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### Trade

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### Repository Citation

Salvucci, L. K. (1998). Trade. In D. S. Frazier (Ed.), *The United States and Mexico at war: Nineteenth-century expansionism and conflict* (pp. 432-433). Macmillan.

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## Tornel Decree

Revolt in the early 1830s against President Antonio López de Santa Anna's centralist regime threatened to tear apart the Mexican republic. Mexican liberals had turned to the United States for help, and money, men, and arms flowed from New Orleans and other U.S. cities in support of the revolutionaries.

Mexican officials, noting the influx of assistance to the rebels, decided to implement a strict policy intended to prevent interference from outsiders. Minister of War José María Tornel drafted a proclamation with the approval of the Mexican congress. Called the Tornel Decree for its author, the document declared, "Foreigners landing on the coast of the republic or invading its territory by land, armed with the intention of attacking our country, will be deemed pirates and dealt with as such. . . ." Dated 30 December 1835, the Tornel Decree provided the rationale for the policy of no quarter adopted by Mexican troops in their effort to bring the rebellion to a close.

Writing in the early 1840s, Waddy Thompson, U.S. minister to Mexico, described a conversation he had with Santa Anna about the Texas Revolution. Santa Anna, once again the president of Mexico, stated to Thompson, "the campaign of Texas had been commenced under a special act of the Mexican congress, providing that no prisoners should be made." While this can be interpreted as an attempt to fix the blame on the Mexican government for atrocities committed by his troops, there is no doubt that the Tornel Decree was directly linked to events at the Alamo and at Goliad.

*Richard Bruce Winders*

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See also **Appendix** for a translation of the Tornel Decree

## Torrejón, Anastasio

Born in the Llanos de Apan, Anastasio Torrejón (c. 1802–18??) joined the Royalist army as a cadet lieutenant in 1816 and fought against Mexican insurgents, earning the rank of lieutenant colonel before the end of the War for Independence. In 1823 he declared for Antonio López de Santa Anna's Plan de Casa Mata and helped establish the Mexican Republic. A highly decorated soldier, Torrejón reached the rank of brigadier general by 1840 and supported Anastasio Bustamante's government against a revolt led by Santa Anna. In 1845 Torrejón helped Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga overthrow President José Joaquín de Herrera. The following year, Torrejón arrived in Matamoros in charge of a cavalry brigade. On 25 April 1846 his command attacked and de-

stroyed a dragoon detachment under U.S. captain Seth Thornton, the event that led the United States to declare war on the pretext that "American blood had been shed on American soil."

In the ensuing campaign, Torrejón's troops covered the Río Grande crossing of Gen. Mariano Arista's army and were engaged at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. In the aftermath of these battles, Torrejón received orders to cover the army's withdrawal to Monterrey. His command defended that city and later fought at Buena Vista, where Torrejón was bruised by a shell fragment. His 3d Cavalry Brigade turned the U.S. left and nearly won the battle for the Mexicans.

In the battles for Mexico City, Torrejón led his troops at Contreras, where the brigade suffered heavy losses, after which Torrejón was accused of a lack of diligence to orders. Despite this slur on his reputation, his cavalry covered the Mexican retreat to Mexico City, and his troops fought again in defense of the San Cosme Garita (gate). In 1854 Torrejón was named commandant general of Michoacán.

*Donald S. Frazier*

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## Trade

The history of commerce between early national Mexico and the United States remains largely untold due to the lack of good serial data. Mexican export and import figures are neither consistent nor comprehensive; on the U.S. side, overland exports from the United States to Mexico went unrecorded until 1893. Maritime trade statistics, collected by the U.S. Treasury from 1824 onward, reveal that Mexico traded silver—mostly specie and some bullion—for manufactured cloth, for wheat flour coming through New Orleans, and for raw cotton for the Mexican textile industry, which tariffs enacted by Mexico in 1829, 1837, and 1842–1843 attempted to protect. Still, before 1838, finished cotton accounted for between 30 and 40 percent of domestic U.S. exports to Mexico. Moreover, before 1841, reexports constituted at least half of all U.S. exports to Mexico by value every year. Such quantitative evidence suggests what other qualitative information confirms: before the Texas Revolution (1835–1836), the composition of U.S. exports and reexports to Mexico reflected mostly economic factors and commercial restrictions. After that, political and diplomatic calculations came into play, as the United States and Great Britain competed more directly for influence in Mexico.

Their respective patterns of trade, which had earlier paralleled each other, falling and rising together, began to move in opposite directions, exhibiting reversed peaks and troughs.

English goods reached Mexico through Texas; this is one reason Texas dominated the political economy of trade between 1825 and 1848. At first, Tejanos were supposed to buy and sell from Mexican army quartermasters at set prices. However, to encourage settlement of the northern frontier, Mexico granted Texas settlers a seven-year exemption from tariffs in 1823. Attempts to collect duties in the early 1830s exacerbated political tensions, leading one economic historian to label the U.S.-Mexican War as an "irrepressible" conflict. Texas had no coastal customs house until 1830, but it is clear that Texas cotton was shipped to New Orleans on U.S. vessels. British merchant companies also gave U.S. traders serious competition in California.

In many ways, the most legendary trade between the United States and Mexico involved individual traders along the Santa Fe Trail. The New Mexico-Chihuahua trade remained active until 1846, as incalculable quantities of silver and mules flowed from the northern provinces to Missouri. Mexican and U.S. scholars differ over the degree of commercial and cultural influence exerted by U.S. traders over New Mexico's inhabitants. But the reorientation of the region away from Mexico and toward the United States was evident, leading a present-day authority on the Southwest, David Weber, to conclude: "The Mexican era saw the *pobladores* break loose from the grasp of Spanish mercantilism only to be embraced by American capitalism."

For the United States, overall trade flows to and from Mexico were small, but their effects could be significant. Regional markets, particularly in Texas, were probably much affected by the overland trade in cattle, horses, and mules. Before the Panic of 1837 in the United States, substantial flows of Mexican silver helped drive up U.S. prices. Wealthy Mexicans also purchased bonds of the individual states of the United States and lost money when these states suspended payment during the panic.

After the U.S.-Mexican War, Mexico's trade with the United States grew more rapidly than its trade with Europe, so that over the rest of the century the United States accounted for an increasing share of Mexico's foreign commerce. The willingness of a nascent generation of Mexican liberals to back away from protectionism and to countenance freer trade also accounted for this shift. These Mexicans, ever wary of U.S. commercial and military power, believed that opening markets to the United States would prevent further loss of territory. The rapid growth of the U.S. economy after 1840 both enlarged the U.S. market for Mexican goods and made the United States an even larger supplier of finished goods to Mexico. But it was not until the 1880s that the integration of the two economies really ac-

celerated. The completion of rail links between the two countries was critical in this regard, as was the now openly favorable policy of the regime of Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz toward foreign investment.

It is customary to state that trade follows the flag, that diplomacy opens the way for more intensive commercial relations. Before the war with the United States, Mexicans generally believed that the principle was reversed, and that Yankee traders were generally followed by U.S. armies. It was not until the later part of the nineteenth century that the more usual pattern held, for only then was a strengthened Mexican state really in a position to control access to its territory and, hence, to its markets.

Linda K. Salvucci

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## Traders Battalion

The Traders Battalion was a volunteer infantry unit of approximately 150 overland merchants and teamsters who had accompanied Col. Alexander W. Doniphan's expedition to Chihuahua. Doniphan had been ordered to report with his regiment of Missouri Volunteers to Gen. John E. Wool at Chihuahua City. He learned upon his arrival at El Paso del Norte on 29 December 1846, however, that Wool had not marched on Chihuahua. (Wool's Chihuahua campaign had in fact been abandoned.) Doniphan decided to proceed to Chihuahua anyway, but, confident that he would encounter a large Mexican force, he ordered the formation of the Traders Battalion on 9 February 1847 to augment his small army. This battalion was organized from members of the merchant caravan of some three hundred wagons traveling south with Doniphan for protection. Two companies were formed: merchant Edward James Glasgow was elected captain of Company A; wagonmaster Henry Skillman, captain of Company B; and merchant Samuel C. Owens, their major.