

# ANALYSIS OF MEXICAN LAND LAW REGULATIONS DISCLOSES CALLES BACKED DOWN TO UNITED STATES

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Receipt of the full text of the regulations for application of Mexico's much-discussed alien land laws makes it possible to see how successfully the United States government has protected Wall Street's interests to the detriment of the Mexican people. Secretary Kellogg's threats have had their effect. President Calles has retreated so far that the struggle for the effective establishment of article 27 of the Mexican constitution still remains to be taken up in earnest.

Whereas article 27, as well as the land law itself, provide expressly that foreign corporations may not own land within 100 kilometers of the national frontiers or within 50 kilometers of the coastlines, the special regulations issued by Calles make the provision practically a dead letter. Mexico's oil lands are nearly all within this "prohibited zone."

## New Regulations.

Section 8 of the new regulations reads as follows:

"In conformity with Fraction 4, Article 27 of the constitution, Mexican firms which are referred to as constituted to exploit any classes of industries, factories, mines, oil or any other businesses that are not agriculture, even when the former are in part or whole controlled by foreigners, may acquire, possess or administer lands within or outside of the prohibited zone, but only to the extent that they are strictly needed for the service of the objects indicated, and always with the permission that is expressed in Section 2." (Section 2 provides that foreign exploiters must agree to consider themselves as Mexicans before the law, in regard to their Mexican holdings).

Thus, altho constitution and land law declare that foreigners may not own land in the restricted area, the president's regulations say that they may—"to the extent that they are strictly needed" for their business—whatever that may mean! Purporting to be regulations for the application of the land law, these sentences constitute rather an open violation of it.

## Right to "Acquire."

There is another significant thing that the text of the regulations reveals. Apologists for American imperialism have been loudly maintaining that they were not objecting to Mexico's right to legislate for the future. They were fighting against only the retroactive features of the land law, they insisted. But the concessions that are now seen to have been forced from President Calles as embodied in Section 8 of his regulations include the right to "acquire," as well as to "possess or administer."

## Calles' Alternative.

Wall Street will not give up its determination to monopolize greater and greater portions of Mexico's national wealth. The conflict with the national aspirations of the Mexican people is thereby not settled but intensified. President Calles will have to oppose a firm front to the demands of American imperialism if he does not wish to lose support among his own people. He may have to retreat momentarily in the face of superior forces but if the Mexican people think he has retreated too far they will be bound to identify him with imperialism itself. Workers are already confronting him with his past record, which is none too reassuring. The Mexican people are almost a unit behind Article 27.