

**Statement of Protest Over the Jailing of
Lázaro Gutiérrez de Lara
(October 23, 1909)**

[Conneaut, Ohio, Oct. 23, 1909]

When Lázaro Gutiérrez de Lara¹ cried aloud in protest against the intolerable conditions in Mexico Díaz ordered him shot. He escaped to the United States as other liberators, such as Kossuth,² had done before him and were received with open arms. But, alas! times have changed and the United States, instead of being a haven of refuge for the oppressed, is the bloodhound of despots and turnkey of assassins.

But the people are awakening and one of these days, ye plutocrats, you will reap the whirlwind you are sowing. The arrest of Gutiérrez de Lara, the Mexican patriot, by order of the dictator Díaz, his imprisonment incommunicado is an atrocity second only to the court martialled assassination of Ferrer in Spain.

The United States is rapidly being Russianized and Mexicanized. Díaz, the monster, may now reach over here and imprison patriots, have them deported to Mexico and assassinated in cold blood.

Mexico under Díaz is an inquisition of horrors. Hell is a paradise in comparison. Eighteen million peons' lives are ground under the iron heel of that monster. Mexico is no more a republic than a brothel is a saints' community.

Díaz rules, and by assassination. Thirty thousand atrocious murders lie at his door. This is the bloody monster Taft embraced in the name of the American people.

The Wall Street plutocrats have a billion dollars invested in American railways, mines, smelters, steel and cotton mills there. Mexico furnishes them with peon labor, and they divide the bloody booty with Díaz.

Three Mexican heroes are rotting in our federal dungeon at Florence Arizona, and the federal prison at Leavenworth, Kansas, holds two more. Braver men than these have never sacrificed their freedom in the cause of humanity and yet they are chained in the prison cells of our asylum for the oppressed upon the request of Díaz.

On the day Taft was in San Antonio a number of socialists were thrown into jail without warrant or hearing upon the order of his secret service satraps. Gutiérrez de Lara, the latest victim, is of wealthy family and a graduate of the University of Mexico. He was a judge upon the bench and a member of the diplomatic corps of Mexico, but because he cried aloud in protest against the acts of Díaz he incurred his enmity and is now being persecuted.

Telegram to the United Press. Published as “‘We Are Being Russianized’ Says Agitator Debs” in *Buffalo Courier*, Oct. 24, 1909, p. 33.

¹ Lázaro Gutiérrez de Lara (1870-1918) was a Mexican attorney hailing from a wealthy family in Mexico City who worked for the Secretary of Foreign Relations and served as a judge. After meeting Ricardo Flores Magón, Gutiérrez de Lara joined the Mexican Liberal Party (PLM). He was arrested in 1906 in Sonora for speaking on behalf of striking copper miners but was freed through the intercession of his family and forced into emigration in Los Angeles. There he became a member of the PLM’s governing junta and editor of the party’s official newspaper. Gutiérrez de Lara was the friend and translator of American socialist John Kenneth Turner, and traveled undercover with him to research a muckraking series of magazine articles detailing the repressive regime of Mexican strongman Porfirio Díaz, collected into the book *Barbarous Mexico* (1910). In 1909 Gutiérrez de Lara was arrested as an alleged “anarchist” by the American government on behalf of the Díaz regime. He returned to Mexico in 1912 where he continued his socialist activism. In January 1918 he was arrested in conjunction with a miners’ strike in Cananea and was summarily executed.

² Lajos Kossuth (1802-1894) was a Hungarian lawyer and politician who is regarded as the father of Hungarian liberal democracy. He was a leader of the 1848 revolution of the Hungarian people against the Austrian empire and served as Regent-President of Hungary until the democratic regime was overthrown through the efforts of Tsar Nikolai I. He was forced into emigration in Turkey late in 1849 before making his way to England in 1851 and visited the United States at the end of that year, where he was entertained by President Millard Fillmore. In his later years he lived in Italy.