

# The Bigger Picture *Advanced*

## Unit 4: The Mexican National Era

Name:

Date:

Period:

### Staying Informed as Tension Grew Across Mexico

When Stephen F. Austin established his colony in Texas in 1821, he **founded** the city of San Felipe de Austin as its **capital**. San Felipe de Austin grew to be the second largest city in Texas at the time, after San Antonio. It was the **social**, **political**, and **economic** center of Austin's colony.

San Felipe was also the location of some of Texas' only **printing presses** at the time. As a result, the city was also home to some of Texas' first newspapers like the *Texas Gazette* and later the *Telegraph and Texas Register*. As challenges increased across Texas and Mexico, newspapers like these kept many **Texians** informed.

Today, we can study the information in these newspapers to learn what was important to many Texians during this era and to try to understand their opinions on the issues facing Texas and Mexico.

**Directions:** Match the term from the reading with its best definition

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| ___ 1) Founded        | A. Related to society and how people live                          |
| ___ 2) Capital        | B. The city where the government is located                        |
| ___ 3) Social         | C. Anglos living in Texas  |
| ___ 4) Political      | D. Related to the government                                       |
| ___ 5) Economic       | E. Established   |
| ___ 6) Printing press | F. An early machine that could produce printed copies of documents |
| ___ 7) Texians        | G. Related to how money is made and spent                          |

Do you think newspapers can provide us with a reliable source of information from the past? Why or why not?

## The Centralist Takeover and Its Consequences

The following primary source excerpts come from a newspaper article in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* from Wednesday, December 2, 1835. The article was published only months after President Antonio López de Santa joined the Centralist rebellion that took over the government and abolished the Federalist Constitution of 1824.

The author of the article, an Anglo listed as J. Grant, described the events that were occurring throughout Mexico as a result of the Centralist takeover.

### Excerpt 1

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>“Guzman and Montenegro have an army of 2,100 liberals, in the state of Gualaxara, and must, by this time, have driven the centralists out of that territory.”</p> <p>“The state of Puebla, with the governor at its head, has refused to publish the law of centralism; and by last accounts it appears that the citizens were arming <u>en masse</u> to defend their <u>liberties</u> and rights.”</p> <p>“The inhabitants of Oajaca have made a noble and vigorous protest against the <u>usurping</u> government and <u>aristocratic</u> party; and it is understood that they were preparing to defend their opinions and rights by <u>arms</u>, so soon as the central law reached them.”</p> | <p><b><u>Vocabulary:</u></b></p> <p><b><u>En Masse:</u></b> In large numbers</p> <p><b><u>Liberties:</u></b> Freedoms</p> <p><b><u>Usurping:</u></b> Taking over illegally or by force</p> <p><b><u>Aristocratic:</u></b> wealthy and elite</p> <p><b><u>Arms:</u></b> Weapons</p> |
|---|--|

- Baker & Bordens. *Telegraph and Texas Register* (San Felipe de Austin [i.e. San Felipe], Tex.), Vol. 1, No. 8, Ed. 1, Wednesday, December 2, 1835. The Portal to Texas History

1. According to the article, how did Mexican federalists in different states show their opposition to the Centralist government? Give specific examples from the excerpt.

## Excerpt 2

“The central government is sadly distressed for funds to carry on their despotic dispositions; and if one or two of their ports are taken, they will have to yield without striking a blow. Their army is scattered, and cannot be united with safety. A number of liberal and able officers are devoted to the cause of liberty; and when the principles on which the freemen of Texas have taken up arms are known, *i.e.* the defence of the constitution of 1824, the whole republic will rise at once, and the final destruction of Santa Ana, centralism, and the Spanish party, may be considered as the immediate result.”

### Vocabulary

Distressed: Troubled or worried

Despotic: Having total power and often using it in a cruel way

Yield: Give in

Principles: Most important beliefs

Republic: A country where people can vote to elect representatives

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2. What are two primary claims the author made in the above excerpt? Select **TWO** answers from the options below.
  - a. The whole of the Mexican people should be fighting to destroy Spain immediately to defend the Mexican government.
  - b. The Federalists have good reason for their opposition, but they are too weak to stand up to the more powerful, better organized Mexican government.
  - c. The Mexican National government lacks money to operate successfully and its military is weak and spread out.
  - d. Once more Mexicans know that the Centralists abolished the constitution, the whole country will fight to overthrow Santa Anna and his whole government.
  - e. Anglos in Texas stand beside the Centralists in the national government as the rightful leaders and support the abolition of the Constitution of 1824.
  
3. According to the article, did any residents of Texas support the Federalist opposition to the Centralist government? Provide text evidence to support your answer.

4. Based on the information provided in excerpt 2, what did the author likely believe would happen in Mexico as a result of the Centralist takeover of government?
  - a. The centralist government would recognize the discontent of the majority of its people and attempt to address the concerns of the Federalists across the country.
  - b. States in rebellion would turn toward the United States government in an attempt to gain support in their fight against centralism.
  - c. Spain would most likely get the opportunity it was waiting for to attempt to reconquer and recolonize Mexico.
  - d. The majority of Mexican citizens wouldn't accept centralism and would fight a war if necessary to bring back the Constitution of 1824.
5. Consider the answer you gave to the previous question. Which quote from the two excerpts you read best supports your answer to question number four?
  - a. "The inhabitants of Oajaca have made a noble and vigorous protest against the usurping government and aristocratic party"
  - b. "...the whole republic will rise at once, and the final destruction of Santa Ana, centralism, and the Spanish party, may be considered as the immediate result."
  - c. "The state of Puebla, with the governor at its head, has refused to publish the law of centralism."
  - d. "A number of liberal and able officers are devoted to the cause of liberty."
6. Imagine you are an Anglo or Tejano resident of Texas at the time. You have read about many people in different states rebelling against the centralist government. Consider and explain the possible pros and cons of having Texas join the rebellions against the centralist government of Mexico under President Santa Anna.