

# Jesus C. Flores' Speech Against The Chinese

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Jesus Flores, a Maderista leader from Gomez Palacio delivered an incendiary speech against the Chinese, the full text of which has been lost but which can be roughly reconstructed by the contemporary references to it.

## Edith Wagner Account

When the boys came back from hearing the speeches, they told me that Jesus Flores—but a few yesterdays ago a bricklayer and now captain of five hundred men—made the most incendiary speech. He preached universal suffrage (by the way, the Mexican women are beginning to sit up and take notice), equality, fraternity—the usual socialist dream; but what is ominous, he assured them that if they joined the cause of Don Pancho Madero they would have a share of all the riches in Torreon; that on taking Torreon everything is to be turned over to the soldiers; they will be able to eat and drink their fill; anything that pleases their eyes they can take. He fairly inflamed them against the Chinese. I could hear them shouting, “*Bajo los Chinos!*” and “Death to the Chinese.” Jack, who was quite near the speaker, said that he kept repeating, “We will suspend the barbarous Chinese like spiders in their webs!” Seems a little venomous, but most of their venom is expended in talk, so I think nothing will come of it. He reminded them that the Chinese had taken the best stalls in the market and sold their vegetables cheaper than the Mexicans, and—greatest crime of all—how their laundries had taken the bread from the mouths of “our hard-working mothers and wives!” Jack said tears actually choked his voice when he denounced that last outrage.

**Source:** Letters from Mexico I in *The Bellman*, Vol. XVI, No. 397, Minneapolis, Saturday, February 21, 1914 (The Bellman Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota)

## Delfino Ríos Account

From the beginning of the month of May the towns of Ciudad Lerdo and Gomez Palacio, distant from this place eight and four kilometers, respectively, and having communication by electric road, had been occupied by the Maderista forces under command of Ramirez, Buitron, Jesus Flores and others, because they were undefended by the federals.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of May the revolutionists organized civic parades, circuses, serenades and other diversions to celebrate the victory of our troops over the French forces.

In the first—that is to say, the civic parades—the troops participated, these being composed mainly of convicts and criminals who had been liberated from the prisons, and of ignorant people of the worst antecedents.

At different points along the line of march speeches were made by the adherents of the cause or by the leaders themselves, who, as a matter of fact were not to be distinguished by their superior education.

Among these latter, Jesus Flores, deceased, made a speech. This man was only a stone mason with no social standing and not even a mediocre education. He spoke of the reasons for

the celebration and added that all of the foreigners had become wealthy at the expense of the sweat of the Mexican workingman, especially the Chinese, who had taken over even the work of the women, depriving them of their livelihood and that, therefore, it was necessary, and he considered it even a patriotic duty, to *finish with them*.

These latter words made an impression and remained fixed in the minds of these unthinking, ignorant people and 'patriotism', which was in a state of effervescence, was prepared to break out at the opportune moment.

**Source:** The Truth About The Assassination Of The Chinese In Torreón in *Diogenes*, July 16, 1911. Translated and published in Owang King & Arthur Bassett, *Report of Messrs. Owang King and Arthur Bassett, Representatives of His Excellency, Minister Chang Yin Tang in an Investigation Made in Conjunction with Licenciado Antonio Ramos Pedrueza, Representative of His Excellency, Francisco L. de la Barra, President of Mexico, of the Facts Relating to the Massacre of Chinese Subjects at Torreón on the 15th of May, 1911* (Mexico: American Book and Printing Company, 1911).

### **Cunard Cummins Account**

The British Consul, who lives in Gomez Palacio, personally heard a speech which was made by one Jesus C. Flores on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May at Gomez Palacio, in which he criticized the presence in the country of so many Chinese and said that one of the reforms to come from the revolution would be to rid the country of them.

**Source:** Owang King & Arthur Bassett, *Report of Messrs. Owang King and Arthur Bassett, Representatives of His Excellency, Minister Chang Yin Tang in an Investigation Made in Conjunction with Licenciado Antonio Ramos Pedrueza, Representative of His Excellency, Francisco L. de la Barra, President of Mexico, of the Facts Relating to the Massacre of Chinese Subjects at Torreón on the 15th of May, 1911* (Mexico: American Book and Printing Company, 1911).