake the examinations the following year. Each year a few senior NCOs who have shown leadership qualities are selected to attend a special one-year course at the Heroic Military College preparatory to commissioning.

The need to travel to Mexico City for the examinations and the required processing fee discourage many potential candidates from applying for admission. Applicants from distant areas must meet their own travel and lodging costs. Along with the fact that the standards of education are relatively higher in the Federal District, these factors tend to ensure that a high percentage of academy entrants are residents of the capital area.

Most officers are drawn from lower-middle-class and middle-class families. Fewer than 5 percent are believed to be from the upper class. Approximately 20 percent of cadets come from military families, and many others have some military affiliation through relatives. Young officers also tend to marry women from military families. In view of the importance of personal relationships within the military, such ties often are relevant factors in the advancement of an officer's career. Because they often come from a lower social stratum than civil-

Cadets of the Heroic Military College
Courtesy Arturo Salinas

ians holding positions of comparable importance, military professionals do not have the same prestige as the officer class in some other Latin American countries.

The practice of women following soldiers on campaigns and sometimes fighting in battles is well established in Mexican history and legend. Until the 1920s, Mexican armies did not provide regular commissary services, and soldiers in effect employed women, known as *soldaderas*, to buy or forage for food and other supplies and to cook their meals. During the Revolution, women sometimes were directly involved in the fighting. By the 1930s, however, the *soldadera* system had been banished from the military as a source of immorality and vice.

Women are permitted to enlist in the modern Mexican military and can enjoy careers in the armed forces, although they are subject to numerous restrictions. The Organic Law states that women have the same rights and duties as men in the armed forces, but in practice women are not permitted to fill combat positions, nor are they eligible for admission to the service academies. Women who enlist receive the same basic training as men, including courses on the handling and knowledge of weapons, followed by training in their assigned specialties.

Women serve almost exclusively in the areas of administration, medical care, communications, and physical education. The highest rank a woman has achieved is that of major general, by a senior military surgeon.

Obligatory military service for males was introduced in 1941 in response to Mexico's possible entry into World War II. During January in the year of their eighteenth birthday, all Mexican men are required to register with the local municipal government for military service. Out of approximately 1.1 million who register each year, some 320,000 are selected by lottery to begin training during January of the following year. The military obligation is for twelve months, which in practice means no more than one morning a week of calisthenics and drilling (although some draftees are now required to fulfill a three-month period of full-time training).

On completing military service, conscripts remain in reserve status until the age of forty. Completion of the service requirement is noted on a Military Identity Card that bears the individual's photograph and must be revalidated every two years. The identity card is required when applying for a passport, driver's license, or employment. This requirement provides the Mexican government with a useful means of keeping track of its adult male population.

Education and Training

One of the key factors in the development of the professional armed forces in Mexico is the military education system. It is designed to underscore the importance of discipline, conformity to law, and obedience to higher authority. The objective is to instill in officers deference to civilian institutions and to discourage any notion of military interference with the functioning of the state. Instruction on political, social, and economic topics is relatively sketchy in school curricula, presumably to avoid heightening the officers' political consciousness. This limited education does not apply, however, to the most senior level, the National Defense College (Colegio de Defensa Nacional).

The military's three service academies form the first tier of the professional education system. The army's Heroic Military College, located in a southern suburb of Mexico City, dates back to the 1830s and is the most prestigious of the three. Air force cadets attend the Heroic Military College for two years,

followed by two years at the Air College in Guadalajara. The Heroic Naval Military School for naval cadets is in Veracruz.

In 1991 there were 245 openings at the Heroic Military College for entering cadets although the excellent modern facilities completed in 1976 can accommodate many more. Entrants range from fifteen to nineteen years old, although most are in the sixteen-to-eighteen age-group. The training is physically demanding and rigorous. Students are deliberately left with little free time. Cadets who complete the four years of training are considered to have achieved the equivalent of a preparatory school education.

Graduates of the four-year army curriculum attain the equivalent rank of second lieutenant and usually become platoon or section commanders, spending three years with tactical units. Young officers then may be designated to attend any of the applied schools for advanced training in infantry, artillery, engineering, support services, or cavalry. Graduates of the Air College who select a flight or ground support orientation in their course work receive the rank of second lieutenant as pilots, general specialists, or specialists in maintenance and supply. Cadets completing studies at the Heroic Naval Military School are commissioned as ensigns prior to service with the naval surface fleet or in naval aviation or the marine infantry. The navy also maintains an aviation school at the Benito Juárez International Airport in Mexico City.

If favorably rated, an army officer may be promoted to first lieutenant after two years and remains at that rank for a minimum of three years. The officer can resign his commission after five years or, after passing a competitive examination and being favorably evaluated, may be placed on a promotion list for second captain in order of his test score (see Uniforms, Ranks, and Insignia, this ch.). Similar requirements must be met for advancement through the rank of lieutenant colonel. The minimum service time is eight years to reach first captain, eleven years to reach major, and fourteen years to reach lieutenant colonel. The rate of promotion is fairly predictable. The Senate, which must approve promotions to the rank of colonel and above, generally resists advancing officers who have not served a normal time in grade.

First and second captains who can meet admission standards may be admitted to the Superior War College or, in the case of naval officers, the Center of Superior Naval Studies. The Superior War College offers a three-year program for army officers

and a two-year program for the air force. The equivalent naval course is three years. Course work emphasizes preparation for command and staff positions, including the study of administration, strategy and tactics, war gaming, and logistics, as well as more general subjects, such as military history, international law, and foreign languages. On completion of the course, officers are considered to have military training roughly comparable to that of the United States Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Conditions for acceptance to the Superior War College are strict, as is the course work. Only about half of the entrants complete the full three years, and only 7 percent of the officer corps are graduates of the college. Those completing the course successfully receive the degree of Licenciate in Military Administration and the title of General Staff Graduate, which is used with one's military rank and commands some prestige. Graduates also receive a stipend of between 10 and 25 percent of their salary during the remainder of their active duty.

The National Defense College, created in 1981, is considered the culmination of professional military education. Entrance is offered to a select group of senior army colonels and generals and their counterparts in the air force and navy. The one-year program includes advanced training in national security policy formulation, resource management, international relations, and economics. Each officer is required to write a thesis involving field research on a topic involving national security, politics, or social problems. The majority of the professors at the college are civilians. Although graduation from the college does not bring immediate promotion, most of the generals reaching the highest positions in the military hierarchy are alumni of the college.

A number of other service institutions, separate from the officer training schools and the superior schools, fall under the general categories of applications schools, specialization schools, and schools offering basic NCO training and NCO technical courses. These institutions include the Military School of Medicine, the Military School of Dentistry, a group of schools of nursing and other medical specialties, military schools of engineering and communications, the Military Application School of Infantry and Artillery, the Military Application School of Cavalry, and a one-year school of instruction in leadership for second and first sergeants.

Mexican officers also attend military schools in other countries of Latin America, as well as in France, Britain, Italy, and Germany. Although Mexico sends proportionately fewer officers to military schools in the United States than some Latin American countries, it uses United States training materials, and United States military doctrine is influential.

Pay and Benefits

The Law of Promotions and Compensation and the Law of Pensions and Retirement were promulgated in the 1920s as a means to regularize military practices, bring the armed forces under the control of the central government, and ensure the stability of the electoral system created by the revolutionary government. These laws, which have been adjusted periodically to meet the changing requirements of the government and the armed forces, form the backbone of the military pay and benefits system.

The three branches of the armed forces provide uniform pay and benefits for equivalent rank and years of service. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, military compensation rose at a faster rate than the cost of living. This situation changed during the 1970s, as pay failed to keep pace either with the rapidly increasing inflation rate or with earning power in the civilian sector. In spite of spiraling inflation during the 1980s, pay raises helped most military personnel keep abreast or slightly ahead of the rising cost of living. Officers of lieutenant rank and above enjoyed comfortable incomes. In the early 1990s, however, pay scales for junior officers were described as so low—about US$300 a month—that moonlighting was accepted as necessary to maintain an adequate standard of living.

Although the government does not disclose the allocation of individual items within the defense budget, it is estimated that approximately 60 percent is dedicated to personnel expenses, including administrative costs, salaries, and benefits. Perquisites, bonuses granted for educational achievements, and supplemental pay for those serving in command positions—from the commander of a company to the secretary of national defense—add considerably to officers' base salaries. Both the amount and the availability of fringe benefits increase as officers ascend in rank. Additional pay is also provided for hazardous duty assignments.

Pensions are extended on a standard basis to all military personnel upon completion of service and to dependents or bene-

ficiaries upon their deaths. This benefit has been increased on numerous occasions to encourage older officers to retire and thus open positions for younger officers. The mandatory retirement age is between forty-five and sixty-five, depending upon rank, but former secretaries of national defense hold active-duty status all their lives. Under a 1983 modification of the Law of Pensions and Retirement, an officer completing thirty years of service can retire at 100 percent of his or her existing salary and receive the same increases granted active-duty personnel. The minimum benefit for those with fewer years of service is 20 percent of base pay.

The Mexican Armed Forces Social Security Institute (Instituto de Seguro Social para las Fuerzas Armadas Mexicanas—ISSFAM) and the National Bank of the Army, Air Force, and Navy (Banco Nacional del Ejército, Fuerza Aérea, y Armada—Banejército) also provide benefits to military personnel and their dependents. Under the ISSFAM, health care is extended through facilities at regional military hospitals in each military zone and the Central Military Hospital in Mexico City. The quality of medical care is reported to be high, and physicians are trained in such sophisticated specialties as microsurgery, organ transplants, and cardiovascular surgery. Banejército offers low-interest credit and life insurance to military personnel and provides financing for the construction of dependent housing at the country's various military installations. Rent for dependent housing is set at 6 percent of an individual's income. Other services and benefits are also available through military zone installations. These services include primary and secondary education for dependents, assistance with moving expenses resulting from service-related transfers, various social services, and access to shops similar to small commissaries. The military also manages a number of farms throughout the country to help produce its own food supply.

Uniforms, Ranks, and Insignia

Mexico originally adopted its system of officer ranks from the Spanish military. With some modifications, it has been retained in the modern armed forces. The highest rank within the Secretariat of National Defense is the rough equivalent of a general in the United States Army. The only officers with the rank of general are current army officers and former secretaries of national defense. Generals are identified by insignia composed of four silver stars and a gold eagle worn on their

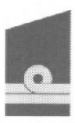
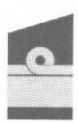
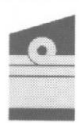
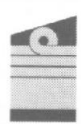
epaulets (see fig. 12). The next highest rank, open to both army and air force personnel, is the equivalent of lieutenant general. Although there is no difference between the Spanish name for this rank and that held by secretaries of national defense, the officers are separately identified by three stars and an eagle. The rank equivalents of major general and brigadier general are distinguished, in addition to the emblem of the gold eagle on their epaulets, by two silver stars and one silver star, respectively.

Officers holding the rank of colonel command certain brigades and cavalry regiments, serve as chiefs of staff for military zones, or manage staff directorates. Colonels are identified by three gold stars arranged in a triangle on their epaulets. The equivalents of lieutenant colonels, a select few of whom may command a battalion or cavalry squadron but most of whom serve as instructors or administrative aides, wear two gold stars. Majors sometimes serve as second-in-command of battalions or squadrons, but usually are assigned to personnel management and training. They are identified by a single gold star.

Other commissioned ranks include first captain and second captain, both comparable to the United States rank of captain. First captains wear three gold bars on the epaulet; second captains have two-and-one-half gold bars. Captains command companies, squadrons, and batteries. Below these ranks are first lieutenants, with two gold bars, and second lieutenants, identified by a single gold bar.

The rank insignia of commissioned naval officers consist of gold stripes above the sleeve cuff, the uppermost stripe incorporating a braided loop. The rough equivalents of the United States Navy's ranks of admiral, vice admiral, and rear admiral wear insignia consisting of a wide gold stripe plus narrow and looped stripes. The equivalents of admiral and vice admiral are consolidated. The sleeve insignia of other officer ranks are similar to those of the corresponding ranks of the United States Navy, except that the upper stripe is looped. Officers of marine infantry units are distinguished by red piping on their insignia of rank.

The rank titles and rank insignia for enlisted personnel in the army and air force are the same (see fig. 13). The highest rank, sergeant 1st class (or master sergeant), is recognized by green epaulets with three horizontal red bars. The next two lowest ranks, sergeant and private 1st class (or corporal specialist), are distinguished by two and one horizontal red bars,

MEXICAN RANK	SUB-TENIENTE	TENIENTE	CAPITÁN SEGUNDO	CAPITÁN PRIMERO	MAYOR	TENIENTE CORONEL	CORONEL	GENERAL BRIGADIER	GENERAL DE BRIGADA	GENERAL DE DIVISIÓN	GENERAL DE DIVISIÓN*
ARMY											
U.S. RANK TITLE	2D LIEUTENANT	1ST LIEUTENANT	CAPTAIN		MAJOR	LIEUTENANT COLONEL	COLONEL	BRIGADIER GENERAL	MAJOR GENERAL	LIEUTENANT GENERAL	GENERAL
MEXICAN RANK	SUB-TENIENTE	TENIENTE	CAPITÁN SEGUNDO	CAPITÁN PRIMERO	MAYOR	TENIENTE CORONEL	CORONEL	GENERAL DE GRUPO	GENERAL DE ALA	GENERAL DE DIVISIÓN	NO RANK
AIR FORCE											
U.S. RANK TITLE	2D LIEUTENANT	1ST LIEUTENANT	CAPTAIN		MAJOR	LIEUTENANT COLONEL	COLONEL	BRIGADIER GENERAL	MAJOR GENERAL	LIEUTENANT GENERAL	GENERAL
MEXICAN RANK	GUARDA-MARINA	TENIENTE DE CORBETA	TENIENTE DE NAVÍO		CAPITÁN DE CORBETA	CAPITÁN DE FRAGATA	CAPITÁN DE NAVÍO	CONTRAL-MIRANTE	VICE-ALMIRANTE	ALMIRANTE	NO RANK
NAVY											
U.S. RANK TITLE	ENSIGN	LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE	LIEUTENANT		LIEUTENANT COMMANDER	COMMANDER	CAPTAIN	REAR ADMIRAL LOWER HALF	REAR ADMIRAL UPPER HALF	VICE ADMIRAL	ADMIRAL

*Note— Applies only to present or former secretaries of national defense.

Figure 12. Commissioned Officer Ranks and Insignia, 1996

respectively. The *soldado de primera*, corresponding to the United States rank of private in the army and airman in the air force, has two short vertical red bars. The lowest rank for each service, basic private or airman basic (*soldado*), wears a plain green epaulet.

The rank insignia of enlisted naval personnel are indicated by white stripes above the sleeve cuff. Enlisted personnel in the navy have only three ranks, chief petty officer, petty officer, and seaman. A chief petty officer has three white stripes and a petty officer two. A seaman has a single V-shaped stripe.

The army officer corps has a blue dress uniform and a dark field-green service uniform. A khaki uniform is used for hot weather. The uniforms worn by naval personnel, including marines, are standard dark blue or white. The dress uniforms of army enlisted personnel are dark field-green; their branch of service is designated by a colored bar displayed on the epaulet. Infantry personnel wear a scarlet red bar; cavalry, hussar blue; artillery, crimson; armored, gray; and engineers, cobalt blue. The air force uniform was modified somewhat from that of the army in the early 1980s. Air force personnel are identified by purple bars. Members of the elite airborne brigade are distinguished by their camouflage fatigues and purple berets. Dress uniforms for enlisted army personnel include the use of helmets as headgear. Members of the officer corps wear caps with elaborate visor decorations and rank designations.

Public Order and Internal Security

Criminal activity, much of it engendered by narcotics trafficking and production, has, since the 1970s, constituted the most serious problem facing military and police agencies concerned with internal security. Mexico's leaders are increasingly conscious of the threat that drug cartels, with enormous funds and weapons at their disposal, pose to the nation's political and social stability. The illicit movement of drugs generates huge amounts of money that can be employed to corrupt public officials at both the state and federal levels. Traffickers also can assemble large weapons arsenals, which contribute to the atmosphere of lawlessness in society (see Narcotics Trafficking, this ch.).

Until the uprising in Chiapas in 1994, revolutionary activity amounting to insurrection against the state had not been a major source of concern for several decades. Groups that sprang up to exploit the plight of the downtrodden and the dis-

MEXICAN RANK	SOLDADO	SOLDADO DE PRIMERA	CABO		SARGENTO SEGUNDO		SARGENTO PRIMERO		NO RANK	
ARMY AND AIR FORCE										
U.S. ARMY RANK TITLE	BASIC PRIVATE	PRIVATE	PRIVATE 1ST CLASS	CORPORAL/ SPECIALIST	SERGEANT	STAFF SERGEANT	SERGEANT 1ST CLASS	MASTER SERGEANT / FIRST SERGEANT	SERGEANT MAJOR	COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
U.S. AIR FORCE RANK TITLE	AIRMAN BASIC	AIRMAN	AIRMAN 1ST CLASS	SENIOR AIRMAN/ SERGEANT	STAFF SERGEANT	TECHNICAL SERGEANT	MASTER SERGEANT	SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT	CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT	
MEXICAN RANK	**NO RANK**	**NO RANK**	**CABO**		**MAESTRE SEGUNDO**		**MAESTRE PRIMERO**		**NO RANK**	
NAVY										
U.S. RANK TITLES	SEAMAN RECRUIT	SEAMAN APPRENTICE	SEAMAN	PETTY OFFICER 3D CLASS	PETTY OFFICER 2D CLASS	PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS	CHIEF PETTY OFFICER	SENIOR CHIEF PETTY OFFICER	MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER	

Figure 13. Enlisted Personnel Ranks and Insignia, 1996

parities between the rich and poor have failed to coalesce into a single movement powerful enough to threaten the stability of the central government. The fragmentation of the forces of protest has been ascribed to several factors, including the territorial expanse and geographic diversity of the country, the preoccupation with local injustices suffered at the hands of those holding economic power, and the government's determination to deal harshly with any threat to public order.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, several guerrilla organizations operated in the countryside. The three principal groups were the National Revolutionary Civic Association, the Mexican Proletarian Party, and the Party of the Poor. Each was directed by a charismatic leader, who eventually was tracked down and killed in confrontations with the military or police. None of the groups was able to carry on organized operations after its leader's death.

The police claimed in 1981 that they had destroyed the last cell of the Twenty-Third of September Communist League, the largest and longest-lived of Mexico's urban guerrilla groups. The league reportedly had incorporated members from several other urban guerrilla fronts. Many terrorist acts were committed in the name of the league before its eradication, including the kidnapping of two United States consular officers in 1973 and 1974 (one officer was freed after a ransom was paid, and the other was murdered).

The Chiapas Rebellion

Mexico's rural indigenous peoples periodically have risen in protest against poverty and encroachment by large farmers, ranchers, and commercial interests on contested land. The most recent and serious such uprising occurred on January 1, 1994, when the Zapatista National Liberation Army (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional—EZLN) rebelled, capturing four municipalities in Chiapas state. Some of the group, believed to number about 1,600, were armed with semiautomatic and assault rifles, whereas others were armed only with sticks and wooden bayonets. Although the group's attacks seemed well planned, army units, supported by air force strikes, were able to regain control after the initial surprise. At least 12,000 troops were transported to the scene. Officials announced that 120 deaths had resulted, although church officials said 400 lives had been lost. Five rebels apparently were executed while bound, and other deaths may have been the

result of extrajudicial executions. Many disappearances of peasants were reported, and there was indiscriminate strafing of hamlets. The government declared a unilateral cease-fire after twelve days and announced several goodwill gestures as a prelude to reconciliation talks with the rebels, who were represented by their masked leader, Subcommander Marcos.

According to government sources, the EZLN, commonly known as the Zapatistas, is not a purely indigenous movement, but is instead an alliance of middle-class intellectuals and radicalized indigenous groups dating from the early 1980s. The EZLN began as an offshoot of the National Liberation Forces (Fuerzas de Liberación Nacional—FLN), a Maoist guerrilla group that had been largely dormant since the 1970s. At the start of the Zapatista rebellion, command of the Zapatista army was jointly held by FLN veterans from Mexico City and a "clandestine committee" of Chiapas Indians representing the various ethnic groups residing in the area.

In February 1995, on the eve of a new offensive against rebel strongholds, the government identified Subcommander Marcos as Rafael Sebastián Guillén, a white, middle-class graduate in graphics design from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México—UNAM). In the initial January 1994 Zapatista raids, the charismatic guerrilla leader had become an international media star, quickly assuming the status of a folk hero among many Mexicans. Capitalizing on his newfound fame and his proximity to the rebel army, Marcos is believed to have wrested control of the EZLN from its Mexico City leadership.

Despite a formidable government offensive involving approximately 20,000 army troops venturing into Zapatista-held territory, Subcommander Marcos and his rebel force eluded capture. By late February 1995, a second cease-fire had been declared. Soon thereafter, the government and the rebels embarked on a second major round of peace talks. In early 1996, the Zapatistas declared their willingness in principle to lay down their arms and become a legal political party pending major reforms of the political system. Despite their ability to grab headlines and attract international support, the Zapatistas remain a marginal political force and are not considered a serious military threat outside of Chiapas.

Police and Law Enforcement Organizations

A number of federal, state, and local police and law enforce-

ment organizations exist to provide for internal security. Their responsibilities and jurisdictions frequently overlap, a factor acknowledged in 1984 when the government created a national consulting board designed to "coordinate and advise police forces" throughout the country. The senior law enforcement organization in Mexico is the Federal Judicial Police, which is controlled by the attorney general. The plainclothes force acts as an investigative agency with arrest power for the Office of the Attorney General. The foremost activity of the Federal Judicial Police is carrying out investigations and making apprehensions related to drug trafficking. Espionage, arms trafficking, and bank robberies also fall under its purview. The Federal Judicial Police serves as the government's liaison with the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol). Its role can be compared to a combination of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

The jurisdiction of the Federal Judicial Police encompasses the entire nation. For control purposes, its jurisdiction is divided into thirteen zones with fifty-two smaller detachment headquarters. Under the coordination of the local federal prosecutor, each zone is headed by a second commandant of the Federal Judicial Police, who in turn directs the group chiefs in the outlying detachments. Individuals arrested by the Federal Judicial Police are placed at the disposition of the local federal prosecutor, who appoints subordinate attorneys to assess each case.

Although it remains one of the smaller law enforcement agencies, the Federal Judicial Police tripled in size between 1982 and 1984, from 500 personnel to an estimated 1,500. In 1988 an assistant attorney general's office for investigating and combating drug trafficking was formed with an additional 1,500 Federal Judicial Police agents. In 1990 the office was expanded and given interagency coordinating functions in the battle against narcotics.

The principal Mexico City police force, the Protection and Transit Directorate, also known as the Traffic Police, consists of some 29,000 officers organized into thirty-three precincts. It is the largest law enforcement organization in Mexico. More than 100 serious crimes are reported each day in Mexico City, and on average in the Federal District in the first quarter of 1997 one police officer was killed and one injured weekly. A sense of insecurity prevails among many citizens because of the lack of

confidence in the police and the fear of police misbehavior and crime.

The Federal District police are poorly paid; in 1992 they earned between US$285 and US$400 a month. Double shifts are common, although no extra pay for overtime is provided. Incomes can be supplemented in various ways, including from petty bribes (*mordidas*) from motorists seeking to park in restricted zones. Police are said to be obliged to pay for more desirable assignments where the possibilities of extorting payments from drivers in lieu of fines is greater. However, junior officers are forced to pass along a daily quota of bribes to more senior officers. In one case, a tow truck driver admitted that he had paid more than US$1,000 for his lucrative job and said that he had to contribute US$32 daily to his superior. In 1992 after a number of officers expressed their objections to the system, the mayor of Mexico City set up offices to receive and investigate citizen complaints.

A number of smaller law enforcement bodies exist at the state and local level. Each of the country's thirty-one states and the Federal District has its own judicial police—the State Judicial Police and the Federal District Judicial Police. State police are under the direction of the state's governor; the Federal District Judicial Police fall under the control of the Federal District attorney general. The distinction between crimes investigated by State and Federal Judicial Police is not always clear. Most offenses come under the state authorities. Drug dealing, crimes against the government, and offenses involving several jurisdictions are the responsibility of the federal police.

Cities and municipalities have their own preventive and municipal police forces, which are responsible for handling minor civil disturbances and traffic infractions. The Federal Highway Police patrols federally designated highways and investigates traffic accidents. Highway police are assisted by military personnel on national holidays.

Both state and municipal forces operate from precinct stations, called *delegaciones*. Each *delegación* has an average of 200 police officers attached to it. The ranking officer is known as a *comandante*, equivalent to a first captain in the military. Most of the remaining personnel hold the ranks of first sergeant, second sergeant, and corporal.

Immigration officers, directed by the Mexican Immigration Service under the Secretariat of Government (Secretaría de Gobernación), have the right to detain suspected undocu-

mented aliens and, under certain conditions, to deport them without formal deportation proceedings. Customs officers, controlled by the Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit (Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público), Crédito are deployed at borders and at international airports to interdict contraband entering Mexico. The Bank of Mexico also operates its own security division, which is charged with enforcing banking and monetary laws, including cases of counterfeiting, fraud, and money laundering.

A number of unofficial paramilitary groups incorporating various police officials have existed in the past to deal with rural and urban guerrillas and illegal groups. The most notorious paramilitary group was the White Brigade (Brigada Blanca) whose existence was officially denied, although it was known to be active from 1977 until 1980, when the government dismantled it. The White Brigade consisted of a group of officers from the army and the police forces that used illegal tactics to destroy guerrilla movements. Published reports held that the White Brigade was responsible for the "disappearance" of several hundred leftists, most of whom the government claimed were killed in fights between rival leftist groups. Politically motivated "disappearances" tapered off sharply during the 1980s, but were once again being reported in the mid-1990s in connection with the unrest in Chiapas.

The government has repeatedly denounced abuses and corruption by the Federal Judicial Police and other police forces. Numerous reforms have been announced, personnel shifted, and codes of procedures adopted. Allegations of police brutality have declined, but torture, wrongful arrests, and involvement in drug trafficking have not been eliminated because abuses are so deeply rooted in the police agencies, and violators for the most part have been able to act with impunity (see Human Rights Concerns, this ch.).

In 1991 Attorney General Enrique Álvarez del Castillo, who was reported to have impeded several human rights investigations against the police, was abruptly removed from office and replaced by Ignacio Morales Lechuga. Morales quickly announced a crackdown on corruption, including a reorganization of the Federal Judicial Police, the creation of special anticorruption and internal affairs units, as well as a unit to protect citizens against crimes committed by the police. In addition, all federal police units were placed under the control of a civilian deputy attorney general. New high-level officials

supervised police activities in sensitive border areas. These reform measures were announced soon after a jailed drug lord took over a prison in Matamoros, claiming that agents of the Federal Judicial Police aligned with another drug lord were threatening his life.

Despite Morales's reputation as an upright official prepared to dismiss police agents and government prosecutors suspected of ties with drug traffickers, he was replaced in early 1993. Later reports accused some of Morales's subordinates of drug-related corruption. The new attorney general, Jorge Carpizo MacGregor, was a respected human rights activist. Carpizo acknowledged in a detailed report the close relations between criminals and law enforcement agencies and produced his own program to eliminate deficiencies and corruption among the police. His reforms brought some progress; some members of the security forces were charged and sentenced, and human rights violations declined, but the so-called "culture of impunity" still prevailed. Carpizo resigned as attorney general in early 1994 and was replaced by Diego Valádez.

The 1994 assassinations of PRI presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio Murrieta and PRI Secretary General José Francisco Ruiz Massieu shook the highest levels of federal law enforcement. After failing to make significant progress in investigating the Colosio case, Attorney General Valádez was replaced in May 1994 by Humberto Benítez Trevino. Initially declaring that the Colosio assassination was the work of a lone gunman, the Attorney General's office later revised its theory based on videotape evidence that suggested a conspiracy of up to six individuals working in concert to allow the alleged gunman to approach the candidate during a crowded campaign rally. The post of attorney general underwent yet another change in early 1996 when incoming President Zedillo replaced Benítez with an opposition congressman, Fernando Antonio Lozano Gracia. Lozano's tenure was significant because it was the first time a non-PRI official held the post.

Late in 1994, the assassination of José Francisco Ruiz Massieu prompted a special investigation headed by Deputy Attorney General Mario Ruiz Massieu, brother of the slain politician. After calling dozens of PRI officials to testify, Ruiz resigned abruptly in November, accusing high-level PRI functionaries of complicity in the killing and of impeding further progress in the investigation. In early 1996, the investigation still had produced no results.

National Intelligence Agencies

From the 1940s until it was disbanded in 1985, the Federal Directorate of Security, which was under the control of the Secretariat of Government, was the primary agency assigned to preserve internal stability against subversion and terrorist threats. The directorate was responsible for investigating national security matters and performed other special duties as directed by the president. It acted as the equivalent of the United States DEA in the Mexican government. A plainclothes force, the directorate had no legal arrest powers nor formal authority to gather evidence, although it could call upon the assistance of other government agencies and could use other surveillance techniques.

By the final years of its existence, the directorate had more than doubled in size to some 2,000 personnel. The agency's demise came after it became evident that many of its personnel were in league with major drug traffickers. Its successor was the Center for Investigation and National Security (Centro de Investigación y Seguridad Nacional—CISN). Although formally under the Secretariat of Government, CISN is said to operate under direct presidential control. Still primarily concerned with gathering intelligence, CISN also has expanded activities to include opinion polling and analysis of domestic political and social conditions. In 1992 illegal wiretaps were found in a meeting room to be used by the central committee of the opposition National Action Party (Partido de Acción Nacional—PAN). Although the government denied any official involvement, the local representative of CISN was forced to resign.

Human Rights Concerns

Brutality and systematic abuses of human rights by elements of the Mexican internal security forces are pervasive and have largely gone unpunished. Practices cited by human rights groups include the use of torture, extrajudicial killings, disappearances, arbitrary detention, and other cruelties perpetrated against private persons and prisoners. According to several sources, the number and seriousness of such offenses has declined somewhat in the early 1990s. The improvement has been attributed to the greater determination of the national government to prosecute offenders and to the work of national and local human rights agencies in exposing instances of

police violations of human rights and in pressing for punishment.

In 1990 the Mexican government established the National Human Rights Commission (Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos—CNDH). Initially under the Secretariat of Government, the CNDH was granted constitutional status and full autonomy under a law enacted in 1992. By the following year, similar offices to investigate abuses had been established in all states of Mexico. The CNDH has the power to compel officials to grant access and give evidence. Its recommendations are nonbinding on government agencies, however. As of 1993, 268 of 624 CNDH recommendations had been followed fully. These resulted in eighty-two people being arrested and twenty sentenced to prison terms averaging more than five years for human rights violations.

According to the private human rights organization, Amnesty International, state judicial police and other law enforcement agencies frequently use torture in the form of beatings, near-asphyxiation, electric shock, burning with cigarettes, and psychological torture. Most victims are criminal suspects, but others, such as leaders of indigenous groups or civil rights activists engaged in demonstrations or other peaceful activities, have been targeted as well. According to the CNDH, complaints of torture declined from 446 in its first year of operation to 141 cases in its fourth.

New laws enacted in 1991 permit courts to accept confessions only when made before a judge or court official in the presence of defense counsel. Similar rules were adopted by several states. Formerly, confessions obtained under duress were admitted as evidence in court. Some defendants have claimed that even with the change, they still fear torture if they fail to confess.

Although in the 1990s fewer new cases of human rights violations were reported each year, numerous charges of extrajudicial killings continue to be made against the police. Police linked to drug rings have been accused of narcotics-related executions. In several well publicized instances, civil-rights workers were slain, as were peasant activists involved in disputes over land titles. Police often assist local landowners in evicting peasant and urban squatters in conflicts over land and in employing violence without appropriate judicial orders.

Police officers seldom are prosecuted or dismissed for abuses. In 1992, however, the attorney general removed sixty-

seven Federal Judicial Police agents and federal prosecutors and referred 270 cases of alleged corruption or human rights violations for prosecution. Acceptance of the CNDH has grown steadily, and its investigations have resulted in a reduction of reported police misconduct, especially at the federal level.

According to the CNDH, illegal deprivation of liberty is the most common human rights complaint among its human rights cases. Between 1990 and 1992, there were 826 allegations of arbitrary detentions. Torture complaints numbered 446 in the commission's first year but fell to 290 during its second. Nearly 100 nongovernmental human rights monitoring groups also have formed, making it increasingly difficult for law enforcement bodies to remain indifferent to public opinion. Nevertheless, the United States Department of State, in its *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1995*, reported a continuing failure to try, convict, and sentence prison and police officials guilty of abuse.

Criminal Justice System

The judiciary is divided into federal and state systems. Federal courts have jurisdiction over major felonies, including drug trafficking. In the federal system, judicial power is exercised by the Supreme Court of Justice, circuit courts, and district courts (see Judicial, ch. 4). The first chamber of the Supreme Court, composed of a president and four other judges, deals with penal affairs. Twelve collegiate circuit courts, each with three magistrates, deal with the right of *amparo* (constitutional rights of an individual, similar to habeas corpus). Nine unitary circuit courts, of one magistrate each, deal with appeals. There are sixty-eight one-magistrate district courts. State judiciary systems following a similar pattern are composed of state supreme courts, courts of first instance, and justices of the peace or police judges.

In most instances, arrests can be made only on authority of a judicial warrant, with the exception of suspects caught in the act of committing crimes. Suspects often are arrested without warrants, but judges tend to overlook this irregularity. Those arrested are required to be brought before an officer of the court as soon as possible, generally within forty-eight hours (ninety-six hours when organized crime is alleged), whereupon their statements are taken and they are informed of the charges against them. Within seventy-two hours of arraign-

ment, the judge must remand the arrested person to prison or release him or her.

Criminal trials in nearly all cases are tried by a judge without a jury. The judge acting alone bases his or her verdict on written statements, depositions, and expert opinion, although in some instances oral testimony is presented. Defendants have access to counsel, and those unable to afford legal fees can be assigned public defenders. The quality of pro bono counsel is often inferior. The accused and his or her lawyer do not always meet before trial, and the lawyer may not appear at the important sentencing stage. The right to a public trial is guaranteed, as is the right to confront one's accusers and to be provided with a translator if the accused's native language is not Spanish. Under the constitution, the court must hand down a sentence within four months of arrest for crimes carrying a maximum sentence of two years or less, and within one year for crimes with longer sentences.

The entire process—the time for a trial, sentencing, and appeals—often requires a year or more. According to Amnesty International, a large number of persons charged with crimes have been held far beyond the constitutional limits for their detention. The long trial process and the detention of those who cannot qualify for or make bail are major causes of crowded prison conditions.

The penal code stipulates a range of sentences for each offense. Sentences tend to be short, in most cases not longer than seven years. The actual time of incarceration is usually three-fifths of the sentence, assuming good behavior. Those sentenced for less than five years may avoid further time in jail by payment of a bond.

Prison Conditions

The penal system consists of both federal and state correctional institutions. The largest federal prison is the penitentiary for the Federal District. The Federal District also sends prisoners to four detention centers, sixteen smaller jails, and a women's jail. Each state has its own penitentiary. There are, in addition, more than 2,000 municipal jails. As of the end of 1993, nearly 95,000 inmates were in Mexican prisons; almost half were persons still awaiting trial or sentencing.

Overcrowding of prisons is chronic. Mistreatment of prisoners, the lack of trained guards, and inadequate sanitary facilities compound the problem. The United States Department of

State's country reports on human rights practices for 1992 and 1993 state that an entrenched system of corruption undermines prison authority and contributes to abuses. Authority frequently is exercised by prisoners, displacing prison officials. Violent confrontations, often linked to drug trafficking, are common between rival prison groups.

Mexican prisons also exhibit some humane qualities. In 1971 conjugal visiting rights were established for male prisoners and later extended to females. Prisoners held at the penal colony on the Islas Tres Marías off the coast of Nayarit are permitted to bring their entire families to live temporarily. Women are permitted to keep children under five years of age with them.

Based on interviews at a smaller state prison, United States penologist William V. Wilkinson found in 1990 that serious overcrowding, lack of privacy, and poor prison diets were the most common complaints. Wilkinson found no deliberate mistreatment of inmates. The prison fare generally was supplemented by food supplied by prisoners' families or purchased from outside. Prisoners with money could buy items such as television sets and sports equipment. Through bribery, prisoners could be assigned to highly prized individual cells, where even air conditioners were permitted.

A major building program by the CNDH added 800 prison spaces in 1993 and 1994. In 1991 Mexico's only maximum security facility, Almoloya de Juárez, was completed. Major drug traffickers were transferred to it from other prisons. The prison's 408 individual cells are watched by closed-circuit television and the most modern technical and physical security equipment. Violence in prisons is a constant problem as a result of overcrowding, lack of security, and the mixing of male and female prisoners and of accused and sentenced criminals.

Imprisonment of peasants, often for growing marijuana, puts a heavy demand on the system. Through the efforts of CNDH, a program of early release and parole benefited 1,000 people incarcerated on charges of growing marijuana in 1993.

Under the terms of the 1977 Prisoner Transfer Treaty between the United States and Mexico, United States prisoners in Mexican jails and Mexican prisoners in United States jails may choose to serve their sentences in their home countries. An extradition treaty between the United States and Mexico took effect in January 1980. It requires the mutual recognition of a crime as defined by the laws of each nation. Because of the

extensive processing required under extradition requests, however, informal cooperation has developed among police on both sides of the border. Suspected criminals who flee to the neighboring country to escape apprehension routinely are turned over without formal proceedings to police in the country where the crime was committed.

Noncompliance with the Prisoner Transfer Treaty has occasionally created friction between the United States and Mexico. The United States strongly criticized Mexico's decision in 1988 to release William Morales, a leader of the Puerto Rican Armed National Liberation Front, who was wanted for a series of bombings in New York in 1978. Mexico rejected a United States extradition request even though a Mexican court had found Morales extraditable. Washington objected particularly to the initial Mexican characterization of Morales as a "political fighter."

The death penalty has not been applied in Mexico since 1929, when the assassin of president-elect Obregón was executed. The federal death penalty was abolished under the Federal Penal Code of 1930, and by 1975 all state codes also had eliminated the death penalty. The military, however, still holds certain offenses as punishable by death, including insubordination with violence causing the death of a superior officer, certain kinds of looting, offenses against military honor, and treason.

Narcotics Trafficking

Mexico is a major source of heroin and marijuana destined for the United States, as well as the principal route of transit for South American cocaine. In 1994 Mexico supplied 60 to 80 percent of marijuana imported into the United States, and Mexican heroin accounted for 20 percent of the United States market. The United States government estimates that 50 to 70 percent of cocaine smuggled into the United States comes by way of Mexico, most of it entering Mexico from Colombia by private aircraft or ship, then transported by land across the United States-Mexican border.

Drug abuse among Mexicans has remained relatively low, although cocaine use is on the rise, particularly along the border area, in major tourist centers, in large universities, and among street children in Mexico City. The Mexican attorney general has said that Mexico is fast becoming a drug-consuming nation. He cited economic hardship, urbanization, and the

collapse of traditional family life as primary causes. A national drug control campaign, instituted in 1992, introduced drug education in schools, gave extensive publicity to prevention measures, and created a program to assist hospitalized drug addicts.

Coordination of United States and Mexican efforts to combat drug trafficking increased greatly during the terms of presidents Salinas (1988–94) and Zedillo (1994–). Mexico widened the scope and intensity of its counternarcotics effort, increasing personnel and budgets threefold between 1989 and 1993. As in the past, corruption among the police at both low and higher levels, lax enforcement, and weak legal constraints have continued to hinder the effectiveness of Mexico's interdiction campaign.

Cooperation between the two countries on narcotic crop eradication dates from 1961. For two decades until Mexico assumed all of the costs of the programs in 1993, the United States gave financial support of as much as US$20 million a year to the antidrug campaign. DEA agents continue to serve in Mexico, and the United States supplies leased helicopters to aid Mexico's efforts.

In 1992 the United States estimated that about 6,600 hectares of opium poppies used in the production of heroin had been eradicated, representing 50 percent of the opium poppy crop. The potential amount of heroin that could be produced increased to 6 tons in 1994 from 4.9 tons in 1993. Some 8,500 hectares of marijuana under cultivation, or 44 percent of the crop, were destroyed in 1994. In many areas, marijuana is difficult to detect because it is planted with corn or in small plots concealed by trees or shrubs.

Cocaine shipments generally reach Mexico from Central America by plane or are shipped to Mexican ports on the Pacific. They are then trucked to locations throughout Mexico for later transshipment over land to the Mexican-United States border. In 1990 a joint United States-Mexico air interception program was launched. The Mexican/United States unit responsible is the Northern Border Response Force. It consists of 1,800 members, overwhelmingly Mexican. Their equipment includes UH–1H transport helicopters leased from the United States and Citation II tracker aircraft. The DEA and the United States military supply radar intelligence. The success of the air interdiction operation has forced traffickers to depend more on drugs delivered by sea or hidden in vehicles. In 1994 the

Northern Border Response Force seized 22 tons of cocaine, about half of the amount seized in 1993.

Stiffer drug trafficking penalties have been introduced in the Federal Penal Code, a law covering asset seizures has been passed, and laundering operations through domestic or foreign banks have been made more difficult. Few major traffickers have been arrested, however. Although corruption remains a persistent problem, some limited success has been achieved in prosecuting public officials—who face twenty-five- to forty-year sentences—for drug-related crimes. The murder of Cardinal Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo in a shoot-out among drug traffickers near the Guadalajara airport in 1993 brought public outrage. Whether Cardinal Posadas was a target of the attack or was shot accidentally was not clear. Many were arrested, including a number of federal and state police. Other gunmen, however, were able to escape aboard a departing scheduled aircraft, and the failure of police to capture the gunmen suggested collusion.

Although laws on money transfers have been tightened, it remains relatively simple to disguise the source of drug money by making cash transactions in currency exchange houses along the United States border. Mexican drug cartels have little difficulty converting their profits into legitimate business operations and real estate. Mexico also plays a critical role in the supply of precursor chemicals needed by South American producers of cocaine and heroin. Most chemicals can be purchased in Mexico and can transit Mexican ports without detection by Mexican customs.

Sensitivities over what Mexico views as United States pressures on its sovereignty have hampered cooperation over drug interdiction. The 1985 kidnapping and murder of DEA agent Enrique Camarena caused lingering tension, in part because of evidence of complicity by Mexican security forces linked with the drug trade. In 1990 bounty hunters hired by the DEA captured a Mexican doctor believed to have participated in the torture of Camarena. He was spirited to the United States for trial, and his conviction in a United States court was upheld by the United States Supreme Court despite Mexican protests over what it viewed as violations of Mexican sovereignty and international law. Mexico's indignation over the United States action resulted in a revision of the rules under which the DEA operates in Mexico.

Security Concerns for the 1990s and Beyond

Since the EZLN uprising in Chiapas began in 1994, the Mexican armed forces have assumed a much higher profile. The reluctance of the armed forces and Zapatistas to engage in full-scale hostilities, the relatively low number of casualties in the uprising, and the idiosyncrasies of Mexico's "revolutionary" political culture suggest, however, that the Chiapas conflict will not necessarily replicate the violent pattern of the Central American guerrilla wars of the 1970s and 1980s.

Analysts predict that the Mexican armed forces will continue a prominent role in narcotics interdiction efforts, as the Mexican drug cartels, bolstered by their links to international organized crime, attempt to consolidate their territorial power and undermine state authority. Observers also expect that the Mexican navy will assume a more prominent role in protecting Mexico's EEZ and combatting illegal immigration and smuggling. For the foreseeable future, Mexico will continue to rely on the United States hemispheric defense umbrella for its external security needs.

* * *

A concise history of the Mexican armed forces and an overview of the service branches as of the mid-1980s can be found in the section on Mexico by Adrian J. English in *Armed Forces of Latin America.* Edwin Lieuwen's *Mexican Militarism* is a full study of the modern military during its formative period. *The Modern Mexican Military,* edited by David Ronfeldt, includes contributions by several authorities on the national defense system. Georges Fauriol's article, "Mexico: In a Superpower's Shadow," treats what Mexico considers as its security threats and weighs its military capabilities.

Adolfo Aguilar Zinser appraises the attitude of Mexican military officers toward civilian society and politics as of 1990 in "Civil-Military Relations in Mexico." *Generals in the Palacio* by Roderic A. Camp and an article by William S. Ackroyd, "Military Professionalism, Education, and Political Behavior in Mexico," examine the important role of the military training and education system.

Little up-to-date material has been published on the organizational structure and operational capabilities of the Mexican armed forces. René Luria's brief survey in 1992, "Defense Pol-

icy and the Armed Forces of Mexico," summarizes some aspects, although more recent developments are not included. Discussion in this chapter of military units, personnel strengths, and weapons systems is based in part on *The Military Balance*, produced annually by the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Appendix

Table

Table 1. Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters	0.04	inches
Centimeters	0.39	inches
Meters	3.3	feet
Kilometers	0.62	miles
Hectares	2.47	acres
Square kilometers	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters	35.3	cubic feet
Liters	0.26	gallons
Kilograms	2.2	pounds
Metric tons	0.98	long tons
.....	1.1	short tons
.....	2,204	pounds
Degrees Celsius (Centigrade)	1.8 and add 32	degrees Fahrenheit

Table 2. Total Population and Population Density by State, 1990[1]

State	Total Population (in thousands)	Inhabitants per Square Kilometer
Aguascalientes	720	131.6
Baja California Norte	1,658	23.7
Baja California Sur	317	4.3
Campeche	529	10.4
Chiapas	3,204	43.2
Chihuahua	2,440	10.0
Coahuila	1,971	13.1
Colima	425	81.9
Durango	1,352	11.0
Guanajuato	3,980	130.5
Guerrero	2,622	40.8
Hidalgo	1,881	90.4
Jalisco	5,279	65.3
México	9,816	459.7
Michoacán	3,534	59.0
Morelos	1,195	241.4
Nayarit	816	30.2
Nuevo León	3,086	47.5
Oaxaca	3,922	32.2
Puebla	4,118	121.5
Querétaro	1,044	91.2
Quintana Roo	494	9.8
San Luis Potosí	2,002	31.7
Sinaloa	2,211	37.9
Sonora	1, 822	10.0
Tabasco	1,501	59.4
Tamaulipas	2,244	28.3
Tlaxcala	764	190.2
Veracruz	6,215	86.7
Yucatán	1,364	42.5
Zacatecas	1,278	17.4
Federal District	8,237	5,569.3
MEXICO	82,041	41.6

[1] These figures differ somewhat from those in the Mexican government's 1990 census.

Source: Based on information from Germany, Statistisches Bundesamt, *Länderbericht Mexiko, 1992*, Wiesbaden, 1992, 31.

Table 3. Crude Death Rate, Selected Years, 1900–90

Year	Crude Death Rate[1]
1900–04	34.5
1905–10	33.2
1911–23[2]	n.a.[3]
1930–34	25.6
1940	23.4
1950	16.1
1960	11.5
1970	10.1
1980	7.5
1990	5.2

[1] Number per thousand residents.
[2] Statistics not available for 1911–23 because of Mexican Revolution.
[3] n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from Vicente Sánchez, Margarita Castillejos, and Lenora Rojas Bracho, *Población, recursos y medio ambiente en México*, Mexico City, 1989, 36; and Mexico, National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Informatics, *Mexico Today*, Aguascalientes, 1992, 23.

Table 4. School Enrollment by Education Level, 1970–71, 1980–81, and 1990–91
(in thousands)

Education Level	1970–71	1980–81	1990–91
Primary schools	9,248	14,666	14,622
Middle schools and high schools	1,108	4,042	6,034
Vocational high schools	182	492	1,018
Teachers' high schools	53	208	121
Universities and colleges	248	930	1,314[1]

[1] Figure for 1989–90 school year.

Source: Based on information from Germany, Statistisches Bundesamt, *Länderbericht Mexiko, 1992*, Wiesbaden, 1992, 44.

Table 5. Vital Demographic Statistics, Selected Years, 1980–92

	1980	1984	1988	1992
Life expectancy[1]	66	68	69	70
Males[1]	63	65	66	67
Females[1]	69	71	73	74
Births[2]	2,428	2,512	2,622	2,726
Deaths[2]	434	411	413	421

[1] In years.
[2] Registered, in thousands.

Source: Based on information from Germany, Statistisches Bundesamt, *Länderbericht Mexiko, 1992*, Wiesbaden, 1992, 38.

Table 6. Infant Mortality Rate, Selected Years, 1930–90

Year	Infant Mortality Rate[1]
1930	145.6
1940	125.7
1950	96.2
1960	74.2
1970	68.5
1980	38.8
1990	40.0

[1] Number per thousand registered live births.

Source: Based on information from Octavio Mojarro, Juan García, and José García, "Mortality," in Jorge Martínez Manautou, ed., *The Demographic Revolution in Mexico, 1970–1980*, Mexico City, 1982, 378; and *XI Censo General de Población y Vivienda, 1990*, "Mortalidad Infantil en México, 1990. Estimaciones Por Entidad Federativa y Municipio" (http://www.inegi.gob.mx/homepara/estadistica/documentos/censos/censos.html#OCHO).

Table 7. Selected Economic Indicators, 1988–95

Economic Indicator	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
GDP[1]	390.5	507.6	868.4	865.2	1,019	1,123	1,248	1,565
GDP growth[2]	1.3	3.3	4.5	3.6	2.8	0.4	3.5	–7.0
GNP per capita[3]	1,990	2,210	2,580	2,970	3,390	3,610	n.a.[4]	n.a.
Inflation[2]	114.1	20.0	26.7	22.7	15.5	10.0	7.0	34.8
External debt[5]	99.2	95.3	104.3	115.4	113.4	118.0	135.5	157.0
Exchange rate[6]	2.27	2.46	2.81	3.02	3.09	3.11	3.37	6.47

[1] GDP—gross domestic product; in billions of current Mexican new pesos (for value of the Mexican new peso—see Glossary).
[2] In percentages.
[3] GNP—gross national product; in current United States dollars.
[4] n.a.—not available.
[5] In billions of current United States dollars
[6] In Mexican new pesos per United States dollar.

Source: Based on information from Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report: Mexico* [London], No. 3, 1994, 3; and Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report: Mexico* [London], No. 1, 1996, 3.

Table 8. Production of Selected Crops, 1988–90

Crop	1988	1989	1990
Beverages			
Cocoa	57	50	36
Coffee	300	343	296
Fruit			
Apples	507	499	310
Avocados	335	320	320
Bananas	1,566	1,185	1,165
Coconuts	1,159	1,057	1,002
Grapefruit	105	100	118
Grapes	563	489	506
Lemons	660	727	463
Mangoes	780	790	800
Melons	826	875	880
Oranges	2,099	1,166	1,558
Papayas	630	640	650
Peaches	265	265	265
Pineapples	248	324	328
Tangerines	151	169	198
Grains			
Barley	350	433	521
Corn	10,600	10,945	14,639
Oats	100	105	105
Rice	456	637	357
Wheat	3,665	4,374	3,880
Legumes			
Beans	857	586	1,247
Chickpeas	150	120	170
Soybeans	226	992	512
Vegetables			
Peppers	654	570	590
Tomatoes	1,980	1,889	1,646

Source: Based on information from Germany, Statistisches Bundesamt, *Länderbericht Mexiko, 1992*, Wiesbaden, 1992, 81.

Table 9. Selected Statistics for Hydrocarbon Production, 1996

	Petroleum[1]	Natural Gas[2]
Proven reserves	49,775,000	68,413
Production (per day)	2,686[3]	1,358
Refining (per day)	1,520	3.7

[1] In thousands of barrels.
[2] In billions of cubic feet.
[3] 1995 (estimated).

Source: Based on information from Jim West, ed., *International Petroleum Encyclopedia, 1996*, Tulsa, 1996, 241, 280, 281, 312.

Table 10. Production of Selected Minerals, 1989–91

Mineral	Unit	1989	1990	1991
Metallic minerals				
Aluminum	thousands of tons	123	122	96
Antimony	tons	1,906	2,627	2,757
Bismuth	tons	883	733	651
Cadmium	tons	1,439	1,346	1,253
Copper	thousands of tons	249	291	267
Gold	tons	6.6	8.2	7.3
Iron ore	thousands of tons	5,373	6,194	6,391
Lead	thousands of tons	163	1,174	153
Manganese	thousands of tons	151	136	79
Silver	tons	2,306	2,324	2,217
Steel	thousands of tons	7,392	8,220	5,867
Zinc	thousands of tons	110	108	66
Nonmetallic minerals				
Barite	thousands of tons	326	310	192
Cement	millions of tons	24	25	18
Fluorite	thousands of tons	780	672	366
Graphite	thousands of tons	40	25	28
Phosphate	thousands of tons	624	605	416
Sulfur	thousands of tons	2,084	2,137	1,791

Source: Based on information from Germany, Statistisches Bundesamt, *Länderbericht Mexiko, 1992*, Wiesbaden, 1992, 84.

Table 11. Selected Trade Indicators, 1991–95
(in billions of United States dollars)

Trade Indicator	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Exports[1]	42.7	46.2	51.9	60.9	79.9
Imports[1]	50.0	62.1	65.4	79.4	72.5
Current account balance[2]	–15.0	–24.8	–23.4	–28.8	–0.1

[1] Free on board.
[2] Includes transfers of émigré worker remittances and nonmerchandise transfers (services).

Source: Based on information from Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report: Mexico* [London], No. 1, 1996, 3.

Table 12. Major Trading Partners, 1993 and 1994
(in millions of United States dollars)

Country	1993	1994
Exports		
Brazil	291	380
Canada	1,558	1,534
France	446	519
Germany	426	406
Japan	704	997
Spain	877	858
United States	42,838	52,787
Imports		
Brazil	1,201	1,207
Canada	1,175	1,627
France	1,106	1,530
Germany	2,852	3,210
Japan	3,929	4,805
Spain	1,115	1,389
United States	45,317	55,468

Source: Based on information from Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report: Mexico* [London], No. 1, 1996, Appendix 3.

Table 13. Major Army Equipment, 1996

Type and Description	Country of Origin	Number in Inventory
Armored reconnaissance vehicles		
M–8	United States	50
ERC–90 Lynx	France	120
VBL M–11	France	40
DN–3/–5 Caballo	Mexico	70
MOWAG	Germany	30
Mex–1	Mexico	20
Mac–1	n.a.[1]	15
Armored personnel carriers		
HWK–11	Germany	40
M–3 halftrack	United States	30
VCR–TT	France	40
DN–4 Caballo	Mexico	40
AMX–VCI	United States	40
BDX	n.a.	18
LAV–150 ST	Belgium	26
Towed artillery		
M–116 pack, 75mm	United States	18
M–2A1/M–3, 105mm	United States	16
M–101, 105mm	United States	60
M–56, 105mm	United States	24
Self-propelled artillery		
M–8, 75mm	United States	5
Mortars		
81mm	United States	1,500
Brandt 120mm	France	20
Antitank guided weapons		
Milan (eight mounted on VBL M–11)	France	n.a.
Antitank guns		
M–30, 37mm	United States	30
Air defense guns		
M–55, 12.7mm	United States	40
Surface-to-air missiles		
RBS–70	Sweden	n.a.

[1] n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1996–1997*, London, 1996, 226.

Table 14. Major Air Force Equipment, 1996

Type and Description	Country of Origin	Number in Inventory
Fighter aircraft		
F-5 (8 F-5E, 2 F-5F)	United States	10
Counterinsurgency		
PC-7 Pilatus	Switzerland	40
AT-33 Lockheed Shooting Star	United States	12
Reconnaissance		
Rockwell Commander 500C	United States	10
SA2-37A	France	1
Search-and-air rescue		
IAI-201 Arava	Israel	12
Armed helicopters		
Bell 205 (5); 206 (5); 212 (15)	United States	25
Utility helicopters		
Bell 205 (4); 206 (12); 212 (15); UH-60 (2); S-70A (4)	United States	37
SA-330 Puma	France	8
Transport		
Various, including C-47 (12); C-118 (10); C-130A (9); DC-6 (5); BN-2 (2); C-54 (1); F-27 (2)	various	47

Note: Presidential transport fleet and training aircraft not included.

Source: Based on information from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1996–1997*, London, 1996, 227.

Table 15. Major Naval Equipment, 1996

Type and Description	Country of Origin	Commissioned or Transferred	Number in Inventory
Destroyers			
Gearing-class, ASROC launcher, 4 127mm (5in) guns	United States	1982	2
Fletcher-class, 5 127mm guns, Bofors 400mm air defense guns	United States	1970	1
Frigates			
Bronstein-class, ASROC launcher, ASRR, 76mm guns	n.a.[1]	n.a.	2
Offshore patrol vessels			
Holzinger-class with Bo-105 helicopters	Mexico	1991–93	4
Uribe-class (Spanish Halcón) with Bo-105 helicopters	Spain	1982–83	6
Guanajuato, 2 102mm guns	Spain	1926	1
Auk-class 3in gun, 4 Bofors 40mm air defense guns	United States	1973	16
Admirable-class, 3in gun, 2 Bofors 40mm air defense guns	United States	1943–44	12
Inshore patrol boats			
Azteca-class, 1 Bofors 40mm air defense gun	Britain/ Mexico	1974–77; modernized 1987	31
Cape-class	United States	1990–91	3
Point-class	United States	1991	2
Polimar-class	Mexico	1962–68	8
Amphibious			
511-class	United States	n.a.	2
Naval aircraft			
Bo-105 helicopter	Germany	n.a.	12
Casa C-212 Aviocar (maritime reconnaissance)	Spain	n.a.	9
HU-16 helicopter (search-and-air rescue)	United States	n.a.	6

[1] n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from Richard Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships, 1993–94*, Alexandria, Virginia, 1993, 415–23, and International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1996–97*, London, 1996, 226.

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Glossary

amparo—A category of legal actions that guards individual civil rights. Literally, *amparo* signifies protection, assistance, or human refuge.

corporatist, corporatism—A political system in which various groups (for instance, the military, labor, and peasants) are organized into official constituencies. The various constituencies influence government policy and are supported by government patronage.

Contadora—A diplomatic initiative launched by a January 1983 meeting on Contadora Island off the Pacific coast of Panama, by which the "Core Four" mediator countries of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and Panama sought to prevent through negotiations a regional conflagration among the Central American states of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. In September 1984, the negotiating process produced a draft treaty, the Contadora Acta, which was judged acceptable by the government of Nicaragua but rejected by the other four Central American states concerned. The process was suspended unofficially in June 1986 when the Central American governments refused to sign a revised Acta. The Contadora process was effectively superseded by direct negotiations among the Central American states.

ejido—A landholding peasant community or the land owned collectively by the members of such a community. An *ejido*, according to Mexican legislation, is a legal entity of the "social interest sector," and its jurisdiction is in the hands of Mexican-born peasants. Its holdings consist of the *ejidal* plots, i.e., individual farming plots, the school plots, the *ejidal* urban zones, the houses and annexes to each plot, and any water resources and forest areas associated with the community. Two basic kinds of *ejidos* exist: the "individual" *ejido*, in which land tenure and ownership are legally vested in a community but cropland is allocated by plots (*parcelas*) on a semipermanent basis among the individual *ejidatarios* (*ejido* members); and the "collective" *ejido*, in which land resources are pooled for collectively organized production. A majority of *ejidos* are of the individual kind.

fiscal year (FY)—Mexico's fiscal year is the calendar year.

Where reference is made to United States aid appropriations or disbursements, the United States government's fiscal year, which runs from October 1 to September 30, is used with the date of reference drawn from the year in which the period ends. For example, FY 1995 began on October 1, 1994, and ended on September 30, 1995.

gross domestic product (GDP)—A measure of the total value of goods and services produced by the domestic economy during a given period, usually one year. Obtained by adding the value contributed by each sector of the economy in the form of profits, compensation to employees, and depreciation (consumption of capital). Only domestic production is included, not income arising from investments and possessions owned abroad; hence the use of the word *domestic* to distinguish GDP from gross national product (*q.v.*).

gross national product (GNP)—The total market value of all final goods and services produced by an economy during a year. Obtained by adding the gross domestic product (*q.v.*) and the income received from abroad by residents and subtracting payments remitted abroad to nonresidents.

import-substitution industrialization (ISI)—An economic development strategy that emphasizes the growth of domestic industries, often by import protection using tariff and nontariff measures. Proponents favor the export of industrial goods over primary products.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)—Established along with the World Bank (*q.v.*) in 1945, the IMF is a specialized agency affiliated with the United Nations (UN) that takes responsibility for stabilizing international exchange rates and payments. The main business of the IMF is the provision of loans to its members when they experience balance-of-payments difficulties. These loans often carry conditions that require substantial internal economic adjustments by the recipients.

maquiladoras—Assembly plants that are also called "in-bond" industries. Established by Mexico's Border Industrialization Program during the mid-1960s to absorb the unemployed along the border with the United States following the termination of the *bracero* (migrant Mexican worker) program between the United States and Mexico in 1964. Machinery, equipment, and components were initially allowed to be imported duty-free for processing or assem-

bly within a twenty-kilometer strip along the border as long as all the imported products were subsequently reexported. Later legislation permitted the establishment of in-bond industries anywhere in Mexico except Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Monterrey. End-product output from the assembly operations of the in-bond industries cannot be sold within Mexico.

Mesoamerica—literally middle America. Anthropological term for region from central Mexico to northern Honduras that contained advanced civilizations before the arrival of the Europeans.

new peso (NMex$)—Mexican monetary unit divided into 100 centavos. The new peso replaced the peso (*q.v.*) on January 1, 1993, at the rate of 1 new peso = 1,000 pesos. At that time, US$1 = NMex$3.1. In April 1997, US$1 = NMex$7.9.

parastatal—Corporation wholly or partially government-owned and managed. Corporate directors general are appointed by the president of Mexico. Although ostensibly managed semiautonomously, boards of directors are subject to the political guidelines of the government.

peso (Mex$)—Mexican currency prior to 1993. At par with the dollar in the nineteenth century, the Mexican government occasionally devalued the peso in the first half of the twentieth century. From 1954 until 1975, the peso's value was fixed at US$1 = Mex$12.49. In 1976 the peso was allowed to float and depreciated to about US$1 = Mex$100 in 1982. By 1992, however, the peso's value had fallen to US$1 = Mex$3,000, and a new currency, the new peso (NMex$—*q.v.*), was introduced, replacing the peso at the rate of 1 new peso = 1,000 pesos.

Sandinista—Originally a member of the Marxist group in Nicaragua attempting to overthrow the Nicaraguan government in the 1960s and 1970s. The group took its name from Augusto César Sandino, who led a guerrilla struggle against United States occupation of Nicaragua in the 1930s. The political arm of the group, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional—FSLN), was the national government of Nicaragua from July 1979 to April 1990. After the late 1970s, the term *Sandinista* is used for a member or supporter of the FSLN or as the adjectival form of the FSLN.

World Bank—The informal name used to designate a group of four affiliated international institutions: the International

Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). The IBRD, established in 1945, has the primary purpose of providing loans at market-related rates of interest to developing countries at more advanced stages of development. The IDA, a legally separate loan fund but administered by the staff of the IBRD, was set up in 1960 to furnish credits to the poorest developing countries on much easier terms than those of conventional IBRD loans. The IFC, founded in 1956, supplements the activities of the IBRD through loans and assistance designed specifically to encourage the growth of productive private enterprises in less developed countries. The MIGA, founded in 1988, insures private foreign investment in developing countries against various noncommercial risks. The president and certain officers of the IBRD hold the same positions in the IFC. The four institutions are owned by the governments of the countries that subscribe their capital. To participate in the World Bank, member states must first belong to the International Monetary Fund (*q.v.*).

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