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POLITICAL FACTIONS IN THE MEXICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM: A  
THEORETICAL AND  
COMPARATIVE EXAMINATION

by

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Dissertation submitted in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Political  
Science in the Graduate School  
of Duke University

1995

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ABSTRACT

(Political Science)

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1995

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ABSTRACT

The problem of this dissertation is to understand how factions affect the political stability of the Mexican political system. The central hypothesis of the dissertation is that the factions work as a allocative device within the dominant party system in Mexico which creates a rational basis for staying within the political rule structure even in the face of short term loses. The factions allow all actors to understand and play by the rules, that, although they have little say in how they are formed, are agreed upon by the participants. The factional leaders distribute State resources to their members and allow them to gain higher positions in the public bureaucracy and elected posts in return for the loyalty and discipline of the followers, a crucial need for those within the dominant party attempting to gain the highest post of Mexico, (and the one that will determine the future distribution outcomes for the great majority of PRI members).



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CD	Democratic Current
CNC	National Peasant Organization (PRI)
CNOP	National Confederation of Popular Organizations (PRI)
CTM	Mexican Workers' Confederation (PRI)
DF	Federal District of Mexico City
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
PAN	National Action Party - Rightest Opposition Party
PRN	Party of the National Revolution
PRD	Party of the Democratic Revolution - Leftist
PRI	Party of the Institutionalized Revolution
PRONASOL	National Program of Solidarity
SECOFI	Commerce Ministry
SEDESOL	Ministry of Social Development, administers PRONASOL
SHCP	Treasury Ministry
SPP	Ministry of Planning and Budget
STPS	Labor Ministry
UNAM	National Autonomous University of Mexico

## GLOSSARY

- Camara. House of Representatives of the Mexican Congress.
- Camarilla. Political faction within the dominant party. Comes from the word *Camara* from the 19th Century, when small bands of men would form in the Congress. A larger political unit than the *equipo*.
- Congelado. A politician that has been "frozen" out of power, either because of a mistake of his own, or because his boss has acted improperly. Not as bad as *quemado*.
- Cuadros. Usually seen in the plural form, the word signifies well trained members of the PRI and bureaucracy. Usually used as follows, "The PAN can't govern because it doesn't have the necessary *cuadros*."
- Dedazo. Literally, the big finger. It means the president, by himself, choosing his successor.
- Destape. The uncovering of the official PRI candidate for president.
- Equipo. Work team in Mexican politics.
- Gobernacion. Ministry of Governance. Difficult term to translate because its responsibilities include internal PRI spying, negotiation between intra-party factions as well as among opposition parties and the PRI, as well as political control and information gathering. Responsible for the electoral boards as well.
- Grupo Politico. The same as *camarilla*, but without the connotation of Mafia that *camarilla* suffers from. Preferred in the Mexican political system.
- Presidentiable. A cabinet member with chances to be nominated president.
- Quemado. A politician that has been "burnt" or ruined by political mistakes.
- Sexenio. Presidential term of six years.
- Tapado. A hidden pre-candidate for president.

CHAPTER ONE  
INTRODUCTION

Since 1929 Mexico has been ruled by the same party, what is now known as the Party of the Institutionalized Revolution (PRI)<sup>1</sup>. While the nation has experienced periodic violence and selective repression, one can say that the civilian ruled dominant party, authoritarian regime is the most stable in all of Latin America, if not in the developing world, at least in terms of duration of a single set of recognizable political institutions. This dissertation examines why Mexico has been so stable for the past 70 years, and what constitutes this stability.

Mexico has not undergone swings between democracy and dictatorship in part because of the presence and role of the intra-party factions. The factional system acts as an allocation or distributive device that serves to alter the costs of leaving the dominant party system, and raise the benefits of staying within it. The political groups inside the PRI also act as lobbyists during the crucial period of the presidential succession, whose outcome in large part

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<sup>1</sup>The PRI was formed in 1929 by ex-president and strongman Elias Calles under the name Party of the National Revolution (PNR). Its name was then changed by President Cardenas in 1938 to the Party of the Mexican Revolution (PRM).

determines how the resources of the State will be distributed.

Part of the genius of President Calles was to give the ambitious leaders of the Revolution, who were either leaders of armed groups or peasant/worker organizations, a clear choice: either join the Party and obey the formal and informal rules set up by Calles, or be destroyed. The gains from joining the new centralized party were substantial: the chance to compete for the presidency, or at least better public sector positions, and thereby the opportunity to win more positions and public resources.

The central hypothesis of the dissertation is that these internal political factions (or *camarillas* in Mexican Spanish) are not only the central career advancing mechanisms in the Mexican political system, but also the prime redistributive vehicle the president can employ to keep his subordinates in line and loyal. The allocation of resources is directed by the sitting president and is channeled through the factional leaders. These resources serve to raise the returns of staying within the Party despite short-term career setbacks, or political defeats.

For the leader of the political group, the factions serve as a way to monopolize and secure scarce talent which would otherwise have the opportunity and incentive to jump ship during crucial moments in the political cycle created by the six year, non-reelectable presidential term, known as the

*sexenio*. Stability is created and nurtured in Mexico by the ability of the president and the factional leaders to distribute resources, and hope for better positions, in return for the discipline of the factional leaders to the president and the factional members to their leader.

If the rules or circumstances which regulate the factions change, then members may choose to leave both the safety and the confines of the dominant party, and one sees a period of instability in the system. In Mexico, threats to the PRI's dominance very seldom come from outside the dominant party, but rather from the very ranks of those who rule the nation.

The incentives of the members and leaders of the *camarillas* for whether to stay within the confines of the dominant party and accept the restrictions of the strategies to gain the top post of the nation, the presidency, are crucial for understanding why Mexico has not seen more internal splits which lead to electoral challenges from outside the dominant party. By studying when the system did endure its greatest challenges, we can pinpoint both the rules which guided the behavior of groups and their members, the evolutions in these rules, and the role of the factions, both in creating and threatening stability.

Political stability in Mexico matters because first, so few developing nations have enjoyed political stability while undergoing great economic change, and therefore, we can learn



from the Mexican example; and second, as Mexico changes, and its institutions come under attack from both those within and outside the boundaries of the dominant party, it is worth understanding more fully why for almost 70 years, people held stable expectations over what the future held politically.

In general, political stability is important for two reasons: one, it is difficult to raise per capita income when the political situation is unstable, if only because domestic and international investment becomes more risky, and there is the possibility of a drop in domestic saving rates. Second, instability can mean economic uncertainty but also, physical repression, loss of civil rights and even political violence directed at large segments of the population. Human suffering is greater under unstable systems. Stability, even if it is the continuance of an authoritarian system, usually means less insecurity, and the lower probability of suffering wide scale atrocities.<sup>2</sup>

Mexico, because of its history of one-party dominance since the 1920's, has been treated as an exceptional case, when in fact, it is not that different from other Latin American nations in terms of historical legacy, economic challenges (and failures), labor, educational and social problems.<sup>3</sup> After the revolution of 1910-1917, Mexico had to

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<sup>2</sup>The obvious exception to this rule is Stalin's reign of terror in the 1930's.

<sup>3</sup> Mexico was dominated by the Spanish Crown and bureaucracy for 300 years. After Independence in the

deal with problems of late development, a restructuring of the infrastructure destroyed by the violence of 1910-1920, and the construction of a national government capable of directing new economic growth. The population after the revolution was still overwhelmingly rural, poor, uneducated and ruled over by a series of locally based *caciques*, or power brokers. In fact, these local *caciques* and regional generals were probably stronger after the revolution than before.<sup>4</sup> The urban working class was small but active, and slowly being organized. These problems were common to many Latin American nations during the first half of this century.

What then, sets Mexico apart? What is exceptional is that despite all these economic and social challenges and the subsequent changes suffered during the course of the 20th century, the political system has been dominated by a single party, and a constantly renewed elite which is controlled by the president who in turn controls the bureaucracy. No opposition party has been able to win the president's chair during this period, and only three governorships have been

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1820Çs, Mexico experienced 50 years of abject instability at the national level, during which time, half the national territory was lost to the United States. The modernizing dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz in the late 19th century was responsible for improving infrastructure, communications and industrial development. The Porfiriato was never able to resolve the problem of transferring power from one leader to another, and was overthrown by regional elites unhappy with their blocked advancement. This mushroomed into the multi-class revolution of 1910-1917.

<sup>4</sup>See David Brading, *Caudillo and Peasant in the Mexican Revolution*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

given over to the opposition (and these during a year period beginning in 1989).

By political stability, we mean no radical change in how decisions are made within the polity, or in how leaders are chosen. New actors can be integrated into the political game, but the actual rules of participation shouldn't alter radically.<sup>5</sup> Actors' expectations about how other participants will behave, their interests, and the outcomes of these interactions do not change much in a stable system. The rules, whether formal or informal, direct and channel the behavior of the participants so that all know how decisions are made, and are aware of the possible spectrum of outcomes. This stability of expectations is brought about by a series of formal or informal rules and norms which constitute a set of limitations of actors' interests and alternatives.<sup>6</sup>

Those actors (or better put, their representatives) who would be better off by radically changing strategies have been excluded from the game, or, while included, are either coopted or repressed into not exercising strategies which would put the entire game into doubt. Those involved in this

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<sup>5</sup>Obviously, this is a very difficult process, and many times does lead to political instability or breakdown. However, the examples of England and the Nordic states during the past century show that it is possible to draw in large numbers of new voters without greatly altering the political system in the short term.

<sup>6</sup>See Douglas North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), for more on the role of institutions, both economic and political in everyday life.

interaction often receive material benefits while violent exits are not highly rewarded.<sup>7</sup>

Stability does not, however, mean an absence of political activity or struggle; rather, we mean that there is no change in actors' beliefs about what can happen given certain actions on their parts, and on the parts of others. In fact, we are trying to advance the idea that political "stability" is very "dynamic", and that players within the system will continually attempt to better their respective positions, either by positioning themselves *within* the rule structure, or by trying to change this structure. (If they do change the rules to such an extent that decisions are made or presidents chosen differently, then we would see political change).

We must also distinguish between political stability, political change and political instability in order to understand how they differ, especially political change and political instability. In thinking about political stability, it can be helpful to examine political change. In concrete terms, one automatically thinks of transforming how a leader is chosen (or how he wins power), how decisions affecting the populace are made and in which are of government.

Political change can take place on a profound or

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<sup>7</sup>Dan Cothran, *Political Stability and Democracy in Mexico: The Perfect Dictatorship* (Westport: Praeger Press, 1994), pp. 17-19.

superficial level. We understand that the change of the Republican Party winning the House and Senate in 1994 is far less of a political change than President Fujimori's unilateral move to side-step the Constitution and Congress in Peru, which in turn was less great a change than the downfall of 40 years of Chilean democracy to a military dictatorship in 1973.<sup>8</sup> These are different levels of political change because they affect rules, expectations, and regime outcomes to different degrees.

Political instability involves the inability of political representatives to form expectations over other participants' interests, strategies and possible endpoints. One does not know how others will react to different problems, nor if cooperation is possible, or if a cheating strategy will be punished, or if the future has any value in terms of pay-offs.<sup>9</sup> The problem, especially in the case of Mexico, is that one can undergo a period of instability, without undergoing true political change. This was the case of the political activity before and after the elections of 1988. Only if one takes a long, historical view of events,

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<sup>8</sup>Yet the change taking place in Washington in 1995 is important because of the large number of laws and rules being altered, which will affect distribution outcomes and future political interactions and strategies.

<sup>9</sup>One could argue, as we will in the conclusions, that Mexico is currently undergoing a period of political instability which will perhaps lead to a change in the political and electoral institutions of the nation. It is not clear however, what will be the endpoint of the violence, and electoral reforms of 1994.

does it become "obvious" that any certain outcome was necessary, or pre-determined due to structural factors.

Several models and theories have attempted to explain regime outcomes and change in both Latin American nations and in Mexico. Ironically, because most of these models deal with political change and not stability, they usually are not very successful at analyzing the Mexican problem. In this introduction, we examine how the literature on development in general and Mexico in particular has dealt with issues of political stability and change. Modernization and bureaucratic-authoritarian theories attempt to understand the connection between economic change and the corresponding political regime outcomes. When Mexico did not live up to these predictions, the notion of an authoritarian government was introduced to explain both why Mexico did not develop democratic institutions after its populist moment in the 1930's (as did Argentina and Brazil), and why it did not fall to a harsh military government in the phase of economic development in which labor was repressed in other Latin American nations.

Although the literature stemming from Juan Linz's seminal work on Spanish authoritarianism<sup>10</sup> and Philippe Schmitter's equally important study of corporatism in Western

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<sup>10</sup>Juan Linz, "An Authoritarian Regime: Spain." In *Mass Politics*, ed. Stein Rokkan (New York: Free Press, 1970).

Europe and Spanish America<sup>11</sup> were successful at describing relations between the state, society and productive sectors, this literature and its adherents have been less successful and explaining the dynamics of stability in Mexico.

Stability in Mexico is not static or immobile. In fact, what is called the period of stability from 1929 until (arguably) 1994 was in fact several periods or stages in the development and breakdown of the Mexican single party, civilian dominated regime. From 1929 to 1940, we see the period of the formation of the present regime. From 1940 to 1970, which is often seen as the golden period of Mexican growth with stability was in fact marked by three challenges from *within* the regime, as disgruntled losers in the intra-party presidential race, left the PRI to run against the official candidate. During the years from 1970 to 1982, the system was so tilted toward the advantage of the presidents, that even with great economic crisis, no real political challenges were seen. In 1986-1988, we saw another internal challenge that was again handily met by the official candidate. Yet this time, the challenger would survive as a true threat, and create a popular opposition party. This short run-down gives us a taste of how active political stability has been in Mexico over the past 65 years.

We will cover the three general treatments of stability

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<sup>11</sup>Phillipe Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?" *Review of Politics* 36 (January 1974).

in Mexico. First, we examine how the modernization theorists applied their theories to the Mexican case in the early 1960's. One can characterize this work as the "proto-democracy" work (Almond and Verba 1989; Brandenburg 1964; Hansen 1971; Padgett 1966; Scott 1964; Vernon 1963), which focussed on the access given to the mass organizations of the PRI, and how this strengthened the political system. The second body of work grew out of the work on authoritarianism and corporatism in the 1970's (Cornelius 1977; Eckstein 1977; Grindle 1977; Hamilton 1982; Johnson 1971; Kaufman Purcell 1973; Montes de Oca 1977), and concentrated on the lack of democracy in Mexico, and the ability of the regime to control its population's demands through the corporatist mechanisms of the State. Instead of democratic access, stability was seen as an outgrowth of political control and repression. The work done during the 1980's on Mexico (Bailey 1988; Camp 1988; Davis 1989; Hellman 1983; Newell and Rubio 1984; Teichman 1988) examined how the dominant regime was meeting the political challenges of economic crisis and reform. Finally, the work done after the 1988 electoral challenge first argued that Mexico would be making the transition to democracy, later, this was changed again to how the genius of the system allowed the leaders to coopt some opposition groups, both within and outside the Party, while repressing others.

If one does not understand why the regime was able to



reproduce itself and its rule structure, then one cannot understand why this famous stability is breaking down now. In the conclusions of the dissertation, we will examine the possible breakdown of Mexico's single party, civilian authoritarian regime in light of the events of 1994 and 1995.

*Modernization Theory and Mexico*

The academics writing on developing nations during the 1950's and 1960's who formed the modernization school, shared two central objectives; first, to understand how economic change and growth led to political change, or really, to democracy; and second, to pinpoint (and measure with attitudinal studies if possible) the role attitudes played in shaping political behavior and thus political outcomes. Democratic attitudes would lead to democratic behavior (and demands) and thus, to representative democracy, much as was seen in Western Europe during the second half of the last century.

Change therefore, was a central tenet of modernization theory. Growing economic (and social) indicators such as levels of education, urbanization, health, income, indoor plumbing, radios, telephones, lead to rising levels of communication and knowledge about the world and one's place in it. Furthermore, as people began to be aware of the greater world, their attitudes toward leaders and authority began to change. No longer were God, his hierarchy, or brute

force the only possible binds among men. The idea of consent and rights would infiltrate into the lives of even the poorest, along with commercials for soap powder.

With these changes in possibilities and attitudes, the links between leader and led would be transformed, with those at the bottom, in large part inspired by the better educated middle classes, would demand a greater part in the affairs of politics. Democracy would be the inevitable outcome.

In a somewhat ironic twist, where at first the authors involved in the modernization studies welcomed new attitudes and demands, by the late sixties, and with the apparent failure of the Alliance for Progress, these authors and advisors began to fear the very growth in modernity that had seemed so promising. The better educated urban masses with growing expectations about what they could achieve, could make demands which civilian politicians and democracies simply could not meet, or in attempting to meet them, lead to an inflationary spiral. The new problem then became how to control and manage this change, so as not to cause an overheating of the new democracies.<sup>12</sup>

*Modernization in Mexico*

Mexico was at first seen as a great validation of

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<sup>12</sup>See Samuel Huntington's, *Political Change in Developing Nations*, for the classic statement of the importance of political institutions in directing the enormous shifts these societies were undergoing.

modernization theory. The nation had grown steadily since the 1940's, using an industrial growth model with plenty of foreign direct investment. In response to this economic growth, thousands of rural Mexicans could now buy radios, enter the monetary economy, sell their wares brought to market in trucks, rolling over new paved roads. Their children could go to school for at least a primary education and then travel to the urban centers in hopes of finding employment and better the lots of their children.

John Johnson's *The Middle Sectors in Latin America* (195?) was perhaps the earliest, clearest examination of how Mexico's economic growth would translate into more democratic outcomes. Johnson's famous "middle sectors" - members of the urban professional, commercial and bureaucratic sectors - would provide the bulwark for Mexico's political development and eventually democracy, because of their demands for a greater voice in how Mexico was governed. As more Mexicans entered the middle ranks, because of economic growth, they would offset the greed of the rich and the excessive demands of the poor.

Academics writing on Mexico in the 1960's (Cline 1967; Hansen 1971; Scott 1964; and Vernon 1964) participated in the debate on the long-term political effects of economic and social development. Hansen<sup>13</sup> for example, in a chapter titled

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<sup>13</sup>Roger Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), pp.173-176.

"The Peace of the PRI", identified two central problems the leaders of the PRI had solved: the lack of land, and the middle classes' drive for economic mobility. He also noted that the economic development of the years 1930-1970 would create new strains on political stability in Mexico.

The authors writing on Mexico in the 1960's and early 1970's added an institutional dimension to this generally sunny modernization picture. The dominant, non totalitarian, non ideological party (important distinctions to make at the height of the US-Soviet tensions) had incorporated both laborers and peasants into its ranks, thus giving them, if not a loud voice, at least some channel for communicating their demands to the party and bureaucratic leadership. These authors believed a rough sort of pluralism was developing around the PRI's organization, which gave the poor a reason to ignore the claims of extreme leftist political organizations.

Not only were the poor given an opportunity to speak out, but the middle sectors were given means to further their political ambitions, an important difference between the hardened dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz, and the PRI regime. Because presidents have the ability to fill thousands of elected and bureaucratic positions, new blood is introduced into the system at regular six year intervals, giving all aspirants a chance to win high positions, and thus assuring their loyalty to the political institutions.

Samuel Huntington<sup>14</sup>, in his famous work on political stability in developing nations, gave Mexico as special place as an example of a regime that had successfully institutionalized its ruling class, as well as the participation of the lower orders. He believed that this stability would give Mexico an advantage over other Latin American nations in the years to come, both in terms of economic and social growth.

*Problems with Modernization*

Several problems, both conceptual and empirical, came to haunt the modernization school, and criticism was fierce.<sup>15</sup> Conceptually, there was no reason why either the middle sectors or the poorer elements would necessary choose democracy, instead of authoritarian solutions. Furthermore, there was no reason to assume that even if politically relevant groups did prefer democracy, that the institutions would create or allow democratic outcomes.<sup>16</sup> As O'Donnell

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<sup>14</sup>Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Developing Nations*, 1969.

<sup>15</sup>As a response, 25 years later, to the critics of the modernization studies, see Lucian Pye in *APSR*, 1992.

<sup>16</sup>Adolfo Aguilar Z., a leader of the Party of the Democratic Revolution, (the PRD), the left-centrist opposition alternative in Mexico, stated the counter-argument in its clearest form in an interview on the McNeil-Lehrer Report, on February 6, 1995. He noted that economic crisis brings about austerity plans, which cause unemployment and later, crime, popular unrest and mobilization (in the streets). The urban middle and upper classes fear those below them, and seek an authoritarian

pointed out in the last chapter of *Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism*<sup>17</sup>, political systems can enter into periods of institutional crisis in which actors simply acting in their short term interests, destroying their long term goals by fomenting authoritarian solutions.

Mexico was a problem for the modernization school in that while the nation's economy grew steadily, there was no shift towards true democracy. In fact, after twenty years of strong economic performance, Carlos Madrazo, the president of the PRI during 1964 and 1965, attempted to reform the party so that its bases and militants would have more say in candidate selection and policy making in general. This would have been an important step in reforming the entire political and party system. Madrazo, who began his reform attempt with the support of the then president Gustavo Diaz Ordaz (president from 1964 to 1970), was bested in his efforts by a coalition of PRI governors, party leaders, and local bosses, all who would have lost out in any democratization of the dominant party. Madrazo lost the party presidency after only two years in the post, and internal party reform was largely forgotten until another failed attempt was made in 1990.

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solution to protect their jobs and property. This ushers in an even more authoritarian regime in Mexico. Aguilar's point will be especially important in thinking about transitions.

<sup>17</sup>Guillermo O'Donnell, *Bureaucratic Authoritarianism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).

When Mexico did begin to see the first fruits of modernization in terms of a sharp shift in rural urban migration, the ruling regime was able to coopt and at least partially organize the newly arriving urban residents. Because the State was the almost sole source of the basic urban necessities, including property rights, light, water and education, the PRI was able to infiltrate and direct many of the early urban shanty towns that grew up around the borders of the nation's major cities, especially Mexico City. Mexico's modernization was met with equal parts control and cooptation on the part of the PRI and bureaucracy (which became more involved in centralized distribution of resources, thereby side-stepping the party hierarchy.<sup>18</sup> The authoritarian regime was flexible enough to deal with the new challenges presented by economic growth and modernization of the communication, health and education infrastructures, as well as the growth of the middle classes.

*Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism (BA) and Mexico*

The work of Guillermo O'Donnell and of a series of dependency theorists took center stage during the 1970's as

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<sup>18</sup>For more on these issues, see Wayne Cornelius, "Leaders, Followers and Official Patrons in Urban Mexico," eds, Schmidt, Guasti, et. al., *Friends, Followers and Factions*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Rosa Montes de Oca, "The State and Peasants," eds. Reyna and Weinart, *Authoritarianism in Mexico* (Philadelphia: ISHI, 1977); and Richard Fagan and William Touhy, *Politics and Privilege in a Mexican City* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1972).

countries followed each other into authoritarian solutions. These authors sought to explain why so many nations at more advanced stages of economic and industrial growth would be unable to continue forward under democratic regimes.<sup>19</sup> They argue that certain stages of economic growth, such as the end of the easy stages of import substitution industrialization (ISI) will *necessitate* authoritarian solutions, while others, such as the first stages of protectionism will allow for inclusionary multi-class political regimes. Attitudes do not cause distinct political endpoints, but rather class interests, and alliances among capital, organized labor, the urban middle classes, bureaucratic technocrats, and leader of the armed forces. Certain economic moments lead to opportunities for distinct classes to make alliances. These alliances have to deal with the working class as industrialization makes this class simply more important. Either the alliances include workers or excludes them, and therein lies the cause of political outcomes.

The BA theorists had to take special account of the Mexican case as it did not fit into their general model. Why didn't Mexico fall into harsh military repression as it passed from the easy stage of ISI (at the end of the 1950's, according to Kaufman, 1979) to a deepened industrial economy? This question bore fruit as it led scholars to study the

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<sup>19</sup>For excellent reviews on this literature, see the Colliers 1979; Cohen 1994; Gereffi 1982; Kaufman 1977 and 1979; O'Donnell 1974 and 1992; Remmer 1989; and Reyna 1977.



importance of the incorporation of labor into the political structures.<sup>20</sup> This literature helps us to better understand both other nations' experiences during breakdown, and the Mexican case of stability as well.

*Authoritarianism in Mexico*

If Mexico was not an example of a BA regime, then what was it and how did it manage great economic change without political strife? To answer this question, Mexicanists looked to Juan J. Linz's work on Spain, and specifically the difference between totalitarian regime (and parties) and authoritarian systems.<sup>21</sup>

Linz categorized the authoritarian regime as having limited political pluralism, no elaborate ideology, little political mobilization, whose strong interest groups are controlled either with laws or credit restrictions. The leader has wide-ranging power within predictable limits, while the electoral processes are controlled by governmental authorities and fraud is used if necessary.<sup>22</sup> Access to

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<sup>20</sup>Kaufman 1979, Ruth B. Collier 1980 and later, Colliers 1991.

<sup>21</sup>For more on authoritarianism, see Juan Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," 1975; Susan Kaufman Purcell, *The Mexican Profit-Sharing Decision*, 1975; Kenneth Johnson, *Mexican Democracy, A Critical View* 1971; and Wayne Cornelius, "Leaders, Followers and Official Patrons," 1977.

<sup>22</sup>Ronald Schneider, *The Political System of Brazil: The Emergence of a Modernizing Authoritarian Regime, 1964-1970* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971).

decision-making is often limited to elite groups.

Of course, adjectives can be attached to the term "authoritarian," such as inclusionary versus exclusionary, or civilian versus military. Thus, a BA government is a military exclusionary authoritarian regime. Peru in the late 1960's would be an example of an inclusionary military authoritarian regime.

Mexico meanwhile, has been labelled with abandon: "inclusionary corporatist authoritarian" (Remmer 1989); "semi-inclusionary multiparty system (Levy 1989); "civilian dominated semi-authoritarian" (Cothran 1994); "inclusionary authoritarian" (Bailey 1988); "an example of populist corporatism" (Reyna 1979); and a "less brutal example of BA (Kaufman 1979). Though not very clear, this mish-mash of terms gives us the idea that Mexico is different from other BA regimes because 1. it is civilian dominated, 2. there is limited repression, 3. large numbers of the under classes are incorporate into the organizations of the official, dominant party, and 4. there are regular elections (although they are marred by fraud).

#### *Corporatism and Mexico*

The concepts of authoritarianism and corporatism are inevitably linked in Latin America perhaps because Phillipe Schmitter's pathbreaking article "Still the Century of

Corporatism?"<sup>23</sup> came out during the spate of authoritarian takeovers, and more likely because modern authoritarianism is far more difficult in terms of the number of the people, issues, groups, economic problems authoritarian leaders have to confront. Organizing the masses makes repression less necessary<sup>24</sup>, and therefore, easier to rule.

The central point of corporatism is that the State aids or forces the different sectors of labor and capital to negotiate over distribution outcomes and investment decisions. In order for negotiations to be successful (i.e., for cooperative outcomes), it is helpful for the actors to be leaders of large associations which can force their members to accept joint decisions. If these associational groups can enforce cooperative behavior over a large part of their sector (for example, a peak labor association that includes of large part of the manufacturing sector), then there will be fewer possibilities for cheating. Knowing this beforehand allows the different parties at the negotiating table to cooperate because they have fewer fears that their counterparts won't be able to assure promised outcomes.

If the State has integrated already existent labor groups into its bureaucratic or party apparatus, and if it

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<sup>23</sup>*International Journal of Political Science*, 1974.

<sup>24</sup>Chile is a sad exception to this general rule. The Pinochet-led regime was able to retain power for many more years than its neighbor Argentina, in part because it was able to destroy the organization of labor and popular groups that had flourished around the political parties.

uses this organizational strength against the wage interests of the workers, then we usually call this type of State-labor relationship State-centered. The State often also has a hand in organizing sanctioning and financing groups of capitalists into specific sectors (small commercial, industrial and agribusiness). Control is imposed through credit distribution and obligatory membership. Often, however, business groups can also form their own lobbies to pressure the government to pass preferred policy.

Mexico used its corporatist structures successfully to grow economically and exert political control during the authoritarian period of the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's under an economic strategy of ISI and heavy foreign direct investment. Later, the same government successfully used these same structures to force and opening in the economy which had as its prime victims both workers' groups and small and medium sized business.

The political and economic structures created during President Cardenas' term in office were successfully used by later presidents to direct and channel the political activity of the both the mass groups which the president integrated into the Party officially, as well as the new entrepreneur groups, which would become more active politically as their economic importance grew. An alliance was born between the politicians (and later the bureaucrats) within the official party, and the leaders of the business communities,

especially in Mexico City and Monterrey, which led to successful macroeconomic strategies, and economic growth, while limiting the income demands of the workers, and the land demands of the peasants.

Thus the corporatist instruments eventually turned into cooptation and repressive devices, as labor unions were increasingly led by government imposed leaders who owed their careers to the party hierarchy, not the workers themselves. These union members still voted for the dominant party, as did their peasant colleagues, in great numbers, creating an important base of votes the PRI could depend on.

*A Critique of the Authoritarian-Corporatist Framework*

The literature on authoritarianism was an important step in advancing our understanding of how a state (or to disaggregate in the case of Mexico, a strong presidency and dominant party) could structure the organization of the nation's economy and make them play a game in which the actors were forced to cooperate, even the labor groups, who were consistently the losers in this negotiations.

The two central problems with this approach (which is still the central point of departure for most books written on Mexico) are first, the extremely static nature of the models, and second, the all encompassing nature of the terminology, which allows all non-democratic or non-totalitarian regimes to fall under the authoritarian label.

The problem of explaining change in the authoritarian approach can be broken down into two parts; first, the model can't tell us much about why authoritarian governments do not change, and second, why they break down. Both problems stem from the inability of the model to understand the dynamics of the individuals working within the system's rule structure, and the institutions that restrict their behavior.

The work on authoritarianism focusses a great deal on how the regime has been able to control the populace, especially the poor, the peasants, and the workers. Far less emphasis has been placed on how the internal attempts to win the presidency have been restrained and channeled.

Most authoritarian regimes were long-lasting when ruled by one man. The problem arose when succession issues could not be resolved under the system's own rules. Mexico has been able to resolve both its succession and stability problems by allowing the president an enormous amount of leeway in choosing his own successor. Yet, he can not physically or politically eliminate those he did not choose, and the losers are not able to protest the president's decision. The factions participate in the succession process by lobbying for their selected candidate, but as we will argue in Chapter 7, their ability to directly influence the choice of the president was sharply curtailed after a series of exits of powerful PRI members unhappy with the official nominee, who were able to strengthen their challenge by organizing and

mobilizing factions inside the official party.

*The Organization of the Dissertation*

First, a short overview of the Mexican political system is presented so that those not familiar with Mexico can better understand the overall problem. Then, the work will examine the *camarillas* or internal political groups in terms of how they form and split apart, how they cross bureaucratic boundaries, how they have changed over time, and the different types of political teams, groups, and networks active in the system.

In Chapter Four, we will examine in theoretical perspective why individuals working within a specific system of rules, laws, and uncertainty, choose to form, join and leave the internal factions. To do this, we will use the "New Institutionalism" literature to examine how actors resolve problems of cooperation to gain joint goals and benefits. I argue that the *camarilla* is a form of cooperative hierarchy, working within the larger hierarchy of the bureaucracy and Party, whose goals are to better the career possibilities of all individuals within the group bettering the lot the prospects of the leader of the political faction.

In Chapter Five, the Japanese and Mexican factions are compared to better understand how internal political groups function within a dominant one-party regime. This comparison

will pinpoint the importance of electoral incentives and internal succession rules as means of understanding why factions exist within dominant party systems, and why they take very different forms.

Chapter Six is an examination of the role both individual factional leaders, and members of their groups play during the presidential succession. Here we point out the restrictions on the players' strategies caused by the fear of attacking the eventual victor in the race to become the PRI's official candidate for president.

Chapter Seven is a historical account of how the inter-regime ruptures of 1940, 1952, and 1988 caused the winners in the succession battles to change the rules to make future ruptures (and therefore instability) more difficult. We end the dissertation with a discussion of how the events of 1994 have made the system more unstable.



## CHAPTER TWO

### AN OVERVIEW OF THE MEXICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

In this chapter, we present an overview of the most important characteristics of the Mexican political system: one, the strong presidency; two, the dominant party (the PRI); and three, the electoral/party system. In the section on the strong Presidency, we shall discuss the weak Congress and judicial system, the actual prerogatives of the chief executive, including his right to personally, or through his closest collaborators, choose thousands of bureaucrats and PRI officials, both bureaucratic and elected, and his successor in the Presidential Chair.<sup>25</sup> Lastly, in the section on the Presidency, we will discuss the sitting president's control over the dominant party, the PRI.

The section on the dominant party will cover the sectors of the PRI, and their role as interest mediators and mobilizers of the masses into the political system, as well as the party's role in winning elections. The final section on the overall electoral/party system will focus on the role of the opposition parties (and their weakness vis-a-vis the PRI and the president), the electoral rules, which had

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<sup>25</sup>Another term for the presidential office in Mexico.

heavily favored the official party until 1994, and electoral results up to and including 1994.

### The Political System

Mexico has been defined as a one-party, inclusive authoritarian presidentialist system. (Grindle, 1977; Kaufman Purcell, 1975; Linz, 1975; Sartori, 1976) The modern Mexican State has, since its founding in the period 1929-1938, tried to include or mobilize, in State-controlled party sectors, as many Mexican workers, peasants and members of the middle classes as possible. These party sectors give little or no space for decision making on the part of their members, or even to the leaders of the largest sectoral organizations.<sup>26</sup> The government trades votes for selective benefits to distinct groups.

The political system is authoritarian in that the regime

1. is able to win votes through fraud if necessary;
2. formulate the electoral rules to the detriment of the opposition parties;
3. use State resources to buy the loyalty of millions of voters;
4. employ selective repression against opposition party activists and voters if necessary to win;<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>See Middlebrook, "The Sounds of Silence: Organized Labor's Response to Economic Crisis in Mexico," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 21 (May 1989).

<sup>27</sup>See Amnesty International's report on human rights abuses in Mexico, 1991 for more on repression in the Salinas sexenio. *Mexico: Torture with Impunity*, Amnesty International, London: Amnesty International, 1991.

5. deny through a variety of means, the opportunity for opposition parties to alternate in power at the national level; and 6. close off access to decision making except to a few interest groups.

Furthermore, mass communication, such as radio, television and newspaper, are indirectly controlled by the regime.<sup>28</sup> A special office of the government, the RTC, is in charge of monitoring radio and television programs. The near-monopoly in television, Televisa, is owned by a close ally of the PRI, and is infamous for either ignoring opposition candidates or attacking them. Since so many Mexicans get their political information from television, this is a serious problem, which becomes critical at election time. One of the issues of the electoral reform of 1994 was the PANÇs and the PRDÇs demand that television coverage at least be more balanced in terms of time given to each candidate.

The president in Mexico is the leader of this authoritarian structure. He enjoys prerogatives, both constitutional and informal, that few executives *who leave*

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<sup>28</sup>Lorenzo Meyer, a respected historian and political commentator reports that there is a radio for every 5.5 persons in Mexico, a television for every 6.5, while only 10% of the population reads a newspaper regularly. (It is not clear whether this statistic on newspapers includes such tomes as the ever informative *Alarma* and other periodicals of its ilk, which specialize in gruesome murders, complete with pictures of the victim and the killer with his chosen weapon, as well as soccer scores). *La Reforma*, October 12, 1994.

*office in predetermined amounts of time can boast of*<sup>29</sup>. The president directs the executive branch of government, which makes economic policy, and controls the electoral and political system, the Congress, the judicial system, the armed forces, and the PRI (which in turn is in charge of winning elections). The president decides when to negotiate with the opposition, and when to ignore or repress certain parties of the opposition. Electoral changes, which until 1989 were initiated solely by the president or his closest advisors, are voted in by a Congress which has been controlled by a PRI majority since the birth of the Party in 1929.

The president's hold over Congress stems from first, the PRI's dominance over the legislative branch, and second, the no-reelection clause. (No Congressmen or Senator can be elected to the same district in back to back elections. Governors and presidents can never be reelected to the same position). Since the PRI Congressmen and Senators cannot be reelected to the same district in two consequent terms, they cannot make a career out of legislative service. As in the case of all public servants, they rely, directly or indirectly, on the president to find them another position when their three (Congressmen) or six (Senators) year term is up. Because their career mobility depends on the chief

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<sup>29</sup>Dictators might enjoy more power, but they do not step down in predetermined six-year terms.

executive, the legislators have little incentive to vote against the president's bills. In fact, although the Constitution allows for the division of powers in theory, in practice, the president dominates.<sup>30</sup>

The domination of the president over his executive bureaucracy is far greater than that of the US president over his agencies. Two causes account for this difference, first, the Congress has almost no oversight over either the budget, or policy programs, and second, when a Mexican president takes office, he has the right to appoint by himself, or through his close collaborators, thousands of high and mid-level public servants who enjoy no civil service protection (as do their US counterparts, except for political appointees at the highest level of government).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>It is interesting to note that more than half of the legislators seem to come from the local level of politics, which we define as elected officials whose careers have been made in the state party, or the state governor's palace. Because they come from the local level, they depend less directly on the president, because they return to state-level politics after serving in the national legislature. But their space to challenge the president's will in Congress is still limited, because their state governor, or leader of the state's most powerful political group does depend on the president and on the State's resources.

<sup>31</sup>Some ministries enjoy more protection from presidential interference than others: for example, the Foreign Ministry, Defense and the Central Bank. The Treasury Ministry (*Hacienda*), also enjoys some protection as well, simply because there are still not that many well-trained economists in Mexico. These ministries train, educate, and advance their members according to their own internal mandates.

Because the president can remove or advance any member of the bureaucracy, those who choose to be public officials must publically follow the chief executive's orders. In practice, the president directs public policy initiatives, which his subordinates delight in bickering over in their attempts to win the Presidential Chair. Even a dictator cannot gain all his ends because of expertise and information asymmetries, so the Mexican president must place extremely trusted subordinates in positions of power. Even so, policy outcomes are often distorted because of the struggles among rival ministers in agencies with cross-cutting responsibilities.<sup>32</sup> However, because the sitting president is the ultimate arbiter of the fates of those below him, the urge to pursue one's interests first must be tempered, at least publically. The final sphere of influence and power of the president is his relation with the institution of the dominant Party. The PRI wins elections, and the president or his executive subordinates are responsible for many of the other duties usually taken up by a political party: they often direct electoral strategies, negotiate with the opposition parties, give money to the PRI to carry out its

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<sup>32</sup>See Arturo Borja, Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, Dept. of Political Science, 1992; Carlos Elizondo, Ph.D. Oxford University, St. Anthony's College, 1993; Martin Greenberg, *Bureaucracy and Development* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1970); Marilee Grindle, *Bureaucrats, Politicians, and Peasants in Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); and Judith Teichman, *Policymaking in Mexico: From Boom to Bust* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1988) for more on public policy making in Mexico.

duties, and initiate reform policies. The president chooses the leader of the CEN (national committee) of the Party, and the heads of the various committees within the CEN.

The literature on the PRI - presidential balance has shifted over the past 25 years. In the 1950Çs and early 1960Çs, American scholars believed the Party had some weight in policy making, as well as functioning as an integrator of interests and mobilizer of public support.<sup>33</sup> Later works<sup>34</sup> stressed that the PRI had no decision making capacity and that the PartyÇs leaders could not easily use their mass organization against the presidentÇs power. Finally, we came to the point where the PRI was seen as simply an electoral machine which was turned on during elections and which had no clout aside from this function. Ironically, because the PRI *always* won elections, even this responsibility did not give the PartyÇs activists more clout or influence in the over-all direction of government, or access to the higher reaches of political power.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Vincent Padgett, *The Mexican Political System* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966); Robert Scott, *Mexican Government in Transition* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1964); and Raymond Vernon, *The Dilemma of Mexico's Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

<sup>34</sup>Frank Brandenburg, *The Making of Modern Mexico*, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1964); Roger Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1980); Carol Needleman and Martin Needleman, "Who Rules Mexico?," *Journal of Politics* 31 (November 1969).

<sup>35</sup>For more on this issue, see Roderic Camp, "The Cabinet and Tõcnico in Mexico and the United States," *Journal of Comparative Administration* 3, no. 2 (August 1971)

After 1988, however, the role and weight of the PRI, at least in the ability of the sectors, to protect the small amount of privilege left to them, had to be recognized. When de la Madrid chose Salinas as his successor, a good part of the political class rebelled, either actively, in the case of the Democratic Current and the oil workers' union, or silently, in the case of the millions of registered PRIistas who either did not work actively for their candidate, didn't vote, or voted for the Current's candidate, Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas. The quiet rebellion inside the PRI (added to the general discontent of the electorate) almost cost Salinas the victory.<sup>36</sup> The new president realized the Party was a necessary curse. Its activists still mattered in garnering votes, but refused to modernize.

Salinas tried to reform the party in order to win votes cleanly, without having to depend in the future on the old-timer element of the PRI to survive electorally.<sup>37</sup> Two changes made up the overall reform: first, the bases would democratically nominate their candidates for elected offices;

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and Peter Smith, *Labyrinths of Power: Political Recruitment in Twentieth Century Mexico*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

<sup>36</sup>Salinas won with approximately 50% of the overall vote, the smallest margin up to that date. Cárdenas came in second with 30%, and the PAN's candidate third with 16%.

<sup>37</sup>Such was the anger of the voters in the 1988 elections, that even with all of the advantages built into the system to privilege the PRI, an opposition candidate almost won.



and second, the Party's sectors would be restructured from the functional interest organizations that had existed since 1938, to regionally based electoral organizations based on small group and especially individual membership.

The reform in large measure failed. The president did not want to give up his ability to benefit his followers with candidacies, while the state and regional bosses were even more adamant in their rejection of democratic nominating procedures. The CTM (the labor central of the PRI) was able to stop the regionalizing effort, and keep the labor peak level association largely intact. As of now, the PRI is still necessary to the sitting president because it wins elections, which is becoming a more important task as elections become more fair. The problem is that the Party is still not democratic, and many of its candidates, put up by the sectors as prizes for loyal members, are extremely unpopular, and difficult to fairly elect at the local and state level, leading the PRI activists to continue to use less than democratic strategies to win at the polls. This dilemma has yet to be resolved.

To sum up this section, the President of Mexico enjoys a large array of prerogatives, both formal and unwritten, that allow him to control Congress, direct favored policy at least the implementation stage, and run the PRI to a large extent. This power is limited by the fact that the president is one human being and therefore limited in the information

he can process, and the contingencies he can foresee.<sup>38</sup>

The duty of the chief executive that most interests us is how he chooses his successor. In this, the literature on the subject follows roughly the same lines as the discussion over the power of the Party versus the president. Early authors believed the process was somewhat democratic, in that the president had to sound out the opinions of the other powerful members of the governing coalition. The newer literature is more ambiguous, mainly because of Cordova's<sup>39</sup> acid critique of the American's scholarship on the subject, and his assertion that the president chooses who he pleases, with little input from other members of the government or Party. One does see pressure on the president to choose as soon as possible, and to select a certain "type" of candidate.

### The Dominant Party System

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<sup>38</sup>As a counterpoint to the president being *completely* dominant over the Party, Diane Davis writes an interesting article about the reform of the Mexico City government in the mid-1980s. The author states that the PRI was able to balance between the president's wishes on reform and the Mayor's, leading us to believe that the president is not as all powerful as most believe - at least, he is not able to push forward on all fronts. President de la Madrid was extremely preoccupied with problems on the economic front at the time this reform was promoted. Diane Davis, "Divided over Democracy: The Embeddedness of State and Class Conflicts in Contemporary Mexico," *Politics and Society* 17, no 3, (September 1989).

<sup>39</sup>Arnaldo Cordova, *La formación del poder político en México* (Mexico: Era, 1992).

As we have discussed above, the PRI has little role in public policy decisions, and has not, for many years, constituted a route to power, i.e., to the heights of the executive bureaucracy, and from there, to the Presidency. The PRI however, does play an important role in two areas - political control/stability and elections. In this section, we will concentrate on the Party's role in (de)mobilizing and controlling the demands of millions of Mexican workers, peasants and members of the middle-classes who make up the membership lists of the PRI and those who vote.

The dominant party in Mexico was first formed in 1929 under the name National Revolutionary Party (PNR), by General Calles. The general feared continual splits of regional military powerholders after the Revolution (1910-1920), and therefore gave them a clear choice - either join the Party and submit to the decisions of its leader (Calles) in exchange for political positions, graft and a share in political power, or be destroyed, either by military means or by the removal of State resources.<sup>40</sup>

In 1938, President Lázaro Cárdenas strengthened the president's powerbase (and his own in a battle against former President Calles) by incorporating millions of Mexicans into

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<sup>40</sup>For an excellent article on a regional caudillo who chose *not* to accept the founding agreement, see Dudley Ankersón's article on Saturnino Cedillo, "Saturnino Cedillo, A Traditional Caudillo in San Luis Potosí, 1880-1938," In David Brading, *Caudillo and Peasant in the Mexican Revolution*, 1980.

three broad sectors - workers (whose largest central is the Confederation of of Mexican Workers, or CTM), peasants (National Confederation of Peasants, the CNC) and the military (the military would be demoted to part of the popular sector under the Presidency of Avila Camacho in 1940). President Avila Camacho dissolved the military sector and strengthened the burgeoning middle class and the urban sectors by placing them in the popular sector, a mishmash of different organizations, brought under the umbrella of the CNOP (National Conference of Popular Organizations).

Each of these three sectors has representation in Congress based on its supposed numerical membership strength. In fact, the largest sector, that of peasants, has the smallest number of representatives in congress (see Table 1-1). The CNOP enjoys by far the greatest strength in the legislative branch.

Table 2.1. Candidates for National Deputies (uninominal seats), 1979-1985

Sector	1979	1982	1985
Worker	70 (23%)	75 (25%)	72 (24%)
Peasant	48 (16%)	45 (15%)	47 (15.7)
Popular	182 (60%)	180 (60%)	181 (60%) <sup>41</sup>

The reason for the strength of the popular sector

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<sup>41</sup>These figures taken from Guadalupe Pacheco MÓndez and Juan Reyes del Campillo, "La estructura sectorial del PRI y las elecciones federales a diputados, 1979-1988," *Sociológica* 4, num 11 (septiembre-diciembre 1989).

probably revolves around the economic strength of the organizations within the CNOP, and the realities of the MexicoÇs present day urban-rural split:

Table 2.2                      MexicoÇs Urban-Rural Split

	1940	1960	1990
Urban	22%	37%	72%
Rural	78%	63%	28%

Corporatism in Mexico

Much has been written about corporatism in Latin American and Mexico.<sup>42</sup> Schmitter defines the exclusionary variant of corporatism as the State structuring of interest groups that produces a system of officially sanctioned, non-competitive, compulsory interest associations.<sup>43</sup> The State uses its power over the associationsÇ finances to control their wage, salary, credit, and benefit demands. The State also governs who leads the groups, how they are chosen, and

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<sup>42</sup>For more on the literature in its Latin American variant, see Ruth Collier and David Collier, "Inducements versus Constraints," *American Political Science Review* 1979; Keven Middlebrook, "The Sounds of Silence:Organized LaborÇs Response to Economic Crisis in Mexico," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 21 (May 1989) and "State Structures and the Politics of Union Registration in Postrevolutionary Mexico," *Comparative Politics* 23, no. 4 (July 1991), Philippe Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?" *Review of Politics* 36 (January 1974), John Sloan, "The Mexican Variant of Corporatism," *Inter-American Economic Affairs* 38, no. 4 (Spring 1984).

<sup>43</sup>Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?"

their internal policies.

By controlling the interest associations, the Mexican State is able to control demands, while giving out fewer benefits than these groups would want. Membership is often mandatory (for certain unionized workers and ejidarios) and the leaders of the groups are beholden to the government for their positions, not their followers, which reduces the incentives to represent the interests of their bases.

The PRI is the head of the corporatist body composed of the sectors. The president of the nation appoints the president of the National Executive Committee (CEN). The CEN is made up of secretaries of the three sectors, and of the committees, such as Finance, Electoral Action, Propaganda, and Communication. The National Council of the PRI is a body under the CEN that guides the state and municipal party organizations and is made up of state committee chairmen and representatives from the three sectors.<sup>44</sup> In reality, the National Council has little power and is seldom heard from. The National Assembly, made up of 1500 PRI activists, functions as the masses' representative of the Party. It meets every 2-4 years to confirm the decisions of the CEN. It too is easily led by the president of the CEN. The

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<sup>44</sup>For more on the basic organization of the PRI, see Scott *Mexican Government in Transition* and more recently, John Bailey, *Governing Mexico: The Statecraft of Crisis Management*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988); and Ronald McDonald and Mark Ruhl, *Party Politics and Elections in Latin America*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989).

regional, state, and local committees follow, and are filled with the activists who win the vote at the local level.

The Electoral/Party Arena

From 1929 to 1994, the PRI has not lost a single presidential election, and only two governorships and two senatorial seats, by majority district vote.<sup>45</sup> The PRI has also dominated municipal and mayoral elected positions.

Table 2.3.<sup>46</sup> Percentage of Total Vote Won by Candidates for Congress by Major Party, 1961-1991.

Election Year	Party					
	PRI	PAN	PPS	PARM	PRD	PFCRN
1961	90.2	7.6	1	.5	-	-
1964	86.3	11	1.4	.7	-	-
1970	80.1	14	1.4	.8	-	-
1982	69.3	17	1.9	1.4	-	-
1988	50.4	17	10	6.2	-	10.5
1991	61.4	17.7	1.8	2.1	8.3	4.4

Note that while the PRI still holds a majority, it has fallen substantially over the past 35 years, in large part because of the electoral reforms which introduced a limited PR system, and initiated by the PRI itself, in an attempt to keep the opposition loyal.

We have seen how the President of Mexico has controlled his own party; now we turn to how the official regime dominates the other opposition parties, the formal electoral

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<sup>45</sup>Proportional representation (PR) was introduced in the Senate in 1994, and in the Chamber of Deputies in 1964.

<sup>46</sup>Baer, Delal. "The 1991 Mexican Mid-term Elections," *CSIS Latin American Election Study Series* (October 1, 1991), 31.

rule-making procedures (this true until 1994), and the electoral system in general (through fraud).

### Opposition Parties

With the exception of the center-right National Action Party (PAN)<sup>47</sup>, and the center-left Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD)<sup>48</sup>, the opposition parties in Mexico over the years have been:

1. vehicles to support an ex-PRIista in electoral challenges, and have died soon after their attempts, (examples are the parties formed around Gen. Juan Almazán in 1940, around Eziqel Padilla in 1946 and around HenrÚquez Guzmán in 1952);
2. government satellite parties, formed and financed by the dominant party (the PPS and the PARM);
3. or scattered left-wing parties. None of them have threatened the PRI in any serious way, with the exception of the PAN and the PRD.

The satellite parties exist to make Mexico seem more democratic. The government gave them subsidies and a few seats to keep their members participating. In isolated cases, when an unpopular PRI candidate manages to get on the ballot on the local level, unhappy Party leaders can support a PARM candidate, and not worry about his legislative behavior in Congress. The leftist parties are weak -

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<sup>47</sup>Formed in 1939.

<sup>48</sup>Formed in 1989 from an electoral coalition front active in the 1988 elections, which in turn was born out of the PRI splinter group, Democratic Current.



enjoying only scattered support in urban slums or unions, (both of these favored organizational bases for the Left have been covered, to some degree, by the PRI's machine), and ideologically divided. Furthermore, the government kept them illegal until the 1977 reforms. It was not until 1988, when a disgruntled PRI splinter group broke away to form an electoral vehicle with some hope of victory, that the parties have had a chance to participate seriously in the electoral process.

The National Action Party (PAN) has been the only serious opposition party active for more than 10 years. It was formed in 1939 as a conservative Catholic party opposed to Cardenas's populist socialist platform. As we see from *Table 2.4*, its presidential vote has never risen above 20% until the 1994 elections.

*Table 2-4*                      The Presidential Vote Count (Percentage)

Year	PRI	PAN	OTHER
1940	93.9	X	5.7*
1946	78		19.3*
1952	74.3	7.8	15.9*
1958	90.5	10.0	
1964	88.6	11.4	
1970	85.7	14.1	
1976	93.6	X	6.4
1982	71.0	16.4	12.0
1988	50	17	30 (Frente)*
1994	49	26	17 (PRD)

\*Challenges from former PRI members who ran against the PRI's official presidential candidate.

The PAN for many years criticized the official Party for

its interventionalist economic policies. Once Salinas in effect stole the PAN's economic program, the center-right party had to run on a more pro-democracy platform. A split formed within the PAN during the Salinas *sexenio* between the more hard-liners and those willing to negotiate and bargain with the PRI. In essence, the PAN agreed to vote with the PRI on the 1989 electoral and political reform in return for Salinas's recognition of PAN victories at the local and state level. Three PAN governors are now installed in Baja California, Guanajuato and Chihuahua, but the negotiations left the PAN open to criticism from the PRD that the PAN was becoming simply another satellite party of the PRI.

The PRD is the newest serious opposition party, and has enjoyed varied electoral success since it came together as the FDN in the 1988 presidential elections, with Cuauhtemoc Cardenas at the helm. The party is split both ideologically and strategically as a result of its birth. Ideologically, the party ranges from Marxist to neo-populist because it was formed by the Mexican Communist Party, the Mexican Socialist Party and a group of ex-PRIistas who were thrown out of the PRI for criticizing the austerity measures of the de la Madrid *sexenio* and their own exclusion from power. Strategically, the PRD is split between two groups, one of which is led by Cárdenas, whose members believe that the only way to bring down the PRI is by winning the Presidency, not by winning local level races first, and then moving up to

governorships, and from there, competing for the Presidency. The other group within the PRD believes that a longer-term, more organizationally-based strategy is their only hope. During Salinas's term, the PRDistas in Congress provided a sort of tragic Greek chorus to the PRI dominated legislative agenda.

The Party system is dominated by the PRI. The executive bureaucracy provides financial resources to the dominant Party that the opposition parties can only dream and complain about, logistical help in the campaigns, and blanket (and biased) coverage in all major media, especially television. The PRI's greatest asset is that "its people" monopolize governmental positions which in Camp's words (1993, p. 161) create a reward system for followers that is unmatched by any other party. Two additional strengths should be pointed out: first, the organization of millions of Mexicans into the PRI through its sectors, and second, the regime's control over the electoral rules. We have already discussed the first, so we shall now concentrate on the second.

It is important to stress that until 1994, elections had no real part in choosing political leadership, nor did citizens use the ballot box to express their preferences for one set of politicians or policies over another. In fact, until 1988, elections, though held every year in some part of the country for some position, were not even the best way for the populace to voice the approval or opposition to past

governmental behavior. Since the PRI always won, and no other serious opposition alternative existed, what mattered was *not* the party in power, but rather the president in turn. Since the exiting president was being replaced, little reason existed to vote for another party and throw away one's vote, even in protest. The PRI did see and react to growing voter apathy. One way the PRI battled this problem was electoral reform - a process which the regime controlled until it had to negotiate with the PAN (and *not* the PRD) in 1989 when the PRI lost its absolute majority in Congress (which it regained in the 1991 mid-term elections).

The regime controls (and has done so since its inception) the right of other parties to be recognized and to register (which are two different legal situations). If a party is recognized, sometimes it can run candidates without being registered, which is a more difficult process). The Ministry of *Gobernación*<sup>49</sup> controls the registration of parties according to an ever changing set of rules laid out by a series of electoral rule boards, (which themselves change names frequently). Of course, the president (and *de facto* leader of the PRI/regime) appoints the secretary of

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<sup>49</sup>*Gobernación* is usually translated as the Interior Ministry, which it is not. This Ministry is a mixture of the FBI, the Electoral Commission, and an agency that spies on both opposition parties and on members of the PRI, usually for the president. *Gobernación* also has the responsibility of mediating among the pre-candidates during the succession process. Perhaps the best analogy would be Great Britain's Home Office. We will leave the term in Spanish as it has no easy translation.

Gobernaciun, meaning the president of Mexico controls which parties register, and which don't. Because the rules are so complicated, it is difficult to meet the requirements for registration, making it relatively easy to deny or revoke registration. Furthermore, as we have mentioned, the regime gives money to certain opposition parties, and not to others.

Gobernaciun, through its Electoral Board, also counts the votes, which arrive after being handled (although this practice is falling away slowly) by several layers of PRI bureaucracy, to its Mexico City headquarters. If an opposition party believes fraud has been committed, it has little redress, because the Electoral Tribunal is also controlled by Gobernaciun.

In 1976, the traditional opposition party, PAN, refused to run a candidate for president. The then entering Secretary of Gobernaciun, Jes<sup>2</sup>s Reyes Heroles, developed the first serious electoral reform since 1964, when President Lupez Mateos introduced a modified program of PR in the Congress. The 1977 reforms were an attempt to invite the opposition parties to participate in the electoral process without giving them any chance to win, or even seriously challenge the PRI's dominance.

The reforms expanded the majority districts in the Camara from 200 to 300, and automatically gave 100 (PR) seats to the opposition. The opposition seats were apportioned on a plurinominal system based on the proportion of each party's

national vote.<sup>50</sup>

A national electoral law in 1986 again expanded the Congress from 400 to 500 seats, while strengthening the PRI's hold over the electoral rules. By law, the Electoral Statutes mandated that the majority could never have more than 70% of the seats, while the PR seats were upped from 100 to 200.<sup>51</sup> Opposition parties could now get 40% of the legislative seats without winning a single race. To counterbalance this, the law mandated that the party winning the greatest number of majority seats would be given enough PR seats to gain an absolute majority in the lower house.<sup>52</sup>

In the 1988 elections, the PRI won only 233 majority district seats, 18 short of the 251 needed for an absolute ruling majority. To obtain this, the PRI gave itself 27 plurinominal seats. The 1989 electoral reform, negotiated with the PAN to the disgust of the PRD, grew out of this near disaster. The 1989-90, 1993 and 1994 reforms to the election

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<sup>50</sup>From 1964-1976, opposition parties got approximately 30-40 seats. From 1979-1985, opposition parties would receive 26% of the vote, almost exclusively from the PR seats.

<sup>51</sup>Roderic Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 148-150.

<sup>52</sup>This measure was a forerunner to the infamous governability clause negotiated by the PAN and the PRI in 1989 which stated that the party with the largest plurality in Congress would automatically be given a ruling majority. This clause only lasted until the 1993 reforms. For more on the political reforms from 1977-1990, see Silvia Gomez Tagle, "Electoral Reforms and the Party System, 1977-1990," in Neil Harvey, *Mexico: Dilemmas of Transition*, (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 1993).

laws have been a three-way tug of war among the central opposition parties. Until the last reform (which took place in the first half of 1994), the regime remained firmly in control of the elections. Electoral reforms are not planned out within the confines of the PRI's leadership or bureaucracy, but rather, within the triangle of the Office of the Presidency, Gobernación and now the PAN.

The 1989-90 reforms introduced changes in voter registration and the infamous governability clause. The PAN gave the PRI this clause in return for guarantees (which would stem from the president himself) that elections would be cleaner, and an unspoken agreement with the chief executive that the PAN would be given the electoral victories it had won. The president, however, still had the arbitrary discretion to decide which races the PAN had won, and which the PRD had lost. Neither electoral laws, nor votes were the measure by which victories were decided - President Salinas still had this prerogative.

The 1993 electoral reform was negotiated in full view of the upcoming presidential elections of 1994. The PAN's vote of confidence in any electoral result is now needed because no one can trust the official vote count as the electoral authorities are still members of the official regime.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Thus, the regime is in a bind: it must negotiate with the PAN to stop the threat of the PRD, which has been excluded from any sort of electoral victory during the sexenio of Salinas, and therefore, from any sort of responsibility or incentive for participating within the

The 1994 reforms were the first negotiated among the PAN, PRI and the PRD. The official regime was forced to agree to the reforms because the guerrilla uprising in Chiapas in January, 1994. The Zapatistas Army for National Liberation (EZLN) demands for fair elections allowed the opposition parties to negotiate a growing autonomy of the electoral organs from the president, Gobernación, and the PRI. The opposition parties called for and got autonomous "citizen councilors" who are responsible for checking the fairness of the vote counts, and the electoral process in general, fairer coverage in the mass media, the presence of non-partisan workers in the Electoral Institute at the lower levels; and other measures aimed at making the elections more fair.<sup>54</sup>

This section has been an introduction to the institutions which govern Mexico, and have done so since the grandfather of the PRI was formed by Calles in 1929. Mexico is a strongly centralist, presidential-dominated nation without (until 1988-1994) an active opposition, or a legislative branch which can effectively act as a counter

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bounds of the law.

<sup>54</sup>One cannot recur to the legal institutions covering the elections, because they are part of the regime's territory. It therefore becomes easy for the PRD to cry foul, no matter if the PRI has won freely or not. The PRI and Salinas, by blocking any victory at the polls for the PRD, backed themselves into this uncomfortable corner. The 1994 elections were saved by the overwhelming win of the PRI's candidate, Ernesto Zedillo.



weight to the president's power. The president controls the dominant Party, which in turn blocks the moves of the two serious opposition parties. These characteristics in large part determine why we see informal, hierarchical groups within the dominant coalition, and they also help explain the actions of the members and leaders during the succession process. To these two problems we now turn.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### AN EMPIRICAL VIEW OF THE POLITICAL GROUPS

This chapter's aim is to give an empirical overview of the shape of the camarillas or political groups in the Mexican political system. The bulk of this information comes from interviews with public officials working within the government, political columnists and academics, as well as information gleaned from newspapers.<sup>55</sup> This "chisme politico" or political gossip is important for grounding the theoretical ideas presented in my thesis, as well as for discovering new questions.<sup>56</sup>

One important point which is not studied in this chapter

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<sup>55</sup> For an explanation of how the interviews were done, please see Appendix 1.

<sup>56</sup> Most of the information from which this paper was written comes from this sexenio (1988-1994). This is especially true in the sections on groups. While this may seem like a dangerous strategy in that certain trends have changed over time, I believe I have guarded against these problems in two ways: 1. where needed, I have indicated that certain types of action, such as recruitment, have changed over time. Second, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 7, the political institutions affecting both the political groups and the presidential succession have changed over time. Finally, many of the points discussed in this paper have not changed radically since the late 1950's, when the current formal and informal rules were institutionalized.

is the role of the camarillas in the succession process. This will be examined in Chapter 6.

#### Definition of Camarillas

Camarillas are informal groups of public employees working in the executive bureaucracy, PRI party posts and elected offices. Their membership does not appear in any official diagram within the regime. Often people deny membership, although their group can be identified. The leader of a group can direct the actions of a subordinate member in ways that are not specified in any formal contract.

These groups form and work primarily to advance the careers of their members. Camarillas can also be viewed as intra-Party factions, although many times they do not have specific ideological interests or goals. Each faction is led by a boss or "jefe" and is made up of several members at different levels of the Party and bureaucratic hierarchy. These people are linked together by binds of loyalty and ability. The fundamental nexus of the exchange relationship between jefe and member is as follows: the jefe delivers government positions, favors and monetary benefits to his people in return for loyalty (or the assurance that the subordinate will not work against the interests of his superior), discipline and information. Therefore, both leader and member benefit from the exchange. In an extremely uncertain political universe, the jefe can build up a

reputation of leading an efficacious and loyal group, which helps both himself and his people achieve better posts in a party and bureaucratic structure that experiences a rapid and thorough turnover every three to six years.<sup>58</sup>

Camarillas vary in size depending on how powerful and/or rich the jefe is. Power in this sense can be understood as how much discretion the jefe has in placing people in positions.<sup>59</sup>

In terms of duration, these internal political groups can last several decades, as was the case of General Corona de Rosal who was the mayor of Mexico City during DÚaz Ordaz's sexenio. During the sexenio of de la Madrid, when Corona de Rosal was quite old, one could still read of his people, or his group's members, decrying the activities of the

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<sup>58</sup>An ex-functionary of the Ministry of Governance estimates that approximately 70-80% of the officials working above the level of the union workers left or changed jobs when the Secretary Fernando Gutierrez Barrios was fired in 1992. (Interview, Nov. 1993 with a mid-level functionary).

<sup>59</sup>Interview, March 10, 1992, with a director general (DG) in the Agricultural Ministry. A rich old-timer like Carlos Hank Gonzalez has the capability, through his political base in the State of Mexico (the state surrounding the capital, Mexico City), and his position as Minister of Agriculture and several business ventures, to keep probably more than 50 people identified with him. He can pluck a poor but brilliant student out of the grime of the countryside with a scholarship, and keep on retainer a distinguished lawyer for over 40 years of service. An Interview, June 23, 1993, with a DG in the Treasury Department. Other, newer, camarillas, headed up by younger men, will have smaller groups whose membership is at least greater than 20 persons.

Democratic Current during the rupture of 1988.<sup>60</sup> Probably, when the old jefe of a camarilla is no longer able to lead effectively, another strong member comes up to head the group, and takes over as leader. Fidel Velazquez, who is over 90 years old and leader of the Party's labor central, the CTM, is still able to place his people as governors or members of Congress, and attempt to get jobs for his now ex-governors, by introducing them to certain pre-candidates for the presidential nomination who asks for the labor leader's support during the pre-campaign process.<sup>61</sup>

Fidel Velazquez is in a special position within the Mexican political system as he is the permanent leader of the CTM. In return for keeping organized labor's voice quiet and delivering votes for the official candidate, he is given his quota of power: party leadership positions, seats in the C mara and governorships. From these positions, he forms his group. *Table 3.1* shows the distribution of seats within the labor movement. We see how many seats in Congress the CTM enjoys versus its less favored colleagues.

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<sup>60</sup>Acciun,

<sup>61</sup>Interview, May 11, 1993, with a CTM member.

Table 3-1. The Distribution of Laborers Seats in Congress<sup>62</sup>  
 PRI Candidates for Majority Seats

	1979	1982	1985
CTM	45 (64%)	50 (67%)	51 (71%)
CROC	11 (16%)	12 (16%)	11 (15%)

Not many of the regime's leaders are able to form these permanent bases of power (like the CTM) and so aren't able to retain long-term groups. This in large part explains their great discipline toward their leaders, especially the president. Those tied to ex-presidents have to cast around for new alliances, just as other, less well-connected public figures must.<sup>63</sup>

Somewhere between a permanent position such as Fidel Velázquez and the hopping about of most political figures, are the outstanding regime members, especially those within the financial sector of the bureaucracy, who are able to

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<sup>62</sup>The information from this graph taken from Juan Reyes del Campillo, "El movimiento obrero en la Cámara de Diputados (1979-1988)," *Revista mexicana de Sociología*, num. 3, año LII (julio-septiembre 1990), 141.

<sup>63</sup>Jaime Serra Puche (the current Minister of Commerce in the Salinas sexenio) was able to do this casting with skill. He was originally tied in with Jesus Silva Herzog, the Minister of Finance during de la Madrid's sexenio. But Serra Puche was able, at the same time he was in Silva Herzog's group, to form a relation with Salinas when the latter was head of Planning and Silva Herzog's central political threat for the PRI's party nomination. When Salinas beat Silva Herzog (and others) in the 1987 nomination race and became president, Serra Puche was designated Minister of Commerce. The head of Commerce was tied to the PRI's presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, and Ernesto Zedillo as well, and stands a good chance of retaining a Cabinet-level position.

place their special apprentices with officials within the government, who still owe some sort of allegiance to their former mentors.<sup>64</sup>

Other camarillas enjoy a much shorter life-span, especially if the jefe burns himself badly enough, as was the case of a pre-candidate in the 1988 succession, Alfredo de Mazo (then head of Commerce). His people are spread out all over the bureaucracy making new alliances because of his mistakes in the presidential succession.

Camarillas have their people distributed throughout the bureaucracy and party. Also, in certain ministries, more than one camarilla can place its members in important positions, usually because the president allows it. This is true for example, in the Treasury Ministry (Hacienda), where the ex-mayor of Mexico City, and pre-candidate for the nomination Manuel Camacho Solís, was reportedly able to place his people, even though a close rival for the nomination, Pedro Aspe, headed up the same agency.<sup>65</sup> The splitting up of ministries is allowed by the president because this tactic makes it easier for him to control his own strongmen (the

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<sup>64</sup>Apparently, a group was formed around Leopoldo Solís in the office of the Presidency in the sexenio of de la Madrid (1982-1988) which included Jaime Zabudovsky and Herminio Blanco, both of whom hold under-secretariats positions in the Ministry of Commerce in the current administration and are poised to become the new generation of political heavy weights (especially if Colosio wins the election).

<sup>65</sup>Interview, June 23, 1993. with a DG in Treasury.

cabinet ministers, from whom the next president of Mexico will come), as they have some sort of non-institutional break on their room for maneuver.

The Nature of the Relation Between Jefe and Member: What is Exchanged?

The leader of a group delivers jobs, benefits and general favors in return for the promise of high levels of performance, and the loyalty of his people. In return the jefe provides security in an uncertain career environment. One interviewee<sup>66</sup> described the rules that govern the relation between leader and subordinate this way: one must have, nurture and maintain the absolute confidence of one's superior. One must never appear to be smarter than he, and can never go over his head in policy matters ("no se puede saltar el jefe"), and one must share whatever information one has. In short, an equipo and camarilla member must show extreme loyalty. Discipline is the second key attribute: even in the face of abuse, one must never show anger or aggression, one must work as many hours, weekends, vacations as is necessary (many public officials I spoke with come into the office around 10 a.m. and often work until 9 or 10pm). Discipline means that if someone steals a piece of work to look good in front of an undersecretary of state, one has a single recourse, to complain to one's jefe. If he says

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<sup>66</sup>Interview, June 23, 1993 with DG in Treasury.



forget it, it is forgotten. If a boss tells a camarilla subordinate to remain in a terrible job, he stays until further notice. We will discuss why the subordinates show such loyalty and discipline in Chapter 4.

One of the most important qualities of a member is his willingness to forego immediate gain for long-term benefits which will accrue to himself, the boss and the group. The jefe of the group builds up a reputation for how well he treats his people which is valuable for recruiting others. Similarly, members have reputations for loyalty which can be used to move up within the equipo or switch equipos if the case warrants it. Each then, builds a reputation which has value in the system.

The individual's interests, calculations and strategies are altered by his group membership. His actions are different from what they otherwise would be if he were on his own. If the leader places the member in a 'second rate' or extremely difficult job, either because he needs him there, or because he has nothing better for him, the loyal member will remain, with the assurance that he will be repaid for his sacrifice with a better job in the future.

Information is also a valuable resource exchanged between member and leader. Information has a split face in the Mexican political system. In some ways it is easy to discover which person is within which group, and what kinds of policies different groups espouse. Other types of

information are far more costly to gather and because of this, one of the primary goods exchanged between leader and member is knowledge. Examples of different kinds of public information would be census data, economic figures, the president's views of Party reforms, and which Secretary has a chance to become ÇpresidenciableÇ. This knowledge is valuable in making economic policies, political plans, and policy making and can make or break one's political career.

Some argue that one of the fundamental reasons for the jefe to place his people in different ministries is to acquire information on plans, problems and activities of other departments and groups. This implies spying, but this is (or was) acceptable behavior. A further problem with public knowledge in the Mexican political bureaucracy is that one doesn't know who produced it, or for what ends. Furthermore, a policy maker often doesn't know who has the information and therefore the costs of finding it and acquiring it are high.<sup>67</sup> Restricting access to information is a form of competition among groups, because it hinders their ability to make decent policy decisions.

#### Flexibility of Groups

A question that lies at the heart of both an empirical and theoretical study of the camarillas is the level of flexibility of their membership. In general terms, a

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<sup>67</sup>Interview, March 10, 1992 with ex-functionary.

flexible system of groups is one in which leaving the ranks of the group is relatively costless in terms of punishment, or damage done to one's reputation for loyalty and discipline. On the contrary, an inflexible system of political groups entails high costs for leaving a still surviving group and its boss. The costs of switching groups when the boss survives, are different from those of the case in which the boss is blocked or out of office all together. A related question is, What are the costs (and of course, benefits) of maintaining ties with other groups in order to protect against the political death of the original group?

The first question is highly disputed, or at least a highly confusing one. Some interviewed state that one has to hide one's group affiliation and any ties one might have to other competing groups, in order to protect one's working future. This leads to three points: 1. everyone is in a group, 2. most deny it vigorously, 3. most have ties with other groups, whether competing or not, whose affiliation, however casual, is denied as well. Others state that people change groups with relative ease, and without any real damage to their reputation for loyalty toward their boss. The crucial problem in answering this question is to identify 1. the different types of groups that operate, and 2. at what different stages of the sexenio and the presidential succession are they active. We turn to this now.

The Difference Between Equipos de Trabajo, Camarillas,  
and Political Networks.

It seems that when people are talking about political groups, they are speaking of several different types or levels: one is the *equipo de trabajo*, (which literally means the "work team"), and the second is a larger political grouping of people which can be considered a *camarilla* under one jefe whose members are dispersed throughout the bureaucracy. The third type of group is some somewhat larger, looser coalition of people and groups which work toward placing one person in office, with the hope of being rewarded for their time and energy. We propose this breakdown when referring to 'political groups within the Mexican political system': work team, (*equipo de trabajo*); *camarilla*; and political network.

First, we will begin with the difference between an *equipo de trabajo* and a *camarilla*. An *equipo de trabajo* is just that: a group that works together in the same office, (or ministry if the head of the *equipo* is a high-level bureaucrat), and work on the same policy problem. *Equipos* have leaders who recruit the members, direct their work, and with whom they share a professional relationship. The professional relation can later develop into one of trust and loyalty, which then changes the nature of the group membership and its responsibilities.

When the "jefe" of the working team moves to another

post, he pulls his equipo (or as many members as he can) with him, and places them in positions within the new area. Usually, people start forming equipos at the level of director general. (Direcciones generales come below the level of sub-secretary, and are usually in charge of specific policy areas). Equipos are normally formed by a superior who has jobs to distribute, although many small groups of friends begin to form proto-equipos which can last the career of a public official by doing each other favors and making long-term plans before any one of them has public jobs to give out.

Equipos can be the building blocks of the larger, more politically active camarillas (cliques, or factions). One man interviewed<sup>68</sup> stated that when a director general left and could not bring all his people in his equipo with him to a new job, those that were left found new jobs with friends or contacts in different "equipos", but those equipos within the same "grupo politico" or camarilla. This leads one to believe that several equipos and their leaders are tied vertically to a single leader through successively more important men, who are closer to the chief of the entire group, who himself is often a cabinet minister.

Camarillas, unlike equipos, have members spread across the bureaucracy rather than only having people work directly

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<sup>68</sup>Interview, June 17, 1993, with a mid-level  
functionary in the Ministry of Tourism.

below them in the same agency.<sup>69</sup> What could be a motivation for spreading one's members across agencies? First, the leader of a political group can influence the outcome of a greater range of policy problems if he can place under secretaries or director generals around the bureaucracy. Second, come the succession, he can be assured of their loyalty and the resources they bring to bear if he got them their position, and third, people in other ministries should be able to supply him with information on disputes, alliances and problems in other agencies that he could not get otherwise and that could help him in his policy disputes or an succession attempt.<sup>70</sup> One interviewee stated, however, that although there are border-crossings among ministries by members of different political groups, these placements are not systematized as it is easy for others within the political class to identify the movements, and make

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<sup>69</sup>For example, Pedro Aspe, head of the Treasury has a close ally working as an Under-Secretary of Agriculture, and another as Under-Secretary of Fisheries, while Camacho Solis, Mayor of Mexico City, was reportedly able to bounce a director general in a financial sector-ministry (who was admittedly already in a weak position) to place one of his own people a few months before the destape.

<sup>70</sup>After Jesus Silva Herzog left his position as Minister of Finance (SHCP) in 1985 in a policy dispute with Salinas, his chief political rival, Carlos Salinas was able to convince the then President de la Madrid to place Petriccoli in as head of SHCP. This gave Salinas implicit control over both Planning and Finance, the then two most important ministries in the government. Petriccoli, for his support of Salinas, was then given the post of Ambassador to the US when Salinas became president in 1988.

judgements about the possible alliances being made.<sup>71</sup>

Camarillas are larger in number, harder to pinpoint in their membership identification, and more political in their goals than equipos. Loyalty and common interest in moving forward, rather than a strictly professional relation, is what binds the members of a camarilla together. The camarilla, one source explained, can be seen as the inner circle around one leader. The group is closed in the sense that all members recognize the authority of that particular group leader. One can belong to only one camarilla while, at the same time, belonging to a larger, looser political grouping which I term the political network.<sup>72</sup>

Several equipos make up one manÇs camarilla, and in turn several smaller camarillas together make up a central political group, usually that of a Cabinet minister. Camarillas can endure over several sexenios, as is the case of Carlos Hank GonzalezÇs, or survive only one sexenio, as will probably be the case of Pedro Aspe now that he has lost the race to become the official presidential nominee for the PRI.<sup>73</sup> If a pre-candidate does not become the partyÇs

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<sup>71</sup>Interview, Nov. 19, 1993 with a mid-level  
functionary in the Foreign Ministry.

<sup>72</sup>I lift this term from Ben SchneiderÇs work entitled, *Politics within the State: Elite Bureaucrats and Industrial Policy in Authoritarian Brazil*, (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991).

<sup>73</sup>Manuel Camacho Solis lost the nomination battle. He immediately quit the office of the Mayor and was named as head of Foreign Relations (SRE) by Salinas as a consolation

nominee, than it is unlikely he will be given another top position in the administration, and will thus be unable to deliver the political goods to his followers.

The equipo normally makes or carries out public policies, while the camarillas' functions and ends are broader, while still including policy goals. The camarilla acts as an informal hierarchy which advances its members' careers across agency boundaries and between the bureaucracy and Party. When the PRI had a slimmer majority in the Congress in the first legislature during the Salinas sexenio, Cabinet ministers made it their business to place their people in key Congressional posts to make sure their programs got legislative approval with a minimum of fuss.<sup>74</sup>

During the succession process, members of the camarillas work

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prize to keep him quiet until the elections in August, 1994. He brought several of his people with him to SRE, who at that point had few other alternatives than to follow the 'loser' in the succession to a temporary post. Yet when Camacho Solis was named to the Peace Commission for Chiapas on January 10, 1994, his political fortunes were once again revived and people like Alejandra Moreno Toscano, who had left government after his failure to win the Party's presidential nomination, once again returned to work with him.

<sup>74</sup>For example, when Salinas was head of SPP he took two Director Generals and told them to run for their respective congressional seats so that Salinas could protect his economic programs from Congressional interference. One of those two DG's -Luis Donald Colosio - was later chosen to become head of the financial committee in the Congress and is now the PRI's nominee for president. The other is now governor of Nuevo Leon. For more information see, La sucesión pactada, (Mexico: Plaza y Valdós, 1994); and the Diccionario Biografico del Gobierno Mexicano, (Mexico: Oficina de la Presidencia, various years).



to promote their candidate while trying to discredit his competitors. Thus, for the individual member, the camarilla is the vehicle which he rides to better jobs, while in the political system, they provide pre-candidates with backup support, information and alliances. Once the new president takes office, his choice of cabinet ministers reflects both who is in his camarilla as well as the balance of forces among the various factions.

The final political grouping that is active in Mexican politics is the political network. This network is different from the camarilla only in degrees: the level of loyalty, size, and other characteristics of the camarilla one finds in the larger network, but to a lesser degree. The network is larger in size, less dependent on the mutual loyalty of members, and does not have only one recognized leader. As stated above, a public official can belong to one camarilla and recognize this group's leader at the same time he participates in a separate network.

The political network seems to function as an information exchange, allowing members to find particular talent, to become aware of the latest relevant gossip of the political class, or to look for jobs. For example, a new under secretary moves into the Ministry of Transportation and Communications. He knows very little about the latest in port technology. He needs qualified people to help him, so first he turns to his inner circle to fill the more sensitive

positions, and then to his political network to fill the rest.<sup>75</sup> During the succession, people will secretly work for one pre-candidate rather than another with few other public officials being aware of this action. One is only fully aware of a functionary's orientation when he is openly a member of his closest circle of advisors. Those at the outer ring of camarilla membership can choose.

The following list is a *rough* run-down of members of the different rival pre-candidates' loose-knit political groups in the 1994 succession, what we refer to as a political network. As we have pointed out, the costs of leaving these groups are lower, while the leader cannot direct the actions of the members of the group as much as he can in the case of those of his camarilla.

El Financiero, a daily newspaper based in Mexico City, published a political report at the beginning of the fourth year which outlined the alliances among the most powerful members of the elite made during the first three years of the

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<sup>75</sup>An interesting example illustrates the difference between a camarilla and a political group or network. Carlos Madrazo was the leader of the PRI in the early part of Diaz Ordaz's sexenio (1964-1970). Madrazo was serious about his attempts to reform the PRI by allowing the free election within the Party of candidates for elected positions. Such was the negative response from other sectors of the party and elite that Madrazo was soon after relieved of his post. The members of his camarilla were able to incorporate themselves into other political networks and find posts within all sectors of the regime, but they were never able (according to this source) to become members of a camarilla who enjoyed the complete trust (*la plena confianza*) of their political bosses. Such was the fear of reformers within the political system.

sexenio.

Table 3.2 Political Network Membership.<sup>76</sup>

<u>Jose Cordoba</u>	<u>Pedro Aspe</u>	<u>Camacho Solis</u>
P. Chirinos SEDUE	Hank Gonzalez SARH	C. Rojas Pronasol
Caso Lombardo SCT	Colosio Pres. PRI	E. Lozoya
Serra Puche SECOFI	Gutierrez Barrios Gob.	V. Cervera P. SRA
M. Palacios	I. Pichardo	F. Solana SRE
		A. Farell STPS
		E. Zedillo SPP

A year and a half later, the groupings were very different:<sup>77</sup>

<u>Colosio/Cordoba</u>	<u>Pedro Aspe</u>	<u>Camacho Solis</u>
E. Zedillo SEP		V. Cervera P.
E. Lozoya		F. Solana
C. Rojas		A. Farell STPS
P. Chirinos (Veracruz)		
J. Serra Puche		
A. Caso Lombardo		
P. Aspe		

The movement of the people within this list shows that members of a political network have more room to maneuver, although they cannot make enemies of their old collaborators, or preferred pre-candidates. Most recognized that Aspe would have a difficult time winning the nomination, and so they discretely made other connections, without openly dumping the head of Treasury (which is never a good idea).

The next is a list of camarilla members: those who are

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<sup>76</sup>The list is not correct in its placements. For example, neither Zedillo, nor C. Rojas were in the Camacho Solis camp by that late date. Both were with Colosio/Cordoba. One supposes that those in El Financiero who made up the list knew very well it was incorrect, which means their mistakes were political in origin. This is a clear example of the political role of the media, especially in transmitting political gossip.

<sup>77</sup>This list made by author.

not near equals of the pre-candidate in question, and who are more tied in to his group. It would be more difficult for these functionaries to switch groups *before* the rival has either lost out, or ruined his political career. Once he has, and the follower has showed himself to be loyal to both the loser and the system, then he can begin to look for new alliances.<sup>78</sup>

**Table 3.3 A Sample List of Camarilla Membership**

<u>Colosio</u>	<u>Pedro Aspe</u>	<u>Camacho Solis</u>
<i>Congress</i>	Angel Aceves Saucedo	<i>Congress</i>
Sen. Eduardo Robledo	Alfredo Baranda	Sen. Carlos Salas
Con. Roberto Madrazo	Gov. M. Cavazos	Sen. M. Aguilera
Con. Abrahán Talavera		Con. R. Echeverria
Con. Miguel A. Yunes		Pedro Ojeda
		Javier Garduño
<i>Governors</i>		<i>DDF</i>
J. Salomón Campeche		Marcelo Ebrardo
Dulce María Sauri Yucatan		Juan Enriquez
M. Gurría Orduñez Tabasco		Diego Valadez
Eduardo Villaseñor Michoacán		Tulio Hernandez
P. Chirinos, Veracruz		Guillermo Orozco
Diódoro Carrasco, Oaxaca		
M. Silerio, Durango		
<i>Sedesol</i>		<i>Others</i>
Rafael Resendiz		Luis Martinez
Carlos Rojas		Ignacio Morales
Alfredo Philips Olmedo		F. Ruiz Massieu
Oscar Navarro		
Silvia Hernandez (Popular Sector Leader)		

Thus we see the difference between the camarilla and networks in terms of who is actually a member of which type of group for the different pre-candidates in the 1993 succession race.

### Horizontal Relations

We have discussed the vertical relations among actors and

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<sup>78</sup>The following list is taken from *Proceso*, number 826, Sept. 31, 1992.

groups within the Mexican political system. Yet horizontal connections - those among members of the same group and alliances between groups - are also important to consider. One of the least clear issues when speaking of camarillas is competition among members of the same hierarchical camarilla. Some public officials interviewed have mentioned that members of camarillas do in fact compete for the attention of their leaders in order to advance more rapidly within the group's hierarchical ordering and thereby receive better positions that the leader is responsible for finding and providing. If the entire point of the camarilla is the creation of smaller hierarchical groups which work within the larger political and bureaucratic structures, then it would seem that competition within cooperative groups is a paradox of sorts. Yet even if subordinates are loyal and disciplined in terms of dealing with their boss, it does not logically follow that they must cooperate with each other. It seems, however, that age and length of service probably saves the boss from enforcing cooperation within the group. Internal struggles would be so damaging to the leader as to give him at least the strong incentive to set standards for upward mobility to which all can subscribe, and thereby lower the temptation to compete with one's own 'people'.

Horizontal linkages exist both between leaders of different camarillas and among their members. The links between leaders of camarillas can be seen a political

alliances, usually effectuated during the presidential succession process to further a pre-candidate's possibilities. Links among members of different groups are a part of the larger information and connection network. As one academic continues to insist, public officials see themselves as members of the system every bit as much as they see themselves as members of a particular camarilla. This network of friends, information, and contacts offers each individual a safety net in case the primary group - the camarilla - fails.

#### Sectors of the Bureaucracy

Some ministries and sectors of the bureaucracy which they comprise, are more important for both policy outcomes and political strongholds than others. The economic sector of the bureaucracy which includes Finance (SHCP), the Central Bank, Commerce (SECOFI) and the now defunct Planning ministry (SPP) controls important policy programs and initiatives as well as serves as a base from which long-term political careers can be built. Both presidents de la Madrid and Salinas worked within the economic triangle from the start of their careers and constructed their equipos from those with whom they worked and had attended university. As the "stabilized development" model faltered at the beginning of the 1970's, the financial agencies became more important centers of both policy disputes and launching pads of future presidents.

Up until the early 1970's, the governance sector of the bureaucracy had enjoyed more influence as it controlled labor, ideological and political issues while the technocrats toiled away in relative obscurity in the economic ministries. The governance sector is comprised of the ministries of Gobernaciun, Justice, Labor and Agriculture. These ministries have important links with the PRI and its electoral missions. For example, Gobernaciun controls the national electoral commission and regulates elections, which the dominant party usually wins. The Labor Ministry is connected to the labor sector of the PRI, the CTM, and is responsible for keeping wages and strike levels down.

Camarillas formed in the economic sector of the bureaucracy began to gain influence over succession politics as they took over larger policy responsibilities, especially during the 1980's. SHCP's dealings with foreign governments and banks gave its high ranking members great weight during the PRI's presidential nomination battles. Planning's control over the distribution of resources to the different departments of state and the governors allowed its Minister and those working under him to make important alliances and connections with other officials throughout the national and state-level political apparatus. Both Salinas as head of SPP and Colosio as head of SEDESOL (which took over many of the distribution responsibilities of SPP when it was dissolved in

early 1992, used this money to their political advantage.<sup>79</sup>

### Why Join, Why Not?

The first and most obvious reason to join a group is that it is easier to get jobs of ever increasing importance in a bureaucracy that offers little security for those above the level of Office Director or Sub Director General. Many have stated that unless one joins a group, there is little or no hope of a successful career, and even those who occupy lower ranking position belong to a group whose boss protects them in that job.<sup>80</sup> Secondly, joining a group and achieving the position brings other benefits besides the salaries - legal protection, loans, scholarships, cars, houses can all be provided by one's boss. An effective group leader should be able to secure goods which are separate from the salary.

Alternatively, some bureaucrats may simply calculate that joining is not their main strategy. One's skills can be so technical or otherwise specific that it is possible to reach a mid-level position and remain in it, or move laterally without much problem. It is not clear that human

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<sup>79</sup>For more on the importance of sectors, see Miguel Centeno, *Democracy Within Reason*, (University Park: Penn State Press, 1994); Miguel Centeno and Sylvia Maxfield, "Marriage of Finance and Order," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24 (1990); and Rogilio Hernández, "La división de la Ólite política mexicana," In Bazdresch, et. al., *México: auge, crisis y ajuste*, (Mexico: Fondo Cultural Económico, 1992).

<sup>80</sup>Interview, June 23, 1993 with a DG in the Treasury Ministry.



or educational asset specificity works well if one wants to move into high posts within the governing elite. One man interviewed insisted that to rise within the bureaucracy, one needed to join a group, yet at the beginning of the interview he explained that most of his early jobs came from his large number of acquaintances and contacts made at the National University (UNAM).<sup>81</sup> One possibility is that there could be time or stage differences in group membership. At an early stage, one casts around for the best group to join and on finding it, the functionary stays with the faction as long as it benefits him, only leaving if the group becomes ruined politically or because the individual is powerful enough to do without it.

Joining one camarilla rather than another can be risky for several reasons: first, because one can lose out quickly if the jefe is quemado or frozen, thus making it necessary to search for a new group; second, one must deliver loyalty which involves sacrifices, the greatest of which is staying in a job that offers little possibility for advancement in the short term. In Mexican political terminology, this is known as discipline: a bureaucrat stays in a position which he considers second rate because he knows in the future his boss will deliver something better. This problem of delivering something better may well be increasing now that

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<sup>81</sup>Interview, June, 1992 with an ex-functionary tied to a losing pre-candidate.

the camarilla bosses have fewer positions to distribute. We will discuss this problem at length in Chapter 5.

### Recruitment

From the interviews done, it appears that one gets recruited into an equipo, or rather, one usually attaches oneself to an equipo leader at the level of director general and up, who is in turn hooked up to a camarilla, or has ties to one. Probably in rare cases, a younger functionary can attract the attention of the leader of a camarilla, but even then, this is probably done through an intermediary as well. The new functionary has ties to a camarilla through his equipo leader, and in all likelihood, has not even personally met the camarilla leader.<sup>82</sup> As the bureaucrat works his way up to be on the director general level, he forms his own equipo and begins to have closer ties to the camarilla leader.

Recruitment into the executive branch before the mid-1980's was done primarily through the UNAM undergraduate faculties, especially Law and Economics departments, (as has been pointed out by Camp and Smith)<sup>83</sup>. The professors found

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<sup>82</sup>Interview, March 10, 1992 with an ex-functionary.

<sup>83</sup>It is important to point out the importance of the Colegio de México (Colmex), roughly, College of Mexico. Colmex is a research institute that also grants two undergraduate degrees in international relations and public administration, and various masters and doctorate degrees. Although statistically, Colmex doesn't show up nearly as much as the UNAM, in fact, it has been probably as

good students and helped them find jobs in the executive and Party sectors, often part-time while still in school. One of the primary reasons public functionaries taught at the National University was so they could recruit students into their groups early. Professors probably competed among one another for the best students. Companions were also important contacts which often lasted throughout one's career. One political columnist interviewed claims recruitment used to be strongly political in the sense that leaders of student groups within the UNAM were noticed and brought into the system based on their ideological propensities and leadership ability. This smells strongly of government cooptation of left-leaning students, and also gave those students the incentive to be more politicized than otherwise. Both ideological propensity and academic achievement were the primary bases upon which professors recruited students.

Recruitment into an equipo can also take place at a later stage in one's career.<sup>84</sup> It can also be the case that

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important as the UNAM for the last 30 years, and now is more central than the National University in terms of placing its graduates in networks and equipos. One professor stated, that in contrast to other universities, academics at Colmex fight to teach classes, in large part because they can make contacts with the brightest students.

<sup>84</sup>Jaime Zabłudovsky of Commerce, was good friends with another student, X, while both were at ITAM. Both went on to US graduate schools and returned to work in the financial sector of the bureaucracy. After their return, Zabłudovsky's career took off, yet as he changed jobs, he continued

a subordinate working under one boss can move up (through other connections and greater abilities) to surpass the original jefe. Still there are connections between the two, and the former subordinate can now provide his old superior with a position or support.

The Family as a Recruiting Tool:

Camp and Smith have pointed out the importance of the family as a recruiting base - a prospective leader has contacts from an early age, and assurance of loyalty built on the father's experience. Family contacts do not necessarily imply camarilla membership, but they can be used at certain times to help the bureaucrat along, as was shown by Camp in his article on Salinas' rise.<sup>85</sup> Another political columnist agrees with Camp in that the importance of family background in the government has grown and has thus narrowed the possible channels for entry into the political elite as those who do not have these ties are less likely to gain access to

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working among people of his same political group. The other's career never advanced very far, and while he was languishing at the Central Bank, Zabludovsky offered him a job in Commerce where the latter is a sub-secretary. The friend is now part of Zabludovsky's equipo, and both remain in the same larger camarilla.

<sup>85</sup>Roderic Camp, "Camarillas in Mexican Politics: The Case of the Salinas Cabinet," *Mexican Studies* 6, no. (Winter 1990).

the highest political offices.<sup>86</sup>

The above discussion has covered the general recruitment into the executive branch and Party, while the following will cover more specific recruitment into groups themselves. Some speak of recruitment of an individual into a camarilla as a kind of seduction: each has something to offer the other and wants something in return. Each must negotiate the terms of future interaction. The aspirant can offer the group's leader various favors such as writing articles in the newspapers, speaking in public forums, reports on important issues, etc.<sup>87</sup>

Another type of recruitment is done through a middle-man, who will introduce the hopeful to a jefe de grupo who needs someone with the former's qualifications. This type of recruitment seems directed at those already out of university, and who are looking for a new group, since the principals do not know one another, while the middle man does.

#### How Recruitment Has Changed

Several people interviewed have mentioned that recruitment has changed over the past ten years. Most state that the UNAM has been replaced by the ITAM and Monterrey

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<sup>86</sup>Interview, March 10, 1992 with a political columnist tied to Camacho Solis.

<sup>87</sup>Interview, February 14, 1992 with a political columnist tied to Camacho Solis.

Tech, both private universities, as the primary recruiting institutions for new people for the executive branch.<sup>88</sup> A corollary to this change is that many of those who graduated from the UNAM and received graduate degrees abroad no longer return to teach in the National University, preferring to install themselves in ITAM and other institutions such as the Colegio de Mexico.<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, professors at the ITAM, like Pedro Aspe, and Francisco Gil Diaz are now important members of the governing elite, and have brought their former students into government to work with them. Once Aspe was no longer in government as of December, 1994, he returned to teach economics at ITAM.

One of the greatest problems for those who continue to study at the UNAM is that the reputation of the school has fallen drastically in recent years, so that even those who are capable and well trained have difficulty finding entry ways into higher-level public positions or the equipos that will take them there. One director general in Commerce stated that he believed good students were still coming out the National University in economics, but that since he knew few professors still teaching there, and because the general

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<sup>88</sup>In an interesting side note to this general change, some up and coming functionaries actually cover their bets by studying law at the UNAM and economics at ITAM, thus getting the benefits of contacts at the former, and a serious technical education at the latter. Luiz Tellez is probably the best example of this.

<sup>89</sup>Interview, June, 1992 with an ex-functionary tied to losing pre-candidate.

reputation was so low, he would have to spend a great deal more time and energy testing the ability of a UNAM graduate in economics than he would an ITAM graduate. An ITAM degree now assures contacts and assurance to employees within the government of one's abilities.<sup>90</sup>

This chapter's intent was to clarify the meaning of the terms: work team, camarilla and political network. Obviously, in the real world, these boundaries run together with distressing frequency, often ruining the constructs one invents. We have, though, made a contribution to understanding the differences by emphasizing that some of the main differences between the types of groups seen is their durability, the costs of exit, and the degree to which the leader can direct the actions of those below him. These differences will become important in Chapter 6 when we discuss how different types of actors behave in the succession process.

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<sup>90</sup>The corollary to the power of ITAM is once its favorite sons botched the economic devaluation of 1994, the entire system of teaching economics (technically as opposed to ideologically oriented) as well as neo-liberal economics has come under fire.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A THEORETICAL VIEW OF THE POLITICAL GROUPS

The purpose of this chapter is to ask why factions exist in the Mexican political system. Using an individual-centered approach,<sup>91</sup> I will attempt to explain why individuals working in a system of high turnover in positions within the bureaucracy and dominant party form hierarchical-cooperative groups which last more than one presidential term.

Instead of an historical approach, the chapter will use a branch of recent work done in political economy which focuses on individuals cooperating in complex institutional environments in order to maximize their preferences. The central authors in this approach are Alchian (1986), Ronald Coase (1938), David Kreps (1990), Gary Miller (1992), and Douglas North (1990); and less centrally, D. Axelrod (1984) and M. Taylor (1982). These authors embark from a rational choice perspective and apply its insights to understand how individuals cooperate when confronted with a series of rules which constrain their actions, and in part, determine their

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<sup>91</sup>Elster (1985) uses the term methodological individualism, meaning that actors try to maximize their ends, no matter how irrational these may be. For our purposes, it simply means that when trying to understand political phenomenon, we must start with the individual acting under constraints.



preference ordering<sup>92</sup>. We view the Mexican factions as informal cooperative hierarchies in which individuals make commitments to work together to meet common goals and collect resources, which are excludable from those outside the group, and necessary to advance. This paper will use their insights to understand why Mexican public officials in effect form mini-hierarchies to solve problems of advancement within the larger hierarchies, specifically, the bureaucracy and dominant party, in which they work.

To understand these issues, it will be necessary to simplify the Mexican political system to its basic components. To do this, the paper will quickly review the central political rules of the game, both formal and informal, that we saw in chapter one.

#### The Political Economy Approach

To understand how actors within a government behave, it is necessary to understand the role of hierarchies and the contractual and behavioral problems they present. A government can be seen as a set of hierarchically organized institutions which make binding rules while offering services to those within a geographically bounded area. This definition shares certain similarities with economic organizations and both can be studied using some of the same

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<sup>92</sup>In chapter seven, we will examine how the electoral challenges of 1940, 1946, and 1952 slowly changed the ambitions and preferences of the regime's members.

tools (while recognizing central differences).

Douglas North (1990) defines institutions as humanly devised constraints that shape actors' choices, preferences and actions. In short, they help determine how actors interact and cooperate.<sup>93</sup> They provide known rules of the game for the actors involved and thereby reduce uncertainty by shaping expectations as to others' probable behavior in given situations which ex-ante may not be clear and certain.<sup>94</sup>

Gary Miller (1992) defines a hierarchy as an asymmetric and incomplete authority of one actor to direct the activities of another within certain bounds. Both actors have certain rights which are spelled out both formally and informally in an agreement. In a hierarchy, the central relation is one of exchange: both the boss and subordinate receive valuable goods from the other. Other institutions, such as the market and democratic voting procedures also organize human activity, but hierarchy interests us most in the Mexican system, because of the internal structure of both the bureaucracy and dominant party.

The central advantage of hierarchy is that there are many possibilities for cheating which can be better solved through the use of one hierarchical contract instead of many

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<sup>93</sup>Douglas North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 3.

<sup>94</sup>Gary Miller, *Managerial Dilemmas: The Political Economy of Hierarchies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 8.

one-shot exchanges among equals. The firm establishes a contract which gives the boss the right to direct activity within the limits set out in the agreement. More complete exchanges can be made because both parties are assured they will not be cheated. Long-term interactions make it in both parties interests not to cheat. Following in the footsteps of Coase, other new institutionalist , such as Alchian and Demsetz (1986), Fama (1986), and Williamson (1985) all assume that hierarchical organizations (firms) arise because they lower the costs of transacting by allowing superiors to monitor and enforce agreements in ways that are superior to the market-court system. Individuals thus agree to enter into an authoritative relation, such as a firm or a state, because the institution forces them all to transcend the perverse individual short-term incentives, thereby allowing them to reach collectively and individually beneficial outcomes.

A strictly "new institutionalist" explanation of Mexican camarillas would probably look as follows: groups form to lower costs of information gathering and the costs of job search in a highly uncertain environment. Superiors can better monitor their subordinates' if a smaller hierarchy is formed within the larger bureaucracy. This control is crucial during the succession process. In a sense, this explanation is helpful, but incomplete, mainly because we can not know why individuals are able to solve the collection

action problem, nor how they are able to overcome the obstacles to cooperation in order to form the sub-hierarchies that are camarillas.

The grave problems of information asymmetry, monitoring and enforcement still exist within the firm or organization which supposedly sprang up to solve these very problems.<sup>95</sup> Individuals continue to have the incentives to cheat and in fact, are still capable of doing so in an authoritative exchange relation. The problems of overcoming the likelihood of cheating must still be solved in order for cooperation to take place. The following section is an attempt to find a individually-based explanation to augment the more functionalist logic of the 'new institutionalism'.

#### Cooperation Under Hierarchies

One can look at the problem of coordination and cooperation in a hierarchy in two ways: from the superior's point of view and from the subordinate's. Both, under normal, short-term conditions, have incentives to cheat - the boss would prefer to encourage the subordinate to reveal his preferences and other important information and then not reward him as promised for enhanced performance, and the subordinate would prefer to shirk, or not work as hard as he had promised to do.

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<sup>95</sup>See Miller (1990:chapter 1), for more on the problems of new institutionalism.

In the real world bureaucracy, there are additional problems such as adverse selection, team production and sub-unit autonomy. To try and limit egoistic behavior, one can attempt to hire only those who share similar preferences and goals. Yet, it is difficult to know ex-ante a subordinate's true preferences as no one would reveal their private desires if they differed from those of the boss. The second problem is team production. Often, it is more efficient to work in teams because of the gains of specialization, but it is difficult to know each individual's input. If each team member knows this, he will have the incentive to shirk, and production will fall, making all worse off. The third hierarchical problem is sub-unit autonomy, which was explored by Sen.<sup>96</sup> He states that any organization that delegates decision-making to more than one group will have incoherent outcomes for some individual preference orderings. Sub-groups within the same organization will pursue their own interests over those of the overall entity, which can lead to tribal warfare. Instead of cooperating with the other sub-units, they compete, which leads to sub-optimal outcomes at the organization level.

Information costs and specific assets exacerbate the problems of cooperation. In any large organization, the information needed to do one's job becomes difficult to obtain simply because other sub-units or agencies control or

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<sup>96</sup>Sen in Miller *Managerial Dilemmas*, 1992, 89.

develop the data-base or knowledge that is necessary. The time and expense of finding the information, requesting it, and obtaining it can be great. People realize the importance and value of their information and are reluctant to share it, unless the other actor with whom they are dealing agrees to reciprocate in some manner. This can establish a long term cooperative relation between actors with the understanding that both will exchange valuable commodities. Groups that can monopolize strategic information are in a better position to influence policy or political outcomes.

Asset specificity means placing a significant investment of time or money in an asset, either human or material, that cannot easily or cheaply be transferred to a second use.<sup>97</sup> Those who enjoy a specific asset hold unique status because few others can replicate their knowledge, experience or training. Asset specificity usually leads to vertical integration between the buyer and the seller of the good. Both can cheat on the other - the seller can withhold the product demanding a higher price, and the producer can refuse the purchase, depending on circumstances. Thus, it can be in both's interests to combine into a hierarchical authority relation to preserve the interests of both parties.

The preceding problems of cooperation within a hierarchy stem from subordinates cheating on their superiors. But the

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<sup>97</sup>See Oliver Williamson, *The Economic Institutions of Capitalism* (New York: Free Press, 1985) for a fuller discussion of asset specificity.

reverse problem is also very possible - that bosses in effect cheat on their subordinates - which makes the gains from cooperation difficult to achieve. The most likely method for the superior to cheat on his subordinate is to promise future benefits if the latter reveals his true preferences and delivers optimal performance, at which point, the boss extracts the gains from the cooperative behavior of his employee. The subordinate knows this possibility for extraction exists, and so he will not make cooperative moves and the possible gains from mutual, long-term cooperation are lost. Unless the superior can credibly demonstrate his willingness not to take advantage of his subordinate, no cooperation will take place, and both are worse off.<sup>98</sup>

#### How to Solve the Problems of Cooperation in Hierarchies

First off, we should ask ourselves how cooperation between a superior and a subordinate within a hierarchy is easier or more difficult to achieve than between two equals. We have seen that the hierarchy is a contractual bind which allows the superior to dictate the actions of his subordinate under certain circumstances. From this base, we argue that the structure of possibilities for cooperation is distinct under hierarchy because of the nature of relations between

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<sup>98</sup>It is interesting to note that the new institutionalism seems to focus on subordinate defect strategies, while Miller argues that in a hierarchical situation, the superior is more likely to cheat and kill off the possibilities of cooperation.

boss and underling. First, the subordinate can be fired by his boss, which gives the latter structural power over bargaining. Inequality of position must be taken into account. Cooperative outcomes are always colored by the fact that one actor has more structural ability to affect the interests of the other.

Returning to the general idea of cooperation: it is often in the best interests of both parties to cooperate even if they are unequals, because cooperation brings higher levels of production, better policy and more efficient distribution of services. As we have seen, however, cooperation is often difficult to achieve, even if it would be in the best interests of both parties in a hierarchy to do so. How can a hierarchical authority relation change incentives or at least harness them so that both the superior and subordinate can cooperate?

Game theorists, such as Axelrod, Hardin, and Taylor can give us insight into this question. All agree that it is rational to cooperate in repeated play games if one has the assurance that other players will cooperate as well. The decision to begin cooperating depends on the future pay-offs from cheating not being higher than the future income stream from cooperation. This also means that the future must not be too highly discounted so that upcoming benefits have a chance to accrue. Both players in a game must want to realize gains from cooperating and must be able to



effectively communicate their desire to do so.<sup>99</sup> Each side must also be able to recognize when the other is cheating and be able to punish the defect strategy.

If benefits do accrue from cooperation, then each can build a reputation as one who will cooperate. This reputation holds tangible value over the course of repeated play. Expectations about the other's probable behavior in uncertain circumstances can be formed and strengthened. This is a reputation.

#### Cooperation Within Groups

Cooperation is more likely in small groups where it is less difficult to monitor behavior and easier to deliver selective benefits and punishments based on performance. Within vertically organized groups, long term relationships are important, as is devising a variety of sanctions for those who stray from a cooperative strategy. Cooperation becomes rational because others within the group have a good idea of the likely behavior of the other members of the group. This promotes a culture of trust. Cooperation within a hierarchical setting revolves around the subordinate revealing private information about his preferences, and work input with the explicit promise that the gains from his cooperation will not be extracted from him by his superior.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup>Miller, *Managerial Dilemmas*, 187.

<sup>100</sup>Miller, *Managerial Dilemmas*, 195.

Still, even in the best situation, monitoring and enforcement can be costly and time consuming. To lower these costs, a leader can build up a culture around how things will be done in unforeseen circumstances. Kreps was one of the first to concentrate on "corporate culture", which he defines as a general rule of how organizations will behave in these uncertain future situations and the method for communicating this rule.<sup>101</sup> Thus the hierarchical culture can create common knowledge about how problems will be dealt with: it shapes expectations about the behavior of others, and makes reputations for cooperation valuable because it is transferable. To be effective, these culture-based rules have to be adhered to even if they impose short term costs because this proves a long term commitment to the subordinates and can hopefully play a role in generating long-term collective gains from cooperation. The leader must visibly tie his hands by delegating responsibilities and assets - this is his credible commitment - to autonomous work groups who take on the responsibility of setting their own work goals, enforcing their own quotas and sharing information among themselves.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup>David Kreps, "Corporate Culture and Economic Theory," In James Alt and Kenneth Shepsle, *Perspectives of Positive Political Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

<sup>102</sup>Kreps, "Corporate Culture," and Miller, *Managerial Dilemmas*, 228.

## From the Theoretical Literature to the Mexican Factions

With this overview of the study of cooperation and how hierarchies can help lower the likelihood of cheating, we can turn to the question: why do we see factions in the Mexican political system? This work will present a snap-shot of why individuals join and form internal political groups.

First, let us examine two different ways of looking at factions. Gary Miller in Managerial Dilemmas, gives us one clue as to why individuals in hierarchies would band together in an internal coalition. Since information is extremely valuable and scarce in policy making hierarchies, individuals join in a coalition to pool, protect and use this commodity to their members' advantage. V.O. Key, in Southern Politics, offers a more institutionally centered explanation: in a political system characterized by a predominant party (like the Democratic Party in the South of the United States before the 1940's), factions form within the dominant party, often around charismatic personalities, in response to the absence of opposition parties.

These two ways of explaining why factions form are incomplete for our purposes: the first because it ignores the overarching political institutions specific to any large organization or political regime (which it of course, does not pretend to do), and the second because it does not focus on how individuals confront their environments. This section will take both perspectives into account - how individuals'

preferences are formed and constrained by participation in a specifically ordered set of rules such as those of the Mexican political system.<sup>103</sup>

In attempting to explain why individuals within the Mexican political system join and form factions, we will examine the preferences of the actors, the central explanatory political institutions, the hierarchical environment presented by the bureaucracy, the demands this environment places on individuals, and finally alternatives to faction formation.

#### Preferences

The goals of the public officials in Mexico cannot be to simply maximize monetary benefits: bureaucrats in Mexico are some of the best educated individuals in the nation, and they could certainly be making better salaries in the private sector, but still, they choose to work for the government. (Although, by the time they reach the level of director general, their salaries and benefits can be quite impressive). Account has to be given to the desire for political power - the ability to make distribution decisions for millions of Mexicans. Because the system is relatively closed, the congress and its elected representatives have

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<sup>103</sup>Therefore, the set of political institutions in Mexico will be taken and used as explanatory variables, even though they are created by human interaction and are thus outcomes to be explained. However, we take them as a given and examine what kind of influence and constraint they form on preference formation and behavior.

little policy-making weight. The road to power is primarily through the executive bureaucracy and secondarily through high PRI posts. Furthermore, there is little circulation from private industry to public life. High ranking government officials spend their entire careers inside the national bureaucracy.<sup>104</sup>

Those who join the public sector want to advance their careers, which brings with them both larger salaries and more decision making authority. Public officials without educational qualifications or ability generally want job security. Both kinds join factions, but this chapter deals with functionaries on the elite track - those who have or will have the chance to rise to the level of director general or higher.

In the literature on bureaucracy and organization, other possible preferences of the public functionaries have been advanced. Gary Allison (1971) in his work on the American bureaucracy, believes most bureaucrats attempt to protect the institutional integrity of their agencies. William Niskanen (1971) argues for a similar bureaucratic preference - increasing the size of the specific agency's budget. In the Mexican case, both of these suppositions are incorrect. The

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<sup>104</sup> Presidents Zedillo, Salinas, de la Madrid, López Portillo, and Echeverría, had never held an elected position before becoming president of Mexico. Only Echeverría held an important PRI post (non-elected), that of *Oficial Mayor*, which in effect takes care of the money flowing through the party.

Mexican bureaucrat simply does not spend enough time in any one agency to warrant his life long devotion to it. The agency is almost never a political base from which to vie for political power over the long-term. He cannot tie his individual advancement to the fortunes of a specific agency. Therefore, he has little incentive to spend energy or time protecting his turf , since in 3 to 6 years, his turf will be elsewhere.

Another possible preference is that of a bureaucrat or politician advancing a specific policy or development plan. In several interviews with public officials in Mexico, all stated that when the president was of a neo-liberal bent, so were they, and when another president came in with different ideas, their ideas changed as well. It seems that the average Mexican public official is highly pragmatic and what interests him far more than a specific type of development strategy is surviving and advancing his career. If he should then attempt to promote a certain type of policy, then he is more able to as a sub-secretary, than as lower level bureaucrat.

For example, Jaime Serra Puche, the secretary of Commerce during Salinas term, had a known preference for a less over valued peso. Yet, he never openly pushed to devalue, even when he had an opening after the elections of August, 1994, when Zedillo had won by a large margin, and was fishing around for a new secretary of the Treasury. Serra

Puche knew Salinas did not want a devaluation during his term, and so, even though it would have to be done sooner or later, Serra Puche respected President Salinas and did not push for the harsher economic medicine until after the president was out of office.

#### The Central Political Institutions<sup>105</sup>

This section will review the central political institutions in Mexico that affect how public officials behave in their quests to advance. The first set of formal and informal rules is presidential dominance over the entire political system, but most importantly over the legislative branch of government. Policy making is made in the bureaucracy, not the Congress. The president controls the PRI and its legislators through his nomination powers. He or his people place thousands of officials in their positions at the beginning and throughout the course of the sexenio.

Votes have little political currency because the PRI has been for the greater part of this century the only party that won elections, and is able to exercise extreme fraud when necessary.

Although the Presidency is a crucial position, there is no institutionalized way to lobby (even within the ruling coalition) or campaign for the chief executive post. The

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<sup>105</sup>This section is a review of the political institutions presented in chapter two.

decision is made by the outgoing leader, sometimes in consultation with leaders of large PRI sectors and faction heads and sometimes without their participation. The PRI nominee for president holds a 100% chance of becoming the next president if past results are any indication of future outcomes.<sup>106</sup>

Groups matter. If one is not closely aligned with the president, or not the leader of a powerful faction, the chances of rising or even staying in one's position fall.

Finally, there is the issue of career mobility: a large number of public officials do not spend more than 3-6 years in the same position - they jump from one job to another with regularity. Although the jumps may be within the same ministry, often the bureaucrats change from one ministry to another within the same 'sector' of the bureaucracy, i.e., from Treasury to the Central Bank, which both belong to the financial wing of the bureaucracy.<sup>107</sup> The mobility is caused by the president's ability to remove people at the start of his term and the large turn-over this causes.

The case of Fernando Solana, now a Senator for the PRI

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<sup>106</sup>This probability has dropped since the 1988 elections in which the opposition party candidate almost beat the PRI s nominee, Carlos Salinas. The PRD has survived the sexenio, and along with the other opposition party, the PAN, is ready for the 1994 elections.

<sup>107</sup>See Centeno, "The New Cientificos," Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Yale, 1990, for more information and a description of the different types of bureaucrats and ministries within the Mexican system.



in Mexico City is illustrative. Solana has been secretary of Education, of Commerce during the sexenio of Lopez Portillo, the head of a nationalized bank during the sexenio of de la Madrid, secretary of Foreign Relations (SRE) during a large part of Salinas term, then returned to Education for 1994, before being nominated to be a senator by Zedillo.

### Individual Incentives and Mexican Institutions

How do Mexican bureaucrats and politicians solve the problems of costly information, principal agency relations, asset specificity in a set of hierarchical institutions characterized by presidential dominance, a high turn-over in high and mid-level positions, and few institutionalized routes to the executive office? Empirically, we see that many, if not most Mexican bureaucrats, elected PRI officials and party leaders join intra-factional groups called *camarillas*.

Most, if not all Mexican public functionaries choose to join factions, and many higher ranking members of the regime choose to form them. Why?

The simplest answer (Grindle 1977; Camp various dates; Smith 1977) is that one's hopes of advancing one's career increase by joining and forming factions. The public official is doing two things: he is holding onto a job at the same time he is trying to get a better one, and he has no outside political base for being in that post. Profound

turn-over at the arrival of the new president causes high mobility among public job holders and enormous uncertainty. The high mobility, as we have seen, lessens the agency's hold over the bureaucrat because he does not form a long-term base from which to jump to either the ministerial level or the presidency. Heads of ministries often are brought in to lead from outside the agency.

High uncertainty because of the lack of job security forces public officials to look for other means (other than hard work, and good performance, which are difficult to measure in the bureaucratic setting), to continue working and advancing in the bureaucracy. By entering a faction, one is basically entering into a risk-sharing agreement. One agrees to a long-term relation with one man who in turn is involved in the same sort of arrangement with a higher functionary, and so on up to the top reaches of government. A subordinate ties his career possibilities to a superior who has a wider set of contacts and a higher position which allows him to control and distribute more jobs to his followers. The underling is shifting the costs of the job search and uncertainty from himself to a superior who can better manage it.

#### Why the Subordinate Joins a Faction or, Measuring Performance

The performance of a public official, be it good or poor

is difficult to measure in any concrete sense, because there are no market forces to give an objective indicator of output. One may have put in 12 hours a day, six days a week (which is common enough in the Mexican bureaucracy), but is the work good? Although some objective measure of input exists, it is difficult to build up a reputation for good performance outside one's bureau or agency. The ambitious official cannot simply work his way up the ministry's ladder because of the constant circulation among mid and top people. Even if the bureaucrat is low enough not to be replaced, he will have to establish a new relation with every superior who revolves through, but this reputation will have little value unless it can be used, because appointment decisions are not made by one's immediate boss, but by the members of the president's circle and other ministers. Therefore, unless one joins a group, the value of a good reputation - for good work, loyalty, and discipline - falls drastically as it cannot be transferred for future use.

The bureaucrat has to establish a long-term relation with someone who has the connections with those who do make appointment decisions. One has to be able to prove to the superior that one is capable and hardworking, and in turn the boss needs to prove to his subordinate that he will exchange positive performance with increasingly good positions.

By shifting search costs to the superior, the subordinate is increasing his chance of continuing in the

constant climb to the top of the Mexican political system. The boss is responsible for finding, obtaining, and providing positions for his people : that is his end of the bargain, and it is an important one, since without him, the lower-level official would have few avenues for signalling and proving his capabilities in a sprawling bureaucracy where jobs are shuffled every six years.

The arrangement between the superior and subordinate benefits the latter in clear ways, yet there are also costs, which at times can be as high as losing one's future career possibilities because one's boss chooses the wrong pre-candidate in the presidential race, or makes other grave mistakes, which freezes him out of career advancement. The subordinate therefore does not eliminate risk by joining a faction, but rather he lowers his costs of job searching by delivering these responsibilities to another who is better able to take them on.

The subordinate can also form a loose, secondary network of friends, colleagues and associations, which serves as shield should the primary faction fail. This secondary network is a also a mechanism to spread risk, because even if the primary group fails to provide positions, the actor can fall back on the secondary group to find a job in the public sector. These sorts of jobs may not be as optimal as those

found by the primary group<sup>108</sup>, but they serve as waiting areas until something better comes up.

Political Groups and the Connections Between the National and State Levels.

One issue which is not much discussed is the link that the factions provide between politicians at the state and national levels. State politics have always mattered in Mexico, in large part because the national political institutions were weak for so long. Even though the regime has centralized power enormously, its leaders, especially the president and the Secretary of Gobernación need to direct and manage political events at the state level, where after all, the majority of Mexicans live.

Since elections among competing parties do not decide who will govern in the states, the president is also responsible for choosing. How does the president choose? Who among all these people will get the job (either of Governor, Senator, Congressman, state, and municipal leaders)? The political groups one sees at the national level are often based in state-level politics, in the sense that the leader of a national faction rose up from state level politics, or began at the national level and has retired to the state level to continue in politics.

For example, Fernando Ortiz Arana rose up from the

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<sup>108</sup>Interview, mid-level public functionary, September, 1992.

political groups in his home state Querétaro, to become a serious presidential pre-candidate after Colosio was shot. Colosio, on the other hand, did not reach prominence through state level politics, but once he had become important nationally, he was able to manipulate politics in his home state. Other politicians return to govern their "homes"<sup>109</sup> after they have fallen from national preeminence. After Alfonso Martínez Domínguez was fired as Mayor of Mexico, he later became Governor of his home state of Nuevo León.

The president is in a long term game with leaders of the national political groups, and those at the state level. The national leaders can either *impose* non-aligned politicians on certain states as a way of both rewarding the politician, or controlling the intra-state play of political groups. When the president does choose a state politician to hold an important post in, for example, Puebla, he is benefitting the entire political group, which harms other state-level groups. A good part of the job of Gobernación is to keep abreast of the movements of the political groups within the states, and to know whom to reward and whom to castigate in the game of distributing political positions at the state level.

The best of all possible positions is to head up a strong state group, while at the same time fostering connections with the powerbrokers at the national level. A

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<sup>109</sup>In the North at least, people from the same states are known as paisanos, or those from the same country.

few examples stand out: Victor Cervera Pacheco, who is from the Yucatán, was Secretary of Agrarian Reform under Salinas, is now running for Governor of his state, and was able to place other Governors much the same way that Carlos Hank González has kept the flanks of Mexico City under control in return for the right to place his people in positions in the State of Mexico (which surrounds Mexico City on three sides), and winning posts at the national level.

To follow up on this idea of the importance of the states in national level politics, we examine in the following table whether Senatorial candidates for the PRI (1994) are primarily from the state or national level. Do they rise to the Senate from the state, or *fall into* it from the center?<sup>110</sup>

Table 4.1 PRI Senators Powerbases: State or National

Of a total of 64 Senators, we were able to find information on 48 of them, which leads us to believe that those who we did not find were primarily (although not totally) based on the state level.

25/48	were based on the state level and
12/48	were openly on the national level, and
11/48	had mixed careers.

The following is a break down of previous experience

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<sup>110</sup>We define the difference intuitively: if the senatorial candidate in question has served the great majority of his career working in state posts, we deem him a state person; conversely, if he has worked mostly in national level positions, we call him a "national".

of the PRI candidates for the Senate.<sup>111</sup>

- 25 had been Congressmen;
- 7 had been General Secretaries of their states  
(this is second in command under the  
Governor);
- 4 had been Director Generals in the nat.  
bureaucracy;
- 3 had been Governors of their states;
- 3 had been Secretary Generals of the PRI;
- 3 had been under-secretaries under Salinas;
- 3 had been Senators;
- 2 had been Presidents of the PRI;
- 2 (at least) had been cabinet members;
- 2 were openly CTM candidates (Mexico and Jalisco).

From this chart we discover two points; that the Senate is partly a dumping ground for PRI members who are in semi-retirement, but that another larger section of the deliberative body is made up of those who have risen from the state level, and for whom the Senate is probably the highest post they will reach.

Thus, we have to take into account how the state level factions: 1. connect national politics to the states; 2. create a pool of candidates for lower level political positions; 3. give national politicians a place to begin and retire; and 4. allow the president a way of controlling the complicated political movements going on underneath the national level.

Why do their superiors form factions? What benefits do they derive from forming small informal --

<sup>111</sup>The numbers will not add up because some held many previous positions. This is to give one the idea of where a typical senator comes from.



hierarchies in a system where the president chooses thousands of top posts and no institutionalized mechanisms exist for competing over the official party's nomination for president? The new president chooses his most important cabinet ministers from the closest members of his faction, and others ministers from among the leaders of the other important factions.

*Table 4.2 Cabinet Membership in Groups, 1995 (Selected)*

Cabinet Member	Position	Group
Santiago Oñate	STPS	Zedillo
Esteban Moctezuma Labastida	Gobernación	Zedillo (Labastida)
Serra Puche	SCT	de la Madrid
Ortiz Martínez	SHCP	Salinas
Carlos Rojas	SHCP	Córdoba-Salinas
Ignacio Pichardo	Sedesol	Salinas
Oscar Espinosa	SEMIP	Hank González
Jos Gurría	Mayor	Aspe? Hank?
	SRE	Aspe?

These people, in turn, have the authority to place thousands of officials in positions (with the president's approval), both within their own ministry and in other ministries as well. Thus, to advance to the highest reaches of the bureaucracy, (from which the next president will be chosen), the ambitious bureaucrat will either be a close member of the next president's faction or lead a strong group himself.

Carlos Hank González, secretary of first tourism and then agriculture under Salinas, is a good example of another phenomenon: that of a politician who uses his political

positions to become rich, and then who uses this wealth to retain political power. Hank González became rich when he used his own business to build up the infrastructure of the State of Mexico when he was governor during the sexenio of Echeverría. When López Portillo needed an ally to stop Echeverría's attempt to influence his presidency, the new president called on Hank González to use his media contacts to push the former president out of the political arena. Then Hank was given the job of mayor of Mexico City, from which he was able to become even richer on the construction contracts. The subordinate was given a task, and when he completed it, he was rewarded.

There is another angle of this same question: in this particular system, why does a superior become a patron who must turn hierarchical subordinates into clients? What does he need from them and why? In a system of constant job-switching, tied to high turn over at the top-level, a superior needs to be assured of well-trained, hardworking assistants, whose specialized assets of knowledge and experience allow the boss to perform well in a number of different policy arenas. But since he changes jobs frequently, the superior cannot make long lasting relations with his subordinates unless he takes them with him and places them in crucial posts in his new agency. If the boss can monopolize scarce talents, education or knowledge by locking certain people into long-term exchange relations,

then he has an advantage over his competitors, and a way of controlling valuable information at the same time.

Despite the constant circulation, the boss will be able to depend on certain individuals to work for the group's interests because if the group does well, so does the individual. But there is a collective action problem here - each actor will have the incentive to shirk, and since all would do the same, the group's possibilities would decline. A long-term, reciprocal relationship would have to be nurtured, which would make repeated games and future benefits possible. A range of punishment options would have to be created in the face of cheating between subordinate and superior, such as not placing a subordinate in the best position possible, while not abandoning him altogether, make cooperation possible in the long run. A sense of trust between the boss and his people is built up over time as both sides play repeated series of games. The subordinate has to be wary of the boss's ability to cheat on the agreement as well: for example, if the subordinate works diligently, but the boss does not place him well over a period of time, then the jefe is abusing the trust of his worker, and the worker has to be able to punish his superior.

#### Loyalty and Discipline

In almost every interview with public functionaries, the

terms discipline and loyalty come up repeatedly as the most important resources a subordinate can deliver to his superior, especially in a long-term political relationship. In the Mexican system, loyalty means not divulging information about one's boss, responding to his directives immediately, even at the cost of one's family life, and working extremely long hours if needed.<sup>112</sup> Discipline means incurring short-term costs, such as remaining in a sub-optimal position, if the faction's leader requests this, with the understanding that in the long-term, this sacrifice will be repaid.

Obviously, for a subordinate to be willing to deliver these kinds of benefits to his superior and incur short-term penalties, he must expect future returns to be greater than the present costs. Therefore, to extract this kind of behavior from underlings in the present, the boss has to be able to commit and signal this commitment in a credible fashion to a long collaboration with his subordinate that will yield rewards for both. A boss reputation for fair dealing with his people has great value, for without it, he would be hard pressed to recruit more. This reputation value

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<sup>112</sup>Political actors, politicians and bureaucrats get into their offices around 10:00, read the newspapers, make phone calls, and go to lunch around 3-4:00. Lunch in Mexico is the main meal of the day, and is the best time to make deals. Restaurants all over the city are full of people buying, begging, and reassuring. Work resumes around 5-6:00 pm and can go on in higher level offices until 10-11:00 pm, as a regular ritual.

acts as a break on his possible cheating strategy. As an example of retribution underlings can take on their bosses, consider the case of an ex-director of a research office in the Bank of Mexico. When this man left the Bank of Mexico to go to another post, he found it impossible to bring even a few of his former personnel with him because he was considered erratic and authoritarian. The former subordinates had all made contacts with other offices, and went to work with new leaders. Their former boss had to reform his work team in the new office, which he was able to do over the span of a few years, in large part because he could pay them well.

#### The Sexenio Pattern

The relation between superior and subordinate has to be strong enough to last longer than the six year presidential term, when the temptation to cheat is the greatest. When pre-candidates are fighting over the PRI's official nomination, one factor in their possible success is sheer numbers of supporters inside the PRI and bureaucracy. This is when offers for future employment fly around the government corridors. For both the leader of a faction and a follower, the temptation is great to leave one faction and align with another whose leader, they believe, has a greater chance at becoming the next leader of Mexico.

The sexenio, which gives the chief executive enormous

appointment and decision-making power creates strong inducements for splitting off and re-forming alliances and coalitions with other groups within the regime. But to be an effective political bargainer, the high ranking political bureaucrat has to be assured that his people are firmly behind him. This creates strong inducements for factions in which the leader can be assured of "his people" continuing in the group, despite the pressures to split off and perhaps capture a better deal elsewhere. Of course, this pressure is not too strong, because no one can know who will be the next president.

#### Breadth of Contacts

If an official wishes to advance his position in the succession shuffle, he must work for his chosen pre-candidate. The more services he can offer, the better his chances are for gaining the trust of the possible PRI candidate for president. These services include holding dinners, writing newspaper articles, staging study meetings, distributing posts, blocking rival s policy advances - anything that makes the pre-candidate look more effective in the eyes of the sitting president. The effective pre-candidate will be able to harness the forces of many public officials spread across the different sectors of the bureaucracy and reach into the PRI hierarchy. In return for these services, positions are expected to be delivered.

A second reason why high-ranking leaders stretch their web of clients throughout the bureaucracy and party is the need to gather, control and protect valuable information about what one is doing and disseminate damaging details about one's rival. In a system where every policy advance is a political instrument, successes and failures in the policy (and newly important, the electoral) arena have immediate and sometimes long-lasting political ramifications. For example, when the Treasury Secretary made a speech about the "Ingenious Myths" of under and unemployment in Mexico, he was considered burned (quemado) for his lack of political savvy. Functionaries in all societies have to stop damaging press and promote a good image, but in Mexico, the problem is more difficult: the elite circle is very small, (the top-reaches of the bureaucracy and party), and mistakes can be exposed and magnified quickly and cheaply.

Controlling the flow of information is crucial, but leakage is always a problem with bureaucratic underlings who may be offered enormous rewards for revealing damaging details about their superiors. How can a superior control his information while tapping into that of others? The superior has to offer his people enough incentives to be discrete - to give the party line to everyone except one's boss.<sup>113</sup> By offering subordinates long-term agreements, the

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<sup>113</sup>The Mexicans have a term for this: el rollo which means, loosely, to talk a lot, with beautiful, heartfelt phrases, while revealing nothing of substance.

boss can stem a great deal of negative information, and by placing one's own people throughout the bureaucracy and PRI, instead of concentrating them in one ministry, the leader is able to capture a wider array of tips, data, and gossip about his colleagues' background, group affiliation, support, policy advances, and alliance formation.

In this section, we have discussed the various reasons *why* public officials at all levels of the Mexican politics would want to enter into an authoritative, long-term hierarchical relation in order to improve their career prospects. An enhanced reputation which is transferable into future circumstances, protection against unforeseen contingencies, and lowering the costs of job searches every three to six years, are all different aspects of the overall explanation. Our second aim was to emphasize why cooperation was possible despite barriers. We argue that long-term relations, even across sexenios, allows group members to cooperate. So too, does monitoring and the culture of mutual trust offered by a culture of work relations built up over the last 60 years.

### Conclusions

In this chapter, we have examined why cooperative, hierarchical, career advancing groups exist under the set of political rules and constraints in Mexico. Factions are seen as a way that individuals attempting to rise to positions of



decision making power cooperated, given the constraints presented both by Mexico's formal and informal political institutions and by the problems of any organization. We found that high information costs and asymmetries, as well as egoistic, self-interested behavior and fear of being cheated upon were important environmental and human variables.

In discussing why the factions exist, two options are posed from two perspectives: should the subordinate join an internal political group or not and should a superior form one or not. The costs and benefits of these options were measured (to the best of our ability) and compared to understand why individuals within this specific system would join career advancing political groups. Superiors also gained by forming these support groups by lowering the costs of information gathering, monopolizing scarce technical and political talent, and protecting themselves against their subordinates' cheating strategies. All of these resources are important in both day to day policy work and the succession process.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### JAPANESE AND MEXICAN FACTIONS COMPARED

In this chapter we are not simply interested in why factions exist, but also how they differ and why. The Mexican factions can be placed alongside the Japanese factions in terms of degrees of institutionalization which can be determined by how long the groups last, penalties for switching one's affiliation, and openness of membership identification.

We attempt in this chapter to give a finer texture to the picture of camarillas in the last chapter and to guard against the criticism that factions or political groups exist in all political systems by examining how three examples of internal career-advancing political groups differ. As in chapter three, we are trying to understand how specific institutional constraints and opportunity structures create incentives which lead public functionaries to join and form different types of internal political groupings.

What do we gain by making this comparison between two countries that are so different in terms of culture, rates of economic growth and political outcomes. We begin to answer this question by admitting that the comparison is not a perfect one. Mexico and Japan are similar in that both have

(or had in the case of Japan) dominant party systems, strong bureaucracies and intra-party factions. The two nations, as we have pointed out, are also obviously very different as well. In terms of the dependent variable, both party/bureaucracies are riven with factional groups, yet these groups are not organized exactly the same. Therefore, we have neither a clear most similar or most different case of comparison. However, despite the problems, we believe that a fruitful comparison can be made between two dominant party systems where opposition parties do not win the right to lead the country with intra-regime factions to try and determine what it is about the electoral system and internal party politics that leads to different types of factions as an outcome.

The Japanese factions will be examined and compared to the Mexican to explain why the camarillas are not as institutionalized as the Japanese political groups. Both types of political groups extend from the bureaucracy to the legislature to their respective party headquarters; both have some contact with outside societal actors; both influence policy-making in their regimes - yet all are different on the measures of institutionalization.

We aim to highlight a neglected aspect of the previous chapter - that of electoral incentives. In the Japanese case, the system of multi-member single district voting in large part explains why political factions exist. Internal

party rules help explain why the factions take different forms, depending on the rules. The comparison with Japan allows us to deepen our understanding of important variables that influence the formation and behavior of faction in Mexico, as well as to think about Mexico's future under more democratic institutions.

### The Japanese Factions

Most authors writing on Japanese factions agree that Japanese factions exist within the LDP because of the electoral system. Thayer points out that the importance of intra-party nomination rules for "locking-in" factional members into long-term, exclusive, known relations with their factional leaders.

The Japanese political system is based on a constitution which is a mix of British parliamentarianism and American political liberties. The party in power elects a Prime Minister (PM) who forms a cabinet and is responsible to the bicameral legislature, the Diet. The Lower House holds most of the decision-making power in the legislature as it is responsible for amending and passing budgets and treaties and can veto Upper House bills.<sup>114</sup> Most Prime Ministers and cabinet ministers come from the Lower House, and the great majority come from the Diet (very few ministers are brought

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<sup>114</sup>Takeshi Ishida and Ellis Krauss, *Democracy in Japan* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989), 39-41.

in from outside the public sector). General elections are held when the PM dissolves the Diet or when a vote of no confidence brings the PM down. Because the PM can hold the party presidency for two consecutive two years terms, most governments last four years, although the Dietmen of the Lower House face reelection every two years.

The role of the Diet tends toward ratifying policy instead of initiating new programs. The party in power from 1955 to 1993, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the bureaucracy tend to predominate in the decision making process over the legislature.<sup>115</sup> Bills are usually hammered out in formal and informal talks between LDP leaders in the Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC) and functionaries in the mid and high levels of the bureaucracy. New policy initiatives reach the Diet already agreed upon, leaving the LDP Dietmen little room for maneuver.

Japan's electoral laws call for a mid-sized multi-member constituency system in which each voter has a single vote. Voters cannot transfer their vote among candidates of the same party, and there is no weighted voting. To win a majority of seats, the LDP must nominate two or more candidates in each electoral district. Thus candidates must compete with each other for the same pool of conservative

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<sup>115</sup>Ibid, 39.

voters.<sup>116</sup>

The HouseÇs 511 seats are divided among 130 constituencies. Most districts have three, four or five seats. If a party endorses too many candidates per district, it splits the conservative vote and allows the opposition parties to win a seat, so it is important that the LDP control the endorsement process and allow just the adequate number of candidates to run as representative of the party. There is no primary system for deciding who will be the LDPÇs official candidates - this is decided shortly before the election by party leaders in Tokyo.<sup>117</sup> Those conservative candidates who do not win the LDPÇs endorsement usually run as independents and can win. When they begin the legislative term, they immediately join the LDP ruling block.

The bureaucracy is led by the PM and his cabinet ministers who are in turn responsible to parliament through a possible no-confidence vote. The bureaucracy was famous for many years as a relatively autonomous, highly efficient and separate branch of government.<sup>118</sup> Now, however, the LDPÇs

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<sup>116</sup>Masaru Kohno, "Rational Foundations for the Organization of the LDP in Japan," *World Politics* vol 44, no3 (April 1992), 383 and Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 91.

<sup>117</sup>Nathaniel Thayer, *How the Conservatives Rule Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 139.

<sup>118</sup>See Meg McKean, "State Strength and the Public Interest," ed. Yoni, *The Political Dynamics of Contemporary Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), for a full discussion of the relative balance of power between the state and societal groups in Japan, as well as an update on the

PARC (the policy making branch of the LDP) consults, negotiates, and fights with the distinct ministries under its charge almost every step of the policy process. Some ex-bureaucrats revolve into the legislative and through the PARC committees after retirement and thus add to party members' knowledge and expertise in policy matters.

Elite bureaucrats are among the best educated in nation. They enter through civil service exams, and once an official has entered a ministry, he will spend his bureaucratic career in the same agency until he retires. Generations tend to advance together with three to four standouts who go on to reach top bureau chiefs and administrative vice ministers (the highest non-elected post in a ministry, directly under the Minister's office). Once one of generation reaches the post of administrative vice minister, the rest of his entering class retires together, from anywhere between 45-55 years of age. The best of them then go on to run for elective office as LDP candidates.

#### Factional Structure

The LDP is a party made up of factions, whose interactions help determine who becomes Prime Minister. Kohno writes that the factions are the central liaison between the LDP and the individual politician.<sup>119</sup> The PM in

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literature.

<sup>119</sup>Kohno "Rational Foundations," 1992, 369.

turn, determines - along with factional participation - the nature of the cabinet, the highest party offices and those of the PARC, and often the policies coming out of the bureaucracy. The factions form around personalities in the party and Diet, and create a network of members at all levels of the Diet, party and bureaucracy. The groups also have strong ties to business groups which fund their electoral activities.<sup>120</sup> The factional groups are "formal political entities" with regular meetings, established headquarters, published membership lists, and clear hierarchical authority structures.<sup>121</sup> The relations between leader and follower can last for over 30 years (the political life of a politician), and some have survived since the formation of the LDP in the 1950s. The leader and follower in these very institutionalized sub-party groups relate in a clear long-term exclusive exchange relation. The boss delivers political and financial resources needed by the rising politician to win elections, gain party and cabinet seats, and in this way, advance his career. In return for these crucial 'favors', the follower or client becomes an undisputed member of the faction where the number of members of a group determine its strength in the crucial vote for the president of the LDP, who then becomes (until 1993) the PM of

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<sup>120</sup>Charles Bingham, *Japanese Government: Leadership and Management* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 9.

<sup>121</sup>Thayer, *How the Conservatives Rule*, 1969, 15.



Japan. We shall examine this relationship in greater detail to determine why individual politicians and bureaucrats join factions in the Japanese political system.

The leaders of the LDP factions fight over the post of president of the party, who then becomes PM, chooses his cabinet and runs the executive bureaucracy. No faction has enough members to win the majority of the 500 votes necessary to win the party presidency balloting, so coalitional agreements are crucial to electing the LDP president. Bingham writes that Japanese politicians rise to the top of the political game by their ability to put together factional alliances.<sup>122</sup> The factions raise and distribute campaign funds, and often one faction raises for its own purposes up to 1/3 the amount of money the LDP as a party controls. The faction helps get an aspiring politician an LDP endorsement. Once the faction's member has won his seat, the faction, not the party, distributes resources which the politician uses in his district to assure his reelection.

The factions are responsible for distributing governmental posts - the PM fills his cabinet to maintain a delicate balance among the competing groups. Party leadership posts are also handed out with an eye toward placating or punishing factional leaders. The most important party policy making body, the PARC, is filled by LDP Dietmen, and its leaders are also placed by factional struggles and

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<sup>122</sup>Bingham, *Japanese Government*, 1989, 10.

agreements.<sup>123</sup>

The factions also link the bureaucracy to the party leadership and Diet. Bureaucratic agencies depend on the party factions for political and legislative support in the negotiating of differences over bureaucratic policy which is tossed back and forth between the PARC committees and the agency divisions, to be fully agreed on before it ever reaches the floor of the Diet for a vote.

Factions are able to get footholds in the agencies that are responsible for distributive, regulatory and extractive issues that can transfer resources to their voters and business supporters.<sup>124</sup> Factional leaders cultivate relations with certain up and coming bureaucrats who are able to or will be able to push the faction's interest. On the party side, cabinet ministers and PARC leaders are able to help their people in the bureaucracy stay on elite promotion tracks from which they can rise to positions in which they can aid the faction.<sup>125</sup>

As the bureaucrats move up, they come into greater and more frequent contact with LDP and diet members and begin to form factional ties. When bureaucrats retire, the best and most successful of them who have formed these

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<sup>123</sup>Thayer, *How the Conservatives Rule*, 1969, 17.

<sup>124</sup>Yung Park, *Bureaucrats and Ministers in Contemporary Japanese Government* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 153.

<sup>125</sup>ibid, 153.

party/bureaucratic connections are encouraged to run for the Diet with the backing of ÇtheirÇ faction. One fourth to one third of the Diet is made up of ex-bureaucrats and their presence is stronger in higher party offices.<sup>126</sup> Former officials become conduits of information between their ex-ministry, the factions and the legislative or party committee for which they work.

#### Levels of Institutionalization of the Japanese Factions

Why do the leaders of factions demand such strict, long-term, open adherence to one faction and why would a fledgling politician agree to join such a strict system of factions? The factions become highly institutionalized under the Japanese political system because of the manner in which LDP party presidents are chosen and the nature of the electoral system. Becoming the leader of the country means oneÇs faction will have extra ability to forage for resources, and Dietmen who belong to the group and hold important posts will have fewer problems with reelection and more money to expand the faction.

Party presidents are chosen by majority vote every two years by 500 LDP Dietmen and state level party leaders. Thayer notes that the best way for a politician to win this position is by appealing to as many of the 500 voters as possible. But asking for these votes is not enough. To

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<sup>126</sup>Ibid, 154.

assure himself of a person's vote, the factional leader can forge a relationship with him in which the leader delivers scarce and valuable resources that the other politician needs in order to survive and prosper in his political career: money, positions and party endorsement.

Even if the factional leader is not running for party president himself, his members, in coalition with the other faction, help win the vote because no single faction is large enough to carry the majority alone. The leading politician has to assure the other leader that he can deliver his people's votes. In either case, the group's leader has to be assured of a certain number of ballots being placed properly.

The relation between leader and follower has to be long-term under this system because party presidents are chosen every two years, so the factions have to survive a long series of tests to be effective. If the members were not locked into one faction, they could shop around during the pre-voting period to ascertain which of the candidates of the party presidency would offer them a better deal. Factional identification and reciprocal responsibility has to be strong enough to stop this kind of bargaining, otherwise members could sell their votes to the highest bidder. In this clock-in factional system, the subordinates gain from voting correctly, especially if the faction wins the LDP presidency. Over long periods of time, the individual members gain more from participating in the faction than if they had sold their

votes to the highest bidder at every election.

Instead of individuals shifting around their votes at every party leadership vote, the factions change alliance formation according to who offers the best possibilities for the faction. The internal political groups in Japan are not known for their ideological bases, so any group can support any other in potential alliances to win the presidency.

We now see why it would be in the interest of Japanese political leaders to lock in followers to long-term openly identifiable relationships that can withstand consecutive two year challenges to loyalty and discipline. But this does not explain why followers are willing to sell themselves into what amounts to factional bondage. Part of this question revolves around examining what the average politician needs to win elections and advance up the political ladder.

The Japanese electoral system is based on the multi-member, single vote system. Districts send usually between 3-5 deputies to the House of Representatives. In a district with three seats, the top three vote-getters are sent to the Diet. This means the LDP almost always runs more than one candidate in a district and thus, the battle over who of the hopefuls will win the party's endorsement is strong. This decision is made by the LDP's leadership in Tokyo. But if the politician is new, how does he gain the attention of the national party headquarters? Often, the factional leader agrees to use his influence to gain the new-candidate's

endorsement.

Because the LDP runs more than one candidate in a given electoral district, political hopefuls have to concentrate against their own party brethren to capture the more or less stable number of conservative voters. Because the voters cast their ballots for a candidate's name, and not a party, the LDP identification matters less than what each politician has to offer, but without being a LDP politician, (and by extension a member of the PARC), he will have less to offer in specific, district wide benefits.

This leads to two resource problems for the potential Dietman, and those running for re-election. The first is that campaigns are expensive and few if any politicians can put up their own money. They are also barred from mass fundraising. This leaves the politician with two options: he can either turn to businessmen for contributions, or he can turn to political groups who have ready funds to distribute. Without these funds, there would be little hope for election. Most turn to the national level factions.

Once the politician is elected for a two year congressional term, the pressure for particularistic resources increases. Because the candidates are voted in as individuals and not as party members,<sup>127</sup> they are forced to promise district-wide divisible goods and benefits. The politician fights in the legislature to channel public works

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<sup>127</sup>Kohno, "Rational Foundations," 1992, 385.

projects into his electoral home, and at the same time, he must pay for a thousand smaller favors such as parties, religious festivals, mourning gifts, etc., that help remind his constituents that he is working for them. Again, he must turn to a national level group to deliver these funds.

To secure the public works projects for his district, the LDP Dietman must win party (especially in the PARC) and bureaucratic posts, such as minister or parliamentary vice minister (PVM), that allow him to direct resource allocation to his constituents. But to rise to this level depends on a relationship with the PM who distributes the top posts of the Diet, LDP and bureaucracy. Thus we return full-circle to the election of the party president. If a politician helps his leader become the leader of the LDP, he himself will benefit in his own career.

We have examined how politically important players in the Japanese system advance their electoral and bureaucratic careers in a system without a primary system for nominating the dominant party's leader, where elections matter, and LDP candidates fight with each other in electoral battles in order to better understand why extremely institutionalized factions exist. These factions have taken over the roles of the party in electing candidates and in negotiating government policy. Thayer writes, "If the party really wants to eliminate the role of the faction, then it should do what the factions are doing. It should offer its endorsements

early and then work on the candidates' behalf."<sup>128</sup> Since party leadership posts are filled by factional leaders, this will never happen, and in fact the system functioned well until one LDP faction split away and helped form an opposition government in 1993.

The manner in which one chooses the leader of the government, as well as the shape of the electoral rules creates an incentive structure in which those who wish to advance their careers find it advantageous to not only form and join factions, but to do so in an extremely institutionalized fashion, i.e., long-term, openly identifiable, and hierarchically-based, internal career advancing political groups.

#### Changes in the Japanese Factional System

Kohno (1992) advances an interesting argument about changes in the factional system in Japan over the past 30 years. His central point is that internal conflict necessitated the search for more institutionalized and agreed upon methods of managing intra-LDP factional disputes over the distribution of important party and cabinet posts. We can use the study of these changes to better understand 1. how the Mexicans were able to moderate intra-regime strife over the same problems, and 2. why this has broken down.<sup>129</sup>

The author notes three central changes since the 1950s

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<sup>128</sup>Thayer, *How the Conservatives Rule*, 1969, 139.

<sup>129</sup>We will look at this second point in the conclusions.



when the factional system was first set up in Japan: first, there are fewer factions; second, each faction holds more members (and as a corollary to this point, a higher percentage of LDP politicians belong to factions); and third, there are more formal *intra* and *inter*-factional relations which better manage the distribution of resources needed to win elections so that factional disputes do not threaten the fabric of LDP domination.<sup>130</sup>

We will concentrate on the third and most important change as we believe this was a central component to the stability of Japan's one-party democracy. Before the 1970's the winning faction got most and the best slots in the cabinet and PARC. This created enormous tensions within the LDP as it forced the losing factions to begin immediately to plot to bring down the PM. It was difficult to convince the winning factions not to shut out the losers, because they had no clear way of determining what would be acceptable to the loser to moderate his attacks on the winner, and because the winner had no assurance that if he did give the loser some positions, that this action would be reciprocated when the losing factions gained power under a new PM.

These problems were in large part assuaged by the slow introduction of the *proportionality rule*, in which factions get

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<sup>130</sup>One could argue that this is exactly what happened in Japan in 1993: inter-factional infighting drove the LDP "reformers" into the opposition, thus weakening the LDP majority enough in congress to end its domination of the political system. Japan is still reeling from 1993.

positions based on the number of affiliated LDP members in their respective ranks.<sup>131</sup> By the 1980s, this rule had become well accepted and followed, thus allowing different factions to cooperate and lessen LDP infighting.

Intra-faction battles were also toned down by a similar rule: *seniority*. Those within a certain faction who had won the most number of elections were almost automatically given the more important PARC and cabinet positions, which allowed them to better service their electoral district. There could be little argument over which factional member got which position if something as fair as seniority was determining winners. One could argue that by applying agreed upon and fair rules of distribution - proportionality and seniority - the LDP was able to lower the seriousness of intra-party infighting and thus remain in power as a predominant party longer than it otherwise would have.

#### Mexican Factions Compared to Japanese

The Japanese and Mexican factions differ greatly on the levels of institutionalization. The Mexican are less institutionalized in that they do not have openly known membership lists, and that the Japanese factional discipline in governing seems greater.<sup>132</sup> In Mexico, one's affiliation

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<sup>131</sup>Kohno, "Rational Foundations," 1992, 374.

<sup>132</sup>For example, it would be next to impossible to study whether the number of factions and of members of factions dropped over the last thirty years in Mexico, because it is

is a closely guarded piece of information, and seasoned observers must guess at the perennial question: who is with whom? In policy disputes, it is also not clear whether battles are fought over ideas, over factional lines, or some combination of the two. Another important difference is that in Japan, the factions are primarily based in the party hierarchy, not the bureaucracy. The LDP Dietmen join the factions to promote their legislative careers, not long-term bureaucratic offices. Finally, although a dominant party has governed since 1955, elections are fair, and opposition party candidates do get elected, at times at the expense of the LDP candidates.

Despite these differences, the Japanese factions and the Mexican camarillas share several important similarities. Each internal career-advancing group is characterized by a hierarchical exchange relation in which jobs and favors are given in return for reducing uncertainty: the boss can better predict how 'his people' will behave in any given situation because he has effectively built a long-term game in which actors' (whose identity changes infrequently) future benefits are tied to mutual cooperation. In both systems, public officials, both elected and appointed, rise to higher positions through a combination of proven competence and factional membership. So although we will be examining how

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almost impossible to know how many factions there were in Mexico now or in 1965.

the two types of groups differ, we must also realize in how many ways they resemble each other. These similarities exist even though nominally the two political regimes are quite different, which leads us to highlight the ways in which they are alike in terms of variables which cause factions to exist: a dominant party system; strong bureaucracy; and closed channels to legislative and bureaucratic decision-making power.

The intra-regime factions of both nations appear to be a way to distribute posts within the dominant party system, where opposition parties do not take over the reigns of government, or co-rule. Now we will turn to how the two systems differ to understand the variation in 'type' of faction.

Mexican government officials who wish to become governors or national legislators most often face their most difficult hurdle to gaining office in winning the PRI's nomination, not in beating their opponents from opposition parties. A governor's seat is a politically valuable commodity which is distributed by the president, sectoral leaders, presidents of the PRI and the Minister of Gobernación. The president of the Republic chooses which leader will be able to place his factional members. Here again, factional affiliation becomes one of the primary routes to top-flight public positions.

Furthermore, for the president, factions work; they

lower information costs when choosing public officials and governors, and they enable him to control his elite at a lower cost in time and energy. The chief executive can play one group and his leader off against another, thereby neutralizing both. He in a sense has to deal with fewer actors, which lowers his costs of governing.

The question remains as to why the Mexican factions are not as institutionalized as the Japanese. What is it about the political institutions which structures incentives to form different kinds of factions? Probably the central answer in this puzzle is how the Japanese versus Mexican party members choose their next leader.

A clear decision rule governs the outcome of the LDP party president election: a majority of 500 must vote for the future leader. As we have seen, factional leaders need to "lock in" followers to vote in masse, either for their factional boss, or for the man to whom their leader has promised the vote. This forces leaders into clear, open, long-term alliances with their followers - otherwise the solitary LDP Dietman would be happy to jump around, promising his vote to the highest bidder. Likewise, the Dietman agrees to this long-term, open affiliation because he must run an expensive election every two years with few fund-raising alternatives other than the party faction, and because of the multi-member district system, which leads to contests among candidates of the dominant party. It is clear membership in

the faction that gets LDP Dietman elected, not the party.

Thus, the issue of re-election is crucial to the specific formation and structure of Japanese factions compared to Mexican camarillas. It is interesting to ask how would the factional structure in Mexico look if representatives could be reelected: would this cause the camarillas to be more institutionalized, or would reelection detract enough from presidential power to lessen the importance of the internal groups? Yet, as important as the issue of Diet reelection is, it seems that the rule structure for choosing the next executive affects the structure of the groups more.

In Mexico, the race for the presidency has no clear institutionalized or formal rule procedure. The president chooses his successor, sometimes in consultation with powerful sectoral and factional groups, sometimes not. The pre-candidate's groups, as we have seen, play important roles in supporting their candidate, while trying to harm the image of their competitors. Factional groups lower the costs of these shadow campaigns. Because the campaign work is done under the table and behind closed doors, and because there is no democratic voting procedure, leaders do not need or necessarily want public functionaries who are openly 'their people' to be working for them. During the 1920's, 1930's and 1940's, when the internal groups and associations within the governing coalition had some sort of veto power, groups'

membership identification was more open. Once the presidents were able, over the course of several sexenios, to impose their absolute vote on the choice of the following president, open factional identification fell. Now, pre-candidates cannot afford to openly pressure the sitting president - this is often how they lose the nomination, so it simply does not pay to force skiddish followers to pledge public allegiance to one group.

The followers themselves can follow two non-mutually exclusive strategies: first, they can (and seemingly must) join the primarily exclusive factions; and second, they can at the same time form a wide net of friends and contacts, who are not in the same primary political group, but who do constitute a secondary level of connections, capable of being used should the primary group become frozen out of political action or burned by a political mistake. Thus, they have an option that their Japanese counterparts do not enjoy. But at the same time, since the factions do not seem to last as long, or hold on to members with such vigor, strict affiliation does not make as much political sense as it does in Japan. The ambitious Mexican official spreads his risks by participating in the network of friendships which allows him to 're-connect' himself to the political game should his primary group fail him. Furthermore, he has few incentives to join a open identifiable group, which holds dangers for his future career.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE ROLE OF THE POLITICAL GROUPS IN THE SUCCESSION PROCESS

This chapter will examine what the regime's internal political groups and their leaders do during the period of the presidential succession: their goals and strategies inside a game whose outcomes have been determined by the rules of the succession process (which themselves have evolved over time because of the activity of the political groups during the transferral of power from one president to another). We will examine how the rule structure of the Mexican political system, which remained essentially unchanged from 1954 to 1993, (with the exception of the 1986-1988 rupture) created a situation in which the president had enormous power to choose his successor, and in which the rival pre-candidates were seriously constrained in their range of possible alternative strategies to win the PRI's presidential nomination.

The lack of serious opposition and fair electoral procedures causes a curious phenomenon to occur: the true fight for the presidency takes place *within* the ranks of the governing regime, not at the ballot boxes. (The partial exceptions to this general rule are discussed in the Chapter 7). The rules circumscribed the political factions' and their leaders' ability to maneuver within the regime during the



succession battle, while giving the president a large space to determine his choice.

First, we will discuss the importance of the succession in the Mexican political system. Then the formal and informal rules that had governed the transfer of power will be reviewed. We will end this paper with a theoretical examination of the 'game' among the President, the pre-candidates (for the PRI's presidential nomination) and their groups under the set of rules which existed until the end of 1993.

#### What is the Presidential Succession?

Simply put, since 1934 the presidential succession in Mexico is the transferral every six years (the *sexenio*) of executive power and authority from one president of the dominant party (the PRI) to another member of this same party. Until now, the Mexican system has been unique in that the sitting president chooses his successor without following the formal rules or guidelines of his own party which dictate how this choice should be made, and who should make it. Informal rules evolved to place limits on the range of possible successors, but within these limits, the presidents of Mexico have much lee-way of decision: their fundamental goals in what is known as the most important political decision a Mexican president can make, are to choose his favorite without

splitting the governing coalition.<sup>133</sup>

As early as the 1950's, American academics recognized what the Mexicans themselves had long known: national presidential elections (and the campaigns) were not meant to give the voters a choice among candidates of parties with different electoral and policy platforms - rather, they were a manner in which the candidate could see the problems facing the nation, and come into office with the overwhelming support of the voters.<sup>134</sup>

The changeover in executive authority is important and dangerous for two reasons. In the process of giving over his power to another within the same coalition, the president's political group splits up and begins to fight among themselves for the Presidential Chair.

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<sup>133</sup>We will examine how the two clauses in this general preference are not always compatible.

<sup>134</sup>See Scott, *Mexican Government in Transition*, 1964, for more on elections in Mexico.

Table 6.1 Natural Dissolution of Salinas Group<sup>135</sup>

Member in 1982	Final Destination
Manuel Camacho Solís	Quarreled with Group over losing nomination. Out of politics for now.
Ernesto Zedillo	Threw Salinas brother in jail for Colosio's death.
Donaldo Colosio	Chosen by Salinas to replace him. Later murdered. Salinas brother charged with murder.
Pedro Aspe	Brought into Group in 1982. Pre-candidate. Stayed clean and loyal to Salinas to end. Out of politics.
Jos Córdoba	Special advisor to Salinas. Political godfather to Colosio. Out of country two days after Colosio's death. Works in IADB.
Serra Puche	Switched to Salinas when Silva Herzog out in 1985. Lost his job after December's devaluation. Out of politics.
Maria Morenos	Fought with Group early 1990's, switched to legislative side. Did well. Now leader of the PRI. Implicated in Ruiz Massieu coverup.

Those within the regime who had once owed the present

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<sup>135</sup>Granted, this is a very strange group, and many of the central rules of intra-regime engagement have been broken, but it does give one the idea of how badly the quest to replace the president divides what were once united factions.

executive their political careers must (gently) cut ties with him in order to align themselves to who will follow, and help their pre-candidate win the nomination. To be allied with the winning pre-candidate can mean access to high positions and the possibility of contending for the next succession battle. To choose badly, or be tied to a leader who has burned himself politically during the succession can mean the end of one's career, or at least a six year hiatus.

The arrival of a new executive means the renewal of the governing coalition<sup>136</sup>, and the assurance that even if one was out this sexenio, one had the possibility of building new alliances and returning in the next. This renewal also gives the new president an enormous boost within his own coalition: it is he who holds the tickets to the feast at the beginning of the term<sup>137</sup>, so regime members are forced to align themselves with him and his project.

Just as the succession is the time of greatest possibilities, it is also the moment of greatest danger for the regimen. First, internal splits over who will hold the Presidency have in the past grown into full-scale ruptures in which one or two of the Party's losers in the presidential

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<sup>136</sup>See the *Diccionario Biográfico del Gobierno Mexicano* for more on how many public officials owe their careers directly or indirectly to the president's good will. The president has a role in placing secretaries of state, subsecretaries, director generals, coordinators of assistants, among other positions.

<sup>137</sup>Jaime Castrejón, May 16, 1993, in *El Financiero*.

nomination race leave the coalition to challenge it electorally. Second, there is always the chance the opposition can win, even in elections whose rules are weighted to favor the dominant party (and these victories are more possible in the case of an internal split and exit). Therefore, the president, when making his choice, has to be conscious that when devolving his authority to another, he must choose a candidate that will cause the fewest splits in the coalition, and be at least passively accepted by the voters.

In the period from 1957 to 1985, the internal political groups of the regime were active in their attempts to gain the Presidential chair for their leader, but these activities were limited.<sup>138</sup> The role of the groups in the succession period (as will be discussed in greater detail below) depended in part on the strength of the outgoing president: if he was in control, their activities were limited (as was the case of Echeverría); if he was weak, their attacks and alliances flourished (the case of de la Madrid), although in both cases, the strategies were similar, but only carried out to greater or lesser degrees.

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<sup>138</sup>It is important to note that during this period the groups and their members were also very active after the *destape* in their attempts to gain good positions within the new PRI candidate's closest circle of people, (his *equipo*), or if they had bet on an opposing pre-candidate, their attempts to not be completely excluded from the next *sexenio*. In this chapter, because of time and space constraints, we will not be able to touch on this topic much.

## The Rules of the Game from the Mid 1950 S to 1993.

The rules which governed the presidential succession in Mexico for many years were a form of map which the pre-candidates and the sitting president followed.<sup>139</sup> The rules placed limits on the actors behavior and strategies by dictating how far their internal proselytizing could go, by lowering the number of possible pre-candidates, and by controlling the losers actions after the destape. Actors knew the possible range of outcomes, and knew what would happen to those who did not accept their defeat. The rules regulated the conflicts among the participants by channeling them into acceptable bounds that everyone understood. In short, the institutions which grew up around the transfer of power from one regime leader to another lent certainty to a difficult process upon which the participants careers depended. It became in the interests of all involved to play by these guidelines because 1. they were known and understood; 2. because the winner was not he who held the largest military force; 3. the uncertainties of returning to a factionalized system of the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionaries times were too great; and 4. most

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<sup>139</sup>The formal and informal institutions evolved after Calles brought the quarrelling regional factions under one party in 1929, were given a push by Cárdenas strengthening of the president s control over the Party, and solidified by the regime s response to the internal conflicts over the succession from 1929 to 1952.

participants, even if they lost out in the PRI's strange nomination race, gained more from staying within the coalition than they would from rupturing it.

#### The Formal Rules

The president of Mexico is elected for one six year term and can never be reelected. There is no vice-president in the Mexican system. The presidential candidate that wins a majority of votes at the national level in a direct vote takes office. The incoming Congress votes on the legality of the national vote, which enables the winner to become president in December of the election year. To be eligible to be a presidential candidate, the nominee must be (this will hold true until the elections of 2000) the child of parents born in Mexico and cannot have held public office, either as a Cabinet minister, under-secretary or director general of a Ministry for the six months leading up to election day.<sup>140</sup>

These rules are costly to alter (obviously, some, such as the "no reelection" clause are more costly than others) as was seen in 1993 when the President negotiated a change in the 82nd article of the constitution which states that only

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<sup>140</sup>The first measure was taken at the Constitutional Convention in 1917 as a nationalistic measure to protect against foreign influence in Mexican affairs. The second rule was established as a way of stemming the flow of regime members from rupturing the coalition if they did not win the nomination. The limit was raised from 3 to 6 months during the sexenio of Ruiz Cortines as a reaction against the Henríquez split of 1952.

children born of second generation Mexicans are eligible to run for president. The Senate, which is heavily controlled by the PRI, voted for the measure, but only after the PRI leadership forced their party brethren to vote for the measure. During the debate over the constitutional change, many PRI senators began to grumble that maybe Salinas wanted to change the 83rd Article as well - which states that the President cannot be reelected<sup>141</sup>.

The candidate that gains the highest percentage of votes becomes president. There is no second round run-off in a multi-party system with three strong parties, and five smaller parties which need 1.5% of the vote to retain their registration. The vote is monitored by a semi-autonomous tribunal, which is headed by the Secretary of Gobernación, and run by a regime member, who is also a director general of the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE), which is under Gobernación's auspices.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>141</sup>The clause, which had affected such prominent politicians such as the ex-Secretary of Gobernación, Jesús Reyes Heróles, ex-President of the PRI and Mayor of Mexico City and current Minister of Agriculture, Carlos Hank González, as well as the current Minister of Commerce, Jaime Serra Puche, had strange effects on those politicians whose parents were not born in Mexico. Because they could not become president of Mexico, they threatened the sitting president and the contending pre-candidates far less than other politicians in important public positions. This enabled many of them to enjoy longer careers in some cases than their colleagues who could rise to the highest post.

<sup>142</sup>Six "citizen counselors", who by law cannot be members of any party, were named and approved by the three central parties in May, 1994 to monitor the Institute in charge of the elections. For more on the problems the



The PRI has a complete set of formal guidelines which regulate how the presidential candidate should be nominated. The outward form of these rules are respected, while the true decision is made and the internal battles over that decision take place outside the purview of these nomination procedures. The PRI does not hold national primaries to determine which PRI candidate registered voters prefer. The official nomination takes place at the end of the fifth year of the sexenio<sup>143</sup>. The Party body responsible for outwardly choosing the next president of Mexico is the National Political Council, which is made up of 200 distinguished members of the PRI, as well as members of the National Executive Committee (CEN), which is the governing body of the Party. Once he is chosen by the National Political Council, the now-official candidate begins his campaign the following January - the last year of his predecessor's term.

#### Informal Rules in the pre-1994 Succession

The most important rules of the succession process in Mexico are that the president chooses the PRIista that will

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citizens counselors face in assuring fair elections in August, 1994, see Santiago Creel in La Jornada, Saturday, June 15, 1994. This point will be discussed in greater length in the conclusions.

<sup>143</sup>The nominating convention takes place after the State of the Union Address, whose date was changed from the first of September to the first of November precisely to give the president more time to make his decision.

follow him<sup>144</sup> and that no one questions his right to make this decision, be it alone or in consultation with powerful members of the ruling coalition. During the ruptures and exits of 1940, 1952 and 1988, all three of the ex-PRIista challengers openly questioned the sitting president's right to single-handedly decide and then proposed that the PRI initiate democratic nomination procedures to choose the next president. Between 1953 and 1986, however, no member of the regime openly challenged the president's prerogative to choose his successor. In the 1986-1988 rupture, one of the Democratic Current (CD) central criticisms of the PRI, was the President's unofficial right to single handedly choose his successor. Interestingly, during the succession of Salinas, very few criticized his right to decide the fates of the pre-candidates until *after* the murder of the PRI candidate in March, 1994 (which took place after the first destape of November, 1993 and the start of the Chiapas uprising of January, 1994). Then, internal battles over who would replace Colosio came out into the public eye and public calls for internally democratic nominating procedures were heard.

The unquestioned right of the current chief executive to

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<sup>144</sup>Roberto Casillas, Pres. Jos López Portillo's personal secretary, ended his own career by stating openly that it is the president alone who chooses his successor, even though both Pres. Gustavo Diaz Ordaz and Echeverría had publically admitted that they were responsible for the decision, Luís García Soler, *Mito y metodo en la sucesión presidencial*. (Mexico: Grijalbo, 1981), 132.

choose his successor is not simply a tradition handed down to Mexico from revolutionary days - it plays a crucial role in how alliances and loyalty work to maintain the system intact during the transition of power from one regime leader to another. First, because the president chooses his successor from within the high posts of the executive bureaucracy, these actors must stay disciplined to the first executive until the *destape*. Because the president cannot be reelected, the end-point (or in game theoretic terms, the last play of the game) of his term is easily measured. If he were not the one to make the final choice, the other actors who are presently subordinates, would stop obeying his dictates, or cooperating with him and each other sooner, as they would have to concentrate on whatever governmental body did in fact make the decision. Because the president determines the fates of all the pre-candidates, they must be far more disciplined to his orders.

The second informal rule which governs the behavior of the actors in the succession process, especially that part which leads up to the uncovering of the official PRI candidate, prohibits pre-candidates from openly campaigning within the regime for support. The ministers vying for the nomination cannot publically state their ambitions<sup>145</sup>, propose

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<sup>145</sup>Manuel Camacho Solís, a leading pre-candidate, only admitted that he wanted to be president of Mexico after he had lost out to Colosio. Fernando Ortiz Arana, who competed against Ernesto Zedillo to replace Colosio, never openly stated he wanted to become the official candidate of the

platforms, or form support groups within the regime. This informal rule began in the 1940 s and became stronger throughout the 1950 s as presidents grew weary of internal Party challenges over the succession and started to dictate how pre-candidates could campaign, or not, as the case may be. In fact, proposals are forwarded, promises made, and attacks launched by pre-candidates on the route to the president s nomination of his successor, but these internal quests for support are muted to the point of silence, at least for those outside the top-reaches of the governing coalition. The interesting question is, why stop the overt campaigning within the regime's limits, and allow underhanded promises, alliances and attacks to be made? A partial answer is that the sitting president cannot stop all forms of internal coalition building and campaigning, but if they are discrete, then one candidate does not become more powerful than another *outside* the coalition, and the president can still maintain control over his choice. Second, if the information concerning the activity of the political groups is difficult to obtain, then the president is in the best position to hold more information than any other major actor within the small and closed elite, as he has better access to the information that Gobernación has accrued on the internal

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PRI.

In fact, as President of the CEN of the PRI, he sent out a decree prohibiting any form of support from within the Party for any possible candidate.

workings of the political class.

The third rule in the succession process is that the president allows a certain amount of dirty political maneuvering among the contending pre-candidates, but not to such an extent as to threaten the overall image of his presidency, or his ability to control his subordinates. Strong presidents will be able to limit the amount of maneuvering, while weak ones will have difficulty stopping them. The attacks that are launched between one pre-candidate and another will be discussed below in the section on strategies.

Just as the president in power allows the pre-candidates to attack each other within certain maleable limits, he also gives them budgetary and political "space" to form alliances with other groups and individuals within the coalition and outside it as well. State resources are an important currency in the succession race, as Ministers who control them are able to deliver public works, contracts, and projects to governors, sectoral leaders, senators, and other groups which allow the pre-candidate to build a coalition of groups and tendencies within the PRI/ regime which can influence how the president chooses his successor. Some Secretaries obviously have more access to public monies than others, and those in charge of spending ministries, such as SPP and Sedesol (Social Development) have had success in the

past four sexenios.<sup>146</sup>

Another rule, which was in force until the Salinas transition<sup>147</sup>, (during the first succession process of Salinas, when the other rules seen above still applied) was that the president let the pre-candidate burn themselves politically during the *pre-destape* race as a way of winnowing out the prospective candidates without the president having to appear arbitrary in his final choice. In other words, if they removed themselves through their own mistakes,<sup>148</sup> the president could argue that he had consulted with the political class in his decision, and thus make it a more open choice. Furthermore, it would be more difficult for a pre-candidate to argue that the choice was unfair if he himself had ruined his chances by making mistakes that became public.

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<sup>146</sup>Directly before being named the PRI's presidential candidate by Lu'is Echeverr'ia, Lopez Portillo was head of the Ministry of Finance before the financial and spending sides of the Ministry were separated. De la Madrid was Secretary of Planning and Budget (SPP) when SPP controlled the flow of state resources to the states and federal entities. Salinas was also head of SPP. Colosio was Secretary of Social Development (SEDESOL), which housed the PRONASOL money. SPP (which had controlled the PRONASOL resources) was dissolved by Salinas in early 1992 and many of its resources and responsibilities were devolved to SEDESOL.

<sup>147</sup>Interview, academic specializing in the Mexican political elite, March 1994.

<sup>148</sup>For example, Moya Palancia, during the succession race of 1975, made the mistake of allowing his wife to semi-publically state that her husband would win the Presidency. Fernando Casas Aleman (1951) began to print up posters that carried the words, *Casas Aleman, PRI candidate for president*. Pedro Aspe, during this current succession race, declared unemployment in Mexico a myth.

This too protected the sitting president, as few groups would support the internal pseudo-campaign of a ruined (*quemado*) politician. Of course, this also gives enormous incentives to other contenders to feed information to the press and directly to the president that burns their rivals.

One of the most important rules of the succession process is that after the PRI candidate for president has been chosen, all members of the political class, *including his defeated rivals*, must publically show their support for the next president of Mexico. Furthermore, the attacks must stop, and it is in the interests of even the losers to desist, as they must now plan their future careers, which depend on their recent rival.

A corollary to this rule, is that once the president has chosen his successor, he cannot reverse his decision in the period between the *destape* and the elections approximately nine months later, no matter how quickly or drastically the PRI candidate distances himself from the sitting chief executive, or how inept the nominee turns out to be.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>149</sup>In one example, after Diaz Ordaz nominated Echeverría to replace him, the new PRI candidate began to openly criticize Diaz Ordaz and his policies. Apparently, Diaz Ordaz woke up every morning during the sexenio of his successor and said, "It's your fault, you idiot, for choosing him." García Soler, *Mito de La Succession*, p. 225. In a more serious example, after the Chiapas uprising began in January, 1994, after Colosio had been nominated by Salinas, many began to question the official nominee's ability to govern effectively, and rumors raced around Mexico City stating that Salinas would replace Colosio with Camacho Solís.

The final important rule of the Mexican succession process concerns the fate of the losers in the PRI/ regime's internal nomination race. The general rule is, excepting gross mistakes or acts of disloyalty, those who are not chosen, but have competed, will be taken care of, and in certain cases, so will their people. The following is a list of the losing pre-candidates and their professional fates:

Table 4.2 The Fates of Losing Pre-Candidates

<i>Losing Pre-Candidate and Position</i> <sup>150</sup>	<i>Future Position</i>	<i>Time Out</i> <sup>151</sup>
1970 Martinez Manautou, <i>Presidencia</i>	Embassador	none
1976 Munoz Ledo, Secretary of Labor	Secr. Education	none
Moya Palencia, <i>Secr. Gobernación</i>	Embassador	none
Augusto Gomez Villanueva <i>Agric. Affairs</i>	Congress	none
Hugo Cervantes <i>Presidencia</i>	Head of CFE <sup>152</sup>	none
1982 Ojeda Paullada, <i>Secr. of Labor</i>	Secr. Fisheries	none
Jorge de la Vega Dominguez, <i>Commerce</i>	Head of PRI	2years
Javier Garcia Paniagua, <i>Head of the PRI</i>	National Lottery	6yrs
1988 A. Del Mazo, <i>Secr. Patrimony</i>	nothing <sup>153</sup>	6yrs
J. Silva Herzog, <i>Secr. Treasury</i>	Emb; Tourism	4yrs
Bartlett Diaz, <i>Gobernación</i>	Secr. Education	none
1994 Camacho Solis, <i>Mayor, Mexico City</i>	Foreign Office Negotiator. Nothing after Dec, 1994	1 week
Pedro Aspe, <i>Treasury</i>	Nothing after Dec, 1994	
Gamboa Patrón, <i>Communications</i>	Nothing after Dec, 1994	
Zedillo, <i>Education</i>	President after Colosio's death.	

<sup>150</sup> Position during succession.

<sup>151</sup> Length of time without public position. This is usually a good indication of how badly the losing candidate was burned in his attempt to win the presidential nod.

<sup>152</sup> The Federal Electricity Commission.

<sup>153</sup> Del Mazo was Commissioner for the Citizens' Mobilization Committee during a few months the election of 1994. He has not been placed in another post since Zedillo took over in December 1994.



The Goals of the Various Participants in the Succession  
Under the Rule Structure of 1952-1993

In discussing the goals of the various relevant actors in the succession game, it is important to note the variance in the ends these people and groups are working toward. First, the sitting president has an entirely different outlook and preference ordering than the pre-candidates who are vying to replace him. Second, one must specify whether one is referring to a leader (usually a pre-candidate, or a boss of an important political group within the regime) or a camarilla or a member of that group, for their interests can converge and separate at different steps of the succession process. Third, the rules which helped limit the behavior of the rival regime groups have evolved since the 1930's. What the camarillas were able to do in 1940, they could not do in 1976; but in 1994, they have alternatives which did not exist in either of the previous periods. In this first section, we are concentrating on the stable set of rules which held sway over the succession from approximately the mid-Fifties to 1993.<sup>154</sup>

We discuss the preference ordering, or set of goals,

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<sup>154</sup>The exception during this period is the 1986-1988 rupture of the Democratic Current (CD). These rules also held for almost the entire succession of Salinas. It was not until the Chiapas uprising struck, that the transfer of power was affected, and the breakdown of the rules governing the transition began.

because we believe these "ends", in conjunction with the set of rules under which the actors labor, help determine behavior, "sub-outcomes" and final outcomes. A "sub-outcome" would be the president's nomination decision, while the final outcome is the transfer of power from one PRI president to another. Under the rule structure from 1952-1993, there was no doubt of the final outcome, only in the sub-outcomes: who would the sitting president choose? In examining what the individuals and groups are trying to achieve, and how these ends differ, we are able to better identify what resources they can and will use, what strategies they will employ knowing the goals of the other participants, and how they are able to form intra-regime alliances to better their chances of advancing their positions. In other words, we can reason out a typical succession game, in which stylized actors aiming to achieve different goals interact.

These preference orderings are not arbitrarily given by the author. Rather, based on interviews, readings, autobiographies of principal participants, and past actions, the goals have been surmised.<sup>155</sup> Obviously, the goals of the actors are in part determined by the set of institutions in

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<sup>155</sup>In recurring to so many sources to determine what the various actors are trying to achieve, and not just relying on past actions, we are trying to avoid judging preferences based only on revealed action. This is a serious problem with the choice theoretic approach: one divines the preference orders of the actors by looking solely at their actions. By looking at other sources, we believe this problem has at least been alleviated.

which they are imbedded. One cannot (nor would it be interesting) to simply state preference orderings without acknowledging the changing circumstances under which they are pursued. The goals for which the participants struggle are shaped by rules which themselves change based on the activity of the actors. Thus as rules change, so do preferences.<sup>156</sup>

### The Goals of the President

Before discussing the goals of the president in the succession, we must examine why should the sitting president care who replaces him, if he is now effectively taken out of the future political game by virtue of his position as ex-president. First, the president needs to choose a successor of trust (*confianza*) who will protect the former president's finances and those of his family.<sup>157</sup> Secondly, if the exiting chief executive has been involved in a serious reform project, such as de la Madrid and Salinas were, then there is an incentive to place a person who shares membership in the close-knit group of collaborators, who will be *more likely* to

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<sup>156</sup>For example, before the tightening of rules to control internal regime ruptures, contending pre-candidates for the presidential nomination of the predominant party held preference orderings which placed winning the Presidential Chair above all other considerations. Once the institutions were set in place from the mid-Fifties on, the goals of the competing actors changed. They still fought to win the nomination, but losing that, were no longer willing to press on in the form of a rupture.

<sup>157</sup>For more information on protecting the president after the end of his term, see *Reforma* June 28, 1994. Also, interview with a political columnist, February, 1992.

follow the general outlines of the reform plan. (Because no exiting president can be sure of the future actions of his successor - there is absolutely no way for an *ex-ante* contract to be written and enforced that allows the former to direct the actions of the latter come the exchange of the Presidential Sash).<sup>158</sup>

Thirdly, the exiting president wants to be able to place his closest collaborators in the high ranks of government in the upcoming sexenio, if only to continue his influence a small while after his term ends. Finally, the leader of Mexico does not want to place a future president who is incapable of governing the country.

#### An Explanation of the Preferences of the President

The president has two central goals - to place his most preferred candidate and reduce the possibility of splits in the political class. Within the rubric of "most preferred candidate", there are two categories to be considered: one, who is closest to him in terms of personal friendship or equipo membership and two, who is more likely to continue the economic or political project that interests him.

Given that the first preference of the president is to

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<sup>158</sup>Lázaro Cárdenas is an interesting exception to this general rule: he was the last president before de la Madrid to offer a dramatically different development program, yet he did not place his presidential candidate, General Múgica, who would have continued or deepened his reforms. Instead Cárdenas placed an economic moderate, Avila Camacho, in the Presidential Chair.

place his most preferred candidate, we must understand why one candidate is more desirable in the eyes of the sitting executive than another. When the possible rupture of the political class was not of great concern, two variables dominated (this before 1988): first, that the pre-candidate be of complete trust (*confianza*) in that he would not betray the sitting executive after taking his place.<sup>159</sup> Since there is no contract that can be legally enforced once the new president has taken office, other methods must be used. The assurance that the agent will not renege on the pre-office holding agreement can stem from life-long friendship, and the knowledge that in six years, the soon to be president will be an ex-president and equally vulnerable to his successor.

The second reason why a certain pre-candidate would be more preferred than another is his willingness to continue the economic or political project of his antecessor. Again, we see the serious problem of implicit contracts written for future contingencies which are next to impossible for the now all powerful principle to enforce. The central problem here is that the all-powerful president must trust his agent to act properly in following the general guidelines of his (the

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<sup>159</sup>The case of the open battle between President Zedillo and ex-president Salinas is a case in point. Zedillo needed a strong action to prove he was in control, and the brother of Salinas has (probably) something to do with the death of the Secretary General of the PRI. What better way of taking the reigns of government than throwing the brother of the ex-president in jail? This is the break down of a very important rule governing relations between executives and their predecessors.

sitting president's) administration. The precandidate must convince the sitting president that he will not drastically change the present project. This often leads the contender to hide their true preferences concerning their future projects.<sup>160</sup>

How do these two concerns combine? If the president does not have such an important project whose survival he wants to assure, then perhaps he will choose a successor who is closer to him personally, in terms of *confianza*. If future of his project is paramount, then he perhaps will accept a higher level of personal risk and choose a precandidate who will force the project into fruition. The best option for the hopeful nominee, of course, is to combine both personal friendship and an outward appearance of complete loyalty to the project, if there is one that concerns the president.

Since Lázaro Cárdenas had to decide between his left-leaning reformist friend General Múgica (who would have deepened the socialist reforms in agriculture and education) and a more centrist candidate, Avila Camacho, regime presidents have had to decide between their preferences in terms of friend/reformer versus a nominee who would not split the political coalition. In all presidential successions,

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<sup>160</sup>In the case of Echeverría, he knew Lopez Portillo would not continue to attack the large capitalistic class, but he also thought his successor would not drastically change the role of the State in the economy, which he did not.

the power of the president's immediate group, the project of the sexenio, and the stability of the coalition all matter. The question is when and why the president chooses one over the other.

Table 6.3 is an impressionistic illustration of how the Mexican presidents have chosen since 1940: between a friend/colleague or a candidate that will insure the stability of the political regime. A candidate who has not made too many enemies, or is unobjectionable to a majority within the coalition, and/or who holds not radical views on the direction of the national economy can be considered a coalition candidate.

Table 6.3 Presidential Preferences Regarding Candidates<sup>161</sup>

Year	Personal Relation	Political Coalition
1940		X
1946		X
1952		X
1958		X
1964		X
1970	Group	
1976	Reform	
1982	Reform	
1988	Group/Reform	
1994	Group/Reform	

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<sup>161</sup>There is no clear way to measure whether the sitting president chose a close colleague or someone to hold the political class together. These judgements were based on readings and interviews, and only can give a rough idea of what kind of candidate was chosen. For more on each decision, see Miguel Centeno, "The New Científicos," Roberto Newell and Luis Rubio, *Mexico's Dilemma*, and García Soler, *Mito y método*.

We see from this table that from 1940 to 1964, the most important consideration for presidents in choosing their successors was that the health of the coalition be preserved. Starting in 1970, presidents began to select those successors who would either protect a certain reform project, or their group (often without success, as evidenced by the Salinas-Zedillo split). One way of explaining what happened was that the political coalition as a lobbying group had some influence, or better stated, veto power, over the choices of the sitting presidents that seemed simply too personalistic, or that made too many groups furious. Two examples of this phenomenon in the early years would be President Cardenas' inability to place his personal favorite, General Mujica, and President Aleman's failure to place his cousin, Casas Aleman, in the face of the voicing of extreme displeasure from the overall political class. (These two cases will be discussed in greater length in Chapter 7). Once the office of the President became gradually stronger, the overall political class was less able to act as a veto against the worst choices of the outgoing chief executive. We then see the beginnings of the choices made by a succession of presidents that used their nomination power to gradually exclude both certain types of public functionaries from the highest posts, and certain generations, who were leapfrogged by those younger and better trained technically.

De la Madrid's exclusion of a good part of the political



class from positions of importance in his administration (see Rogelio Hernández 1993), and his choice of successor once again brought the discontent of wide segments of the regime members into focus. In the last three successions, (de la Madrid's and both of Salinas'), the reaction of the coalition has become a problem in choosing the next president - either because of a rupture, or the threat of a possible rupture, (which caused Salinas when choosing the first time, to prepare Colosio in a number of more political positions, so he would not be rejected by the *políticos* within the regime).

#### Strategies of the President

What can the president do to choose the candidate closest to his ideal point, both in terms of continuance of influence (or his central project), while at the same time maintaining the unity of the political class, which becomes more or less important for their vote-getting ability depending on how seriously the PRI is challenged by the opposition parties at election time.

Assuming first that the chief executive judges there to be a weak electoral challenge<sup>162</sup>, he is then free to choose a candidate that is close to his perfect choice. If the president does not have to concern himself about a candidate who will win at the polls, then his concern for the health of the political class lessens as he does not have to worry

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<sup>162</sup>The president can be mistaken in his judgement. However, here, it is only his perception of the electoral state of nature that matters.

overmuch about winning votes. However, the coalition splits could still matter if a rupture and electoral challenge could act as a resource for a political entrepreneur to take advantage of latent societal discontent as was the case of 1988. The best option would obviously be to field a pre-candidate that is a combination of the two, but if that is not possible, than to choose one that is as close to his personal ideal point, while not being completely unacceptable to the governing coalition.<sup>163</sup>

In order to place his most preferred candidate, the sitting president must control the process of the succession, which depends on several factors: the timing of the decision; the flow of information concerning the behavior of the political groups within the regime; external pressures (such as an IMF stabilization plans or US Congressional approval of the NAFTA); the quantity and quality of the political attacks delivered by the rivals; and the ability of the contenders to grow politically and ally themselves to political groups and other pre-candidates in the race.

The best way the president can gain his ends is to place a certain number of pre-candidates in positions from which they can contend for the highest political position in the

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<sup>163</sup>One must also take into account here the discount rate of the future for an outgoing president. He may be more interested in continuing his project, for personal reasons, having to do with reputation, than in the health of the coalition. The first brings greater benefits in terms of personal gratification than the second.

nation. At the same time, he must be able to quickly rid the board of any powerful figures that he does not want in the game. Having done this, he can either protect his most preferred player, or allow each to prove himself on the battlefield to see who survives best, and only then choose this candidate.

All presidents, except perhaps de la Madrid, who stepped down amid deep economic and political crises, have the incentive to delay their decision as long as possible, because once they have specified their successor, their ability to influence events declines drastically as new loyalties spring up around the figure of the PRI's nominee. But several types of pressures build up during the fifth year of the sexenio which push the chief executive to name his choice. Most of these pressure center around the uncertainty caused by not knowing who will be the next leader of Mexico, which makes both economic and political decisions in and outside the government difficult. So although the current president may want to extend his power until the last month possible, it becomes more difficult to do so, especially after the State of the Union Address on November First.

The president must also be able to place pre-candidates in institutional positions at least by the end of the fourth year from which they can contend for the Presidential Chair. Because pre-candidates must come from cabinet level positions (including the leader of the PRI), the president must place

those he wants to be in the race in important cabinet posts with enough time to gain allies and national recognition. Conversely, if the president sees a strong Cabinet Secretary gaining political force *who he does not wish to become a pre-candidate*, then he must get rid of him before he has garnered more allies, which would make it more difficult to remove him.<sup>164</sup> Conversely, the president can place a weak politician in a strong institutional base, as was the case of Olivares Santana, also Secretary of Gobernación, during the second half of López Portillo's sexenio.

The president must see that no one candidate becomes too powerful, or makes too many alliances which would make it difficult *not* to choose him. This is a problem of controlling the alliances and attacks among the rivals. To do this, the president must have access to an enormous amount of information concerning who is doing what to whom and for whom within the political class and especially among the pre-candidates. Because the president has a direct channel to the Secretary of Gobernación, he is able to gather this specific knowledge of the activities of the members of the political class at a relatively low cost.<sup>165</sup> The pre-

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<sup>164</sup>Many believe this was the case of Fernando Gutierrez Barrios, who was becoming more popular as Secretary of Gobernación as the sexenio of Salinas wore on. He was removed in January, 1993, and a close collaborator of the President's, Patrocinio González Garrido, was placed in his position.

<sup>165</sup>An interview with a director general of Gobernación was extremely helpful in this respect. The interviewee

candidates know they are under surveillance, so they plan their strategies accordingly; that is, they take under consideration how the president will view their actions.

The president allows the rivals to attack each other because; one, it would be difficult to stop this strategy completely; and two, the attacks in effect weed out some candidates who appeared strong, but in fact, cannot handle the intense pressure of the succession process. Because the attacks came from other pre-candidates and not from the president, the latter appears less arbitrary in his decision not to choose the battered contender.<sup>166</sup> If the hidden favorite (the *tapado*) is the target of the maneuvering, then the chief executive can either protect him, by defending him publically, or change his mind, and not choose him. The attacks launched by the pre-candidates cannot go beyond a certain point however, as that would bring the entire --

explained that the Minister of Gobernación was the filter of information for the president in that it was part of the Ministry's responsibilities to know the activities of the political groups and their members, especially during the succession process. The position of Minister of "Information" gave the Gobernación's chief enormous influence with the president, because as the Director General explained it, the Secretary knew *who* the president was interested in, as well as the specific details of the activities. When the Secretary is also a leading pre-candidate, he has an advantage over the other contenders because of his information base, which could easily be used to attack the other rivals. Perhaps because of the power of information, the Secretary of Gobernación has been a top contender in the last eight successions, with the exception of Olivares Santana in 1982.

<sup>166</sup>Interview, Mexican academic, and specialist in the Mexican political elite, March, 1994.

government and the sexenio into question, weaken the programs already initiated or perhaps weaken the president's first choice.

Alliances can be dangerous for the president's ability to chose his most preferred candidate, but in reality, agreements between the candidates are difficult to sustain. The accords among pre-candidates usually tend to be defensive in that there is a tacit non-aggression pact, rather than offensive, in that the two parties agree to both attack the third candidate, or agree to work so that one candidate wins with the president s support, (in return for a top-level position for the 'loser' and posts for members of his equipo).

If the president does calculate that the political class is ripe for rebellion, then he can literally prepare a candidate by placing him in positions where he will be able to make contacts and connections as well as distribute State resources toward that end. In this way, there is no conflict between the president's favored candidate and the preferences of a large part of the political class. This appears to be the example of Salinas' careful planning of the latter part of Colosio's career.<sup>167</sup> Colosio was a good candidate for the

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<sup>167</sup>Colosio moved (or was moved) from a Director General (working under his future rival Camacho Solis) in the Secretary of Planning, to Congressman in charge of the Congressional Treasury Commission, to Coordinator of the Salinas' 1988 presidential campaign, to leader of the PRI, to Secretary of Social Development (Sedesol), and finally, to official presidential nominee of the predominant party.

presidency because he had experience in all aspects of the regime, not simply in the financial sector as had de la Madrid and Salinas himself, with disastrous results for the unity of the political class. By choosing Colosio, Salinas was able to eradicate the tension that had existed for at least two sexenios between the pre-candidate who was closest to the sitting president in terms of the economic project, and the pre-candidate who would not split the unity of the regime.

To clarify the ideas we have presented, *Table 6.4* offers a sequential series of presidential decision points during the succession process. We see the outlines of the presidential game, assuming weak electoral possibilities of the opposition, and little chance of a regime split. In the section below, we will fill in this table with the corresponding choices and dilemmas of the contender in reaction to the choices of the president we see here.

Table 6.4

PRESIDENTIAL DECISIONS

PRESIDENTIAL  
DECISION

- I. Choose a Reform/Group Candidate vs  
Coalition Candidate<sup>1</sup>
  
- II. Protect First Choice vs  
Allowing Open Fight Among Precandidates
  
- III. Take a 'Sounding' of the Political Class vs.  
Make Decision without Consultation
  
- IV. Choose a Candidate with a Strong Political  
Network vs.  
Choosing One without One.

As we shall see, in each of these decision points of the president, the competing pre-candidates :

1. did not know beforehand how the president would select
2. did not know if the president had already made a decision
3. and did not know afterward if the president had chosen or not, or how he had chosen. In other words, there were extremely high information gathering costs.

We will examine how, under such uncertainty, and under the rules of the game, the rivals reacted to these presidential decisions within the course of the presidential succession.

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<sup>1</sup>This is not logically a dichotomous decision on the president's part. He can, as Salinas did, groom a candidate that was at least passively acceptable to a large part of both the political sector as well as the economic bureaucracy. Colosio has been the exception, however, and we will treat this as a choice between two different kinds of candidates. This was clear in the Zedillo candidacy: the Party bureaucracy and more political groups fought against Salinas favorite, because he had no experience in any area except the financial sector of the government.



### Goals of the Pre-candidates

The principal goals of the competing pre-candidates are somewhat contradictory. The first preference is to win the PRI's presidential nomination.<sup>168</sup> For the stronger candidates, the second best option in case of losing the nomination is to stay in the political game - that is, to not burn oneself in the process of fighting for the sitting president's approval. This causes a dilemma at times: some strategies to win the presidential nomination create enemies among the rivals, so they should be avoided since one could very possibly ruin any possible relation with the winner of the prize. But at the same time, attacks are a central strategy for burning other hopefuls, and therefore, useful.

### Strategies of the Pre-Candidates

The two fundamental strategies the pre-candidates can

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<sup>168</sup>Various contenders for the throne do not enjoy equal chances for winning it: there are strong pre-candidates and fillers. The also-rans know that their chances of winning the Presidency are minimal, so they prefer to play the game loyally, and in doing so, be rewarded by the incoming president. Gen. Corona del Rosal made an interesting observation when Camacho Solís was behaving badly because of his loss to Colosio in the destape of November, 1994. Corona del Rosal noted that when he was a pre-candidate for the presidential nomination during Díaz Ordaz's transfer of power to Echeverría, he played knowing he would lose, and so he made no enemies during the succession race. Ramón Aguirre was a similar figure in the succession race of de la Madrid. He did not compete thinking he would win, but rather as a loyal friend to de la Madrid. He was rewarded with the governorship of Guanajuato, which he then lost.

use in trying to win the president's favor in the succession are to attack their opponents or to ally with them, either defensively or offensively. Attacks can take various forms, from blocking policy initiatives, to accusations of corruption, to highlighting failures to carry out official responsibilities, to exaggerating mis-statements, to harassing rivals' supporters, to blocking nominations to party and elected posts of members of other groups. Many of these "low blows" never come to light as they are carried out within the depths of the executive bureaucracy and the PRI, but in other instances, the national press plays a crucial role in keeping the politically interested public and political class aware of who has made mistakes, as well as who is attacking whom, and how.

The limits of how far the attacks can go are diffuse, unwritten, and vary with every president. The president usually knows who is behind the attacks and so can indirectly let it be known that he wishes them terminated. We have already discussed why the president would wish to limit the level of bellicosity among his possible successors. At times, however, it is not clear to the general political class who is attacking whom. The greater the level of uncertainty, the better it is for both the president and pre-candidates: the president because he does not wish to tip his hand, and the rivals because if an animosity is openly admitted at least within the national press, then it will be

more difficult to make an alliance in the following sexenio. The attacks generally do not have ideological content unless it is used in a direct manner, or as a resource to win points with other members of the Cabinet or alliances within the PRI or with national capital.

Alliances can be made among two sets of actors: with other pre-candidates or with groups within the governing coalition. Those among groups active in the succession and a pre-candidate are common. They involve governors, state-level caciques, sectoral leaders, elected officials, PRI leaders at the state and national level, as well as Cabinet members who are not in the nomination race. Alliances among rivals are important for blocking third pre-candidates and for lowering the possibilities of splits come the next term. The other factor which influences their chances of being nominated is their closeness to the president - membership in his equipo or a strong personal relationship. This factor can be considered a prior state of nature to the succession ordeal: either you have always been a member of the president's closest circle of advisors, or you haven't. A contender can make every attempt to work closely with the chief executive, and gain his trust, but trust is usually only gained through time. In any case, abject loyalty and discipline to the president's dictates are practiced by every presidential hopeful in about equal measure, so this is taken as a given and will not be considered a strategy, except in

special cases.

The best strategy for the pre-candidates is to attack the least in route to being chosen by the president to succeed him. This makes it easier to govern once in office. The worst strategy is to attack the eventual winner. But since one cannot know who will gain the Presidency, one can only hope one isn't attacking the eventual winner. If two pre-candidates can ally to keep a third from becoming too powerful, then there is the incentive to do so. The ex-Mayor of Mexico City seemed to be the unlucky victim of this strategy in the latest succession. He was attacked for his inability to lower pollution during 1992, and the following year, his attempt to negotiate a democratic transition for Mexico City was blocked. Some believe if his political reform of the City had been successful, his pre-candidacy would have been unstoppable.<sup>169</sup>

One way of diluting the dilemma is to make an alliance with some strong contenders, while attacking others, and hope that the others do not concentrate on eliminating you. In *Table 6.5*, we fill in the complete game between the sitting president and the rival pre-candidates which shows the dilemmas of choosing between strategies during each step in the game.

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<sup>169</sup>See Arnaldo Cordova's article in *Uno Más Uno*, April 21, 1993, and *El Financiero*, May 15, 1993, Informe Especial, num. 155, for more on Camacho's reform attempts.

Table 6.5

PRECANDIDATES' REACTIONS TO DIFFERENT STATES OF NATURE IN THE SUCCESSION

*Presidential Decision 1: The Probability the President Wants a Reform Candidate Versus a Coalition Candidate*

As we have seen, this is not necessarily a dichotomous choice for the president. However, in many successions, it has been. The pre-candidates must calculate the probability that the president will choose their basic category. If the contender decides from the outset that he has a good chance, then his following strategies will be to win the nomination, not just avoid being burnt in the process.

The preference hierarchy of the rival pre-candidates is as follows:

1. win the nomination
2. lose, but not get burnt in the process
3. lose, get burnt in the process

*Presidential Decision 2: The Probability the President will protect his choice or will allow an open fight in the succession race.*

If the president has already chosen his favorite early in the succession race, will he protect him? or is there a possibility that, given the battle among the pre-candidates, he will allow his mind to be changed should the favorite perform badly during the months before the contest? The contenders are in their most difficult decision node, for if they choose badly here, they could be burnt for the next years. Also, alliances among the rivals makes a large difference in this decision node. By allying in the attack strategy against the third candidate, the other two may be able to eliminate the third.

Strategies of the Pre-candidates:

1. Attack one pre-candidate, make an alliance with another
2. Attack both pre-candidates, look for support among the larger political class.
3. Try to ally with both rivals.

Possible Outcomes of Different Strategies:

1. Win the nomination without having made any real enemies
2. Win the nomination, but at the expense of creating rifts within the political class.
3. Ally with the winner, (having lost the nomination oneself).
4. Attack the winner, and suffer the consequences.

*Presidential Decision 3: The Probability the President Will Take the Larger political class' preferences into account when making the decision, or that he chooses without their consideration or negotiation.*

Vertical alliances are crucial in this decision point. If the candidate enjoys the support of a large assortment of groups scattered throughout the bureaucracy and Party, the president can be assured that the candidate enjoys the support of a large part of the political coalition. If the president is interested in maintaining the coalition, then this will be an important consideration, if not, the asset will make little difference. The candidates spend a large amount of resources attempting to strengthen their viability among the various groups of the coalition. Another strategy is to spend resources in a specific area of the regime, for example, the financial sector of the public bureaucracy. Also, alliances with other members of the cabinet can help the pre-candidate

### Goals of the Members of the Pre-candidates *Equipos*

The central goal of a close collaborator of a strong pre-candidate is to have him win the nomination, and then work with him in some way during the campaign, in route to garnering a high(er)-level position in the incoming administration. The second goal is to not get burned oneself should the pre-candidate lose.<sup>170</sup> This means even close collaborators of the various rivals need to make some sort of accommodations with other groups, although these alliances need to be extremely discrete.<sup>171</sup> If one is a member of an equipo of a pre-candidate, one has little choice in coming out openly for the politician. This lack of choice brings with it both advantages and costs: if the pre-candidate wins, the subordinate wins as well; however, if he loses, the career of the subordinate *at times* can end as well. There

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<sup>170</sup>Manuel Bartlett Díaz is a good example of this phenomenon. Bartlett was a close collaborator of Moya Palencia, a strong pre-candidate who lost out to Lopez Portillo in 1975. Bartlett, instead of losing his career when he lost his mentor, had connections to the new Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Santiago Roel. When Roel fell, Bartlett became a close advisor to his old friend, the new Secretary of Planning, de la Madrid. When the latter became president in 1982, Bartlett was made Secretary of Gobernación. From there, he launched a campaign to be de la Madrid's successor, but lost out to Salinas.

<sup>171</sup>As we have seen in a previous chapter, the members of the small group around the leader, his equipo, do not have the same freedom to make alliances as do members of his camarilla.

are, though, plenty of cases in which a close collaborator continues his career with another political group.

#### Goals of the Individuals and Groups within the Regime

For those who are *not* openly tied to a leading pre-candidate, the first preference is to publically proclaim one's allegiance to the would-be winner. But because no one knows who will be proclaimed the nominee, openly stating a predisposition for one rival rather than another is dangerous, because if he should not win, then his supporter loses out as well for having come out in support of him. But if the individual comes out for no one candidate or for all of them, then his support is conditioned, and is not worth as much after the destape, when the positions are handed out.

Those who do come out openly either have a prior connection to the pre-candidate, (although they are not of his equipo), or they believe they have better possibilities under one future leader, rather than another. Francisco Ruíz Massieu, when Governor of the state of Guerrero, came out in support of Salinas' campaign to win the PRI's nomination. Ruíz Massieu had risen to become governor with the support of another camarilla, but had contacts with Salinas' group from their university days together.<sup>172</sup> The present Governor of Guerrero, Rubén Figueroa, came out in the

<sup>172</sup>See Roderic Camp's, "Las camarillas en la política mexicana", *Mexican Studies*, 6, no. 1, (Winter 1990) for more on the roots of Salinas' group.



national press a few months before the destape<sup>173</sup> to state that Colosio was the best candidate for Mexico. An ex-leader of the PRI, and former Echeverría collaborator, Sánchez Vite, went further than Figueroa in his support of Colosio, by stating that not only did Colosio understand the problems of the nation better than anyone, but that the other strong contender, Camacho Solís, would lead Mexico to ruin if he were nominated to be the Party's candidate for president. It is not clear what relation, if any, Sanchez Vite had with Colosio.<sup>174</sup>

Those individuals who are loosely tied to certain pre-candidates have to be able to switch camps if their man should lose. This is not considered terribly disloyal, but snide comments are made when public officials survive their relationship with a failed pre-candidate. Usually either politicians with certain scarce ability or resource are able to follow this difficult strategy: Fernando Ortiz Arana, or Pedro Aspe.

If one's goal is to survive, rather than advance, than an excellent option is to jump on *la cargada* (the massive wave of support for the new official nominee of the Party) after the sitting president has made his choice and not --

<sup>173</sup>See article in *El Financiero*, October 19, 1993, for more on Figueroa's public statement.

<sup>174</sup>It is interesting to note that both Rubén Figueroa, and Sanchez Vite, are caciques of their respective states, Guerrero and Hidalgo. Perhaps Colosio had made some deal with state level leaders.

before. This brings in the worst returns in terms of high level positions, but is the safest in terms of surviving into the next sexenio.<sup>175</sup>

The pre-candidates have an incentive to add followers, but to do so, they have to offer concrete side payments whose worth are greater than the risks incurred by openly backing a pre-candidate. Future promises can also be made, but have to be heavily discounted for two reasons: one, the rival contender may not be chosen and two, even if he is, he may renege on the promise. The value of the side payment depends on the value of the non-aligned member - the more important the possible partner, the greater the bribe to join the alliance. The non-aligned coalition member has to make a decision whether to join a certain pre-candidate's coalition based on 1. how likely it is he will win, and 2. what kind of chances does he have of aligning with other contending rivals. In this case, there is no clear majority driven minimum winning coalition. No one votes to nominate the next PRI presidential candidate. The more groups and group leaders who are included in the winner's circle, the better, especially during the first months in office, when the new president is consolidating his tenure. There are two limits on coalition building within the regime: one, the budget's

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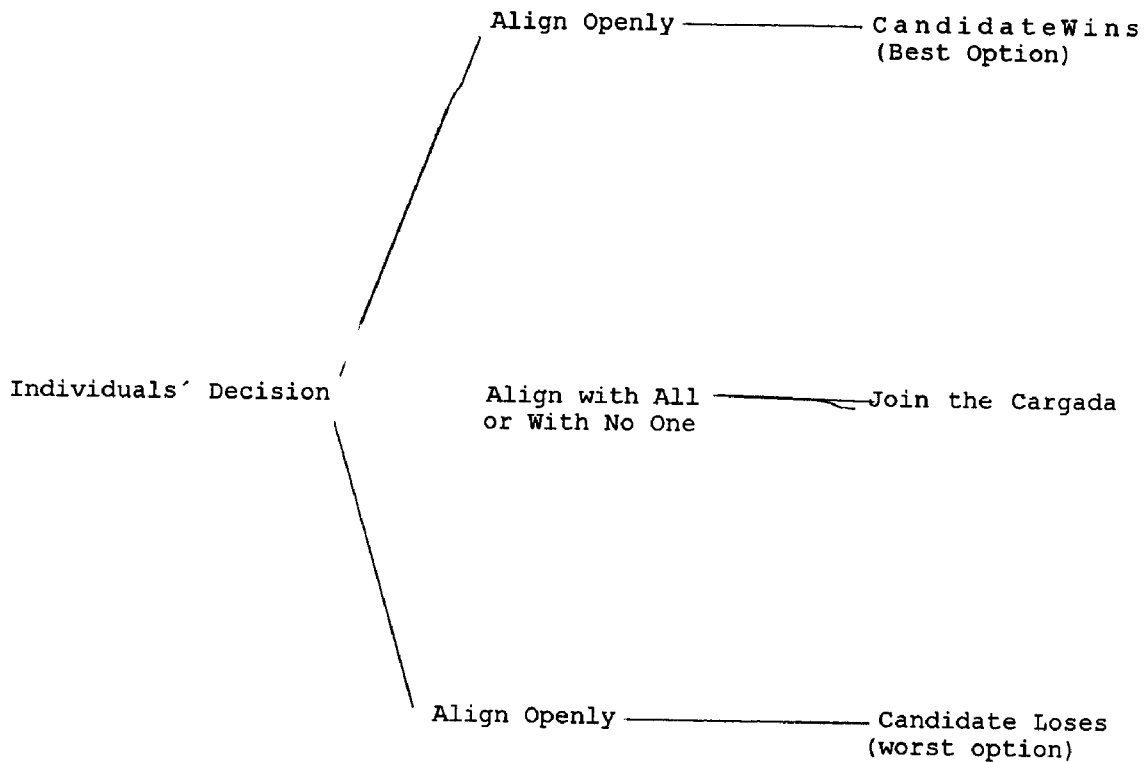
<sup>175</sup>In this case, the calculation has to be made not only in terms of risk-aversion to possible political death, but also in terms of the rewards to the losers, and the connections already forged with one or another of the pre-candidates.

capacity to pay-off coalition members, and two, the president's desire and/or ability to advance a harsh, unpopular reform. (The number of public positions is finite, but highly expandable; new positions, such as advisor, can always be created).

See *Table 6.6* for an illustrated decision tree for those individuals within the coalition who are not part of the equipoise of a pre-candidate.

Table 6.6

UNALIGNED INDIVIDUALS' STRATEGIES DURING THE SUCCESSION



One's incentive to risk aligning openly with a candidate depends on:

1. opportunities with possible winner, or previous connection to him.
2. ability to withstand the worst alternative, which is openly back the losing candidate.

An actor is more likely to not align with any pre-candidate if:

1. he has no real connection and
2. he cannot afford to be tied to the loser.

### Coalitions among members of the Cabinet

How do non-aligned members of the cabinet choose who they will back in the upcoming succession? There are usually three strong pre-candidates vying for the nomination. First, an individual cabinet secretary must decide to back one candidate openly, or behind the scenes, and second, they must choose the candidate who they believe has the best chance of winning, and the fewest chances of being burnt if he loses. This double consideration sometimes leads the non-aligned cabinet member to choose the pre-candidate who is not locked into a conflict with his rival. In this way, the Minister protects himself against the worst outcome - that of being tied to a burned loser. The same strategy also allows the minister space to switch his loyalty if his original choice goes down early. Because he is not involved in an acrimonious conflict, both the minister and the pre-candidate he was originally tied to can move into the orbit of one who appears to have better chances of winning.

### Conclusions

We have examined how the rules, both formal and informal, of the Mexican political system have restrained the range of alternative strategies open to contending PRI pre-candidates. We have also seen that the president, while wielding great room of maneuver, cannot choose randomly - he must balance the health of the political coalition against

his wishes to place a candidate who comes from his group or shares his preferences for reform.

During the period 1953 to 1993 (with the exception of the rupture of 1986-1988), rival pre-candidates did not exit the PRI if they lost the nomination as they had in 1940, 1946 and 1952. Instead, their best hope (in terms of maximizing benefits) was to continue their careers, if at a lower level inside the regime. The dilemmas they faced were created by a structure where information costs were made deliberately high in terms of knowing the sitting president's choice, and where attacking the winning candidate could mean political death, while allying could also mean losing the nomination if the other contenders could successfully attack you.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### EXITS FROM THE REGIME AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

The Mexican political system is famous among other Latin American political regimes for its ability to remain stable over a period of sixty years, during which time the nation experienced rapid economic growth, profound social change, and the disappearance of the military as a primary political force. In this chapter, we will explain how and why distinct threats to the system's institutions were possible in some eras and not in others, and how the system became more adept over time at meeting internal challenges. A picture of how the system works can only be complete by looking at moments when its very supports were being attacked. Mexican stability can be better explained if one looks at how the leaders of the regime dealt with internal challenges to their positions; or in other words, how they dealt with the regime's losers. Their attempts to stop internal challenges in turn led to endogenous rule and change, and greater levels of political stability.

We will attack this problem by examining the "exits" from the official regime (the Party together with the executive bureaucracy at the national level). Four powerful

PRI functionaries and members of the "Revolutionary Family" have challenged the entire structure of the Mexican political regime by running against the Party's candidate in four separate presidential elections. In all cases, these challengers had been unsuccessful presidential pre-candidates for the official Party.<sup>176</sup>

The Mexican political system by and large delivers well to those who play by the rules and stay within the boundaries. Even those who make grave mistakes or do not win the presidential nomination are almost always reintegrated into the system at a later date. However, those who refuse to play by the rules can be intimidated, harassed, jailed or even killed. So why and under what conditions, would powerful members of the ruling coalition choose to leave the safety of the official realm to challenge it electorally from outside these limits? And as a secondary question, what effects do these exits or ruptures have on the regime's institutions over time? In other words, how do individuals effect endogenous institutional change in the Mexican system?

By understanding these ruptures, one can get a far

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<sup>176</sup> The two central figures of the 1988 exit, Porfirio Munoz Ledo and Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, represented a part of the ruling coalition which had been displaced from the governing elite in the 1980's. In a sense, Munoz Ledo closely resembled the 1952 challenger, Henrúquez Guzan, as both came from a once powerful faction and elite 'type'. However, whereas both Almazan and Henrúquez Guzman were both still relatively powerful members of the elite coalition, Cuauhtemoc Cardenas had never been and Munoz Ledo had been completely marginalized.



clearer view of what stability within a one-party state means, mainly because they represent the greatest threat to that very stability. Since the end of the Mexican Revolution in 1920 until today, the sharpest challenges to the continuing dominance of the President and the PRI have come from internal splits within the regime - not external, societal driven movements. Plenty of losers in internal power struggles have left public administration, but most, such as Fernando Guti rrez Barrios<sup>177</sup>, returned to quietly to private life, either to remain there, or to attempt a return at a later time. Very few have chosen to leave the Party to run against its candidate in presidential elections.

All four exits have come during the process (lasting one to two years) of the transfer of power from one non re-electable president to another, otherwise known as the presidential succession, while the leading actors in the drama have been unsuccessful pre-candidates to the official Party's presidential nomination. During this period, many in government, especially at the national level, form groups whose central goal is to place one pre-candidate (or

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<sup>177</sup>Gutierrez Barrios was head of Gobernacion for the first half of Salinas's term, when the president threw him out, in effect, for being too popular. Later, when the PRI's official candidate and Salinas' first choice to replace him, Donaldo Colosio was assassinated, rumors quickly surfaced the Gutierrez Barrios had something to do with the murder. These rumors effectively put the ex-Secretary of Gobernacion out of the race to replace Colosio, a contest that Zedillo and Salinas (for being able to place his favored candidate) won.

'posible') on the Presidential Chair in the next sexenio (or six-year term). When political power and influence is slowly slipping from the hands of the sitting executive, and the 'posibles' are maneuvering to be chosen, the dangers to the regime's continuance are greatest. Once a new executive has been chosen by the out-going president, then all within the official regime stand firmly behind him because it is the executive that hands out positions and almost singlehandedly chooses his successor.

One of the central keys to grasping the stability question in Mexico is asking why internal splits do not explode more often into full fledged ruptures during the succession process. To do this, the paper will examine the three most important exits, those of 1940, 1952, and 1988.<sup>178</sup> By understanding when and why powerful politicians leave the coalition, one can also focus on why they stay, and why the system remains so stable. Also, by studying the exits and the regime's reactions to them, one can understand how the

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<sup>178</sup> The exit of Ezquiel Padilla in 1946 was not as important as the other three in that he was not able to gain the widely based official and societal support the other three dissenters did. His case will only be referred to in passing. However, it is important to note that his attempt to beat the official PRI candidate, Miguel Aleman, in 1945-1946 means that three ruptures occurred sequentially over three sexenios. Added to the two armed rebellions in 1924 and 1929 and Vasconsuelos' electoral challenge in 1929, the regime suffered continuously from internal fissures from the end of the revolution until 1952. Thus the question of how the leaders of the system were able to squelch internal dissent from 1952 to 1986-87 becomes a central question which will be addressed later in the paper.

institutions were designed over time to keep powerful, but unsatisfied politicians from attempting to bring the system down.

A way to link stability to individual action is institutional change. Actors working to promote their own interests attempt to and are sometimes successful at promoting changes in the political rules of the game. These rules constrain human interaction, structure incentives for behavior, and influence actors's preferences. The rules, which can also be conceived of as institutions, therefore constrain, structure and influence political outcomes, such as economic policy making, or political reforms. Yet, except in the case of revolution or external invasion, institutions are not created or changed overnight. They are incrementally modified by individuals, and these small changes go on to influence how future actors working within the same system behave and cooperate.<sup>179</sup>

We will examine how and under what conditions do political actors work, either alone or in concert with others, to change the rules under which they operate. Then, we will study how do the changes made at one point in time affect those made in the future.

According to North (1990:87), actors will attempt to alter the rules of the game to maximize their gains, and will do so when they estimate the likelihood of success is

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<sup>179</sup>North, *Institutions*, 1990.

relatively high, and are willing to risk their resources to gain possible benefits. Part of the cost of altering institutions is organizing groups to support the attempt. As we shall see, this was one of the central problems for the challengers: the regime's leaders could offer divisible goods such as better positions within the government to those threatening to participate in the exit while the dissident leader could only offer highly uncertain future benefits.

Both challengers and regime leaders were involved in altering Mexico's political institutions. The challengers, (who before their exit, had participated in and benefitted from the regime's rule structure) fundamentally wished to change how the president was nominated. The presidents who had won against the dissident politicians worked to lessen the ability of regime elites to openly form political groups to work in their favor, or to entice large numbers of other unsatisfied regime members to leave with them, or make alliances with important societal groups. In other words, the presidents, in concert with other regime leaders, recognized it was in their interests to stamp out the possibilities for dissention come the succession, and took steps to raise the costs of challenging the system. The loyalists modified the system marginally which made it more difficult for dissidents to change it fundamentally.

This work also clarifies the importance of internal political factions and the changing role they play in the

presidential succession. In studying the activity of both the Party dissidents and loyalists in the three exits, several different types of internal political factions came to light. First, there are the groups directly tied to the politician fighting for the nomination: these are other Party members who had worked for the leader, with whom they enjoyed a great deal of confidence and loyalty, and on whom their careers depended. The individuals in these groups were responsible for organizing other Party members to back their candidate.

The second type of group also worked to push their candidate into the Presidential Chair, but their connections with the possible nominee were looser. In the case of the dissidents, other groups which were aligned against the apparent official nominee would join forces with the dissident. Groups formed which did not have close ties with the heir apparent, but that wanted to show support beforehand in order to extract benefits once the Party candidate took office.

As we shall see, apart from organizing other Party members who are openly backing one pre-candidate (as thus showing numerical support), members of these groups also perform other important political tasks in the pre-nomination period. The most important of these is attacking the other candidate in stories and columns in the national press, by whispering campaigns, and by publishing stories in Party

organs. All these channels are meant to capture the ear of the sitting president or actually force his hand when choosing his successor. These attacks usually center around the ability of the other candidate to govern the nation because of his ties to extremist groups, or professional background.

One of the clearest problems experienced by all dissenter groups while still active in the Party is organizing enough regime members to sustain a challenge within the coalition. Even if it is in the dissatisfied members' interests to have the dissident pre-candidate become president, these benefits only accrue in the future, which has to be heavily discounted because of the enormous risks in the present from backing a dissident candidate. Some types of activities are relatively costless, such as attending dinners to discuss political issues, but one's name becomes attached to an opposing group, the regime's leaders possess such tools as to make future involvement extremely costly. These weapons include loss of employment, public attacks, investigation into private business dealings, etc. The regime can also deliver divisible goods to individuals, such as better public positions, which changes their personal calculus of the costs and benefits of involvement. We shall see that the incentives for unattached Party members were either to form a group early for the officially favored candidate, or to pursue a lesser option, which would bring

fewer benefits, but was safer because one wouldn't be burned by choosing incorrectly, which was to simply bandwagon once the official candidate was more or less obvious. By moving early, one shows one's loyalty and willingness to risk a good deal, and therefore, the rewards are greater.

A riskier strategy, but one that can bring successful results, is to move for an opposition or dissident candidate in hopes that the regime leaders consider the possible defection too costly and therefore offer the dissident-to-be a better position in hopes of forestalling his defection. Because many knew the regime would offer these incentives, it created the possibilities of demonstrating false preferences. One way to look at the problem of dissidence is through the lens of Albert O. Hirschman's *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*<sup>180</sup>, which allows one to explore when and under what conditions distinct strategies are used to influence the behavior of an organization, in this case the official regime, especially during the succession process.

Hirschman writes that there are two basic strategies to change the way an organization behaves: one can either exit and find other possibilities outside (such as buying another brand, or switching political parties), or one can voice one's discontent. Both courses of action can be used together by voicing one's griefs to the point where this

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<sup>180</sup> Albert Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

seems to do no good and then exiting. For Hirschman, loyalty raises the costs of exiting (through high entry or initiation costs, not to mention the psychological pain which can be caused by exit).

Hirschman believes that exit will be used in situations where the costs of switching to an alternative are low and/or the price of voicing one's opinion is high, or in general fruitless. This is often the case in simple economic transactions. In political situations, exit from the system is often far more costly (such as exile), and so voice is more often used. Collective action problems are an implicit problem in Hirschman's work; if several people or groups are complaining, the probability their complaints will be acted on rises.

The possibility of an organization changing its practices or policies in response to complaints increases if exit is also possible. For if actors have no hope of exiting or no alternative once they do exit, it is far easier to ignore the opinions of dissatisfied members. Leaders of different types of political organizations order their preferences distinctly, although loyalty is always at the top of the ordering.

In Mexico, because of the inclusive nature of the regime, political leaders and the president would rather disgruntled members of the Revolutionary Family voice their discontent than leave the ranks, precisely because the exit



of a powerful Party member can threaten the entire system. Dissidents within the Mexican system obviously have contrasting preference orderings. For them, the easiest solution is to voice their complaints and negotiate on the outcome. But if this doesn't work, then they are faced with a dilemma: if they exit to challenge the system from outside, they could lose everything, including their lives in some cases. But if they do not leave the Party, then their voices will continue to be ignored. Even the threat to exit becomes empty here.

Yet before 1952, the exit option was very much possible and thus, the Party leadership took internal counter-currents seriously. After the 1950's, as exit became less possible, the economy and state sector grew at such a rate that there was little to complain about as all groups were taken care of, either by giving them public positions or financial benefits. Democratic reformers, such as Carlos Madrazo in the 1960's, were simply 'shut up', either permanently or simply by removing them from their posts. But as the economic situation of Mexico became gradually more desperate during the late Seventies, the option of buying off alienated members became less possible. Furthermore, the governing elite became more closed and homogenous during de la Madrid's sexenio<sup>181</sup> which again raised the question: what to do with

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<sup>181</sup> Rogelio Hernández Rodríguez, "La división de la elite política mexicana," eds., Carlos Brazdresch, Nora Bucay, Soledad Loaeza and Nora Lustig, Mexico: augue,

the dissenters? To state it in another way, how were those unsatisfied with the regime going to bring it around?

If the dissenters were to be heard, they had to complain in numbers, and if their threats to leave the system were to be taken seriously, then many must be willing to risk all to leave. And if these defectors were to challenge the system, instead of simply retiring to private life, some sort of organization must be created. All these imperatives imply collective action. A regime that is not cutting back on positions and whose governing circle is not shrinking is a moderately indivisible good: all benefit from it, while the consumption of the good by one does not detract from the enjoyment of the good by another. In other words, all public officials and Party members benefit from a large State whose ruling elite is porous. But if all benefit from the good whether they directly work toward it or not, few would spend resources, hoping others would. So, some sort of enforcement mechanism must exist to force the discontents to exercise their voice. Furthermore, the costs are high for fighting for this type of regime in a system where exit is extremely risky. Thus, a problem for any dissenter in the Mexican system is how to organize a group within the regime to either voice a disagreement, threaten to leave, or actually exit. As we shall see, some conditions are more propitious than

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crisis y ajuste, Trimestre Economico, no. 73-1. Mexico: FCE, 1992.

others. For example, if the moderately unhappy PRIista sees that 1. many others share his dissatisfaction, 2. that his possibilities within the system are dwindling rapidly, and 3. that the possibilities for improvement are small, then he may be more likely to attend a dinner or a meeting where these issues will be discussed, especially since these actions are virtually costless. And as he sees many others join in these small discussions, perhaps enticed by the promise of future positions, (i.e., selective incentives) he may be more willing to climb a ladder of political escalation. But at any moment the political leadership can knock him out of action by offering him a divisible good: a better job. Thus, the ability of the dissenters to garner support, especially inside the official system has to be a central question.

In the first section of the chapter, the three ruptures will be examined. Within this section, I will examine why no ruptures occurred from 1952 to 1986. Then, to complete the comparative analysis, I will also concentrate on a non-case, or a presidential succession in which a dissatisfied, or rejected pre-candidate for the nomination did not leave the regime's boundaries and run against the official Party candidate. This way, it will be easier to identify the reasons which led to the decisions of those who did exit. The case chosen is the presidential succession of 1976, primarily to test for the importance of economic crisis and support from powerful political outsiders, mainly the large-

scale capitalists of the North. Finally, I will return to the question of political stability in the conclusion.

### The Three Cases of Exit

The three cases of exit examined in this paper are: Juan Andreu Almazan's in 1940, Miguel Henriquez Guzman's in 1952 and Cuauhtemoc Cardenas and Porfirio Munoz Ledo's in 1988. These three cases are worth comparing, because despite some differences, their similarities can tell us much about the threats to the regime from internal divisions, and how the official regime leaders learned to deal with these challenges over time. The differences in the three exits are worth pointing out. One could argue that at the time of their exit, Munoz Ledo and C. Cardenas were not members of the governing elite as were Almazan and Henriquez Guzman. But Munoz Ledo had enjoyed a long career in public service, reaching the Presidency of the PRI in Echeverria's sexenio and the level of secretary in Lopez Portillo's. He was also considered a long shot for President in Echeverria's succession. Therefore, while Munoz Ledo's career had fallen sharply, it closely resembles that of Henriquez Guzman's in that he was attempted to regain the heights of the elite.

A sharper difference is that both Henriquez Guzman and C. Cardenas (1988) wanted to reinvigorate the Cardenismo of the 1930's, both in terms of economic policy and the Cardenist faction's representation within the government's elite. Almazan on the other hand, came from the right of the

political spectrum in terms of economic policy and was trying to increase the dwindling chances of the Calles' faction (Calles was president from 1924-1928) within the highest circle. Another fundamental difference among the three cases is the long period of time elapsed between Henriquez Guzmán's exit in 1952 and C. Cardenas and Munoz Ledo's of 1988. During the intervening 35 years, no dissatisfied official had left the Party to run against the official PRI presidential candidate. The official structures had offered enough incentives to disgruntled pre-candidates to stay in the game, while at the same time, they had closed off the possibilities of exit during the presidential succession through better control of the pre-destape period factional movements and of the PRI's sectoral organizations (worker, campesino, and popular groups organized by and tied to the PRI). Not only had the Party changed over time, so had society, becoming better educated, richer and better informed. It is precisely this break down in the PRI's and the president's ability to control the succession process, given its 35 years of success, that makes the 1988 case so interesting, especially given its many similarities to the 1940 and 1952 examples.

Despite the differences in the three exits, their similarities are fascinating in what they can tell us about how the system works. This work will concentrate on three general points of comparison. First, the conditions which enabled these powerful public officials to even conceive of

leaving the Party. As will be shown, two issues crop up in all cases: a shift in the overall economic development model and the closing-off of possibilities for a heretofore important faction. Second, the strategies used by the dissidents to gain recruits and unite the opposition and the regime's attempts to stifle the opposition will be examined. Finally, the threat represented by the ruptures and the Party leadership's responses to it will be shown to be fundamentally similar as well.

The comparison of the three cases is structured as follows: an analytical description of each case will be presented with certain themes: 1. a general background of the previous sexenio, including its economic program and factional experience; 2. a short political biography of the leader of the rupture; 3. the dissident's ability to gain followers and unite the opposition; 4. the Party's response to the threat. The question of why the PRI suffered no challenges from 1952 to 1988 will also be addressed in this section.

#### General Almazan's Exit Attempt of 1940

None of the system's ruptures can be understood without knowledge of the then-current sexenio in which they took place. For example, the attempt of Almazan to gain the Presidency in fact began in the middle of 1938, approximately one and a half years before the transfer of power to the next

chief executive. Therefore, to understand why Almazan was willing to threaten the regime at the end of Lazaro Cárdenas' sexenio (1934-1940), one must examine the broad characteristics of this period, especially the economic model, and the changes in the possibilities of the powerful factions.

Although Lazaro Cárdenas is now seen as one of Mexico's greatest presidents, during his period in office, profound doubts and criticisms were leveled against his economic and political reforms. Cardenas' policies can be summed up as: 1. increased State involvement in the economy, especially in primary inputs such as oil (Cardenas expropriated petroleum in 1938), electricity and steel; 2. an attempt to push the ejido as the central agrarian unit of production coupled with broad-sweeping land redistribution; and 3. the re-organization of the unions (CTM), and campesino groups (CNC) into large centrals which were then drawn into Party sectoral organizations.<sup>182</sup> Added to these wide-reaching programs was a socialist rhetoric used by the President and many of his supporters which included references to Mexico's recognition of the class struggle and the eventual need to create a workers' state.<sup>183</sup> These policies and rhetoric were a shift

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<sup>182</sup> Lorenzo Meyer, "La revolucion mexicana y sus elecciones presidenciales, 1911-1940," en Pablo Gonzalez Casanova, *Las elecciones en Mexico*, (Mexico: UNAM, 1985), 90.

<sup>183</sup> Bertha Lerner de Sheinbaum and Susana Ralsky de Cimet, *El poder de los presidentes* (Mexico: Instituto Mexico de Estudios Politicos, 1976), 148.

away from the politics of Mexico's previous leader and strongman, Plutarco Elias Calles, and they threatened the interests of several powerful groups within society, such as the northern businessmen, who feared expropriation, Catholic groups, who watched the State rally behind non-religious, government controlled 'socialist' education<sup>184</sup>, and worker and campesino groups whose independence was shattered as their organizations were taken over by government imposed and controlled leaders. According to Mexican historians such as Ralsky de Cimet, Lerner and L. J. Garrido, Mexico was being split between those who opposed Cardenas and those who wanted his program to reach even further.<sup>185</sup>

The Party could not allow free election or a frictionless campaign if it hoped to 1. hold on to the government and 2. discipline its elite so that every presidential succession would not be a cause for open dissention within the regime's elite. The president, often after consulting sectoral leaders and Zone Commanders, decided on his successor, and once this decision was made, all others, especially the losing pre-candidates, must discipline their ambitions. Assassinations and armed rebellions had been the favored way to decide political transitions until Calles drew the various military, worker and peasant leaders from the Revolution into

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid, p. 148, and LuÚs Garrido, *El partido de la revolucion institucionalizada* (Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1982), 264.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid, 150 and 264.



one organization - the Revolutionary Party. All these groups would share in government as long as they were willing to accept the central rule of the game: the president has the final say, especially in nominating his successor.

Not only were fundamental economic and political changes sweeping the nation, a basic readjustment was taking place within the confines of the Revolutionary elite; the hopes for members and leaders of the Calles faction were being shut down by Cardenas' successful move to exclude Calles himself from the political game.<sup>186</sup> Ralsky and Lerner write

The displacement of the Calles group from political leadership constituted a powerful motive to create difficulties for the regime in the moment of the presidential succession. They were interested in recovering the force they had lost and integrating themselves once again in future politics.<sup>187</sup>

Because Calles himself posed such a threat to Cardenas, the latter had to destroy Calles and his faction as a political force.<sup>188</sup> Thus Cardenas threw out Calles' Congressmen and

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<sup>186</sup> Jose L. Reyna, "Las elecciones en el Mexico institucionalizado, 1946-1976, ed., Gonzalez Casanova, *Las elecciones Mexico* 1985, 140.

<sup>187</sup> Lerner de Sheinbaum and Ralsky de Cimet, op. cit., p. 148.

<sup>188</sup> Calles, after stepping down from the presidential chair in 1928, had ruled Mexico as head of the new party he formed in 1929 and as *Çjefe maximoÇ* of the newly joined revolutionary factions. Although three interim presidents officially held power from 1928-1934, Calles remained the ultimate arbiter of major national decisions. When the PNR nominated Cardenas for a six year term beginning in 1934, most believed Calles would continue his behind the scenes rule. Cardenas soon demonstrated his drive to place the

Senators, and ejected others tied to the old caudillo from public administration posts. To be a Calles supporter was not to have much future in the highest reaches of the Revolutionary elite.

General Almazan, because of his background and experience, was in a unique position to take advantage of the discontent both in and outside the governing elite. The General began his military career during the Revolution aligning himself with Calles, and later spending many years as Zone Commander of the region that included Nuevo Leon.<sup>189</sup> Here he made contacts with the powerful Northern business leaders of Monterrey, and in fact became extremely wealthy himself.<sup>190</sup> The General had enjoyed a long military record, with a good number of important positions enabling him to form a political power base.

It must also be remembered that in the 30 years following the Revolution, the military in Mexico played a far more important political role than it does now. General Calles realized that independently based Revolutionary Generals had to be integrated into a central organization to keep them from continually fighting over the nation's political and economic spoils. The post-Revolutionary presidents used 'their'

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Presidency beyond Calles' domination.

<sup>189</sup> Luis Medina, *Del cardenismo al avilacamachismo: Historia de la revolucion mexicana, 1934-1940* (Mexico: Colegio de Mexico, 1981).

<sup>190</sup> Garrido, *El partido de la revolucion*, 1982, 271.

generals to ward off regional armed threats, to support their agrarian reforms and to assure their presidential successors would take office. The military figures who had led quasi-independent armies during the Revolution formed the very center of the governing elite. From their ranks came every post-Revolutionary president (except interim president Ortiz Rubio) until Miguel Alemán rose to power in 1946. Thus, in the early Post-Revolutionary era, they were the source, the support and the ultimate threat to the coalition in power. For why should one Revolutionary General have more right to be president than another, except that the sitting chief executive chose one and not the other?

Almazan began his run for power as a legitimate pre-candidate to the Party's (at that time the PRM) nomination for president to succeed Cardenas in 1940. He also became a natural candidate for all those inside the ruling coalition who opposed the sexenio's reforms or the closing-off of their career possibilities. Calles' faction chose Almazan to lead them, while at the same time, Almazan's own people were forming groups within the Party to support his candidacy.<sup>191</sup> The General from Guerrero became the candidate for, and of, those who had suffered the most under Cardenas and wanted back in the game.

Almazán's candidacy was discarded early by the sectoral leadership of the Party because he was considered too far to

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<sup>191</sup>Ibid, 94.

the right and too likely to dismantle, instead of consolidate, the reforms of the past sexenio. Mugica, a close Cardenas collaborator and another front-runner against Avila Camacho, admitted defeat in the race to gain the PRM's nomination, he did not leave the confines of the regime to challenge the official candidate in the electoral arena. He pulled out of the race but stayed in the Party. 'Se disciplinó', that is, he disciplined himself politically by accepting defeat gracefully, probably because he knew he would be rewarded for his personal loyalty to the president and for his place in the Cardenas faction, which at the end of Cardenas' sexenio was still very powerful.<sup>192</sup> Almazán however, did not subordinate his ambitions and remain within the Party, because he had fewer opportunities inside the coalition and greater support outside for an independent run.

#### Almazan's Decision to Leave the Party

When it became obvious at the end of 1938 that Cardenas had moved for Avila Camacho,<sup>193</sup> Almazan had to decide whether he would stay in the Party and resign himself to a dwindling career, or leave in order challenge the system. There was no hope of a democratic vote among the mass-based sectors of the PRM regarding who would be the Party's presidential candidate. Cardenas had reorganized the structures in 1938, at once

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<sup>192</sup>Idid, 278 and Jose Reyna, op. cit. 140-1.

<sup>193</sup>Garrido, op. cit., 266.

centralizing political power into the mass-based sectoral organizations controlled by the PRM, and at the same time taking away what little say the sectors or the legislature had in policy decisions. The president became stronger as he now controlled the Party.<sup>194</sup> Thus Almazan had to convince the President, and when he couldn't, the decision point emerged.

Cardenas attempted to convince him to stay within the Party. Both the president and the leader of the PRM invited the General to present his official candidacy to the Asamblea Nacional of the Party, where the representatives of the sectors voted for the official presidential candidate. Almazán of course knew that the decision had already been made in favor of Avila Camacho, and that the Asamblea Nacional's members were controlled by the President and therefore the decision was simply a rubber stamp.<sup>195</sup> What were Almazán's expectations? Did he, who had used his troops to assure Party victories in the ballot box, really think that he wouldn't be either assassinated or simply defrauded of his votes? The fact that he did leave the regime is some evidence that he thought he could win legally. But this does not explain why he thought he could beat the PRM's candidate. What probably convinced him the risk was worth it was the level of anti-Cardenas and anti-Party sentiment both in and outside the PRM.

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<sup>194</sup>Ibid, p. 257.

<sup>195</sup> Francisco Paoli Bolio, "Legislacion electoral y proceso politico, 1917-1982," *Las elecciones en Mexico*, 144, and Garrido, op. cit., 274.

Garrido writes, "The character of the Cardinist policies and the transformation of the Party in 1938 had created certain favorable conditions for the creation of a broad opposition movement."<sup>196</sup> Perhaps he thought a mass movement against the Party was enough to detrench it.

Added to these sources of support was the lack of possibilities for the faction to which Almazan pertained. Calles' people, even if they had switched loyalties and become useful to Cardenas, as had E. Portes Gil, for example, were not fully trusted and were jettisoned once their immediate usefulness was exhausted and Calles fully defeated. They had been expelled from the Legislature and forced from their administration positions, while Almazán was offering them a chance to regain their career trajectories. Almazán himself had been loosely identified with the Calles group, and while he had served Cardenas well, he was not one of his 'people'. Perhaps with the outside support and the end of his career in sight, the choice to leave was not so difficult after all.

Almazan's program was not fundamentally different from Avila Camacho's: both advocated in general terms: nationalism, the political participation of the masses, and the enrichment of the poor.<sup>197</sup> The largest difference between Avila Camacho and Almazan was that the latter was pro-private property,

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<sup>196</sup>Garrido, op. cit., 277.

<sup>197</sup> Paoli Bolio, op. cit., 144 and Medina, op. cit., 259.

especially for the small landholder, and anti-ejido because this land tenure system would supposedly ruin rural productivity. In other respects, Almazán was no radical. He favored industrial production, and wanted to free sectoral union leaders from their ties to the Party and therefore introduce democratic practices within the PRM.<sup>198</sup> A one-party system was not the problem, only the direction, both politically and economically, taken by Cardenas. As we shall see, each dissident leader passed over in the Party's closed, secretive selection process, later called for an opening in this nomination process. These complaints had not been heard from any of the central figures prior to their impending defections.

While Almazan was promising to first open up the decision-making process of the Party, the PRM's leaders were accusing the General of purely selfish, ambitious motives in his attempt to win the nomination outside official rules. The national press described the campaign as a fight "between personalistic groups who were comparable in force, acts, and ambitions...".<sup>199</sup>, i.e., as a fight between internal factions. Almazan, in his memoirs, defends the motives of his exit by declaring that his campaign was in reality a fight between the Mexican people who desired political democracy and a

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<sup>198</sup> J.A. Almazan, *Memorias del General Almazan* (Mexico: E. Quintanar, 1941), 112-113; Newell and Rubio, op. cit., 78 and Lorenzo Meyer, op. cit., 95.

<sup>199</sup> Almazan, op. cit., 121.

"privileged caste who wanted to dominate the nation for purely personal ends."<sup>200</sup> We will see almost the exact exchange in the 1952 and 1988 cases; and with good reason - if one is losing out by playing by the authoritarian rules of the game, it makes sense to call for a democratic opening, especially if there is a good chance of winning in a free election, at least in the moments these people chose to exit.

#### Groups Supporting Almazan

Almazan's strategy before the final break with the PRM was very simple: create groups to support his candidacy and form alliances with other factions who were anti-Cardenas. Lorenzo Meyer, a historian, gives a simple description of how to win the Party's presidential nomination:

The victory or defeat of all those members of the Revolutionary coalition that at one time aspired to the Presidency depended on their capacity to generate and sustain alliances in the cupula, that is to say, with leaders of the Army and mass organizations.<sup>201</sup>

But for the wave of anti-Cardinismo sweeping the nation and the splits within the Revolutionary coalition, Almazan would not have had a chance of winning an election against the PRM, and therefore probably would not have left the regime. But the opposition sentiment within the heart of the Party was what gave the general his impetus: he was able to form groups

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<sup>200</sup>Ibid, 121.

<sup>201</sup>Lorenzo Meyer, op. cit. 93.



on his behalf and ally with several other factions and high-level public officials. Furthermore, although the leadership of the CNC, CTM, and the Army was firmly behind Avila Camacho, their *membership* was certainly not convinced, and dissenters within each organization either openly or privately went for Almazán.

A number of unions and workers supported Almazán despite their allegiance to the CTM, whose leaders obligated them to back Avila Camacho. These workers were unhappy with the means of control used by the central to limit wage increases.<sup>202</sup> The ties between union and central were becoming more authoritarian as the CTM developed mechanisms which took away the ability of the union members to vote on issues pertaining to their interests. Campesino groups under the umbrella of the CNC experienced similar internal fights over the same issue: the imposition of peasant leaders beholden to Party officials and deaf to the demands of the base who then lacked any influence over policy making or the selection of candidates.<sup>203</sup> There is also evidence that the Army divided over the issue, with the majority of Zone Commanders supporting Avila Camacho, while Almazán captured some of the

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<sup>202</sup>Garrido, 1982, 279.

<sup>203</sup> L. Meyer, *op. cit.*, 93 and Eduardo Correa, *El Balance de Avila Camachismo* (Mexico: Edition of the Author, 1946), p. xxix.

officers of the lower ranks.<sup>204</sup>

Added to groups within the sectoral organizations and the Army were Senators, Congressmen and ex-public officials, especially those active during the Calles era, who split off from the Avila Camacho movement to support Almazan. Thus, within every part of the Party, at every level, defections, (not from the PRM itself, but from the official nominee), became more commonplace.

#### Strategies of Party Members

But there were those within the Party were not so quick to follow Almazan out to the cold reaches beyond the governing coalition. Those public officials who were not completely tied to Calles still had possibilities and could hope that Almazan's attempt to influence the succession - to open it up to a larger number of participants - would improve their career possibilities within the next sexenio without having to exit the regime. These semi-dissidents had options: they could support Almazan silently, and in effect do nothing for the official candidate; they could openly join a pro-Almazan group, but not follow the General when he left the Party, or they could openly follow him out, hoping that if he lost, they would be welcomed back into the PRM and be given decent positions. Each of these strategies was followed by different

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<sup>204</sup> Newell and Rubio, op. cit., 78 and Correa, op. cit., p. xxix.

members of Almazán's coalition.

While the General from Guerrero was willing in his bolt from the Party to rupture the very structures of the political institutions, many of his followers simply were not: they appeared to be more interested in influencing either the nomination decision, and failing this, they hoped to improve their career position by the threat. Paradoxically, by threatening the system, one could re-start one's career. By joining a pro-Almazan group, the Party member was showing his willingness to leave, causing the official coalition troubles. One of the PRM's most successful tactics for breaking up the Almazan coalition inside the Party was offering individuals positions in the following sexenio. Party members, knowing the leadership would do this, falsely threatened departure, precisely to precipitate this reaction.

Those who actually left the Revolutionary circle played a far riskier game. Some actually believed the rhetoric of democratization and were willing to lose everything, including their fortunes, and in many cases their lives. Others however, were not such sticklers for their principles and returned to the fold successfully. They knew that the end was near - that their generation was passing away, and with it, their individual possibilities of career advancement.<sup>205</sup>

#### The Regime's Reaction to the Exit

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<sup>205</sup>Carreno Carlon, op. cit., 319.

The aftermath of the exit challenge is one of the most important moments in which the regimes' actors *endogenously* changed the systems rule structure so as to make such future ruptures more difficult.

Once Avila Camacho took over, he took steps to centralize authority under the banner of the Presidency, thus continuing a trend begun under Cardenas. To do this, he took both short-term and more institutionalized steps to change Mexico's governing institutions - those that regulated the relations between the Party, and the political bureaucracy, as well as opposition groups and the regime through manipulation of the electoral rules. In the short term, Avila Camacho took back as many of the ex-Almancistas as wanted to rejoin the Party, thus coopting dissidents back into the system.

The new president also took several long term measures. Centrally, he removed decision-making responsibilities from the PRM and placed them within the executive bureaucracy. His first step was to form the Federal Electoral Commission (CFE), which was placed under the aegis of the Ministry of Gobernacion, (which, as we saw, can be seen as a fusion of electoral college and internal security agency). Now the bureaucracy, not the Party would monitor elections and their results, an important source of power.

With the Party reforms of 1942 and 1946, the PRM/PRI (which changed names for the last time in 1946), began to lose its ability to select candidates with this authority going to

Gobernacion. Not only was the Minister of Gobernacion responsible for choosing federal deputies, and senators (following the dictates of the President), he could also force the ouster of governors, a political maneuver which the Party had controlled before. The Minister of Gobernacion had no independent base, but rather depended on the good will of the president to keep his position, shifting more control to the executive.

President Avila Camacho also dissolved the military sector of the Party and strengthened the then diffuse popular sector of the PRM by fusing together disparate organizations into a single confederation known as the CNOP (National Confederation of Popular Organizations). The president followed this up by cutting the number of federal deputies and senators awarded to leaders of the labor and peasant sectors and shifting these seats to the CNOP. More importantly, those who were attempting to make a career in the government shifted their activities to the CNOP - working and organizing in the new sector, to rise within regime, thus supplying the coalition with its new political stars, instead of the labor sector, which had been up until that time important in this regard, second only to the military, which also lost importance during the following two sexenios of Avila Camacho and Miguel Aleman.

Garrido notes that the Party would no longer be the center of ideological debate or decision-making, but rather an

electoral support mechanism for the President. The Party for example, no longer could debate and diffuse ideological debates - it lost its press organ El Nacional to the Ministry of Gobernaciun during this period. The president was able to control the Party and its sectoral and bureaucratic leadership by shifting many of its responsibilities over to the bureaucracy, controlling the labor organizations, dissolving the military sector, and strengthening the popular federations of the PRI, which he packed with men personally loyal to him.

Not only did Avila Camacho weaken the Party while strengthening Gobernaciun, he also reformed the electoral laws, making it more difficult for opposition parties to gain legal status. The 1946 Electoral Law for the first time made registration of new political parties (by Gobernaciun) a legal necessity. The new party had to have at least 30,000 adherents, with 2/3 of the states having party organizations of at least 1000 members. The party also had to be registered for one year to be able to participate in elections. The Ministry of Gobernaciun would be responsible for both granting and revoking registrations. These new rules made it difficult for elite breakaway factions to form parties to challenge their former colleagues, while making it easier for the government to control the rebels when they did break off through Gobernaciun's registration rights.<sup>206</sup> The exit of AlmazÃn thus instigated changes in the Party, government and

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<sup>206</sup>Paoli Bolio, 1985, 146-147

electoral arenas which became part of what we now consider normal Mexican politics.

General Henriquez Guzman's Attempt of 1952

Henrúquez Guzmán's attempt to leave the Party and beat its official presidential candidate in fair elections shared many characteristics with Almazán's exit in 1939-1940. Both were revolutionary generals with long careers within the governing elite who came out losers in the Party's pre-candidate nomination process. In the exits of 1940 and 1952, both generals received support from leaders and groups within the official ranks of government. Both organized their efforts around the force of their personalities, and lacked any sort of permanent party organization. The Party reacted in similar ways to each threat: its leaders attempted to convince Henrúquez Guzmán to stay within the government elite, and when this failed, reverted to threats, intimidation and violence.<sup>207</sup>

The sexenio of Miguel Alemán (1946-1952), in which the exit of Henrúquez Guzmán took place, was characterized by two basic changes which led to the attempt of 1951-1952. First, Alemán sharpened and deepened the shift towards capitalist development begun by predecessor, Avila Camacho (1940-1946). Second, Cardenas' faction (no longer led by the ex-President, but still active after the end of his term and identified with

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<sup>207</sup>Paoli Bolio, 149.

his more socialist policies) lost a good deal of ground to new groups with distinct backgrounds.

Aleman instituted a true change in the development model, which implied changes in State economic and investment priorities, and concomitant political difficulties. Land distribution dropped sharply, following a trend from Avila Camacho's term. Development now meant industrialization, encouraged through the State's protection of its economy and the substitution of many imports. Economic growth was good during Aleman's term, and the growth of the industrial plant was significant.<sup>208</sup> The threat of expropriation dropped as foreign investment in Mexican firms was encouraged, and union activity controlled, often violently through the State-controlled CTM.<sup>209</sup> Through these strong arm tactics, the government was able to reign in wage increases and demands of the large urban unions. The State began to invest heavily in infrastructural programs and protection of all sorts of industries, which allowed for an enormous rise in the level of corruption as men tied to the government won contracts worth millions based on their contacts.<sup>210</sup>

Added to these economic changes were major shifts in where and how public functionaries were recruited and how they advanced within the system. Not only was Miguel Aleman the

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<sup>208</sup>Reyna, 1985, 105.

<sup>209</sup>Rodriguez Araujo, 1974, 114.

<sup>210</sup>Ibid, 114.



first civilian president, he initiated the rise of the university trained, non-military political bureaucrat. As the generation of generals with revolutionary experience passed away, the UNAM trained lawyer began to replace these other types of leaders in positions of power within the public administration. The military as an institution lost influence: it would no longer be a source for men to fill leadership positions, and its ability to mediate on the succession issue began to disappear.<sup>211</sup>

As the economic model changed, and the generation of military leaders was replaced by younger men without independent military bases, the faction once led by Cardenas, as well as other groups and individuals tied to the older regime, saw their ability to continue to advance within the governing coalition decline dramatically. Olga Pellicer points to this as a fundamental reason why enough frustration built up within the ruling coalition to create the conditions making an exit possible. She writes that older members of the Revolutionary Family were discontent because they had been excluded from "the direct exercise of power during the Alemán administration."<sup>212</sup> These leaders and members of their groups would later act on their frustration by threatening to follow or actually following HenrÚquez Guzmán out of the Party (now called the PRI).

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<sup>211</sup>Reyna, 1985, 105.

<sup>212</sup>Pellicer, 1977, 33.

What brought many within the PRI to the brink of open rebellion was the possibility of Aleman or a carbon copy of the sitting president continuing in power for another sexenio. First, Aleman floated rumors that he would force a change in the Constitution through the Congress allowing for the reelection of the President. These rumors were taken seriously enough that reportedly Cardenas and Avila Camacho went to talk to Aleman to warn him that if he ran for reelection, Cardenas would run against him and certainly win.<sup>213</sup> Aleman realized reelection was impossible, so then attempted to impose Francisco Casas Aleman, the unelected Mayor of Mexico City, on the Party leadership. Casas Aleman was so unpopular because of his ties to corruption and his heavy handedness in the Capital that not even Aleman's own people wanted him to succeed.<sup>214</sup>

Into this situation of discord, dissatisfaction and rumor stepped General Henriquez Guzman, a revolutionary leader who had enjoyed a series of ever more important positions under Calles and Cardenas until Avila Camacho took power and diplomatically sent Henriquez Guzman into political exile. The General had enjoyed the confidence of Cardenas for many years, and so belonged to the once powerful faction that saw its possibilities being reduced. Pellicer writes, "Henriquismo represented the banners that justified the

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<sup>213</sup>Interview, Mexico City, January, 1993.

<sup>214</sup>Interview, Mexico City, January, 1993

Revolutionary movement and specifically, tried to rescue Cardenismo as a political alternative and current within the government."<sup>215</sup>

In short, the movement, headed up one of Cárdenas's old political allies, and which began inside the PRI before being expelled, was a reaction against the loss of political strength of the old Cardenas faction as well as the displacement of the Army by the younger generation of university trained lawyers within the highest ranks of government. Henriquez Guzman was perfectly placed to head up the Cardenas coalition and save his own career at the same time.

Even more than Almazan, Henríquez Guzmán did not want to leave the Party. Rather, he wanted to force the sitting president and Party leaders to open a space for himself and the other Cardenistas being pushed out of the political game. Reyna writes that, especially at first, the Henriquista movement was an internal fight over the future of the Cárdenas faction. One group simply wanted to force themselves into a better position and the succession was the best moment to do this.<sup>216</sup> Pellicer agrees with this by writing that when pro-Henriquez groups began to form, their intention was not to break away from the PRI, but force its leaders to consider the general as an alternative presidential candidate, and give

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<sup>215</sup>Reyna, 1985, 106.

<sup>216</sup>Ibid, 105.

Cardenistas the places they deserved within the ruling coalition.

In all areas of the regime, HenrÚquez GuzmÁn was able to garner support, with the Army, for the reasons outlined above, being an especially strong base. The list of ex-public officials, both elected and administrative, that supported HenrÚquez GuzmÁn is also impressive: former governors, leaders of the Senate, Congressmen, directors of public utilities, the founder of the CNC (Graciano Sanchez).<sup>217</sup> Another author, J. Carreþo Carlun, notes that apart from the solid support given by the military, peasant leaders who had organized groups to promote agrarian reform, and labor leaders who had renovated national union movements also supported the dissident.

It's not clear whether the author referred to CTM union leaders, those that were unaffiliated with the national central, or to those thrown out of the workers' sector of the Party. Another author states that no organized union inside the CTM supported the dissident movement.<sup>218</sup> The issue of increased Party control over sectoral members is important. During AlmazÁn's exit in 1938-1940, many members of affiliated unions split off from their imposed leaders to support, in one way or another, the opposition movement, and the CTM's leaders were not wholly able to control this phenomenon. If the second author is correct in that even the members of these

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<sup>217</sup>Lozoya, 1989, 122.

<sup>218</sup>Paoli Bolio, 1985, 150.

unions were not able to back HenrÚquez GuzmÁn, despite AlemÁnÇs anti-union policies, then Party control over its sectoral organizations had increased notably. Still a third author states that workersÇ groups were in favor of the opposition General, or at least against the CTM, so perhaps the ability of the PRI to force its members to back the official candidate was still not fully developed.<sup>219</sup>

#### Party MembersÇ Strategies

Again, as in the case of AlmazÁn's Party supporters, one needs to ask how far they were willing to go to influence the succession in their favor. There is strong evidence that the Cardenistas launched General HenrÚquez inside the Party structures because they thought it was still possible to influence the future course of internal politics in their favor.<sup>220</sup> Political groups were openly formed by Henriquistas inside the PRI's sectors with the intention of creating some counterweight to the presidentially controlled sectors already existent.<sup>221</sup> Perhaps because of what had happened to AlmazÁn, the Henriquistas were more determined to win the Presidential Chair inside the framework of the official rules.<sup>222</sup> This was a clear case of an inside attempt to influence the succession to better the dissenters' individual career possibilities.

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<sup>219</sup>Pellicer, 1977, 37.

<sup>220</sup>Rodriguez Araujo, 1974, 113.

<sup>221</sup>Pellicer, 1977, 35.

<sup>222</sup>Reyna, 1985, 106.

When it became clear to some of Henrúquez's supporters that the internal split was not to be resolved by giving Henrúquez the official nod, many were convinced to stay within the ruling coalition, in the same way similar Almazán quasi-dissenters had been convinced - through a mixture of job incentives and threats. It is probably safe to believe that mid and upper level public officials were offered incentives while members of the worker and peasant sectors were threatened. Furthermore, many coalition members had supported Henrúquez largely to force Alemán to drop Casas Alemán as his choice of successor. Once the sitting executive had done this, Henrúquez was dropped by these Party members in favor of the PRI's official candidate, Adolfo Ruiz Cortines.<sup>223</sup>

Just as Henrúquez was able to garner support among disaffected members of the Revolutionary Family, so was he able to take advantage of the widespread societal discontent brought about by Alemán's change in development programs. Disgusted with Alemán's favoritism towards his family and friends, the urban sectors supported the general in his campaign as they had supported Almazán just 12 years earlier. Small and medium sized business owners were also a part of this backing. In the rural areas especially, Henrúquez's Cardenist policies fell on willing ears. Alemán's policies had befitted large landholders at the expense of the large mass of peasants and small holders. The PRI's control over

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<sup>223</sup>Pellicer, 1977, 35.

the peasant central would be especially important for the final vote as the great majority of Mexicans in 1952 were still rural dwellers.<sup>224</sup>

The majority of the economic and administrative policies promised by Henríguez were similar to the official candidate's. Rodríguez Araujo writes, "The ideology was the same, the difference was based on the criticism of the worst abuses of power (of the regime), that is to say, its vices."<sup>225</sup> The opposition candidate saved his strongest criticism of the PRI for its internal, non-democratic decision-making practices. The main intention of the movement was to force the PRI's leaders and the president to open up the process of the designation of the official candidate and allow more members of the ruling coalition to actually vote on the candidate democratically. Henríguez added another demand: to democratize the relation between the Centrals and the Party so that the members could elect their own leaders (instead of simply accepting imposed ones) and in this way, through democratically elected bosses, the bases could have some representative voice in how the Party operated and was led.

Henríguez Guzman denied that his attempt to challenge the Party stemmed from his frustrated ambitions. As we have seen, under Avila Camacho and Alemán's sexenios, the general had not done well career-wise, nor had many other Cardenistas and

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<sup>224</sup>Ibid, 37.

<sup>225</sup>Rodríguez Araujo, 1974, 118.

Revolutionary military leaders. Rodríguez Araujo writes,

During the first post-Revolutionary years, before political control had crystallized in the Party, splits in the elite were caused by the frustration of personal ambitions of famous military leaders. After this, when the Party had become better organized, the crisis occurred when the leaders of a faction couldn't reconcile themselves to the nomination of a presidential candidate outside their faction and so started an opposition movement to the left or right.<sup>226</sup>

Thus Henriquez Guzman had to follow Almazan's footsteps: while he was still working within the PRI, he emphasized his desire to open up the nomination process, which would enable his Cardenista faction to garner either the executive's office or at least more influence over the following president (because he would owe his position to the faction which helped place him in office in a more democratic fashion).

Just like Almazan, Henriquez Guzman claimed the Party in power had betrayed the revolutionary ideals enshrined in the Constitution of 1917, and only by defeating the PRI could the revolution continue. As we shall see, this rhetoric would be used again in 1986-1988 as Cuauhtōmoc Cárdenas (the son of the ex-president) and Muñoz Ledo justified their departure from the PRI and their attempt to be the first and only opposition who could win against the official Party in its history.

#### The Party's Strategies

Not only was Henriquez's democratic rhetoric similar to

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<sup>226</sup>Rodríguez Araujo, 1974, 108.



that used by Almazan, so were the Party's strategies employed to neutralize the electoral threat. The PRI reacted to the dissidents with a mixture of threats, violence, offers of negotiation and important positions in the next administration in exchange for maintaining internal discipline.<sup>227</sup> Some in fact accepted these offers. In a press release of mid-1950 which represented the opening salvo of the dissidents within the Party, 25 Henriquistas pledged their support for the general and his program. By December of that same year, 12 of these public officials had recanted and agreed to openly support the official candidate and thus maintain political discipline.<sup>228</sup>

#### The Regime's Reaction

As in 1940, once the dissident leader had left the Party to challenge the regime electorally, the Party stepped up the attacks against the motivations of the Henriquistas and crossed the line into violence, which again continued through and after election day.<sup>229</sup>

HenrÚquez Guzmán won less than 16% of the vote, which of course was rejected as massive fraud by the general and his supporters. The day after the elections, a large protest march took place in a central park in Mexico City. It was

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<sup>227</sup>Pellicer, 1977, 36.

<sup>228</sup>Rodríguez Araujo, 1974, 114.

<sup>229</sup>Rodríguez Araujo, 120 and Paoli Bolio, 151.

dispersed violently with more than a hundred reportedly killed. The persecution of the Henriquistas continued throughout the year. In February of 1954, Henrúquez Guzmán's party lost its registration with little protest from any sector.<sup>230</sup>

As was the case with 1940, the PRI in 1952 welcomed back into the heart of the governing coalition many of those who had left the Party to support Henrúquez Guzmán.<sup>231</sup> Pellicer writes of this phenomenon, "The government of Ruiz Cortines contributed to facilitate this option (of return), by receiving with open arms the Henriquistas who desired to reintegrate themselves back into the heart of the Revolutionary Family, and make theirs some of the policies advocated by the Henriquistas."<sup>232</sup> The same author goes farther by stating that the decision of the Party dissenters to re-enter or not reveals their motivations for leaving. Those who refused to reintegrate themselves, Pellicer charges, were the dissenters who truly desired to change the governing institutions of Mexico. Those who returned, had in fact fought in the riskiest manner to re-open their career possibilities who then reconciled themselves to Ruiz Cortines' victory. General García Barragán, a central figure in

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<sup>230</sup>Ibid, 120.

<sup>231</sup>Lozaya, 128; Carreno Carlon, 339; and Interview, Mexico City, January, 1993.

<sup>232</sup>Pellicer, 41.

HenrÚquez GuzmÁN's exit, went on to rise to be the Secretary of Defense in DÚaz Ordaz's sexenio (1964-1970).<sup>233</sup> The president channeled remaining military ambition into a new opposition party (the Party of the Authentic Revolution - PARM) which he helped form specifically to give a safe outlet beyond the coalition's borders to those of the armed forces who wished to participate politically.

As another part of his short-term strategy to increase the popularity of his government, Ruiz Cortines altered Articles 34 and 115 of the Constitution so women now had the vote. He modified the laws governing the behavior of public officials to stop at least superficially, the level of corruption AlemÁN's cronies had displayed and he altered the fines levied on those charged more than the official price for basic goods.<sup>234</sup>

On a more institutional level, Ruiz Cortines continued the drive to centralize political and policy authority under the executive branch, not the Party, thereby weakening the possibilities for ruptures within the coalition. The role of the Party under this term became the model for following sexenios: to receive and transmit executive decisions to the organized masses, contain the possibilities of mass

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<sup>233</sup>Lozaya, 128. DÚaz Ordaz, while not playing such an important role in Henriquez Guzman's attempt as Garcia Barragan, was also working with the opposition general at the end of AlemÁN's sexenio. Rodriguez Araujo, 116.

<sup>234</sup>Pellicer, 1978, 17.

mobilization, organize participation in elections, and give out benefits and favors to political supporters. The labor central was split between the larger CTM and the CROC, which was tied directly to the government, and less likely to call for strikes, although the CTM was generally pliant. The popular sector was given more executive backing as well. The days of independent political maneuvering by factions within the Party were over. The Secretaria de Gobernaciun was strengthened yet again when it was deeded the responsibility of removing governors, a task heretofore taken by the Party.<sup>235</sup>

The electoral law was once again changed in reaction to the newest rupture. In 1954, the prerequisites for party registration went from 30,000 affiliates (instituted during Avila Camacho's term), to 65,000 overall, with 1,000 to 1,500 distributed in 2/3's of the states. These restrictions worked so well for the following several years, that the electoral law was next changed in 1963, it was modified to give opposition parties representation even if they won no elections. Overall, the institutional reforms worked - there would be no coalition for the next 35 years. The reasons why will be discusses in the next section.

#### Why There Were No Exits Between 1952 and 1987

In the 35 years between Henriquez Guzman's attempt and the rupture of 1986-1988, no other powerful losing

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<sup>235</sup>Ibid, 69-70.

presidential candidate or faction leader left the Party with the intention of beating its candidate in elections. What had changed from the 1940-1952 period of constant internal splits and the period of calm between 1952 and 1986-1988? Powerful, unsatisfied losers in the nomination battles no longer choose to risk an electoral fight with the PRI

To simply say that the estimated costs of such an exit was not worth the probable costs is not enough to explain why the calculations of the public functionaries changed. Four central factors explain why the regime was able to maintain internal stability and cohesion for 35 years, while the rupture of 1986-1988 shows how these conditions for stability broke down and created the opportunity for another internal split to threaten the entire system.

The first of the four factors was the increasing ability of the President to control the succession process: both the formation and behavior of groups, as well as the ability of the PRI sectors to move independently for one candidate or another, was tightly managed. Second, the true revolutionary generation has passed away, taking with it the generals' claim to the right to govern and/or decide who had the right to rule. Third and related to the second, is the destruction of the Calles faction and control over Cárdenas' group, the two strongest political groups of the post-revolution period. The final factor which explains internal control and stability is the continued growth of the size and role of the State, and

the lack of any major changes the economic development model that would create large groups of "losers", or organized groups that had previously enjoyed benefits now being denied them.

Following the three successive threats to the continuing survival of the post-revolutionary political institutions, President Ruiz Cortines strengthened his control over the transfer of power to such an extent that not only was there no rupture in 1958, none of the presidential hopefuls even openly declared their ambitions, nor did they mobilize all the instruments available to their counterparts only six years earlier. Political groups did not begin to form openly in any of sectors of the Party, Army, Congress or bureaucracy in the two years leading up to the actual exchange of the Presidential Sash, as they had in previous successions. All pre-candidates were, for the first time, chosen from the sitting Cabinet, a practice that continues to this day, and serves as an efficient way to cut down the pool of pre-candidates to a minimum.

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President Ruíz Cortines was able to control 'posibles' pre-nomination activity, especially the formation of groups, which made it difficult to know early who was the preferred of the President, and as no one was sure he would not be the one chosen, no one dared to threaten to leave. In this succession, the 'destape' was born; hiding the official candidate as long as possible to stop outward ruptures.<sup>237</sup>

Not only did the President initiate new informal rules of how the pre-candidates could promote themselves, he also tightened controls on the Party, a change which had begun with Cárdenas' reorganization of the Party in 1938. Beginning especially after 1946, the sectors were no longer able to participate in the designation of candidates for elected positions.<sup>238</sup> Jose Luíz Reyna writes that..."control over the elections passed from being a function of the sectors to the leadership of the Party and of course, the Executive."<sup>239</sup> The PRI reorganized its sectoral bases so that there was little room for independent maneuver.<sup>240</sup>

Lorenzo Meyer has written of the period 1911-1940:

The power of the President was never so great that he could impede the members of his own party from announcing their pre-candidacies

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<sup>237</sup>Reyna, 108.

<sup>238</sup>Ibid, 103.

<sup>239</sup>Ibid, 103.

<sup>240</sup>Interview, Mexico City, January, 1993.



and working openly in search of positions that would facilitate the decision in their favor.<sup>241</sup>

The story of increased executive control over the Party is in great part explained by its increasing control over the labor sector - the CTM. The regime, according to Alan Knight (1990, p. 77-79) was able to stifle independent union formation and growth, while at the same time coopting loyal CTM leaders to the government's policies by buying them off. When the CTM lost its independence, it lost its ability to influence politics as it had formerly.

The regime's leaders during the 1940s and 1950s also formed and promoted the middle class federation (CNOP) of the middle class sector. To deprive the CTM of political weight, the CNOP was given what had been the labor sector's responsibilities, and began to supply the top elite with politicians, who had before worked their way through either the military or the labor organizations, and served as a firm base of presidential power. The double-pronged strategy of bringing the CTM to heel worked as an instrument of the President: no longer would groups within the CTM be able to freely work for one pre-candidate or other.

Furthermore, the Party's political control mechanisms such as choosing candidates for national offices, and control over the governors' fates were transferred from the Party to

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<sup>241</sup>Meyer, 1977, 98.

the Secretaria de Gobernacion (as well as election monitoring and registration of parties). Now the presidents would have a more direct mechanism for controlling its elite: how it chose its members, how it kept them content, and how it could put them out of the game without great repercussions when necessary.

The second factor which helps explain the lack of regime ruptures between 1952 and 1986-88 is the passing away of the Revolutionary generation. Generals with military experience (and independent force in the form of almost private armies) began to die off or retire. The period of the Army as a decision-making center or source of the highest level public officials ended. The younger military officers which rose to take their place had not led independent armies, which left them with no claim to rule and therefore, they realized that their best possibilities now lay in the strictly military field, inside the regime.<sup>242</sup>

A third part of the explanation is the end of Calles' faction as a political force and better control over the remaining Cardenistas within government. Reyna writes,

This means that the institutionality of the system was achieved, in great measure, with political discipline and by neutralizing the nuclei of dissidents, in particular those stemming from the official ranks themselves.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>242</sup>Reyna, 102 and Lozaya, 128-9.

<sup>243</sup>Reyna, 104.

These two factions had been made up of those with Revolutionary experience and independent power bases (peasant groups and unions) which had been brought into the Party organization by Calles. Now those rising within the official ranks had no independent bases, their power resided in the temporary posts the President offered them.<sup>244</sup> Factions still exist, but their members are far more beholden to the will of the President in office, who placed them in power, and can normally be removed if he wishes.

One would have to add the importance of sheer experience on the part of the PRIistas of whatever political faction. After three successive failures to win the presidential election, or more to the point, of being allowed to win the elections fairly, most could see the futility of such an action, except perhaps as a way of influencing the presidential succession process. But as the risks became higher, the possibilities for success lower, and control greater, there were enough negative incentives to stop such an action.

The public purse was used as a political tool to integrate able and ambitious men into the ruling coalition, and even those groups that lost out in a presidential succession battle were assured of spaces for themselves and their people within the regime. We shall see that part of

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<sup>244</sup>Except one could argue, a figure like Fidel Velázquez, who has survived in his position as head of the CTM for almost 50 years.

the problem in 1986-88 was the shrinking of the State sector and the effect this change had on many officials' expectations about their future within the coalition.

A related issue is the continuance of an economic development model which called for a large, active State in intervene in the economy, protecting its industries while keeping taxes low. Statism was a political instrument of stability, while the protectionist, pro-capital economic model retained the important business groups' loyalty to the political institutions of the nation. The urban sectors benefitted enormously from State subsidies on food, education, utilities, etc. Thus, dissatisfied public officials would find it difficult to unite distinct social sectors in a campaign against the official candidate, as Almazán and to a lesser extent Henríquez Guzmán had been able to do (and as we shall see, C. Cárdenas and Muñoz Ledo in 1988).

What is interesting to note is the evolutionary change in the Party's ability to control its own elite (which was parallel to its increasing ability to reign in the mass-based sectors). Calles confronted a set of quasi-independent politicians who had organized large numbers of Mexicans into either armies, peasant groups, or unions. Calles began the process of national integration of these leaders by forming the PNR. As we have seen, this process of control was neither fast nor easy. Every president from Calles to Ruíz

Cortinas had to deal with some sort of internal division, and the individual efforts to meet these threats gave the Party an ever increasing ability to control its members.

#### The Rupture of 1986-1988

In 1986, the conditions for a rupture were all present: a profound economic crisis had rocked the nation for four years, driving down living standards for millions of Mexicans. The crisis was being dealt with in a startling fashion - the President and his closest advisors were opening the economy up to competition and the State as an economic actor and source of public positions was being reduced significantly. Forced to impose a new economic model on a very reluctant Party and bureaucracy, President de la Madrid closed off the highest ranks of the elite to all but his closest personal colleagues, denying positions to other well-trained, powerful politicians. The economic crisis and de la Madrid's response to it, opened the door for a disgruntled and 'out' PRI faction to exploit the enormous amount of societal and Party discontent. The only factor this scenario lacked was the resurrection of a Revolutionary general to lead the charge against the ruling faction, and in fact, the dissenters had the next best thing, Lazaro Cárdenas' son, Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas, who became one of the leaders of the internal faction willing to force a systemic split.

Beginning in 1981, and lasting at least six years,

Mexico experienced the most profound and prolonged economic crisis since the Revolution of 1910-1920. Spurred on by sharp price rises in 1974 and 1979, López Portillo decided to pursue a high growth development policy by borrowing in the international market against the country's proven oil reserves. This policy proved disastrous as oil prices dropped in 1981 and the US Federal Reserve drove up interest rates. These two external events took away Mexico's ability to pay its debt just as the interest on this debt grew rapidly. In August, 1982, the Mexican government admitted its inability to pay the interest. The national debt had risen from 30 billion dollars in 1977-78 to 80 billion in 1982 and would rise to 96 billion in 1986.

De la Madrid took over the Presidency in December, 1982 and accepted IMF conditions in return for a re-negotiation and re-scheduling of the debt payments. At first, the President and his advisors believed the nation's economic problems could be solved by resolving the liquidity crisis, and responded by devaluing the peso, lifting price controls, and initiating a mild sell-off of state owned enterprises (SOEs). The shock of the 1985-1986 drop in oil prices finally convinced the governing coalition of the need for a profound restructuring of the economic development policy Mexico had followed since the 1930's. Mexico would quickly move from a protected capitalist economy with heavy state

involvement, to a liberalized, open, market driven economy.

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The economic team of de la Madrid drafted a plan which opened the Mexican economy up to international competition. These changes included, among other policies, the sharp reduction in the number of State owned enterprises (SOE's) through sales or closings. Tariff barriers were slowly lowered before 1986, and then when Mexico entered the GATT in 1987, they dropped sharply. Barriers to foreign ownership and investment were eased as well. Complementary to these changes were across the board cuts in social spending and a strong policy of austerity. Using the labor central as its instrument, the government kept salaries capped even as inflation rose. Strikes were strongly repressed. Infrastructure, education and health spending was slashed.<sup>246</sup>

Not only were the recipients of government services harmed by the austerity plans, so were the government agencies themselves. The State's bureaucracy shrank notably: 17 subsecretaries were closed, while 148 general directions and two oficiales mayores (basically the inspector general of a secretariat) suffered the same fate.<sup>247</sup> Obviously, as these positions were cut, many well trained public officials lost

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<sup>245</sup>Carreño Carlón, 332. and Peter Smith, 1990, "Mexico Since 1946," *Cambridge History of Latin America*, vol 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 142-146.

<sup>246</sup>Ibid, 332.

<sup>247</sup>Hernández Rodríguez, "La division," 1992, 261.

their jobs. Those that didn't saw their earnings drop sharply as inflation overtook them. So the public sector which had always provided thousands of jobs and decent wages (augmented by innumerable ways of adding to one's salary), was threatened in de la Madrid's sexenio. The public purse simply couldn't allow for the old political redistribution system which had kept many ambitious public officials content with the regime before 1982.

While the debt crisis was hacking away at the size of the bureaucracy in general, the ruling elite (the highest collaborators of the President) was closed-off to all but the closest personal colleagues of de la Madrid. The President, who had come from the financial sector of the bureaucracy (Banco de Mexico-The Central Bank, Hacienda-Treasury, SPP-Planning and Budget), drew his 'people' from his personal relations within the Bank and Hacienda, leaving out many well-trained bureaucrats who simply didn't have these close career ties with de la Madrid.<sup>248</sup> Not only did he draw his team from the financial wing of the administration, he placed them throughout the breadth of the bureaucracy, which allowed the President to force his austerity plans on a reluctant public sector, but again, left out a generation of other bureaucrats who had fewer hopes to rise to the positions they believed they deserved. Depending on who would win the Presidential chair in the next sexenio (1988-1994), their

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<sup>248</sup>Ibid, 294.



future career possibilities could well be closed off permanently, especially if they lacked the new profile that those from the financial sector shared: a higher degree, usually in economics or public policy from a foreign university, and experience in the public financial sector.

Thus we see the rise of the so called technocrat without political sensibilities in Mexican politics. In fact, while there is no sharp distinction between technocrats and *políticos*, there is some validity to the claim that a Ph.D. in economics from Yale does not help one win elections back in Mexico. Of course however, *tecnicos* had always existed, while many '*políticos*' have advanced studies abroad. What was new in de la Madrid's sexenio was the emphasis on technocrats from the financial sector running departments usually reserved for other 'types' of public officials, for example, those with long-term political experience in other areas of the federal bureaucracy, such as Gobernación.<sup>249</sup>

The cabinet inaugurated by the new president in 1982 was extremely independent of other presidential factions. In fact, only one member of Echeverría's or López Portillo's factions was nominated to a cabinet post: P. Ojeda Paullada, a López Portillo follower, was awarded the lowly Ministry of Fisheries, because he had displayed political discipline not complaining openly about losing the official PRI presidential

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<sup>249</sup>For more information on types of political actors in the Mexican regime, see M. Centeno, Ph.D. diss., Yale University, Department of Sociology, 1990.

nomination in 1981, the succession that de la Madrid won.

De la Madrid closed off the highest ranks of the elite because he believed that to push through a major opening in the economy accompanied by a drastic austerity plan which threatened the interests of many societal and regime groups would only be possible with a team completely beholden to him, who at the same time, shared his reformist vision. Closing SOE's, and large offices with the bureaucracy, controlling wages even as inflation rose, lowering subsidies on industrial inputs and public consumption goods, as well as chopping public infra-structural spending and contracts was not a popular set of tasks, especially during an economic crisis, whose root causes were not agreed upon. Thus the President used his appointments as a way to impose his plans on his own bureaucracy and Party (not to mention society at large). Of course, both the reforms themselves as well as the manner in which they forced upon the regime (by using a tightly homogenous elite) were highly unpopular and had profound political implications come the next presidential succession (1987-1988). Hernandez Rodriguez writes of the public officials during this period, "In these conditions, to ask their loyalty towards the system that had expunged them and their leaders (of political groups within the bureaucracy), was a bit much (era una exageración)."<sup>250</sup> It is to this problem of loyalty toward the system that we now

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<sup>250</sup>Hernandez Rodriguez, 1992, 261.

turn.

Even as de la Madrid's small group monopolized the decision-making centers of the regime, other factions within government still circulated, and beginning in 1986, began to plan ways to regain the political ground they had lost in the 1982-1986. Echeverría's faction, which represented the 'left' of the regime, was especially active. The left had been marginalized after the designation of de la Madrid in terms of positions and policy making during the economic crisis. After all, it was during the more leftist, Statist sexenios of Echeverría and López Portillo that the growth of the public sector had occurred.<sup>251</sup>

Echeverria had opposed de la Madrid's nomination, and tried with little success to influence the cabinet selections of the new president in 1982-1983.<sup>252</sup> Many of the Party dissidents in 1986-1988 came from Echeverría's old faction, and had been powerful or had been linked to more powerful men during his sexenio, and were poised to inherit high-level positions during the 1980's, but had been frustrated by de la Madrid's closure of the elite.

In 1986, with the political time-table pressing towards the presidential succession, the best opportunity arose to place a candidate who would both open up the elite ranks to a more varied type of bureaucrat and repeal some of the worst

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<sup>251</sup> *Acción*, September 1, 1986, no. 422.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid*, same page.

abuses of the economic reforms of de la Madrid's sexenio.<sup>253</sup>

In mid-1986, the press got wind of meetings among Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas, Muñoz Ledo, Carlos Tello, Ifigenia Martinez, Rodolfo González Guevara, Gómez Villanueva, and Beatrice Paredes, (among others) all members of the Left wing of the Party, with Muñoz Ledo, Ifigenia Martinez, and Gómez Villanueva being close to Echeverría, while others had links to the peasant sector of the Party, an Echeverría stronghold.<sup>254</sup> These PRI members would form a political group or current within the Revolutionary Family which fought to influence the presidential succession, open the selection process, and turn-back some of de la Madrid's economic reforms. The current was named 'la Corriente Democrática' (hereafter CD). The two leaders of the CD were Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas<sup>255</sup> and Muñoz Ledo<sup>256</sup>. Their possibilities for

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<sup>253</sup>Hernández Rodríguez, 1992, 262; and Carretero Carlón, 334.

<sup>254</sup>Carlos Lugo Chavez, "La Corriente Democratizadora del PRI". ed. Lugo Chavez, *Neo-Cardenismo* (Mexico: Instituto de Proposiciones Estrategicas, 1989), 2.

<sup>255</sup> C. Cárdenas was Lazaro Cárdenas' son, who although born in the presidential mansion during the presidential term of his father, had enjoyed only a mediocre political career. He had served as Subsecretary of Agriculture under Echeverría, but was not considered a close collaborator. He later went on to serve as Senator and then Governor of Michoacán from 1980-1986, a post given to him by López Portillo. While Governor, he stood out as a populist leader who closely identified with the economic and social policies of his father.

<sup>256</sup> Muñoz Ledo had been more successful in his political career than C. Cárdenas and was closely identified with the Echeverría wing of the regime. During the 1970-1976 sexenio,

achieving high posts in the national bureaucracy looked weak if another de la Madrid 'type' followed as president. By August of 1986, other powerful PRIistas were becoming linked with the new corriente, if only through participating in 'talks' with the two leaders of the CD: the Rector of the National University; Governors from Querétaro and Quintana-Roo; Senators such as G. Martínez Córballa; Congressmen and CTM union leaders.<sup>257</sup>

Those dissatisfied with the closure of the elite government ranks, or with the direction of Mexico's political-economy during de la Madrid's sexenio were willing to take part in chats with the CD leadership. These were not only Echeverría's people: in fact, during mid-1986, as the political succession process began to heat up, the Current grew dramatically as all sorts of Party members showed some sort of support. Rogelio Hernández writes these public functionaries were worried because "...of the intent of the new politicians to take over the government's leadership positions, ignoring old traditions and marginalizing many men

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Muñoz Ledo had risen to Secretary of Labor and had been a weak presidential possibility in the 1976 succession. Although he did not win the nomination, Echeverría put him in as President of the PRI to direct the 1976 elections. López Portillo switched him over to Secretary of Education, where he was ousted one year later and sent to the UN as Ambassador. Muñoz Ledo had few ties with the government's financial sector, and was considered a statist in his economic ideas. Plus, as part of Echeverría's camarilla, he was tied to a group who had lost out badly during de la Madrid's sexenio.

<sup>257</sup>Lugo Chavez, 1989, 5.

with experience."<sup>258</sup> In the first stage of the CD, these people were only 'talking' or exercising their voice, to influence the course of the next sexenio, which meant, how to push de la Madrid not to choose a technocrat with little political experience and few contacts with those outside the financial sector.

Members of unions and peasant groups affiliated with PRI's sectoral centrals were also concerned about the regime's sharp turn away from a more Statist development model, and their inability to influence the government's decision-making.<sup>259</sup> The 'bases' or mass membership of the Party had almost no way of pressuring the government to form or carry-out policies to benefit their economic interests. Supporting a new current within the Party, which was both Statist and pressing for more democratic Party practices, was probably the best way to recuperate lost economic and political weight.

While Muñoz Ledo and C. Cárdenas were still intent on keeping their efforts within the official structure, their rhetoric only included opening up the candidate selection and decision-making circles of the government; they did not propose to destroy the dominant one-party system Mexico had enjoyed for over 50 years. The *Document Número Uno*, the first published expression of the CD's proposed reforms, states,

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<sup>258</sup>Hernández Rodríguez, 1992, 253.

<sup>259</sup>Lugo Chavez, 1989, 18.

"The Party must implement an open process of struggle for the PRI candidacy for the Presidency of the Republic."<sup>260</sup> An open voting process within the Party must be established, and in this way, the masses (who were possibly pro-CD) would be re-integrated into the life of the revolutionary party. The official PRI statutes provided for the democratic nomination of presidential, congressional and municipal-level Party candidates. But in fact these guidelines were ignored by the president who had enormous power to impose candidates at almost all levels. This is why the leaders of the CD willingly called only for the written rules to be followed. Because their internal Party faction was quickly gathering followers, a more democratic nomination procedure might have enabled them to displace the faction in power using the Party's own statutes.

In the economic realm, the CD called for a return to Cardenist policies. It backed broad State involvement in several strategic sectors of the economy (which de la Madrid had spent four years trying to weaken) as well as a tool of redistributing wealth.<sup>261</sup> While directing their appeals at a lofty level, the leaders of the CD were careful to deny that their motivations for forming an internal current were based on the need to re-start their stalled careers. This was no

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<sup>260</sup>Ibid, 6.

<sup>261</sup>de la Vega Dominguez, "Entrevista con...", in *Mexico: El reclamo democrático*, 149-50.

mere factional move on the part of one political group trying to regain from another political ground lost in the de la Madrid sexenio.<sup>262</sup> We have seen this same denial in both the 1940 and 1952 ruptures.

The PRI's leaders gleefully reminded Muñoz Ledo that while he held top government positions, including President of the Party, he was not at all interested in internal democratic reform. This point, added to the fact that Muñoz Ledo had also unsuccessfully lobbied de la Madrid to replace the deceased J. Reyes Heróles in the Ministry of Education in 1985<sup>263</sup> made it difficult for an observer, pro or contra-CD, to believe that the CD was not born in an attempt to influence the 1988 succession.<sup>264</sup> One observer writes that the CD's criticism of the overall process of the presidential succession and their denials of factional interests "could only be credible in the measure that one ignored the political biography of the democratizers." After all, Muñoz Ledo, as President of the PRI, had named the new President of the Republic in 1976 through an 'acto administrativo' (or an administrative seal of approval), instead of a true democratic Party vote, exactly the process he was now

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<sup>262</sup> *Acción*, September, 1, 1986, no. 422.

<sup>263</sup> Carreño Carlón, 334.

<sup>264</sup> *Acción*, September 1, 1986, no. 422; Hernández Rodríguez, 1992, 121; Lugo Chavez, 1989, 9; and Lerner and Ralsky, 1.



criticizing.<sup>265</sup>

#### Party Members Strategies

Whether the average regime member believed in the democratizing rhetoric is unknown, but it clear that many realized their possibilities to advance were being cut off by the rise of de la Madrid's homogenous clique and economic project. Many Party loyalists supported the CD early as an alternative to the technocrats, or as a way of opening political space. But while the CD stayed, however precariously, within the PRI, public officials had several alternatives: they could openly support the new current; they could support it in private; or they could simply do nothing -not support either alternative - which also harmed the official Party.

As Muñoz Ledo and C. Cárdenas pushed the challenge farther within the official ranks, new decisions had to made. In 1986, as the CD sharply increased its public criticisms of the political group in power, the Current lost important backers such as Senator Martínez Córballa, González Guevara, Janitzio Mógica, Beatriz Paredes, Carlos Tello and Silvia Hernández.<sup>266</sup> Many who approved of the CD's general ideas were simply not willing to cause a complete and perhaps final

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<sup>265</sup>Carreño Carlón, 334.

<sup>266</sup>Ibid, 333. González Guevara went on to act as a middleman between the CD leaders and de la Madrid's people. After the elections in 1988, he formed the Corriente Crítica inside the PRI, and finally left the Party in 1990.

rupture with the regime, and when they realized that Muñoz Ledo and C. Cárdenas were capable of taking that final step, they withdrew their support. Some of these were willing to threaten, but from inside the Party's limits. Once they had made their discontent clear, they went no further. In fact, some of the original CD supporters actually ended up denouncing the Current.

Even once the CD's leaders had been expelled from the PRI, options remained. Some CD supporters stayed within the Party, but simply did nothing to help the official candidate win. For this reason Salinas almost lost the election, despite the PRI's advantages. Those who knew how to run a campaign simply did not perform their jobs as they should have, in order that Salinas realize how important they were to the Party and the regime overall.<sup>267</sup> Of course, when the CD left, it drew out with it many traditional supports for the system, as well as those who were expert campaigners.

#### The Party's Strategies

The PRI, of course, had many strategies to meet the threat of a Party-wide rupture, some of which in fact deepened the split, rather than alleviating it. Because the Party leadership had not faced any real dissention for so many years, loyalists seemed unprepared to deal with it effectively. De la Madrid's people and the hard-liners found

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<sup>267</sup>Hernández Rodríguez, 263.

it easier to threaten those within the CD, and to attack their motivations, rather than negotiate a way out of the internal crisis.<sup>268</sup> Another negotiating block was de la Madrid's determination that an economic liberal would follow him to complete the economic 'modernization' regardless of the political costs to the coalition. This reduced the space for maneuver for both sides.

The PRI and the President's people relied on a mixture of threats, and accusations to stifle the growing influence of, and support for, the CD within the Party. As we have seen, the accusations centered quite reasonably on the democratizers' motivations. Continuous calls to maintain political discipline - i.e., to put up with present conditions with the expectation that they will improve - were issued by PRI leaders to the democratizers.<sup>269</sup> Given the reduced possibilities for these people within the regime, support from other PRIistas and societal-wide discontent, these calls had little weight. Still, many PRIistas would not leave, primarily because of their fears for their jobs in the public sector.<sup>270</sup>

While the CD played within the Party's limits, the strongest threat of the PRI leadership was to expel the

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<sup>268</sup>Carreño Carlón, 333; and Hernández Rodríguez, 1992, 263.

<sup>269</sup>Acción, November 17, 1986, no. 433.

<sup>270</sup>Interview, PRD activist, and former public sector employee, Mexico City, July, 1993.

dissident faction from the Party, leaving them no chance to exercise further political influence, unless of course they could organize the opposition and societal discontent of five years of economic crisis into a true political challenge. This was the great dilemma for the President of the nation and of the Party: expelling the faction would create what had not existed since 1952 - *an option for all those frustrated with the regime.*<sup>271</sup> In 1987, the PRI President, Jorge de la Vega Domínguez, openly admitted the problem by stating it would be impossible to throw the CD leaders out because 1. the Cárdenas name was still revered in Mexico and thus untouchable and 2. because the expulsion would be public and place the PRI in a weak position.<sup>272</sup>

While the Party was threatening, and accusing, it would be an exaggeration to argue that it did not attempt to negotiate with the dissidents; it simply did not do it well, or perhaps the leadership of the Party was shackled by de la Madrid's insistence that financial hard-liner succeed him. De la Vega met with C. Cárdenas, Muñoz Ledo and I. Martínez various times throughout 1986 and 1987 while the CD was still in the Party, and agreed to "respect the procedures fixed in the Party statutes."<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>271</sup>*Acción*, November 17, 1986, no. 433, and Hernández Rodríguez, 1992, 262.

<sup>272</sup>*Uno Más Uno*, (newspaper in Mexico City), June 4, 1987.

<sup>273</sup>*Acción*, November 17, 1986, no. 433.

The leaders of the CD had a wider space for maneuver because they could organize other unhappy PRIistas, negotiate and attack simultaneously. With meetings, dinners, newspaper columns, and documents, the CD diffused its strongly pro-State message throughout the political bureaucracy and Party. Once they realized how well their program was received by discontented Party members, the dissidents pushed their attacks and complaints further out into the open, testing the PRI elite's reaction. They knew they had a cushion of time before they would be expelled, and they used it to gain supporters within the coalition ranks. When the President closed off dialogue with the faction, the CD used a double strategy of having some CD leaders, like I. Mart nez, declare their desire to stay within the Party, while C. C rdenas continued the public attacks against the authoritarian nature of the Party elite.<sup>274</sup>

By bringing the "Family's" problem out in public, the dissidents were breaking the fundamental rule of not airing internal problems. But the CD's publicity was a good strategy for two reasons: it forced the PRI to answer the anti-democratic charges publically and it laid the groundwork for a electoral challenge to the PRI should the CD's demands not be met.

As 1987 wore on, and the presidential succession grew hotter, (and before the CD leadership was ejected from the

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<sup>274</sup> *Acción*, November 17, 1986, no. 433.

Party), the dissident statements and threats grew steadily stronger. In the *Segundo Documento de Trabajo* (May, 1987), the authors warned that the upcoming succession would be like not other, implying that the faction would not allow the President to simply nominate his successor without a challenge from the dissidents.<sup>275</sup> At the same time, I. Martinez stated that further CD moves depended on how the PRI presidential candidate was nominated and who received the nod. This meant that if the President named a 'pol tico' instead of a financial technocrat, the CD would be more likely to lessen its attacks.<sup>276</sup> It is not clear whether this meant the President had to choose C. Cárdenas as the official candidate, or simply a 'politico'. In the end, de la Madrid chose Salinas de Gortari, then seen as a pure technocrat with few political abilities (an opinion which would soon change); in other words, the worst possible candidate to reconcile the PRI leaders with the dissident faction. Ten days after the official 'destape' (the unveiling of the president's choice of successor), C. Cárdenas accepted the nomination for the candidacy of the Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution (PARM), a heretofore satellite party which had always supported the official regime. Three other smaller parties, the PST, PSD and PPS soon followed up by also

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<sup>275</sup>Lugo Chavez, 1989, 15.

<sup>276</sup>Ibid, 16.

nominating C. Cardenas for president.<sup>277</sup>

Muñoz Ledo quit or was thrown out of the PRI two months later. The split within the heart of the Party, the first since 1952, had become finalized, and would become even more dangerous as the ex-Current members mounted an effective electoral challenge to over 60 years of PRI political domination.

Once the dissidents left the Party, their central task was to unite all opposition parties, groups and movements behind the candidacy of C. Cárdenas. Besides the PARM, PST, PSD and PPS, the dissidents were able to convince Heriberto Castillo, leader of the Mexican Socialist Party (PMS) to not run for president and instead support Cardenas' movement.<sup>278</sup> By late January, 1988, the ex-PRIistas had formed the National Democratic Front (FDN), which was backed by 10 leftist organizations. A new party (the PRD) would be born from the exit, which unlike the electoral vehicles of Almazán or Henríquez Guzmán, lived on after the presidential campaign for which they were born.

It is ironic that the electoral and party reforms of the 1970's, instituted to draw-off criticism of the official PRI, would later create parties and organizations which supported a true challenge to the system. Because of the political opening of the 1970's, the ex-Current members were able to

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<sup>277</sup>Ibid, 21.

<sup>278</sup>Ibid, 26.

broaden their appeal to a broad-based political and economic organization capable of reaching millions of Mexicans unhappy with years of government corruption, economic crisis and political stagnation. The threat to leave the Party was extremely well-timed: the FDN was able to organize disparate societal groups under its banner. Yet, not all those unhappy with the regime were pro-FDN. In fact, the PAN was led by a popular figure who rallied businessmen, and conservative groups to his cause, thus splitting the anti-PRI vote, although C. C rdenas won more vote in the official count.

Many of Mexico's citizens, especially in urban areas (Mexico is now 60% urban) voted for the FDN simply to protest the PRI's poor performance over the last three sexenios, knowing that the official Party would never allow the challengers to end 60 years of one-party dominance in a fair vote.<sup>279</sup> In the decades following the formation of the Party in 1929, the rural vote was well organized and numerically important to overall electoral victories of the regime. However, as the population changed dramatically from rural to urban based, the PRI s vote-getting ability began to suffer as it was not able to organize middle-sector urban voters as well as it had the rural sector. Furthermore, urban groups have been able to maintain greater autonomy from the regime, which gave the FDN and the PAN their strong votes in the

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<sup>279</sup>I thank Jose Antonio Crespo for pointing this out to me.



cities. The FDN won 36% of the vote, the highest for the opposition in a Presidential election ever. Most observers, and many citizens, believe the PRI stole the vote when its computers 'went down' directly after election day. C. Córdenas and the FDN protested the results which brought hundreds of thousands of Mexicans into the streets, but Salinas took office in December, 1988 as planned.

#### The Regime's Reaction

When the new president did take office, he reacted to the Party split much as Avila Camacho had in 1940 and Ruíz Cortinas in 1952: he used the presidential office and its powers to make future ruptures less likely and safe-guard his own abilities to govern. Salinas brought leaders from different Party factions into the Cabinet, re-opening avenues to advancement, strengthened his hold over the Party, and formed new political-economic institutions designed to decrease societal discontent, while at the same time, weakening the Party's hold over its mass membership.

Salinas took care to give cabinet seats to both people from his own political group, as well as other powerful politicians from outside the government's financial sector. For example, he gave F. Solana, a politician with a long trajectory in the public sector, the Ministry of Foreign Relations, the Ministry of Agriculture eventually went to Hank González, another old-time politician, while the

powerful Secretary of Gobernación was placed in the hands of Gutiérrez Barrios, the 'mano dura' (roughly, strong arm) of both Echeverría and López Portillo. Cervera Pacheco, a politician with a strong base in the state of Yucatán and in the CNC<sup>280</sup>, was awarded the Ministry of Agrarian Reform, while Manuel Bartlett won the Public Education portfolio and later became Governor of the state of Puebla. These Cabinet appointments showed how conscious Salinas was of the need to open up the governing elite to those public officials outside of Treasury and Budget (Hacienda and SPP). His ability to form alliances with distinct factions also shored up his weak position following his near defeat in the presidential elections, which was caused in some part by the abstention in electoral activities by otherwise loyal regime leaders. Furthermore, early CD supporters, who had later backed away from the CD when it became apparent that a full rupture was possible, such as Beatriz Paredes, Carlos Tello and Silvia Hernández, were given positions within the Salinas government. Paredes became Secretaria General del PRI, (the 2nd highest position within the Party), Carlos Tello became Ambassador to Russia, and Silvia Hernández became Senator (for the PRI) for the state of Querétaro, and later head of the popular sector of the PRI.

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<sup>280</sup>Cervera Pacheco had been able to place three governors in Yucatán during his political career, and was tied to Echeverría through Gómez Villanueva, an early Current supporter.

Institutionally, the new president initiated the Programa Nacional de Solidaridad (PRONASOL or SOLIDARIDAD), which was designed to bring government money for infrastructural improvements and social welfare programs directly to poor communities, usually those that voted against the PRI in recent elections. PRONASOL money goes directly to local level committees formed specifically for this purpose, thereby by-passing other pre-existing government and Party welfare agencies. The President arrives in a town, receives the committee's petition for funds, and therefore when the money becomes available, Salinas himself seems directly responsible. The funds for these programs come from the government's sales of public enterprises, but it is also directed away from other government and Party programs, thereby taking credit for improvements away from the PRI and placing it in the hands of the President. Salinas has also used SOLIDARIDAD as a job placement service, much as the PRI is used. He has put a number of rural, union and social activists, who were never members of the Party, in posts within the agency that administers SOLIDARIDAD. Many of these activists should have been natural allies or members of the PRD, but were in effect coopted into the system.

More directly, Salinas has weakened the Party's power by stripping some PRI governors of their offices after winning contested elections. In Guanajuato, San Lu s Potos  and Michoac n, Salinas forced the recently elected governors of

his own party to step down after opposition protests, a completely new development in the Party's history, while also allowing the PAN to win governorships in free elections (Baja California in 1989 and Chihuahua in 1992). The PRI militants at both the state and national level have thus been shown that the President can take away even their final and most fundamental responsibility: winning elections.

#### Similarities in the Three Cases

Having reviewed the three most important cases of exit from the ruling coalitions, several fundamental similarities stand out. The most important is that these internal divisions and electoral challenges represented a serious, if not the most serious threat, to the official regime's continued dominance.<sup>281</sup> Vincent Padgett wrote in 1966 that the challenges of 1940 and 1952 constituted the only serious threat to the peaceful transfer of power.<sup>282</sup>

Many experts on Mexican politics have written that the student demonstrations and massacre of 1968 constituted the most dangerous threat to the political regime. The threat stemmed from the possible alliance between middle-class students and workers in Mexico City in favor of a democratic opening. This was met by an overly repressive response of the political elite which in effect amounted to "killing its

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<sup>281</sup>Hernández Rodríguez, 1992, 262.

<sup>282</sup>Padgett, *Mexican Political System*, 1966, 193.

own". But it is not clear that the events and responses to the massacre ever threatened the regime's foundations. Some student leaders were shot, others jailed, while probably the majority found employment in the public sector. A few attempted a guerrilla movement which was crushed during the Seventies.<sup>283</sup>

In all three examples, the challengers came from (or had once been part of, as in the case of P. Muñoz Ledo) the heart of the ruling coalition and made their attempts during the process of the transfer of power, one of the most delicate moments for any regime, except for perhaps the most stable, accepted democracies. The leaders of these splits had held important posts and enjoyed personal and professional contacts with others within the governing elite. Their defections began as attempt to influence the succession in their favor - i.e., to force the sitting president to choose them as his successor, or at least offer their groups (or their people) a larger place in the ruling coalition via better positions. The timing of their attempts was not hazard: by threatening a decisive split in the most fragile period, the dissidents stood a better chance of gaining their ends.

While in all cases, the leaders had been high ranking members of the revolutionary elite, they were not among the

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<sup>283</sup>Interview, former aid to a Governor of Guerrero, R. Figueroa, Mexico City, December, 1992 and with a PRD activist, Mexico City, July, 1993.

front-runners in the succession contest. In fact, all four leaders were bosses of cliques or groups that no longer could look forward to continued advancement, either for the leaders or members of the camarillas. If the entire group's future is in doubt, then the leader is more able to organize these people into a solid force which threatens the regime, if only for the sheer numbers of possible dissidents. This is especially clear in the Henríquez Guzmán and C. Cárdenas/Muñoz Ledo exits: an entire wing of the Party was being denied further possibilities.

Henríquez Guzmán, on the other hand, led both the revolutionary generals who were being phased out of power by younger civilians as well as the PRIistas tied to Lazaro Cárdenas' faction who still remained active in government. In the 1988 case, the Current's leaders represented both capable public officials frozen out of leadership positions by de la Madrid's imposition of his financial-sector allies, as well as functionaries threatened by the reform of the State which was whittling away at their positions and budgets.

In all cases, the challengers wanted to change the informal, tightly controlled manner in which the following president was chosen, in favor of the official guidelines which allowed for a representative vote among the Party's sectors (which would have favored their candidacies in a fair vote). All called only for more democratic nomination

methods until they left or were expelled from the PRI, at which point their rhetoric expanded to include calls for multi-party democracy and the down-fall of the official Party as the dominant force within the Mexican political system. None had complained of the procedures before beginning their challenges.

It was not until a conjuncture of conditions existed that these political leaders decided to rebel against Party discipline or complain about the informal Party rules of transitions. This set of conditions includes: the weakening of possibilities for the leaders and their groups (as well as a sector of the coalition); the transfer of power from one president to another; and generalized discontent within society caused by changes in the nation's economic development model. The reforms of Lázaro Cárdenas had threatened the interests of the business classes; Alemán's (1946-1952) economic program took political and economic weight away from the sectoral supports of the Party, especially peasants and workers, while de la Madrid's shift away from Statism threatened the political class as well as the middle sectors, and small and medium sized entrepreneurs, giving the dissidents a broad base of support for their electoral attempts against the PRI.

Not only were the conditions which made the exits more likely similar, so was the opportunity for the dissidents to use 'voice'. Voice in this case could be considered the

meetings, and political dinners, etc. that each candidate participated in before organizing his group within the Party, and then the negotiations between the loyalists and the challengers before the final break. As Hirschman points out, voice is used when those dissatisfied with the status quo believe that there is some hope it will work, which also implies that the exit option exists, but is not too easily taken. But even given that Mexico enjoyed the conditions for voice to be used, it did not mean the organization's leaders would react to it, preferring to allow a rupture (which was in each of the three cases controllable), rather than change the cause of the problem, which was the closed nature of transferring power from one leader to another.

The calculations used by those who supported the dissidents also followed the same pattern; there were those who openly backed the Party rebels and then left with them. After the electoral defeat, some of these returned the high positions within the Party's ranks, while other chose not to, or were not offered this option. Other supporters carefully played their hands by participating in early meetings, almost inviting Party leaders to offer them a prize not to leave, while others who stayed simply didn't perform their tasks, or were coerced into loyalty.

One difference is important to note. In the 1940 and 1952 exits, neither rupture deepened into a permanent alternative for dissatisfied members of the coalition, or



society. The 1940 and 1952 exits had a return ticket attached, while the 1988 attempt was one way out of the regime coalition for good. Only those who had stopped short of a full exit were given posts, not those who actually left. The PRD became a permanent party, even with its factional struggles, which continues with the PAN as Mexico's other (now more serious) opposition. The new "socialist democratic party" offers a more palatable alternative to old-style PRIistas than does the Catholic, pro-business, anti-state PAN, so the elite leadership now has to act with the possibility that a group within the PRI will make a jump to the PRD.

#### A Non-Case: The 1976 Presidential Succession

To clarify the conditions that made these ruptures possible and to highlight the calculations of politicians who lose out in the presidential process, this section will examine a non-case, or a succession in which none of the losers chose to leave the Party to make an electoral bid against the PRI. The case chosen, the 1976 succession, will test for the economic crisis variable, versus that of a radical shift in the development model. Otherwise, the 1976 transfer of power was like any other between 1940 and 1988: different pre-candidates vied for the sitting president's favor, Yet, in 1976, no powerful loser rebelled against the decision. Why not?

The Echeverría sexenio (1970-1976), was characterized by strange contrasts in both the economic and political arenas. Economically, the growth of the economy slowed moderately against the miracle years of 1956-1970, but was generally respectable. Agriculture production dropped, denying Mexico much needed foreign currency, and this drop was not compensated by either foreign earnings from other sectors of the economy (as the government followed a protectionist development policy) or an increase in tax receipts, (Echeverría's proposed tax reform failed when the business sectors fought hard against it). The president, faced with dropping production, chose to spend his way out of it by increasing the size, budget and responsibilities of the public sector. Disputes grew between the government and large business owners as the latter grew nervous of the growing State and the harsh rhetoric emanating from the administration. The government also infuriated the capitalists by supporting unions in their struggles for their wages. In fact, workers got higher salary increases during Echeverría's sexenio than during any other sexenio since.<sup>284</sup>

By the succession period, public spending had gotten out of hand, capital flight ensued, the peso had to be devalued, causing a loss of confidence in the government's ability to manage the economy effectively. Echeverría responded by

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<sup>284</sup>Miguel Basáñez, *El pulso de los sexenios* (Mexico: Siglo XXI, 1990), 51.

blaming the capitalists for disloyalty toward the nation's interests.

Politically, Echeverría had allowed more openness for press and political opposition mainly as a result of his disastrous handling of the 1968 student demonstrations when he was Secretary of Gobernación. The enormous growth of the bureaucracy and the public sector (especially the SOE's) allowed the regime to buy off the political opposition, while keeping the political class in good condition. At the same time the president opened up the political sphere, he heavily controlled his own governing elite, especially the cabinet and sectoral leadership of the Party.

Echeverría's transfer of power to his successor was disciplined; he was strong enough to resist the pressures to name the next president until extremely late in his sexenio; giving him more time and ability to force the distinct political leaders within the regime to follow his dictates. Echeverría was able to avoid group activity around the pre-candidates by forcing the pre-candidates to keep silent about their ambitions and stay relative inactive in their attempts to garner support.

Newell and Rubio write that a struggle was raging between two 'alas' or wings of the Party during the 1976 succession: one side wanted to continue the spending policies to buy political tranquility while the other wanted to retake a more economically rational route, ignoring the political

problems this would cause. Each side backed different pre-candidates and refused to agree on a common favorite, leading Echeverría to reject both these 'posibles' and settle on López Portillo, a politician who, despite his career trajectory, was not known as a man with a strong group behind him.<sup>285</sup>

Despite the economic problems and political factiousness, none of the losing pre-candidates left the Party - all held their criticisms of the choice made and maintained discipline. Why didn't Moya Palencia or one of the other pre-candidates leave after losing out on the nomination? What was different about this case? Probably the most important variable is the lack of a faction whose members viewed their chances as hopeless. The expectations for future success were high, as were the risks of exit, making a rupture unnecessary and overly dangerous. The sectors were well controlled, (and the workers and teachers, two large parts of the PRI's bases, were content under Echeverria's term) giving any internal opposition movement little base for organizing.

The second major factor is the lack of support from any major societal group outside the regime, such as the largest business groups of the North. These groups, despite the threats and accusations stemming from Echeverria's administration concerning their blame for the currency

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<sup>285</sup>Newell and Rubio, 1984 .

devaluation, did not appear to try to draw out any of the loser to run outside the regime as 'their candidate'. This is due in part to the losers' reluctance to exit and partly due to López Portillo's calming rhetoric, which did not emphasize class struggle, the capitalists as traitors, or any other inflammatory issues.

The general conclusions one can draw from the 1976 non-case support the argument of why the 1940, 1952 and 1988 ruptures occurred: in Echeverria's transfer to López Portillo, there was no single 'out' faction or wing of the Party without future possibilities for advancement; the elite was not freezing out any particular faction; the Party wasn't weak - it could and did organize its bases to support the official candidate, and finally, the losers had no real options outside the regime.

Conclusion: Ruptures, Institution Building and Political Stability.

Throughout the length of this paper, we have been discussing how the exits of 1940, 1952, and 1988 are fundamentally similar in their causes and also their effects on the political institutions of Mexico. But what effects have these ruptures had on overall political stability?

One way of examining this problem is to understand the relationship between institutional change and political stability. To do this, one must first define political

stability. A central theme is actors' expectations of how outcomes will be decided. Therefore, the central rules of the game do not change or change so slowly that the alterations do not cause disruptions in the short term. For many years in Argentina, for example, one could not say with much certainty that in five years' time that political outcomes would be decided by civilian institutions such as a written constitution, an elected president and congress, because there was a high probability that the military would take over and rule by executive fiat. Fundamental institutional change could occur in the short-term, and even when elected civilians were in power, the expectations that they would remain there were low. People acted on these expectations of short-term change, which created and enhanced the instability of the nation's political regime.

In the Mexican case, the early years of the Twentieth Century saw the breakdown of almost all institutions: economic, political and social, during the Revolution of 1910. Following this disruption came a conscious recreation of these institutions, especially political, by the "winners" of the Revolution, led by Elias Calles. By offering the leaders of near-independent armies, peasant and worker organizations a place in the political leadership of the nation, in return for the promise of loyalty toward the regime (and therefore toward the Caudillo), Calles was able to convince the majority that cooperation would bring greater

long-term benefits than a short-term defect strategy. Calles was strong enough to destroy those that refused the bargain, like Cedillo and de la Huerta, while retaining the support of others within the coalition.

But even as the institutions were initially created, agreed upon, and strengthened (for example, by Cárdenas mobilization and inclusion of thousands of Mexicans into the bases of the government party), individuals within the coalition were not locked into the same cooperative strategy. Game theorists (Axelrod 1984; Hardin 1982; Taylor 1986) predict that cooperation is possible in long-term repeated play as long as the future is not too heavily discounted, if the rewards from cheating are not too great in the present, and if actors have some sort of commitment that other actors will continue cooperating.

As we saw in the 1940 and 1952 cases, the cooperation strategy followed by both Almazán and Henríquez Guzmán before their exit attempts broke down as they saw their future possibilities diminishing. Furthermore, the hopes for a successful challenge in the present increased as widespread discontent within the Party swelled the ranks of their political factions.

The resources brought into the Mexican political game of the decades 1930 s, 1940 s and 1950 s by distinct actors and the low costs of alliance-making facilitated the defect strategy taken by regime dissidents. The central

institutional building task of Party leadership during this period was to weaken the incentives for succession challenges. To do this, the main strategy was simply winning the presidential elections at any cost. Apart from the learning curve, the incentives for possible dissidents were also altered through presidential institutional building, which decreased the ability of elites to communicate and organize.

Presidents Avila Camacho, Ruíz Cortines and Salinas de Gortari each took steps to modify the formal and informal rules of the game to make the ruptures that had marred their presidential campaigns more difficult in the future. The three most common steps were welcoming some of the dissenters back into official political life, weakening the Party by taking away larger and larger chunks of its primary responsibilities, which usually ended up under Gobernación's jurisdiction in the case of Avila Camacho and Ruíz Cortines, and under Solidaridad in Salinas case. At the same time, the electoral laws were altered, making future elite dissention less likely to turn into dangerous electoral challenges.

Thus, the short-term manipulation of available punishments and rewards which were available and necessary to all presidents to keep his people in line, changed subtly as the more formal institutions were modified by presidential action. Each president's attempt (beginning with Calles) to reign in the unruly factions of the Revolutionary Family led



to different opportunity costs for voicing dissent and/or exiting in succeeding political generations. The costs rose as political control was solidified under the president's mantle. Opportunities changed slowly over twenty years as successive presidents changed electoral laws, controlled the sectors of the Party more successfully, and redirected political tasks away from the Party.

The generational shift from independent Revolutionary actors integrated into the official coalition to public servants whose entire career depended on their ability to continue climbing within the ranks of the regime gave Mexican presidents better leverage over their actions. Bureaucrats had little ability to independently organize large groups outside the regime loyal only to themselves with which to negotiate with the regime's top leadership. A new type of internal political group or faction would grow out of these reduced possibilities for organization. The 1988 case shows however, that this generational shift was not enough to stop all possible ruptures from culminating in electoral challenges.

Thus we see that Mexico's famous political stability derives in large part from the president's control over the regime's elite. But this ability to reign in ambitions and change the cost-benefit ratio of loyalty to ambition was not born with Calles' call to institutionalize political relations in 1929: it evolved over more than two decades of

constant challenges from powerful, dissatisfied members of the elite. The internal stability of the regime was matched by the Party's ability to coopt and repress political movements within civil society.

It is certainly conceivable that if a challenger had won against the dominant Party, the new president would have been forced to use the Party's sectoral machinery to govern, or risk a dissolution of his position as different groups attempted to force better arrangements with the government. Even if the Party structures survived one sexenio, as the new term approached, actors who had seen a clean victory in one presidential election would believe it was possible for them to do the same, which seems in all likelihood to lead to the formation of a multi-party system. By taking away the president's ability to choose his successor almost singlehandedly, and the Party's role in winning elections, the regime as we know it seems difficult to imagine. For this reason, the coalition's elite strove so mightily to contain internal divisions before they became true ruptures.

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CHAPTER EIGHT  
CONCLUSIONS AND TRANSITIONS

In the dissertation, we have studied how the political factions within the dominant party and bureaucracy have been created out of the interaction of individuals working to survive and advance within a system of rules which limit their actions and shape their goals. These groups and their behavior have changed over time and this change has in part been responsible for continued stability. Thus we see an argument for the endogenous rule change which has been absent from so much of the literature on Mexico. We have also seen how the battle among groups and their leaders over the most important prize of the political system, the presidency, is a process of avoiding the worst outcome in a game of enormous uncertainty. It is this fight for the presidential chair that drives much of the system of alliances, groups, infighting, and internal control.

After years of armed challenges to the presidential decision, followed by a series of electoral contests from disgruntled PRI members, Mexico arrived at a general rule-based limitation on *who*, *how* and *when* internal aspirants could

compete and what their were the available options if their attempts to gain the presidency failed.

The political groups which sprang up around revolutionary strongmen came to hold another function once the rules had changed. The groups became a way of recruiting scarce talent, gathering information, pooling resources, and assuring discipline and loyalty, which were all responses to the limitations drawn by the rules in the presidential game. In this way, benefits are given even to those who ran and lost, because in playing and losing by the rules, these failed hopefuls do not destabilize the game. The incentives for leaving the safety of the dominant regime were few: no one would follow the defector, and if the challenger did win votes, they could be easily stolen by the fraud machine of the PRI.<sup>286</sup>

#### A Transition to Democracy, or Something Else?

Mexico enjoyed (or suffered from, as one may view the issue) political stability for several decades, even while its Latin American brothers were shifting between complete (or restricted) democracy, on one extreme, to military dictatorship, on the other. Since 1994, however, one could

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<sup>286</sup>Of course, one could argue that it was only because of the inclusion of the workers and peasants into a broadly based party, that this sort of logic of internal competition was able to develop. If the initial inclusion had been less successful, the working class would have been a greater problem, but as it wasn't, we are left with elite infighting as a major variable.

argue that the political (as well as economic) system has entered into a period of instability, and that we may see changes in the political institutions of Mexico. It would seem that we are in the midst of a transition, but toward what? Toward a democratic system, or toward greater repression? It is still not clear by any means.<sup>287</sup>

The first point to observe is that when thinking about transitions in Mexico, is that one automatically takes into consideration far more actors than when considering political stability under the dominant regime. The spectrum of actors has widened (already) to include not just the president and the political groups, but also opposition parties (and the factions within them), leaders of the Catholic Church, new financial sector leaders, guerrilla groups, as well as public opinion, especially as embodied in voting.

But is Mexico in the midst of a transition to democracy in 1995, or are these signs of democratization as false as those of 1988 turned out to be? There is hope that democratic institutions will win out in this period of greater instability. The 1994 presidential elections were far more contested and fair than any since those of 1910 under Madero. Independent "citizen counselors", agreed upon by the three main parties, were appointed as part of a major

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<sup>287</sup>See the section of editorials in *Reforma*, February 20 and 21, 1995 for a good look at how fearful many were of Zedillo losing power in a putsch from the Right, made up of businessmen, the Catholic Church, and groups from the PRI.

reform in order to improve and validate the electoral process. A last minute electoral reform (which included the citizen counselors) also improved media coverage of the campaign, financial reform, and voting procedures. The rightist opposition party is winning gubernatorial elections in several states, without having to mount large scale protests in the streets. Finally, three identifiable parties are vying for power from the Left, Center and Right. Each of these could develop into a mass-based, catch-all party, or a more ideological class based party. These parties are in large part fighting over how to *define* the center of the political system.<sup>288</sup>

Along with the positive signs of successful elections, opposition victories and a developing party system with more autonomous institutions, there are auguries that the instability of 1994-1995 will not lead to a democratic resolution in the short to medium term, but rather greater repression. The gravest problems are the internal battles within the dominant regime over how the transition will be carried out, by whom, and at what velocity. Two reformers who were leading the party at the beginning of 1994 were both dead by the end of that year, victims of unsolved political

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<sup>288</sup>However, all three parties have assured business that private property will be not be challenged. In the case of the leftist PRD, there are many who do not believe their claim.

assassinations.<sup>289</sup>

The split within the Revolutionary Family appears to have broken violently out into the open, and it is not clear as of early 1995 if the hardliners within the regime will be able or willing to bring down the elected president of Mexico, and place their own man. The split within the regime is between those who will gain from a further opening in the political system, and those who will not. Those who would lose in a transition are the PRI's regional bosses and local leaders, leaders of the workers' central of the PRI, and groups not tied to the technocrats in power since de la Madrid's sexenio (1982-1988). Those groups who could withstand a political opening are the more "modern" currents within the PRI which could conceivably be elected even if the PRI was no longer the dominant party in terms of ability to use fraud, the media, or unfair financing to win elections.

The second problem for a democratic future lies in the decision of the opposition parties (one in particular, the PRD) to decide to stay in the political game. The strategy of playing in what can only be called, (especially before

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<sup>289</sup>There is no point speculating much about the murders of Luis Donaldo Colosio (the PRI's official presidential candidate in the 1994) and Jose Francisco Ruiz Massieu (the PRI's General Secretary). No one has sufficient evidence to prove who murdered Colosio, although now, most believe it was an intra-party split that provoked his death. In February, 1995, six months after the murder of the PRI's General Secretary (second in command of the party), Raul Salinas, brother of now ex-president Carlos Salinas, was charged with Ruiz Massieu's murder, although no one has offered a clear motive for the killing.



1994) an extremely un-level playing field, has to be weighed against attempting an alternative strategy of either threatening an alliance with the guerrillas in Chiapas or relying on street demonstrations to pressure the government, or to bring it down.

Because the opposition parties (especially the election debacle of 1988) can credibly question electoral results in the mind of the public, they do not have to accept unfavorable outcomes of the democratic process.<sup>290</sup> Street demonstrations become as important as votes in determining who will preside over the State Houses (this strategy did not work for the presidential elections of 1988 and 1994).

#### The Transitions Literature

In this section of the conclusions, we will examine how other authors and schools have approached the problem of regime change, which is now known as transitions. We have identified three ways of studying regime change which come out of the literature on development. The first is process and actor centered studies, best characterized by the O'Donnell and Schmitter work (1986), and followed up by other authors, (Bratton and van de Walle 1994; Hagopian 1993; Remmer 1990; Share 1987; C. Young 1992). The second way of understanding change is the structuralist approach to regime

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<sup>290</sup>See Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

outcomes, which focuses on economic structure and class alliances. The third approach is more of a cautionary note, given by Remmer (1989) who argues strenuously that in rejecting the structuralist and dependency theories and models of the 1970's that explained breakdown of democratic regimes, the authors writing on the transitions of the 1980 s have gone too far in concentrating on the actors and their interests as the central explanatory variable.

The process-oriented literature focuses on how actors define their interests within a game whose rules are changing, and in turn, how the interaction of those involved - the military factions, politicians, leaders of social groups and unions - changes the possible outcomes from those at the beginning of the transition. The central driving variable behind when and how transitions begin are splits within the authoritarian elites. Soft liners within the military make alliances with responsible civilians in order to exit what is perhaps becoming a more difficult political and economic situation. Hard liners can also make alliances with those groups within society who fear out-of-control political change, or one that does not protect the rights of capital. The speed of the changes and negotiations becomes an important factor then, because if it is too fast, the hard-liners will be able to use the fear of the capitalists to put a break on the transition. However, the allies of the soft-liners within civil society may not be able to control

those who demand a complete return to full democracy in the shortest amount of time possible.

Elite pacts are of especial importance here. Soft liners can freeze out more radical groups on the right who would attempt to stop the process altogether, while those within civil society must block the hard left, which could threaten the military (or authoritarian rulers), or expropriate private property. All participants have to be assured that even if they lose in the electoral arena, their political and economic rights will not be destroyed, and they will have the possibility of winning in the next round.

One central problem in this literature is the issue of cycling. It is not clear why hardliners within the military could not make implicit or explicit alliances with radicals in civil society to bring down the negotiated opening. Other groups would react to this alliance, and a period of instability around cycling alliances would result.

A second problem is that of the "time-line," or the historical perspective in which one views these transitions. It could be that there is nothing fundamentally different about the transitions in Latin America in the 1980 s because the economic structures underlying their insertion into the international economy, and the class alliances made possible by these positions, makes these transitions to democracy as ephemeral as those of the 1940's and 1950's.

This second problem leads us to the second major

approach to regime change. The structuralists take a far longer view of the entire question of regime change and outcomes. Instead of concentrating on the individual interaction in the actual moment of transition, authors such as Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens (1992), and Ruth and David Collier (1991) focus on how variations in the nations place in the international economy and structure of the labor market, as well as the political reactions to these structures, creates or excludes possible alliances among the political representatives of different classes.

Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens take a strong structuralist line. The fundamental variables which explain outcomes are first, the difficulty in founding the State and second, the basis - mining or agriculture - of the pre-industrialization economies. Thus, outcomes in the 1980 s were in large part set by the end of the 19th century. Although these authors profess to agree with the Colliers on the importance of conjunctures in which human interaction can make a larger difference, they do not consider any of these moments. Their argument centers around how the structure of the economy, and the class alliances generated from this structure, shape institutions such as the State and the party system, and thus, the prospects for democracy.

Unfortunately, the authors do not place Mexico in comparative perspective. Because it does not fit their general model, Mexico is considered apart from the other

Latin American cases. The stable authoritarian, civilian based regime outcome is explained by Calles and Cárdenas' ability and willingness to institutionalize labor and capital's inclusion into the party.

Thus, political change in *Capitalist Development and Democracy* can be understood as an outcome determined by economic structures which are difficult to alter. Mexico, however, is the exception whose causal variable is not its mineral based economy, but rather the institutionalization of labor-capital conflict in the 1920's and 1930's.

In terms of the possibilities of a modern transition to democracy, (which Mexico missed after its populist moment, while other nations such as Brazil, Argentina and Chile underwent them in the 1930's and 1940's), the authors allow that labor unions in Mexico will *not* play a central role in bringing down the regime. The PRI-allied syndicates of the CTM fear the strengthening of both independent unions and the links they will make with the leftist PRD.<sup>291</sup> Instead, what is necessary for democratization is an internal reform of the PRI, so that the mass organizations will have a voice in governmental policy making and candidate selection. However, we saw that the 1990 attempt to do this failed. The possibilities for change are not great: they write, "without a strong common front of organizations articulating the

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<sup>291</sup>Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Stephens and John Steves, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 219.

interests of subordinate classes politically, it is doubtful the PRI will feel sufficient pressure to resolve the internal struggle..."<sup>292</sup>

### Mexico and the Transitions Literature

The two central approaches to the study of regime change and transition to democracy focus on different actors and different time periods. What can Mexico take from these studies in the midst of its long-drawn and difficult political transition? First, we take the position that although a transition takes place in historically given entities known as the State and society, we must concentrate on the interaction of politically relevant actors and use the structures of society as constraints under which the participants formulate their preferences and undertake strategies to gain their ends. Structural imperatives, such as the need to protect capital, can be seen as such a constraint. We do this because a transition can be seen as an event in which humans cooperate and struggle precisely to change the rule structure which had heretofore directed their individual and collective actions.<sup>293</sup>

Remmer's general prescription to place the structures of

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<sup>292</sup>ibid, p. 220.

<sup>293</sup>This is not to say that we will ignore the general idea behind the structuralist approaches. We simply argue that economic structures is too broad a way of understanding short-term interaction.

the outgoing authoritarian regime center stage in order to understand how it will change, and what sort of new regime will be born from it is our first challenge. Mexico is the only long-term, institutionalized civilian-governing one-party state to make the difficult transition from authoritarianism to democracy. Therefore, to understand why Mexico is changing, it has been necessary to understand why it was stable. Furthermore, the actors which mattered during the over 60 years of PRI dominance still matter, only they are joined by other participants in a changing rule structure.<sup>294</sup>

In our discussion of the Mexican transition, we will concentrate primarily on what the actors themselves were concentrating on: how to moderate the existent electoral and political institutions that govern elections. We argue then, that the Mexican transition is based first on institutional change. The participants (members of the two main opposition parties, the citizen counselors, PRI electoral officials, the Secretary of Gobernación, and the newspapers) are involved in an effort to improve the electoral institutions to the point that the results, whatever they were, are believable. The actual process of the voting must be clean enough so that an

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<sup>294</sup>Rueschemeyer, Stevens and Stevens state that it is difficult for the organizations of the subordinate classes to play a central role in democratization of Mexico, which leads us implicitly back to the idea that political change will stem from internal disputes within the dominant regime.

opposition party could win if the citizens vote for it.

This central electoral route of a political transition to democracy has been augmented at every stage by the need to keep the more radical elements of the PRD from leaving the institutionalized field of battle and taking up with the armed guerrillas of Chiapas, who are potentially<sup>295</sup> offering another path to power. Cárdenas' central threat was that if he did not win the presidency at the ballot boxes, he would be willing to win through massive civil demonstrations, urban terrorism, and rural guerrilla movements. Enough guarantees have to be given to the more moderate factions of the PRD so that they would be willing to respect the electoral returns, whatever they may be, knowing that 1. the populace voted for or against them; 2. this vote was respected, and 3. there would be another presidential election in six years for which they can compete openly and fairly.

#### The Events of 1994

One can discuss which is more important as a cause of important political instability and change: proximate versus longer-term variables. In the case of Mexico, one has to recognize both, because to fail to do so is to run the risk

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<sup>295</sup>One has to say "potentially" offering another route to power, that of armed rebellion, because the Zapatistas have always been willing to negotiate with the government's representatives, as well as talk to members of the opposition parties.



of underdetermining the nature of change in a stable authoritarian system. In 1994, the Mexican political system underwent a series ground shaking events such as a guerrilla uprising, the murder of the official PRI candidate, a third electoral reform of the sexenio, a month when the PAN candidate was leading at the polls, presidential elections, a second assassination (this time of the second highest official within the PRI), and a massive currency devaluation that brought on an economic crisis and an austerity plan.

We will argue, that in terms of political gains, and transition toward democracy, that the most important of these events was the electoral reform which changed, for the first time in the history of Mexico, the balance of power between the institutions and rules in charge of elections and the dominant regime. Yet we also recognize the importance that must be assigned to the internal battles for supremacy within the ranks of the dominant regime.

First we examine the more underlying causes of change, and then the proximate events that lead, especially, to the electoral reform and the contested elections of August, 1994.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>296</sup>Our methodological concerns lie closer to the proximate causes as we are interested by the aggregate outcomes of individual interaction. However, we recognize that without these larger scale transformations, individual incentives would look very different, and so would outcomes. Thus, in a sense, we are examining (and very quickly at that), the more structural underpinnings, as well as exogenous foundations for human interaction.

Longer term changes:

1. growth in education and economic indicators which show that more Mexicans can read and own televisions. TV is an especially important source of political information in Mexico, although it is largely controlled by a near monopoly tied to the government.

2. Long term economic opening which harmed the economic and distributive interests of many groups within the PRI. If they could not control the over-fed public enterprises, it was far more difficult to recruit and keep on political allies.

3. Stagnation within the political elite in terms of renovating the pool from which the high level functionaries within the powerful bureaucracy were chosen. This was especially serious when it became clear that the financial sector would still be in power after the end of Salinas' sexenio, thus excluding other groups for yet another sexenio, the third in a row.

4. The labor and peasant sectors of the PRI were becoming less important even as vote getting mechanisms. As we have seen, in large part, the PRI was built on the incorporation and control of these two sectors. Now, however, Salinas had been successful at integrating (not incorporating or controlling) into a loose coalition, other groups such as the Catholic Church, foreign investors, large

scale domestic capital, the newly rich stockbrokers and bank owners, and others who had managed to benefit from the industrial openness and financial protectionism of Salinas. Because of the economic weakness of the sectors of the PRI, as well as their inability or unwillingness to bring in the 1988 vote, it was easier for Salinas to take away sectoral privileges and even restructure the PRI away from collective representation to an individually based, modern party.

The proximate causes of regime instability and change in Mexico begin with the January 1, 1994 guerrilla uprising in the poor southern state of Chiapas. The demands of the rebel leaders centered around democratic reforms, not the transformation of the means of production. The Zapatistas, as they are known, received an enormous amount of support from civil society and most intellectuals, even as most of the latter deplored the means used by the guerrillas. After 12 days of conflict, the rebels and the government sat down to negotiate, and one of their first agreements was to begin a new round of electoral reforms to protect the 1994 presidential elections from the type of wide-spread fraud that was perpetrated by the regime in 1988.

Not only did the Zapatistas spur the first real electoral reform of the Salinas administration, they also gave the excluded PRD another alternative to the two they had been forced to employ; that of competing in elections and then taking to the streets after they inevitably lost them.

Now the PRD, especially its more radical wing, could threaten to shift the grounds of action away from the political institutional game, which was heavily weighed against them, to a tactical and ideological alliance with not only the armed rebels, but also with an underground network of leftist groups, which were willing to join the Zapatistas in armed rebellion. If it looked as if the PRD was not going to win the 1994 electoral race that they considered stolen in 1988, its leaders could *threaten* to take the other route to power - that of the Zapatistas.

The third proximate cause of the changes undergone in the Mexican political system during 1994 and 1995 was in the growing inability of the president to control the internal battles among the groups and powerbrokers within the regime over the transfer of power from one executive to another. This variable was as important as the other two, because the president might have been able to control the threat from the guerrillas if had been sure that his own party and bureaucratic leaders were behind him. As evidenced by the open battles after the death of Colosio to replace the fallen candidate, Salinas could no longer control the battles over his successor. It looked much more like the intra-regime battles of 1940 or 1952, than those of 1976 or 1982, and we can take this as evidence, along with the two assassinations of 1994, that the internal rules of engagement no longer held.

One can argue that because Salinas seemed so weak and indecisive during the three months after the beginning of the Chiapas uprising, that leaders of PRI groups took advantage of the situation to reassert their lost influence and try to place a more favored candidate. These internal battles were in part caused by Salinas handling of the political situation during his six years in office. By handing over hard-won political offices to the opposition, negotiating with the hated PAN, attempting to restructure the PRI around individual, not sectoral or group membership, and *still* not allowing local and state level PRI elites to choose candidates from among their own ranks, the president had alienated a large segment of the dominant party structure without either giving it a material compensation (steal all you want), or forcibly removing them from power (as he had done so successfully with the leader of the powerful petroleum union).<sup>297</sup>

#### The Elections of 1994

We are arguing that election reform and elections themselves are playing a large role in the political transition Mexico is currently undergoing. However, as we

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<sup>297</sup> At least that was the hypothesis going into the elections of 1994. What we ended up seeing in fact, was that the PRI retained the "green vote" or the rural population, while gaining large segments of the urban middle and poorer classes, who in effect, feared PRD violence, and PAN's conservatism and image of wealth. The PRI was still capable of capturing the center.

have seen, internal groups are fighting to retain the influence they have accrued over many years. Furthermore, the Left is not sure it wants to participate in the democratic game. Thus, in our discussion of the elections of 1994 (and especially taking into account the uncertainty of whether Zedillo will survive 1995 as president), we must keep in mind that institutions and elections are not the end-all in a nation's political transformation, especially if the actors who will lose from democratic rule-bound procedures are able to challenge the democratic process.

Even with these reservations, the presidential, senatorial and congressional elections in August, 1994 were a watershed in electoral politics for Mexico. We have looked at some of the internal battles within the PRI. Now we turn to studying the importance of elections to deepen our understanding of the *process* and possible *outcomes* of transition in Mexico.

We will examine the issue from three different levels; first, internal battles over candidacies and strategies; second, party strategies, and third, voter strategies. The night Colosio was murdered<sup>298</sup>, someone broke into the PRI's national headquarters in Mexico City and stole the candidate

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<sup>298</sup>Almost a year after the presidential candidate was shot in Tijuana, the government finally admitted that there were two gunmen, not one. See *Reforma*, Saturday, February 25, 1995. This explodes the hypothesis of the lone, lunatic murderer, and leads to the question, who had the sort of organizational ability to know where Colosio was and send an unknown number of men to shot him?

lists that Colosio had made up before his death. These lists were a forceful reminder of the fallen candidate's attempts to bring disparate factions of the Party together. Because there is no democratic, militant, or voter based nomination system within the PRI, the issue of the missing lists made it easier to 1. give Zedillo more room to make his own decisions, and 2. pressure the new candidate to make certain choices over others.

After the death of Colosio and before his replacement was chosen by Salinas, an enormous amount of pressure and

DATE CHAINMACRO(

Figure 1298 Figure 1 Figure 10 DATE NEXTRECORD the same as winning the presidential elections).<sup>299</sup> The leftist PRD was divided between the two groups which had comprised it since its very inception: ex-PRI members and more radical leftist militants. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas was the leader of the more radical wing. His strategy was clear - to win the presidential chair that he firmly believed was stolen from him in 1988. If he could not win at the polls, even given the greater level of institutional autonomy, then he would call into question the ability of the regime to carry out clear elections, and thus lead a civilian rebellion in the

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<sup>299</sup>See Jean-Francois Prud'homme, "Cooperación interpartidista y constitución de la clase política," Working Paper, CIDE, 1995, for more on party strategies and elections.

streets and bring down the eventual winner of the 1994 contest.<sup>300</sup> What did not seem to interest Cárdenas was an institutionalized transition toward democracy, but rather the presidency at any cost.

The leader of the more moderate wing of the PRD, and president of the party, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, seemed to be willing to negotiate greater institutional freedoms in the electoral wing, and by doing this, was paving the way for a run at the presidency himself in six years, but under even greater electoral autonomy. Thus, Muñoz Ledo's strategy was to negotiate all the institutional changes in the electoral commission possible while the president was forced to deal, and the Zapatistas were in effect, forcing the talks. The PRD therefore, showed certain signs of awkwardness in its attempts to negotiate while at the same time calling into question *ex-ante* the validity of the elections in which they were participated.

The PAN was also somewhat divided in its general strategy, (although not in its leadership, which controlled the official candidate far more than was the case of the PRD). The rightist opposition party had been following an evolutionary, non-confrontational (sell out, to many)

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<sup>300</sup>When it appeared that the PAN's candidate Fernando was doing extremely well in the polls, and might even stand a chance of winning the elections, Cárdenas called into question Ortiz's autonomy from Salinas and the regime. In doing this, he was attempting to discredit the PAN candidate enough so that if he won, Cárdenas could still win the presidency with street demonstrations.



strategy in the electoral and legislative arenas for many years. An important component of this strategy was the emphasis on winning races at the local and especially state level. In this way, the PAN would gain experience and credibility by governing several large and important states before going for the main prize, the presidency. Thus, when the PAN s candidate "won" the first televised debate in Mexico, and led at the polls, there was consternation within the ranks of the leadership. A month and a half later, the press was asking, "What had happened to the PAN?". One could argue, that given the enormous crisis in Chiapas, the vociferousness of the PRD and the political assassination of Colosio, the leadership of the PAN thought better of winning the presidency at such a moment of discord. Instead, they ran a good campaign to be the second political force of the nation and clean up the electoral institutions enough to assure that in the next presidential contest, their party could win if the citizenry voted for them.

The third level of interest is that of the voters strategies. Here, much more empirical work needs to be done, but we will advance two hypotheses as to why the Mexican people voted in such force for the PRI s presidential, senatorial and congressional candidates.<sup>301</sup> The first is that the PRI had taken over the center of the political spectrum

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<sup>301</sup>Zedillo won with 50% of the vote, the Fernandez came in second with 26%, and Cárdenas had a bitter third place show with 16%.

in terms of economic policy, and that even with the lack of growth evidenced by the economy during Salinas sexenio, most believed they were better off, and so voted for the party that would bring them greater material benefits in the future. The second idea is that most voters were afraid of the possible ramifications of an opposition win, especially given that the PRD was threatening to leave the institutionalized game and bring down the government. An interesting proposition<sup>302</sup> that stems from this hypothesis is that many voters, especially those better educated in urban centers, wanted the opposition to do well in terms of Senate and Congress seat totals, and believed many would vote against the aging dominant party,<sup>303</sup> but themselves did not vote for the opposition, because they were afraid that if they did so, the PRI would lose and all hell would break loose in Mexico. For that reason, they did not vote for an opposition candidate. We do not have the empirical capacity here to determine which of these two hypotheses is correct, but it is illuminating to see the various alternatives of voting behavior in the one of the cleanest elections ever held in Mexico.

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<sup>302</sup>Yemile Mizrahi, personal communication.

<sup>303</sup>A reasonable belief given that the polls published throughout June and July of 1994, just months before the August vote, showed the PAN candidate ahead. At the same time, Cárdenas was openly threatening to discredit the vote tallies, unless he was declared the winner; i.e., that despite the electoral reforms of May, if he did not win, the vote was fraudulent.

It is important to note that at least in 1994, the transition in Mexico was openly channeled through the party system and electoral institutions (even as attempts were made to keep the PRD within the game without promising it the presidency in return for its participation). Changes to electoral system were negotiated by the three parties, although each of them had different interests in these accords. Fair elections, which should be the only device by which one governs the nation, have become less important as rumors float around Mexico about whether Zedillo would survive the spring as president of Mexico.<sup>304</sup> Yet, if elections cannot guarantee the political survival of a Mexican president, what then will? The political institutions which had been improved for the elections of 1994, were close to being destroyed by the economic crisis of 1995 (and larger crisis of the authoritarian regime's internal balance among forces).

A parallel reaction to peaceful, negotiated, institutional change was taking place so "underground" within the depths of the authoritarian regime, that almost a year after the death of Colosio, there were few leads into his murder. In late February, 1995, when arrests were made, leaders of the PRI-regime fell, including the brother of Salinas. The rules that had guided the behavior of

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<sup>304</sup>It would not be enough to vote him out of office in six years because Mexican presidents cannot stand for reelection.

generations of Mexican leaders and the groups themselves had been tragically broken. Violence had not been a permissible manner in which to resolve intra-party grievances since Obregón was murdered in 1928, and Calles formed the party to integrate warring factions in 1929. Was this in-fighting a cause of further reform and political change, or a result of it? It seems to early to tell.

What then, can we learn from the Mexican political transition? First, it is important to note the inter-connection between economic crisis and political change, especially in the short to medium term. Because of a lack of democratic accountability and monitoring, the closed political elite was able to take disastrous economic risks which have brought the nation to the brink of financial catastrophe. This economic crisis has in turn put into doubt the political survival of the duly elected president of Mexico, Ernesto Zedillo. On the other hand, the economic problems have shut off so many other options, that political negotiation and reform have become among the few political resources Zedillo has left. Economic disaster could lead to either political collapse, or greater democratization.

Second, when thinking about transitions, one must concentrate on the behavior of the political actors which mattered under the authoritarian regime, *especially* if the regime was as institutionalized as Mexico's. These internal regime actors are breaking down rule structures that served

their predecessors well for over 60 years. Yet one can see how the groups still follow the forms in many areas, while those that are broken, such as the dictate that the new president does not persecute the family of the ex-president, are ignored at great cost.<sup>305</sup> The incentives of the groups and their members have still not changed substantially, because individuals within the regime do not have independent power bases. Until elections and legislative careers become effective ways of "constituting a new political class"<sup>306</sup>, the Revolutionary Family will have few options except to 1. put up with the decisions of the president, or 2. use violence to gain their ends.

Finally, one should point out the importance of negotiated electoral reforms, which are taking the place of elite pacts in Mexico. Many political actors, both within and outside the dominant regime have recognized that unless the bulk of the citizenry is brought into the process of political transition, other options could ultimately bring about far more violent solutions.

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<sup>305</sup>The general political class was all a-goggle when Salinas went on a hunger strike in March, 1995 to protest the new administration's accusations that the ex-leader was responsible for a coverup in the Colosio murder. Zedillo and Salinas were locked in a very similar struggle to that between Calles and Cárdenas of 1934-5. Cárdenas finally threw Calles out of the country, and unseated his allies from government and legislative positions. One could argue that the split between Salinas and Zedillo is nothing new.

<sup>306</sup>The words of Jean-Francois Prud'homme, 1995.

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## APPENDIX 1

### INTERVIEWING METHOD

Instead of a vertical method of interviewing many people at all levels of one political group, I chose to spread my interviews across the bureaucracy. I spoke with people in the Ministries of Agriculture (SARH), Commerce (Secofi), the Mayor's Office (DDF), Interior (Gobernación), Treasury (Hacienda), Fisheries (Pesca), Presidential Office (Presidencia), Health (Salud), Social Development (Sedesol), Communications (SCT), Planning (SPP), and the Foreign Office (SRE). I have also spoken with ex-Congressmen, and advisors to the Workers' Central, the CTM.

I chose this strategy because I needed to find out if there were any major differences between how camarillas and equipos formed and operated across bureaucratic sectors. In fact, what I found is that there are not any fundamental differences in organizing the career-advancing groups in different areas of the public bureaucracy. What is different across sectors is the power some members have to promote their equipos based on their control of public resources. This problem will be considered below.

In my different interviews, I specifically asked about the activity of the different levels of a single camarilla. The relation between the boss and his subordinate is repeated

up and down the hierarchical ladder of both the political groups and the public bureaucracy. Other studies, especially Merilee Grindle's work on Conasupo, have concentrated on how one group behaves, so I believed it was important to concentrate on cross sectoral (of the bureaucracy) interviews.

Added to the interviews with public officials (both active, out of power, and fully retired), I have spoken with political columnists and academics. Obviously, each person I have interviewed has his own agenda, that is at times obvious (and therefore easy to correct for) and sometimes quite hidden. For the juiciest bits of gossip, I try to get confirmation from another source.

In all interviews, I asked two central questions, but in open ended conversations that often began with a lecture on the Mexican Revolution (who says that ideology doesn't matter?). The first question concerned what are these groups: how many members do they have?; who joins?; how long do they stay?; what are the costs if they choose to leave?, etc. The second central question revolves around the behavior of the groups during the presidential succession period, roughly the last two years of the sexenio. These questions included, what do members do for their boss?; can people switch from one group to another?; does the nature of the groups change from one stage of the process to another, if so, why? Most questions were covered in most of the interviews.



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