Breaking News: Oil Expropriation

[Opens with a jingle] [After this jiggle to play mariachi music in the background for the rest of the show] Good morning, the cosmic race of the world. I am Kat Pikus and this is “Breaking News” on LAS. On March 18th of this fine year of 1938, President Cárdenas represented every Mexican by demanding foreign oil companies leave Mexico. These foreigners have not respected our rules in the Constitution of 1917 by continuing to exploit our fine country. They do not care about their workers. They only care about the money in their pockets. Cárdenas has always wanted the best for his fellow citizens. He continues to fight for our nation by exiling those who are leaching off of our Mexico. He is not the only one who can beat these parasites.

We have been told by our government that they need your help. They want to find a way to peacefully get rid of the oil monopolies and transfer the resources back to the rightful owners, the Mexican people. These corporations enjoy taking from us. Cárdenas has decided to pay them for their resources to satisfy their greed. Please go to your local Ministries of Finance and donate anything that you can. Our government cannot do this without your help! Every donation makes a difference in helping these companies leave our wonderful country. Anything you can spare is pivotal to completing our mission.

[Insert fanfare music] Our donation shoutout of this week is Enrique Sarmiento of El Pueblo and Bruno Montes of Mexico City. Enrique Sarmiento donated his two prize chickens and a bag of corn. Thank you Enrique for being a hero and helping out our nation! Bruno Montes donated half of his salary after working as a lawyer in Mexico City’s famous firm, Benito Juárez and Sons. Thank you Bruno for being a hero and helping out our nation! We are getting close to our goal because of people like Enrique and Bruno. Already, citizens just like you have supported the removal of the California Standard Oil Company of Mexico and the Mexican Sinclair Petroleum Corporation.

Thank you for listening to Breaking News, the official news show of the PRM. Thank you to the live band playing the national musical style of mariachi during this broadcast. Breaking News is sponsored by the CNC and the CTM. Up next on LAS, we have “La Hora National” with President Cárdenas. [Fade out with another jingle]

The radio show clip from above is about the oil expropriation of Mexico. This is when President Cárdenas bought private foreign oil companies for Mexico. The choice impacted everyone in Mexico especially the workers in the natural resource industry. It impacted everybody by creating nationalism. This only worked because people bought into the idea. This was because of the personal nature of the request. Cárdenas announced this event on the radio by personally denouncing these companies and asking for the nation’s help (Buchenau & Henderson, 229-230). Cárdenas specifically says, “Having thus proposed the only solution to this problem, I ask the entire nation for the moral and material support necessary to carry out a resolution so justified, so important, and so indispensable” (Buchenau & Henderson, 230). He did not keep this request private and personally asked Mexicans for assistance. Nationalism was created because people enjoyed the idea of the removal of foreign manipulation. The Mexican population has a history of celebrating the defeat of major powers. The Punitive Expedition, only a few years earlier, was when the United States searched for Pancho Villa who was viewed as a hero (Buchenau, 87). He was a hero that ran away from a fight. Often people think of heroes as people who charge into conflict. Villa was hidden away which in some contexts could be viewed as a coward. This demonstrates that they did not view the act itself just the outcome as important. Everyone could be a hero or patriot as long as the goal is met. Cárdenas capitalized on that idea to help make the people feel like patriots. He capitalized on nationalism fiscally and politically. Cárdenas understood that the Mexican people wanted to be connected to the government. He also understood that they were tired of watching the government not listen. The words using words like “important” and “justified” signal to the audience that the government understands that is what people want. Cárdenas appreciated any help from the Mexican public which is why he asked the entire nation. He was not asking the elite because they are not the only Mexicans. Everyone should feel that they contributed to their nation. Everyone did contribute to their nation they could some even brought livestock to help pay for the policy (Albarrán). People were willing to get rid of their livelihood to help this policy go through. There are few examples of government policies anywhere around the world that bring all people together. Interestingly, it does not matter the outcome of the policy. The Mexican population came together and created a sense of pride in this project. This national pride is because Mexico was finally in control of its exports and created the national oil company Petróleos Mexicanos (PEMEX) (Buchenau, 101). PEMEX is a way for Mexicans all over the country to connect with their exports. This is because there is pride in national corporations especially when the product is in high demand. Modernization is starting to be in the forefront of the world and oil is necessary for these machines.

 Cárdenas knew what would work to get people to listen and I tried to emulate that with my radio announcement. The radio spot is all about creating a sense of unity and nationalism. Purposefully, I used the word “our”. This word created a sense of connection especially because it is coming from the government. People want to feel included and special. I incorporated ways that the listener feels that I am specifically talking to them. I also did some shout-outs to big national symbols because they can be weaponized to promote emotion. The cosmic race is a reference to José Vasconcelos’ novel of the same name. The Constitution of 1917 is an iconic piece of work that influences politics after its creation. Additionally, there was a slight poke at Calles who got exiled by Cardenas while he was in office (Buchenau, 100). People were tired of the Calles running the government. Calles likely would have continued to manipulate the government. Exiling him is signaling to the nation that Calles’ ideas and the ideas of an individual are no longer wanted. I was not creative with names, leading to a law firm named after the famous Indigenous president who was a lawyer. All of these symbols are purposeful in creating a connection with the listeners of Mexico. Mexico is known for its symbols which makes them more effective. Words are only as powerful as the meaning that the audience gives to them. Media will continue to use words to inform the public and find ways to create connections .

Works Cited

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