# THE MEXICAN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES AND THE MEXICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

by

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I hereby recommend that this dissertation prepared under my direction by Rudolph O. de la Garza

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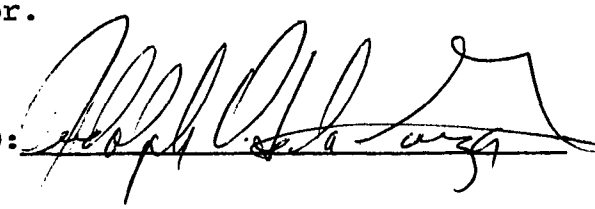
SIGNED: 

## DEDICATION

To the memory of my mother, and to my father who unquestioningly trusted me and selflessly provided me all the opportunities that had been denied him.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to all those who helped me design, implement and present this research. I am most indebted to Professor Paul Kelso whose friendship and advice have been a source of comfort throughout my graduate school years. I am also particularly indebted to Professor Edward J. Williams who has provided me advice, guidance and friendship in this and other projects. Professors Henry Kenski, Michael Sullivan, James Hogan, and John Schwarz rendered valuable assistance at various stages of this project, and I also thank them.

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ABSTRACT

Scholars agree that the President and the Revolutionary Family dominate Mexican politics, but because of the emphasis on top-level elites, the roles of lower-level office holders in the national decision-making process remain obscure. To a significant degree this lack of attention on middle-level decision-makers reflects a formalistic and traditional approach to the study of politics. This study breaks with this tradition and examines the roles of one national political institution, the Chamber of Deputies, within a functional framework so as to determine if the Chamber has a role in the national decision-making process, and if so, of what importance is this role. Specifically, this study examines the Chamber's contributions to four systemic functions: lawmaking, communications, legitimation, and elite recruitment.

The Chamber of Deputies does not have a major role in lawmaking. The executive initiates the great majority of legislation, and almost all executive-initiated bills pass. Moreover, until the late 1960's, deputies did not even debate the majority of presidential legislation. Occasionally, however, the Chamber has made major substantive changes in executive legislation, and several presidential bills have

been killed in committee. Moreover, Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) and non-PRI deputies regularly initiate major substantive legislation, but the great majority of these bills does not pass. Overall, then, it seems that the Chamber's major contribution to lawmaking is that it provides a final check for refining executive legislation. Bills are formulated elsewhere, and the Chamber reviews them to insure that they are correct.

The most important role deputies have is as gestores, petitioners, for their constituents. The majority of PRI deputies defined this as one of their major tasks, and non-PRI deputies protest that PRI deputies are so active as gestores that they, too, must serve as petitioners. PRI deputies begin to serve in this capacity while they are still candidates, and they continue this service throughout their years in the Chamber. They carry out this activity because the party rewards them for so doing and because they recognize an obligation to their constituents. Although occasionally deputies serve as gestores for middle and upper middle class groups, these petitions are primarily in behalf of the lower economic classes. By articulating demands for their constituents to the government, it seems that deputies serve as a major link between the government and the public.

The Chamber of Deputies is also a legitimizer of the government and the political system. The Chamber has been a part of the governmental structure since independence, and

its activities receive national press coverage. Furthermore, the Chamber is the only place where opposition forces are guaranteed the opportunity to criticize the government, and for this reason non-PRI deputies believe that the Chamber and its debates are vital to Mexican democracy. State and local governments recognize the importance of the Chamber to national politics and continuously invite Chamber representatives to participate in political and social ceremonies. Public organizations are also aware of the Chamber and appeal to it to intervene in political disputes. In sum, political activists perceive the Chamber as a legitimate part of the Mexican political system, and therefore Chamber approval of executive policies legitimizes both the policies and the government.

Mexican deputies are well educated and experienced and serving in the Chamber offers them a variety of benefits. For some, a deputyship is a reward for years of loyal service and it provides status and substantial income. Others view serving in the Chamber as the first step in a national political career, and many deputies go on to hold major positions after their terms as deputies. Those who do go on to other positions tend to have been active within the Chamber and to have held Chamber offices.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The objective of this research is to analyze and describe the roles of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, the Lower House of Congress, in the national political system. Unlike the studies of legislative behavior concerned primarily with theories of representation, institutional independence and power vis-à-vis the executive, role perceptions of individual legislators, and institutional factors affecting the lawmaking process, the attempt here is to view the legislature from a developmental perspective so as to determine and evaluate the significance of the functions performed by the Chamber of Deputies as an institution and deputies as individuals. It is hoped that this study will provide new insights into the nature of the Mexican political system and suggest hypotheses regarding the roles of legislatures in other developing nations as well.

### State of the Literature

Prior to the 1960's the great majority of legislative studies focused on the United States Congress, American state legislatures, or on the legislatures of other Western nations; and comparative studies were characterized by a

formal, legalistic approach to their subject matter.[1] As the behavioral revolution was institutionalized within the discipline, however, both the scope and method of legislative research changed. Formal, legalistic descriptions were either abandoned or combined with behavioral analysis in an attempt to more accurately describe the functions of legislatures and the role of legislators in their respective political systems.[2] The scope of legislative studies was broadened to include non-Western nations in the hope that such research would help generate universally valid hypotheses about the functions of legislatures and their relationship to other areas of the political system.

In recent years there has been a substantial increase in the number of studies dealing with legislatures in a developmental context. These have been characterized by an effort to identify and explain the functions of

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1. For a discussion of comparative political literature in general, see Roy C. Macridis, The Study of Comparative Government (New York: Random House, 1955).

2. John C. Wahlke, Heinz Eulau, William Buchanan and Leroy C. Ferguson's The Legislative System: Explorations in Legislative Behavior (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1962), was a pioneering study in this field. Subsequent studies reflecting the influence of this study are Allan Kornberg, Canadian Legislative Behavior: A Study of the 25th Parliament (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), and Roger H. Davidson, The Role of the Congressman (New York: Pegasus, 1969). For a complete review of the literature, see Norman Meller, "Legislative Behavior Research," in Michael A. Haas and Harry S. Kariel, eds., Approaches to the Study of Political Science (Scranton: Chandler Publishing Company, 1970), pp. 239-266.

legislative bodies in developing political systems. The first such effort was Frederick W. Frey's The Turkish Political Elite.[3] A more recent study, one similar in focus to the present research, is Raymond Hopkins' "The Role of the M.P. in Tanzania."[4] Herbert Hirsch and Donald M. Hancock are the authors of a new publication concerned with comparative legislative analysis.[5] Allan Kornberg has edited two studies on this same subject.[6] Henry C. Hart has analyzed the historical role of the parliament in British development and compared it with the contemporary situation in India.[7] Seymour Martin Lipset takes a similar approach in discussing the role of the American Congress in early American history.[8]

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3. Frederick W. Frey, The Turkish Political Elite (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1965).

4. Raymond F. Hopkins, "The Role of the M.P. in Tanzania," American Political Science Review, 64 (Sept., 1970), pp. 754-771, and Hopkins' Political Roles in a New State: A Study of Politics in Tanzania (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).

5. Herbert Hirsch and Donald M. Hancock, eds., Comparative Legislative Systems: A Reader in Theory and Research (New York: The Free Press, 1971).

6. Allan Kornberg and Lloyd D. Musolf, eds., Legislatures in Developmental Perspective (Durham: Duke University Press, 1970); Kornberg, Legislatures in Comparative Perspective (New York: McKay, 1971). Neither the Hirsch-Hancock nor the 1971 Kornberg volumes was available for use as of this writing.

7. Henry C. Hart, "Parliament and Nation Building, England and India," in Gerhard Loewenberg, ed., Modern Parliaments: Change or Decline (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, Inc., 1971), pp. 111-140.

8. Seymour Martin Lipset, The First New Nation (New York: Basic Books, 1963).

The study of legislatures in developing countries has gained such prominence that there is even a major forthcoming work entirely devoted to Latin American legislative systems.[9]

This increased concern with legislative behavior in third world countries reflects the realization by American scholars that these legislatures perform important functions in their respective national political systems, although their principle functions may differ from those of Western nations. These studies indicate that the functions performed by Western legislatures might be quite similar to those performed by non-Western legislative bodies.[10] It is also important to note that it is generally concluded that parliaments in so-called developed nations have declined in influence vis-a-vis the executive and are no longer the independent lawmaking bodies they were once considered to be.[11]

Despite the increased concern with legislative systems in the third world, no scholar has subjected the Mexican legislature to rigorous analysis. Students of Mexican

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9. Weston H. Agor, ed. Latin American Legislative Systems. Collection in preparation, University of Florida, Gainesville.

10. Robert A. Packenham, "Legislatures and Political Development," in Kornberg and Musolf, op. cit., pp. 521-576, suggests this.

11. Samuel Beer, "The British Legislature and the Problem of Mobilizing Consent," in Elke Frank, ed., Lawmakers in a Changing World (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1966), pp. 30-48; Nicholas Wahl, "The Fifth Republic: From Last Word to Afterthought," in Frank, op. cit., pp. 49-64; Peter H. Merkl, "Party Government in the Bonn Republic," in Frank, op. cit., pp. 65-82.

politics, however, have examined almost every other aspect of Mexican political life. They have analyzed the structure and strength of political parties;[12] they have discussed decision-making and planning;[13] they have scrutinized the role of the executive;[14] of the military;[15] and of the Church;[16] and they have analyzed the Mexican political culture.[17] This lack of attention reflects the degree to which the executive dominates political activity in Mexico.

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12. Frank Brandenburg, The Making of Modern Mexico (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1964); Robert E. Scott, Mexican Government in Transition (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964), hereinafter cited as Scott; William P. Tucker, The Mexican Government Today (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957); L. Vincent Padgett, The Mexican Political System (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966); Paul Kelso, manuscript on Mexican politics, in preparation, University of Arizona, Tucson; Barry Ames, "Basis of Support for Mexico's Dominant Party," American Political Science Review, 64 (March, 1970), pp. 153-168.

13. Brandenburg, op. cit.; Julio A. Fernandez, Political Administration in Mexico (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 1969); Robert J. Shafer, Mexico: Mutual Adjustment Planning (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1966).

14. Brandenburg, op. cit., Scott, op. cit., Padgett, op. cit., Kelso, op. cit.

15. Edwin Lieuwen, Arms and Politics in Latin America (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965); John J. Johnson, The Military and Society in Latin America (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964).

16. Brandenburg, op. cit.; J. Lloyd Meecham, Church and State in Latin America (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1934).

17. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1965); Robert E. Scott, "The Established Revolution," in Lucian W. Pye and Sydney Verba, eds., Political Culture and Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 330-395.

Cognizant of the executive role, scholars have relegated the Chamber of Deputies to a position of minimal concern.[18]

Studies by American scholars on the Mexican Congress have been limited to one detailed description of the formal powers of each Chamber[19] and one cursory analysis of congressional campaigning.[20] Because of this paucity of information, most scholars have confined themselves to pointing out that the Mexican Congress does not serve as a check on the power of the executive. "In fact, the legislature as an immediate and effective check on the presidency lack significance."[21]

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18. It is noteworthy that United States scholars have ignored Latin American legislatures in general. The principle exception to this is Weston H. Agor's work on the Chilean legislature. See Agor, "The Senate in the Chilean Political System," in Kornberg and Musolf, op. cit., pp. 228-272. The Chilean legislature is one of the two or three in Latin America most comparable to the American Congress and thus it is understandable that American scholars would examine it before all others.

With this exception, studies of Latin American legislatures have been limited to chapters within textbooks on Latin American government and politics. See William W. Pierson and Federico G. Gil, "Legislative Assemblies in Latin America," in Peter G. Snow, ed., Government and Politics in Latin America: A Reader (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), pp. 187-209; Robert E. Scott, "Legislatures and Legislation," in Harold E. Davis, ed., Government and Politics in Latin America (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1958), pp. 290-332.

19. Tucker, op. cit., pp. 91-101.

20. Karl M. Schmidt, "Congressional Campaigning in Mexico: A View from the Provinces," Journal of Inter-American Studies, 11, (Jan., 1969), pp. 93-110.

21. Padgett, op. cit., p. 148.

"On no occasion did it (Congress) take the bit in its teeth and defy the president."[22]

> ". . . as every informed Mexican knows, its (Congress') principle function--policy or law-making--has been assumed by the presidency almost in toto . . . the legislative function resides in the two chambers only in the most sterile, legalistic sense, depriving the senators and deputies of even this small pretense of independence with which to salve their bruised egos."[23]

Although these statements are accurate, they are concerned only with the legislature's constitutionally defined functions and ignore other roles the Congress might have. This narrow focus reflects the traditional view scholars have had of the American and Western European parliaments and the bias with which many scholars have approached their topics. In other words, most students of Mexican politics on learning that the Mexican Congress does not operate in the way they believe the United States Congress operates have concluded that the Mexican legislature is unworthy of further study and largely irrelevant to Mexican politics. An illustration of this attitude can be found in the most recent book length study on Mexican politics; the index counts not one reference to the Chamber of Deputies or Senate.[24] It has

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22. Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (New York: Atheneum, 1966), p. 323.

23. Scott, op. cit., p. 262.

24. Kenneth F. Johnson, Mexican Democracy: A Critical View (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971).

been shown, however, that all political structures perform numerous functions;[25] therefore, it would seem useful to begin this research by examining the functions legislatures are capable of performing and by asking how the Mexican legislature "contributes to the decisional function in the society of which it is a part . . . ."[26]

Recent legislative studies have identified numerous functions that legislatures are capable of performing. John Saloma lists 16 general and specific functions which the United States Congress performs or could perform.[27] Although his list refers to the United States Congress in particular, it is reasonable to suggest that it might be applicable to any national legislature. Robert Parkenham indicates that

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25. Gabriel Almond and J. Bingham Powell, Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1966), p. 31.

26. Wahlke et al., op. cit., p. 8.

27. John S. Saloma III, Congress and the New Politics (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1969).

| Major specific functions: | The functions Saloma lists are: |
|---|---|
| Representative | |
| Legislative | General functions |
| Control of Administration | |
| Investigative | Conflict Management |
| Informative | Integration |
| Constituent Service | Legitimation |
| | Participation |
| Other | Recruitment |
| | Education of a |
| Executive Counsel | democratic electorate |
| Constituent | Adaptation |
| Leadership | |
| Internal Organization | |

the Brazilian legislature performs many of these same functions and thus makes an important contribution to the national decision-making process. It legitimates decisions, it recruits and trains politicians for higher level positions, it legislates, it articulates interests, and it oversees administrative activities.[28] Paul Kelso suggests that the Mexican Congress performs many of these same functions, but because of a lack of data he is unable to determine which are performed or how institutionalized they are.[29] The objective here is to determine to what extent the Mexican Chamber of Deputies performs these functio . Specifically, this study will examine the Chamber's contribution to the decision-making process in four areas: law-making, legitimation, communication, and elite recruitment.

## Thesis Objectives and Theoretical Justifications

There are several reasons for concentrating on these functions. First, as indicated above, legislative studies suggest that these are important functions performed by most legislatures. Second, the literature on the Mexican

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28. Packenham, op. cit., pp. 523-536. His review of the literature of legislatures in other non-Western systems suggests their legislatures also perform many of these same functions.

29. Kelso, op. cit. It is interesting to note that Scott indicates that Congress performs many of these functions, but his conclusion that congressmen incur "bruised egos" suggests that he considers these functions relatively unimportant and demeaning; Scott, op. cit., p. 262.

political system has broached these functions but does not include any depth analyses. Finally, these are major systemic functions, and understanding to what extent the legislature engages in them will provide insights into the overall nature of the Mexican polity.

These three reasons explain why these particular functions are analyzed. This study will examine law-making because it is generally considered to be a legislature's primary function, and because existing studies have assumed that the Mexican Congress exercises virtually no discretion in the law-making process. The degree to which the Congress helps contribute to legitimate governmental activities will also be studied. One of the principle anomalies of the Mexican political system is the high degree of affect for the system, and particularly for the president and the Revolution, despite a relatively low level of governmental material output.[30] This high level of system affect suggests high levels of governmental legitimacy, and this seems to be a major reason for continued political stability in Mexico since the 1930's. Thus, if Congress contributes to legitimating national policies and therefore contributes indirectly to maintaining system stability, congressional activities can be said to be of major significance to the system.

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30. Almond and Verba, op. cit., pp. 310-312.

This study will analyze congressional communication activities because this is a function vital to the maintenance of any polity and because scholars have suggested that the Mexican Congress is active in this area.[31] The great importance of communications to all political systems is well known.[32] If the Mexican Chamber of Deputies does contribute significantly to communicating with the public in behalf of the government and with the government in behalf of the public, it can then be argued that for this reason, too, the Chamber is of vital importance to the system.[33]

This study will also analyze the part Congress plays in recruiting members into Mexico's national elite. Numerous studies have shown the importance of elite recruitment to system maintenance.[34] If congressional experience

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31. L. Vincent Padgett suggests that Mexican legislators' "functions as political communicators and mobilizers would seem significant . . . ." Op. cit., p. 148. Karl Schmidt agrees with this evaluation. Op. cit., p. 93.

32. Almond and Powell, op. cit., pp. 178-189; and Karl W. Deutsch, The Nerves of Government (New York: Free Press, 1966).

33. President Kenyatta of Kenya has stated that this type of activity is Congress' major responsibility. "All members of Parliament must serve as a bridge between Government and people, representing to the government the views of their constituents and then interpreting to their people the policies and decisions of the Government." Quoted in Newell M. Stultz, "The National Assembly in the Politics of Kenya," in Kornberg and Musolf, op. cit., p. 321.

34. Almond and Powell, op. cit., pp. 47-48; Harold Lasswell, Politics: Who Gets What, When, How (New York: World Publishing Co., 1968).

enhances a politician's career opportunities, it would suggest that Congress has a major role in system maintenance functions.

In summary, then, the objective of this study is to determine if the Mexican Chamber of Deputies performs several of the functions that legislatures are usually thought to perform and that some scholars on Mexico have suggested it performs. If it performs these functions, it will be concluded that the national legislature is an integral part of the decisional structure and process in Mexico, and that it is of more importance to the system than is generally thought. It must be added, however, that even if Congress does serve these functions, it is most likely that other institutions also perform them. However, it is beyond the scope of this exercise to determine whether the legislature is more active in any of these areas than are other institutions. Therefore, if the Chamber does carry out these functions, all that can be said is that the legislature is an integral part of the system. Its weight vis-a-vis other institutions cannot be measured. Also, if Congress does not perform these functions, all that can be concluded is that in these four areas Congress does not contribute to the decisional process. Only future studies can determine if the legislature makes meaningful contributions to decision-making in other areas.

## Research Strategies and Concept Operationalization

Perhaps the most important factor affecting a significant part of this research was the environment in which it took place. The research design called for survey data and data gathered from documents and general publications. Unfortunately, the original design had to be significantly modified in the field because of insurmountable obstacles that arose.

The original design called for a random sample of 100 current deputies. Although this constituted half the Chamber and was, therefore, far in excess of the number needed for a representative random sample, it was intentionally large in anticipation of difficulties that might arise in attempting to interview current and past deputies. The anticipated problems did arise and thus the strategy paid off.

The Chamber of Deputies currently has 213 members, including 35 party members selected by a type of proportional representation and 178 elected by majority or plurality vote who represent the Partido Revolucionario Institutional, Mexico's dominant party. The party deputies include 20 deputies from the Partido de Accion Nacional (PAN), a centrist to right-wing party, 10 from the Partido Popular Socialista, (PPS), a left-wing socialist party, and five deputies representing the Partido Autentico de la Revolucion Mexicana

(PARM) a party difficult to classify and largely irrelevant to current Mexican politics.[35]

A sample of 15 would have been necessary to insure at the .95 confidence level that the sample was representative. Because data on such items as age and education are available on the universe, the question of representativeness only has relevancy for such items as role perceptions, representational focus, and motivations. Taking role perceptions as the item by which representativeness is to be measured, the question becomes: How many deputies must be interviewed to determine the mean number and type of role perceptions for this group?

Setting confidence levels at .95 and demanding an accuracy of $\pm 1$ and estimating the mean of the universe at 2, so that

$$1 = 1.96 \frac{2}{N}, \qquad N = \frac{1.96(2)}{1} + 3.92, \qquad N = 15.36$$

Thus, although the sample size has been derived for one area of generalization, the sample constitutes over 21 percent of the universe and therefore is more than sufficient as the basis for generalizations about the entire population.[36]

The sample interviewed includes 13 PAN, 3 PPS, and 30 PRI deputies. Additionally, numerous informants

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35. See Brandenburg, op. cit., for a discussion of these parties, pp. 119-140.

36. See Hubert M. Blalock, Social Statistics (New York: McGraw Hill, 1960), pp. 165-167.

including several newspaper correspondents, the principle administrative officer of the Chamber and several chamber employees, and Professor Daniel Cosio Villegas provided considerable useful information. Eight PRI deputies refused to be interviewed and three refused to complete the interview. The requirements for randomness were met by assigning a number to each deputy according to his place in an alphabetical listing, and then drawing the respondents from a table of random numbers according to their assigned number. Chamber officers were specifically included in the sample to insure that the leadership would be adequately represented in the study. Thus, it is the researcher's conclusion that the nature of the sample justifies formulating generalizations and arriving at conclusions on the basis of the data presented herein.

Although the sample is representative, several major problems affected the conduct of the interviews and might have affected some responses. The factors that proved to be the major obstacles to completing the survey as originally planned were the nature of the political system, the distrust Mexicans have of survey research and of North Americans, and the work schedule followed by the majority of deputies. The Mexican political system does not reward openness and candor. A United States diplomat pointed out that "there are no memoirs in Mexico." Although an overstatement, his views suggest the degree to which secrecy is valued in

Mexican political circles. Numerous Mexicans, including Dr. Cosio Villegas and several deputies as well as the directors of a survey research institute in Mexico City commented on the suspicion with which Mexicans view survey research. L. Vincent Padgett has also commented on this problem.[37]

Fortunately, it was possible to establish excellent communication with numerous respondents, despite these obstacles. One member of the Chamber, for example, an articulate, scholarly academic who is among the current Chamber leadership, accused this writer of being an agent for the CIA. While the writer was interviewing another deputy, the first deputy approached the second and told her of his suspicions. Fortunately, the interview had been completed by this time.

Another factor which made interviewing difficult was the work schedule. Chamber sessions are held twice weekly except during the latter part of December when they are held daily. The deputies arrive shortly before the session and leave immediately afterwards. They have no private offices, and it was virtually impossible to learn their regular office numbers and addresses. Almost all interviews, therefore, had to be conducted during the period immediately before or after the session or during the session. To do so, however, it was necessary to compete with other deputies who wished

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37. Padgett, op. cit., Preface, pp. vii-viii.

to chat with the respondent, and frequently interviews were interrupted so as to allow the respondent to greet one of his or her companions.

A final obstacle was that the PRI majority leader did not agree to allow the study until early November, and without his tacit approval it was impossible to have any interviews with PRI deputies. To secure his unenthusiastic permission it was necessary to wait for weeks outside his office, send him a letter, wait additional weeks, and only then did he have his private secretary inform this researcher that he had "no objection" to the study. With the exception of directing one deputy to grant an interview, the majority leader did not endorse the research in any way. On at least two occasions, moreover, two deputies who appeared willing to be interviewed apparently changed their minds after consultation with the majority leader. They promised to contact the writer but never did, despite his continued presence in the Chamber.

Although numerous deputies cooperated enthusiastically, many did not. Furthermore, because all but one or two PRI deputies began the interview obviously nervous and/or suspicious of the researcher, the researcher chose not to engage in indepth probing unless it was perfectly clear that doing so would not alienate the respondent. Thus, most of the interviews were relatively brief, running from 30 to 45

minutes. Several interviews lasted over an hour, a few lasted two hours, and one lasted over five hours.

The interviews with PPS and PAN deputies differed significantly from those with PRI members. The PAN respondents were extremely cooperative and were willing to answer any and all questions. These lasted between one and two hours and were conducted either in the party's legislative office or in the private business office of the individual deputy. The PPS deputies also cooperated fully; interviews with them ran at least an hour and were held in the party headquarters.

Two survey instruments were used in this research. The original questionnaire was used only with PAN deputies.[38] The interviews with PPS and PRI deputies focused on nine items. They were:

1. Respondent's political socialization. This item was concerned with how the respondent became interested and involved in politics. Of primary concern was the respondent's family's political history.

2. Motivations for becoming a deputy.

3. The reasons for which the respondent was selected to be a deputy. The concern here is to identify the factors that explain what types of candidates are selected by the PRI to run for Congress. Because nomination by the PRI is

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38. See Appendix A.

tantamount to election, the nomination process, rather than the electoral process, is emphasized.

4. Role perceptions. This item attempts to tap the way the respondents see their job. Understanding this provides insights into the role of the legislature in Mexican politics.

5. Representational focus. Here the objective is to identify whom the deputy feels he is representing. This is important because it suggests the nature of the relationship between the deputy and his constituency; and this, in combination with a deputy's role perceptions should clearly indicate the manner in which the deputy carries out his responsibilities.

6. The legislative functions of the Chamber. This item offers insights into the operations of the Chamber which are otherwise unavailable. Of particular importance are the manner in which the committee system operates and the way in which deputies see their legislative input. These interviews provide the only evidence available on the workings of the committee system because committee hearings are secret.

7. Communication activities. The objective of this question is to determine the frequency and type of contact the deputy has with his constituency from the time of his campaign through his term in office.

8. The relationship between service in the Chamber of Deputies and developing a political career. This item should

reveal the importance deputies assign to their position in terms of career development and explicate the kinds of activities in the Chamber that are rewarded or discouraged.

9. The importance of Chamber debates and of the Chamber in national politics. Responses to this question will suggest the degree to which the legislative process, in particular Chamber debates, contributes to legitimizing governmental activities. Of particular significance here are the responses of party deputies.

As suggested above, other questions were discussed if the interview situation permitted. These additional questions included the salary levels of deputies, the importance of holding Chamber offices, the process by which Chamber officials are selected, and indepth probes of the items listed above.

The final major change in the design of the study concerns interviews with former deputies. Originally the intent was to interview current and former deputies and then compare their attitudes and perceptions in an attempt to learn when the Chamber began to function as it now does. Because of the difficulty in locating former deputies and, when located, their unwillingness to cooperate, the researcher abandoned this strategy. Nonetheless, numerous respondents had served in the Chamber on earlier occasions, and four former deputies did cooperate with the researcher. Therefore, although this study does not systematically present

the attitudes of deputies over time, it does include some information on past legislatures upon which inferences will be made.

In order to understand how the legislature is able to perform whatever functions it performs, it is first necessary to understand the place of Congress in Mexican history and its current constitutional powers and formal operating procedures. This is the context within which the legislature functions and therefore it must be discussed at the outset. The source materials for this section will include major historical and political studies of Mexico, the constitution, and official documents dealing with the operation and structure of Congress. This material will be presented in Chapter 2.

This study will employ several different research strategies to analyze the legislature's contribution to the functions listed above.

## Lawmaking

Lawmaking is defined as introducing and passing legislation or amending legislation introduced by the executive, state legislatures or deputies. The Chamber's lawmaking activity is measured by the number of bills introduced and amended by deputies. The efficacy of Chamber activity is determined by the ratio of deputy bills introduced to deputy bills passed. Chamber efficacy will be compared with

executive efficacy to illustrate the nature of the relationship between the Chamber and the President.

These data are taken from the Diario de Debates, the Chamber's official record, for the regular sessions of five complete legislatures, 1940-42, 1944-46-48, 1951-53, 1961-63, 1964-66, and for one year of the 1970-72 legislature. Each legislature consists of three regular four-month sessions. The legislatures were stratified to correspond to executive terms, and one legislature was randomly selected from each of the six executive terms since 1940. Complete legislatures rather than single legislative sessions were selected to control for variations within a single legislature. This provides the same information as an analysis of single sessions but additionally allows for comparing the relationship between different executives and the Chamber and levels and styles of activity between legislatures. The specific hypotheses and findings on lawmaking are found in Chapter 2.

Communication

Here communication is the process by which the government informs the general public of its activities, and the people make their demands known to the government. It is assumed that the government intends information to generate support for the system. In this study, however, it will be impossible to determine the effects of these efforts. Hence, only the efforts to communicate will be described; no attempt will be made to measure their impact.

Communication activities are measured in three ways. The first deals with the deputy's election campaign. The important variables here are the number of cities visited by a congressman in his district, and the number and kinds of speeches he gave. The second focuses on the deputy's contact with his constituency following his election. The important variables here are the frequency with which the district is visited, and the activities engaged in during these visits. Finally, communication also results from constituency-initiated contacts. Constituency visits to Mexico City and correspondence from the district are measured to determine the amount of communication initiated by the constituents. It is assumed that the deputy will respond in one form or another to these contexts, and in responding to the deputy's communication function is also performed. Propositions and conclusions related to this activity are found in Chapter 3.

Legitimation

In a nation state with an homogenous political culture, legitimation can be defined as the process by which a congruent relationship is established between the political culture and the means by which a government gains office, holds office, and makes policy.[39] No nation, however, has a

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39. See David Easton, A Systems Analysis of Political Life (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1965), pp. 278-310.

homogenous political culture.[40] Within the so-called "developing" nations the problem of competing political cultures is of greater significance than it is within "developed" nations. Therefore, when analyzing legitimation in developing political systems, it is necessary to make explicit the particular subculture with which one is concerned.

In Mexico, as in most of the political systems of Asia, Africa and Latin America, there are two major political cultures--that of the elites and that of the masses.[41] In many of these countries the elites have accepted many Western political norms and are attempting to restructure their politics to conform to these norms. The masses, on the other hand, either tend to maintain their traditional values and are only concerned with system outputs or are unaware of the existence of the nation state. Almond and Verba identify these three types as participants, subjects and parochials.[42] Because in any system it is the participants who in effect define the dominant political culture, legitimation in Mexico will be defined as the process by which a congruent relationship is established between the political culture of the elite, i.e., participants, and the

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40. Almond and Verba, op. cit., pp. 16-26.

41. Lucian W. Pye, "The Non-Western Political Process," Journal of Politics, 20 (Aug., 1958), p. 477.

42. Almond and Verba, op. cit., pp. 16-20.

means by which the government takes office, holds office and makes policy.

If the Chamber of deputies contributes to legitimizing governmental activity, then the elites must be aware of Chamber activities. The most direct means of measuring elite awareness would be through survey research. Time and economic considerations make such a survey impossible. Here, therefore, elite awareness will be inferred from a content analysis of newspaper coverage of the Chamber.

This study will analyze newspaper reporting in three major urban daily newspapers, Mexico City's Excelsior, Guadalajara's Informadaor, and Monterrey's El Norte, to determine the amount of coverage given to the Chamber of Deputies. The analysis is of daily coverage for one month of each of the ten legislative periods from 1940 to 1970. The months and years were selected from a table of random numbers. They are: October, 1940; September, 1944; December, 1947; October, 1949; December, 1954; November, 1957; October, 1958; December, 1962; November, 1965; and September, 1968.

Initially, it was intended to do both a quantitative and qualitative content analysis of newspaper coverage. However, the validity of a non-national researcher qualitatively content analyzing foreign newspapers is questionable. Unable to develop confidence in the coding scheme, the researcher chose to abandon it rather than to force the data to fit a predetermined mold.

Additional indicators of legitimation are the perception of deputies, particularly minority party deputies, of the importance of Chamber debates and of the Chamber *per se*, and other activities of the Chamber that publicly suggest it oversees or authorizes governmental activities. Chapter 4 contains the hypotheses and findings related to the Chamber's legitimating function.

Elite Recruitment

Elite recruitment is the process by which new members are selected to join the national political decision-making elite. In this study, behavior within the legislature is related to recruitment from the legislature to high national political positions to determine if the Chamber serves as a training ground for national decision-makers. If this is so, it would suggest that the national elites consider congressional experience, and therefore the Congress, to be of greater importance to the political system than is often suggested in the literature.

If the Chamber serves as a training base for future leaders, then by definition some members of Congress must go on to hold high government positions. The degree to which Congress serves this function will be measured by the percentage of all high government officers since 1940 who served in the Chamber prior to holding high government positions. High government positions include the President, cabinet

secretaries and their assistants, members of the supreme court, ambassadors to major nations, the directories and subdirectors of the major national banks and semi-autonomous agencies and PRI national officers, governors, and senators.

If some members of Congress are promoted to high level posts subsequent to serving in the legislature, it is reasonable to expect that their behavior while in Congress contributed to this promotion; otherwise, it would be difficult to analyze the meaning of the congressional experience in career development. An analysis of official documents during the legislative terms of promoted congressmen will indicate if a particular behavior pattern characterized their legislative careers. This analysis will focus on their speech-making activity, and the amount of legislation they introduced and/or amended, and the offices held while in the Chamber. The behavior of promoted congressmen will be compared with that of non-promoted deputies from the same legislatures. It must be emphasized that only certain types of behavior are studied here. Activities behind the scenes in committees and outside the Chamber cannot be measured despite their potentially great importance. Incumbents will have their behavior analyzed in the same way as promoted legislators, and they will also be asked to discuss and evaluate the importance of these activities to career development. Comparing these views with behavior patterns over time will suggest trends in the evolution of the legislature

and its relationship to the national political system. The results of this analysis are found in Chapter 5.

The concluding chapter of this study summarizes the findings of the earlier chapters and attempts to combine the findings so as to suggest the roles of the Chamber of Deputies in the Mexican political system and with the importance of these roles in Mexican national politics.

## CHAPTER 2

## THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES: ORGANIZATION, FORMAL POWERS, AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

The evolution of the Mexican Congress evidences periods of increasing and decreasing importance, but the institution has remained a part of the institutional structure of the Mexican political system since Mexico won its independence from Spain in 1821. In 1822 the Mexican Congress held its first session, and until President Victoriano Huerta dissolved both houses in 1913 Congress held regular sessions and was institutionalized as an integral part of the formal government apparatus.[1] Originally a bicameral institution, the Senate was eliminated in 1865, leaving only a Chamber of Deputies. It was not until 1873 that a bicameral legislature was re-established.[2]

Although the role of the Chamber of Deputies varied throughout the 19th century, the Chamber did have a voice in the decisional process until the Huerta regime; however, the

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1. For a discussion of the development of the Mexican Congress, see Deborah Gomez Noriega, El Senado Mexicano, thesis for the title of Licenciada en Derecho Nacional, Facultad de Juris Prudencia, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (Mexico, D. F., 1954).

2. William P. Tucker, The Mexican Government Today (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957), p. 91.

significance of this voice is perhaps suggested by the paucity of studies dealing with the Chamber during this period. Thus, the actual role of the Chamber in decision-making during these years is impossible to determine; it is less difficult to assess its relative importance during different regimes. Under the dictatorships of Bustamante and Santa Anna, the Chamber had little importance. Under the Liberal governments of mid-century, on the other hand, deputies appear to have played a significant role in government decision-making. This importance declined with the ascendancy of Porfirio Diaz to the presidency, and by the end of his regime the Chamber was nothing more than a ratifying agency for his policies.[3] With the changes following the outbreak of the 1910 Revolution, the Chamber of Deputies began to exercise some independence vis-à-vis the executive and became a forum from which to oppose presidential programs. Francisco Madero, revolutionary Mexico's first president, was challenged by porfiristas in the Chamber. The ascent of Victoriano Huerta to the presidency following

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3. For a discussion of the Diaz regime, see Vincente Fuentes Diaz, "Partidos y Corrientes Politicas," in Mexico: Cincuenta Anos de Revolucion, III. La Politica (Mexico, D. F.: Fondo de Cultura, 1961), pp. 375-382; Mario de la Cueva, "La Constitucion Politica," in Mexico, op. cit., pp. 3-23, discusses congressional activities under the Liberal governments of mid-century. Frank Brandenburg, The Making of Modern Mexico (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1964), pp. 16-46, presents a succinct and excellent review of 19th century politics.

Madero's assassination resulted in the Chamber's becoming a major opponent of the executive. Madero's supporters in the Chamber and in the Senate became such an obstacle that Huerta finally dissolved the Congress.[4]

The Revolution continued, Huerta was deposed and the victors competed for control. Open and vigorous debate characterized the Constitutional Convention of 1917 and the Convention of Aguascalientes before it. Debate in the Chamber also reflected the unsettled political situation and the several factions vying for control used the Chamber as a base for opposing the consolidation of power under any one man. This continued until Alvaro Obregon became president. After almost being deposed, Obregon defeated the opposition and with his victory came absolute control of the Chamber. "Since then the means of the Executive for controlling the Legislature have become one of the essential and institutional characteristics of Mexican politics."[5] It was not until 1940 that opposition deputies were allowed to return to the Chamber, but they are "carefully selected from among the least brilliant or least popular. Nonetheless it is important to note that since then the tabu that prevented the

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4. Pablo Gonzalez Casanova, La Democracia en Mexico (Mexico, D. F.: Ediciones ERA, S. A., 1965), p. 16.

5. Gonzalez Casanova, op. cit., p. 16.

least minimal opposition in the legislature for 18 years has been broken."[6]

A review of the performance of the Chamber from 1821 to 1940 suggests that the Chamber's level of activities has been determined not by the Chamber but by the executive. There is no legacy of an independent legislature in Mexico; there is no continuous history of the Chamber of Deputies serving as a check on the executive. Indeed, the opposite is true. Strong executive rule has been the norm in Mexico, and the role of the Chamber of Deputies must be evaluated from this perspective.

## The Chamber of Deputies: Formal Powers and Organization

The Mexican Constitution sets forth the powers and structure of the Chamber of Deputies. Deputies are elected for three-year terms, and a *suplente*, or alternate, is elected simultaneously with each deputy. Deputies may not be re-elected for consecutive terms, nor may they serve as a *suplente* until they have been out of office at least three years. *Suplentes* may be elected as deputies immediately following their terms, provided they have not been occupying the seat of the proprietary deputy.[7]

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6. Gonzalez Casanova, *loc. cit.*

7. *Constitution of the United Mexican States* (Pan American Union, Washington, D. C., 1964), Articles 51, 53, 59, Section 1, Chapter II, Title III, pp. 22-23.

Two types of deputies sit in the Chamber--majority and party deputies. The Constitution allots deputies to the states on a population basis and requires that they be elected in single-member districts. A recent amendment to the Constitution allots each state, beginning with the 1973 elections, one deputy for every 250,000 citizens or for fractions over 125,000. From 1951 until the amendment, the Constitution allocated one deputy for each 200,000 inhabitants or fraction over 100,000.

The office of party deputy was instituted by President Lopez Mateos in 1964 for the purpose of giving minor parties more representation in the Chamber. Minor parties now have the opportunity to win seats in the Chamber, even though they may have failed to elect a single majority deputy in the general election. The constitutional amendment of 1963 in effect created a crude system of proportional representation by giving five party deputies to each minor party which polls at least 2.5 percent for total vote cast nationally for all candidates for the Chamber and an additional deputy for each additional 0.5 percent of the total national vote. A recent constitutional amendment offers minor parties the chance, beginning in 1973, to obtain even more seats in the Chamber by lowering the percentage of the total national vote required for five party deputies to 1.5 percent and by raising the total number of seats minor

parties may win to 25.[8] Despite the difference in the manner of election of majority and party deputies, there is no difference in their rank, rights or obligations.[9]

In the three elections held since 1963 when the system of party deputies was instituted, the National Action Party (PAN) has won a sufficiently large percentage for the national vote to qualify for 20 party deputies. The other two minor parties, the Popular Social Party (PPS) and the Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution (PARM) failed to poll the minimum of 2.5 percent of the total vote in any of the three elections but nonetheless were awarded 10 and 5 party deputies, respectively.

The requirements a candidate for the Chamber must meet are stringent; in fact, they are more extensive than those for representatives of other Latin American Congress must meet.[10] A candidate must be a native born citizen; he must be 21 years old by the day of the election; he must be a native of the state in which the election is held or have resided there six months prior to the election; he can not

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8. For the text of this amendment, see Diario de Debates de la Camara de Diputados del Congreso de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, II, November 25, 1971, pp. 6-8. Hereinafter cited as Diario.

9. Constitution, op. cit., Article 54, p. 23.

10. William W. Pierson and Federico G. Gil, "Legislative Assemblies in Latin America," in Peter G. Snow, ed., Government and Politics in Latin America: A Reader (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), pp. 187-209.

be in the Army or Police within 90 days of the election; and he can not head an executive department or be a Supreme Court Justice 90 days prior to the election. A governor can not be elected from within his own state, even if he resigns the governorship. If a candidate is a State Secretary or federal magistrate he must resign his position 90 days prior to the election. No religious minister may be elected. Moreover, while serving in the Chamber a deputy may not be employed by the federal or state governments and receive payment for this employment unless the Chamber authorizes this.[11]

The Constitution, similar to the United States Constitution, delegates specific duties and powers to both houses. The duties of Congress include the manner in which legislation is introduced and processed, the obligation to audit the national accounts of the previous year, the obligation to examine, discuss and approve the national budget and enact taxes, and the obligation "to study, discuss and vote on all bills which are introduced, and to decide on all other matters which pertain to it according to the Constitution."[12]

The shared legislative power of Congress can be classified as regulatory, organic and ordinary. Ordinary laws are "the result of an activity authorized by the

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11. Constitution, op. cit., Articles 55, 62, pp. 22-23.

12. Constitution, op. cit., Articles 71, 72, 65, pp. 24-25.

Constitution." Organic laws define and regulate the jurisdiction and operation of government organizations such as secretariats and semi-autonomous agencies. Regulatory legislation is concerned with specific administrative and legal codes.[13] Thus, the Constitution empowers Congress to legislate in economic matters, in admiralty matters, on the foreign service, on all matters relating to the Federal Districts and the Territories and on the operation of government agencies as well as "to enact all laws that may be necessary to enforce the foregoing powers, and all others granted by this Constitution to the powers of the Union."[14]

The Chamber also has several exclusive powers. These include verifying presidential elections, approving the annual national budget, approving executive appointments to the Superior Courts of the Federal Districts and Territories, and determining the validity of the election of its members.[15]

The Constitution also establishes the procedural framework for Chamber operations. Sessions must begin September 1 and may be continued through, but not beyond, December 31. Extraordinary sessions may be held after this date, but they may only deal with those specific matters for

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13. Tucker, op. cit., p. 97. Tucker also classified congressional powers as legislative and non-legislative. See pp. 95-96.

14. Constitution, op. cit., Article 73, pp. 27-32.

15. Constitution, op. cit., Article 74, pp. 32-33; Article 60, p. 23.

which they were called.[16] The Permanent Committee, composed of 15 deputies and 14 senators, is in session while Congress is adjourned and serves to oversee the executive during this period as well as to carry out routine functions which require congressional action such as the approval of executive judicial appointments.[17] The Permanent Committee approves the president's requests for extraordinary sessions; it may call for them independently, also.[18]

The procedure for initiating, studying and passing legislation is also set forth in the Constitution.[19] The president, deputies and state legislatures may introduce bills. Once submitted, bills are sent to committee and after committee action they are returned to the Chamber floor for debate and action. This procedure can be obviated when the Chamber determines a bill is of "urgent or obvious resolution."[20] Once passed, a bill is sent to the Senate for study; if the Senate rejects all or part of a bill, it is

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16. Constitution, op. cit., Articles 65, 66, 67, pp. 24-25.

17. Constitution, op. cit., Articles, 78-79, pp. 34-35.

18. William Tucker has a good discussion of the Permanent Committee. Tucker, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

19. Constitution, op. cit., Article 71, pp. 25-27.

20. Reglamento para el Gobierno Interior del Congreso General de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos (Mexico, D. F.: Imprenta de la Camara de Diputados, 1970), Article 60, p. 27.

returned to the Chamber and only that part which has been amended or rejected is studied anew. If the Chamber approves the changes the bill is sent to the executive; otherwise, it is returned to the Senate. The Senate may then approve the Chamber version, or both the Chamber and the Senate can agree to have only the mutually agreeable part of the bill sent to the executive. If no agreement can be reached, the bill is killed and can not be reintroduced until the following year. Beyond this the Chamber has the power to adopt its own rules.[21]

Like most legislatures, the Mexican lower house works through committees. There are currently 47 standing committees, and this number has not varied greatly since 1940.[22] Although committee assignments may change from year to year, most assignments are for the three-year term. The two major exceptions to this are the Administrative Committee and the Auditing Committee of the Treasury. Membership on these is rotated annually.

The Gran Comision is the most important committee in the Chamber. It makes all committee assignments, hires all administrative staff and establishes wages for administrative personnel. Formally, the deputies from each state elect a member of their group to serve on this committee,

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21. Constitution, op. cit., Article 73, p. 31.

22. Reglamento, op. cit., pp. 28-29; Reglamento (1941), pp. 22-23.

and the members of the Gran Comision then elect the president of the committee.[23] There are no party deputies on the Gran Comision. In principle a minority party deputy who won a regular seat in the Chamber could be elected; in practice it is extremely unlikely that this will occur.

Committees generally include three deputies and one alternate. The Gran Comision names the committee presidents. Each president is responsible for calling his own committee meetings, and bills must be reported out of committee within five days of receipt.[24] Committees have the right of access to any documents pertinent to their needs, and they may meet with any government official to discuss their work. Any deputy may attend any committee meeting he chooses, and he may participate in its deliberations but may not vote unless he is a member of that committee. The committees are to meet throughout the year to study new legislation and to take action on past bills.[25]

Chamber officers include a president, two vice-presidents, and unspecified number of secretaries who usually number three. The Chamber elects a new president and vice-presidents each month but elects secretaries for one-

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23. Chapter 5 describes the actual selection process of all Chamber officers.

24. Reglamento, 1970, p. 34.

25. Reglamento, 1970, pp. 28-37.

year terms. Chamber presidents and vice-presidents may not be re-elected during the same year.[26] These elections are by secret ballot.

The Chamber may hold as many sessions per week as it chooses. Usually it meets twice weekly except toward the end of the session when it meets daily. Regular sessions are open to the public, and the Chamber is also authorized to hold secret sessions for a number of reasons.[27] Deputies have no assigned seats, and they must attend and remain for the duration of all sessions. The Constitution stipulates that deputies will not be paid for days on which they are absent, and extended absences may lead to dismissal.[28]

Debate is a two stage process. After a committee returns a bill to the floor, it is first discussed

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26. Reglamento, 1970, p. 10. Chapter 5 describes how Chamber officials are actually selected.

27. Reglamento, 1970, pp. 19-20. The secret sessions are relatively open. Members of the press are allowed to attend them, and on one occasion a Chamber official invited the researcher to a secret session.

28. Attendance rules are virtually ignored. In 1957, the Chamber failed to have a quorum for 11 consecutive sessions. Only then did the Chamber president warn that he would apply the rules governing attendance. Excelsior, Nov. 23, 1957, p. 1. During the 1971 session, numerous deputies were frequently absent, and on one occasion attendance was so low that Chamber employees invited members of the public, including this researcher, to sit in the Chamber so as to give the appearance of a quorum. Robert Scott points out that Senate attendance suffers from similar problems. One Senator "was conspicuous for having missed almost every meeting of his Chamber, but very prompt in picking up his salary." Scott, op. cit., p. 265.

generally and then each article is discussed individually. Voting follows this same pattern. The president controls debate and determines who will participate in the debate. Speakers are recognized in an alternating pro-con fashion. Only members of the committee responsible for the bill under discussion may speak more than twice. A deputy not on the original list of speakers may have the floor to make factual explanations or to answer personal allusions. Individual speeches may not exceed 30 minutes. Following the debates, a roll call vote is taken to determine the Chamber's actions.[29]

This summary of rules, procedures and power indicates that the Chamber does have, nominally at least, adequate constitutional authority to play a major role in the legislative process in Mexico. Scholars have stated that it does not do so. Here the actual functioning of the Chamber is examined to illustrate this and to attempt to explain why this is so.

## Lawmaking and the Chamber of Deputies

The major factor affecting behavior is the relationship that exists between the leaders of the Revolutionary Family and deputies.[30] "Aspiring politicians realize that

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29. Reglamento, 1970, pp. 37-47.

30. Frank Brandenburg, op. cit., pp. 4-5, describes the Revolutionary Family as consisting of three groups. The

their political future is dependent on their ability to establish themselves with the president, with the leaders of the Chamber or of the Senate, or with the party hierarchy. They are obliged to praise their superiors and to be submissive. This is an important part of the reason for legislative submission to the executive."[31] The extent of this submission is indicated by the nature and amount of legislative activity and opposition.

There are several ways for deputies to exercise their constitutional powers. They may initiate bills, amend bills, defeat bills and debate bills. In contrast to the executive, deputies seldom introduce legislation. Considering only substantive bills introduced by the executive and passed by the Chamber, and comparing these with all deputy-initiated legislation, it is clear the executive is by far the more active lawmaker.[32] Table 1 illustrates this.

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first includes the incumbent president, the president-elect during an election year, former presidents, select national and regional political leaders and a few labor leaders or wealthy individuals brought in by the family head. The second level includes all those who are requested to advise the family leader. Since 1952 approximately 200 spokesmen for various organizations have made up this second circle. The third level is composed of the national bureaucracy, including the Chamber, the military, the official party, state and local administrators and captive opposition parties such as the PARM and the PPS.

31. Interview with Professor Daniel Cosio Villegas, Dec. 9, 1971.

32. Substantive bills include all bills concerned with finance, education, labor, business, agarian affairs, judicial affairs, national resources, housing, health,

TABLE 1

A COMPARISON OF LEGISLATIVE INITIATING ACTIVITIES BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, SELECTED YEARS, 1940-1970

| Year | Deputy Bills Introduced | Deputy Bills Passed | Substantive Executive Bills Passed |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1940 | 44 | 12 | 48 |
| 1941 | 11 | 8 | 42 |
| 1942 | 17 | 8 | 20 |
| 1946 | 32 | 15 | 58 |
| 1947 | 24 | 11 | 92 |
| 1948 | 46 | 16 | 56 |
| 1952 | 13 | 3 | 37 |
| 1953 | 15 | 4 | 53 |
| 1954 | 9 | 2 | 47 |
| 1961 | 6 | 2 | 32 |
| 1962 | 17 | 7 | 25 |
| 1963 | 17 | 9 | 37 |
| 1964 | 35 | 20 | 24 |
| 1965 | 24 | 11 | 37 |
| 1966 | 46 | 12 | 33 |
| 1970 | 5 | 3 | 23 |
| Totals | 361 | 143 | 664 |

Deputies introduced a total of 361 bills of all types; this is only slightly more than half of the 664 substantive executive bills passed by the Chamber. These 664 bills represent the great majority of substantive bills introduced by the executive, but this total would be increased if other types of executive legislation were included and if substantive executive bills on which the Chamber had not acted were included.[33]

Several propositions related to levels and types of activity were generated prior to the field investigation and are tested here.

Proposition 1. The Chamber of Deputies has become increasingly active since 1940.

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communication and elections. Bills calling for individual pensions were not included as substantive legislation unless they were debated. All bills relating to establishing monuments, creating legal holidays, etc., are ceremonial bills. Any legislation dealing with Chamber regulations, internal operations or external activities is defined as a procedural bill.

33. In 1949-1951, 138 bills passed both houses of Congress. Only 72 of these were substantive bills, and three executive initiatives were still pending. Robert Scott, op. cit., p. 264. It is interesting to note that Kenyan and Tanzanian M.P.'s are even less active than Mexican deputies. Between 1963 and 1968 no private bills were introduced. Furthermore, all government bills introduced during this period passed. These similarities reflect the common impact of executive dominance in otherwise dissimilar political systems. Newell M. Stultz, "The National Assembly in the Politics of Kenya," in Allan Kornberg and Lloyd D. Musolf, Legislatures in Developmental Perspective (Durham: Duke University Press, 1970), p. 373; William Tordoff, "Parliament in Tanzania," Journal or Commonwealth Studies, 3 (July, 1965), p. 89.

Figure 1 does not support the proposition. If party deputy initiatives are controlled, deputy initiated bills decline continuously from the 1940's to 1970. The reason for this is unclear but it is undoubtedly related to increased PRI control and the decline of serious external challenges to the government since 1940.[34] Another possible reason is that the deputies might not be competent to draft legislation themselves, or they lack the information to draft and introduce major legislation. This is a view numerous PRI deputies articulated.[35]

> "It is true that the majority of bills come from the executive, but there is a logical explanation for this. The majority of initiatives deals with public administration; this is an executive responsibility and does not in any way indicate we are ignoring our legislative function."

> "Years ago the Congress might have introduced more bills. Now it no longer drafts the bills because of the fact that the executive has all the technical elements required for drafting legislation. Let us say you want a bill on communications. Who can best do this? The executive and his expert assistants or the deputies? He has the necessary technical staff."

> "If the majority of bills is introduced by the executive it is because in the Chamber we do not have re-election. So, the person who best knows all the problems is the executive. He has the greatest amount of information and the broadest perspective."

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34. For an analysis of increased PRI support from the perspective of election results since 1952, see Barry Ames, "Basis of Support for Mexico's Dominant Party," American Political Science Review, 64 (March, 1970), pp. 153-168.

35. All respondents were assured they would remain anonymous. For a description of the sample, see pp. 13-15.

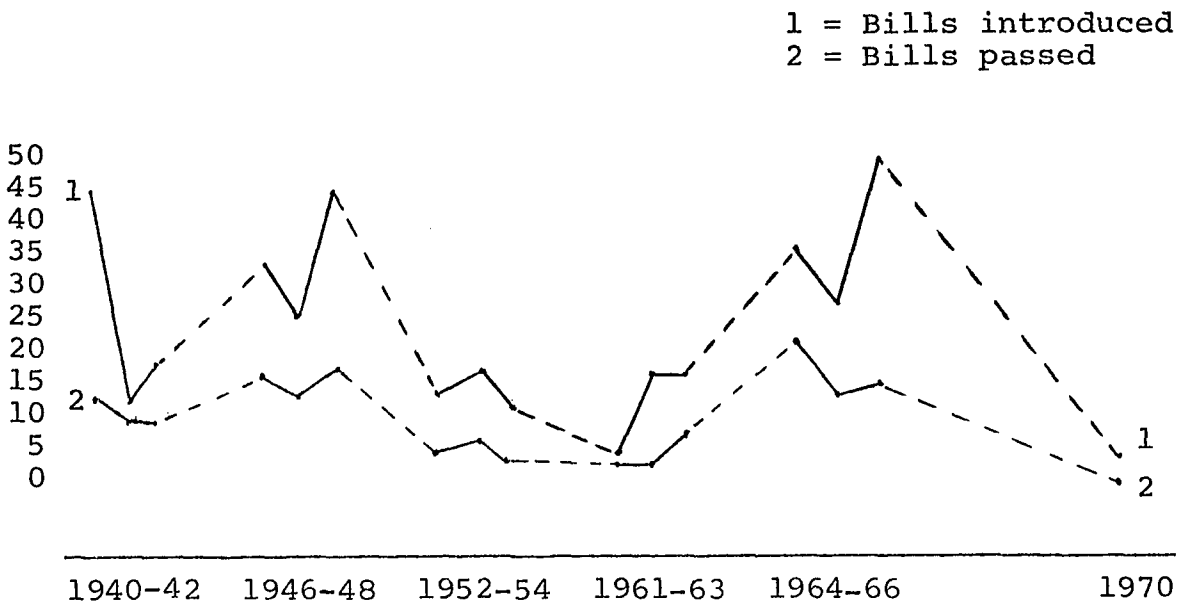


Figure 1. Deputy Initiatives Introduced and Passed, Selected Sessions, 1940-1970.

Clearly, then, deputies are not active lawmakers. Nonetheless they could make a valuable contribution to the lawmaking process through studying and possibly amending the bills introduced by the executive and by themselves. Four propositions examine these possible alternatives.

Proposition 2. If the executive introduces a bill the Chamber will pass it as it is, pass it with amendments, or kill it in committee. The Chamber will not defeat executive legislation on the floor.

Proposition 3. The Chamber amends the majority of executive legislation.

Proposition 4. If PRI deputies amend executive bills, they do so in committee.

Proposition 5. If non-PRI deputies amend executive bills, they do so in committee as well as in debates.

A surface examination of the data verified proposition 2. Not one executive bill was defeated during the years examined. The Chamber did not act on several and it "filed" others. In 1946, a 1941 bill on communication was filed; in 1947 a 1934 bill was filed; the Chamber acted similarly in 1965 on a 1962 bill.[36] As predicted, the executive's relationship with the Chamber does not allow for his bills to be defeated publicly. Yet, the fact that not all executive bills pass suggests that the Chamber does provide some input into lawmaking.[37] This input is probably best measured by the Chamber's amending activities.

The available information on the Chamber suggests that Propositions 3, 4, and 5 should be valid. L. Vincent Padgett states that "legislative committees do hold hearings and collect evidence . . . . In this respect legislative committees carry on useful work in gathering information for the executive and in sounding out reactions to possible

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36. Diario, Nov. 5, 1946, p. 1; Oct. 10, 1947, p. 1, Nov. 9, 1965, p. 1.

37. Without exaggerating the similarities, it should be noted that this situation is not too dissimilar from that in the United States. The American executive also dominates Congress to the extent that "few pieces of major legislation pass that do not have his active support." Malcolm E. Jewell

proposals."[38] Thus, PRI deputies can be expected to amend bills in the secrecy of committee hearings, but they would be unlikely to attempt to do so in public because this might be taken as an indication of a party split and affect their own careers. Opposition deputies, on the other hand, are likely to express their views in committee, and if they do not prevail here, there is no reason for them not to air their objection in debate. Whether in debates or in committees, therefore, deputies can be expected to amend executive legislation.

Responses from PRI deputies appeared to substantiate these propositions. Almost all stated that they performed their legislative duties in committee, and because of this and the need to maintain party unity, the public misinterpreted the lack of opposition in debates.

"Specifically, our function is to analyze the President's initiatives as well as those introduced by deputies, improve them, and always be concerned that the laws passed contribute to our development."

> "Whoever introduces a bill, they are all dealt with in the same way. After the first reading they are sent to committee. All the

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and Samuel P. Patterson, The Legislative Process in the United States (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 308.

38. L. Vincent Padgett, The Mexican Political System (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), p. 159. The second part of this quotation is taken from a footnote on this page.

real legislative work is done there. We have studied some bills for one and one-half months. What returns from committee is the dictamen, not the bill. The changes are made in committee; there they are debated. This is why so many people think all we do is done here and raise our hands in support of all bills."[39]

"You are surprised we do not criticize bill from the rostrum. Well, we do not do it at the rostrum. We discuss them within committees; there we make the corrections we think necessary. We do not make a spectacle. Why not? Because we are one party, and as one party we have a commitment to the party and also because we have another avenue by which to make our views known. We do not criticize and insult the President from the tribune because there is no need to."

"The bills come from the executive, go through the Chamber and reach the committee. There we study the bills. If you see mistakes you propose changes to the president of the committee. Your suggestion is discussed with the other committee members. If they agree with your proposal, the president of the committee speaks with the president of the Gran Comision and explains it to him. Then a meeting of deputies with specialists from the executive branch is called. I personally have spoken with a Secretary and sub-Secretary. They explained their views and convinced me in some areas; in others they accepted our views. With that we returned to the Chamber and prepared the dictamen with the necessary amendments. This produces a rather odd result. Since you can express yourself in committee you do not have to do it in the Chamber. The opposition party does this. So, people ask me why PRI deputies never oppose the President's bills. Well, this is why."[40]

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39. The dictamen contains the committee's modifications, if any, of a bill, and its recommendation to pass or defeat the measure.

40. A similar pattern exists in Tanzania and Kenya. In Tanzania MP's may criticize bills only on practical grounds but not on principle, and they do not publicly oppose decisions reached by the national party leaders. Raymond

PAN deputies had a much different view of committee activity. They stated that they had never been to committee hearings where a bill was discussed. The PAN congressional secretary told this interviewer of numerous attempts to learn where and when meetings would be held. Often, he said, he received notification of meetings after they were held. PRI officials responded to his protests by stating they had no control over mail service. Committee chairmen send PAN deputies copies of the committee action, so that they may sign if they approve, or issue a dissenting vote if they do not. On several occasions, PAN deputies have complained that they could not vote on a bill because they had not even seen it prior to the session when it was to be passed.[41] At times, they are forced to approach the majority leader immediately prior to a debate in order to suggest amendments.[42] Failing in this they resort to debates to win their point. PAN deputies also state that few of the President's bills are amended, and those amendments that are made are only stylistic. Typical of the PAN's view is this response.

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F. Hopkins, "The Role of the M.P. in Tanzania," APSR, 64 (Sept., 1969), pp. 768-769. Debates do not result in major policy changes in Kenya although occasionally they may lead to minor modifications. Stultz, op. cit., p. 326.

41. Diario, Dec. 23, 1947; Oct. 27, 1963.

42. This occurred on Dec. 17, 1971. A PAN respondent stated that he asked the majority leader to consider an amendment. The respondent said he was forced to do this because he had been unable to discuss the bill with PRI deputies in a normal fashion.

> "The committees have a real role in that they receive from the Chamber the responsibility to discuss the contents of initiatives and theoretically they should modify them according to the public's feelings. Of course, if opposition members do not participate in them (committees), and if amendments are only stylistic, well . . . (trails off, smiling)."

PPS deputies do participate in committees but they state their views are seldom accepted. They therefore attempt to amend bills in debates. Like PAN deputies, they contend that the few amendments which executive bills undergo are stylistic.

The data in Table 2 permit testing these three propositions.

Proposition 3. The Chamber amends the majority of executive legislation. The data do not support this proposition. Overall, approximately 60 percent of substantive bills initiated by the President passed without <u>any</u> debate. Since 1952, 42 percent of these bills have passed without any discussion. Only when party deputies entered the Chamber in 1964 was the majority of bills discussed.

Proposition 4. If PRI deputies amend executive bills, they do so in committee. The data suggest this proposition has some validity. More bills were amended in committee than in debate prior to 1964. However, since so few bills are amended this finding is relatively insignificant.

Proposition 5. If non-PRI deputies amend executive bills, they do so in committee as well as in debates. Again,

TABLE 2

SUBSTANTIVE INITIATED BILLS DEBATED AND AMENDED[a] BY THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES SELECTED SESSIONS, 1940-1970

| Years | Bills Passed No Debate[c] | Bills Debated and Passed | Bills Amended in Committee[b] | Bills Amended in Debate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1940-42 | 100 | 4 | 3 | 0 |
| 1946-48 | 163 | 53 | 4 | 4 |
| 1952-54 | 75 | 62 | 18 | 13 |
| 1961-64 | 62 | 32 | 8 | 6 |
| 1964-67 | 46 | 48 | 18 | 17 |
| 1970 | 9 | 14 | 2 | 0 |
| Total | 455 (60%) | 213 (28%) | 53 | 40 (12%)[d] |

a. Amendments are defined as any change in the legislation, substantive or stylistic.

b. Amendments in committee were determined by examining the committee's report on its action. Unless the report explicitly stated that a bill had been amended, it was coded as not having been amended.

c. Debate is defined as any discussion on the substance of a bill.

d. Combined total of all bills amended.

because so few bills are amended the utility of this proposition is minimal. As is discussed in Chapter 4, however, minority party deputies do use the debates to attempt to amend legislation, but they are unsuccessful because of the PRI's control of the Chamber. Thus, even though the data presented here do not validate the proposition, it is correct to conclude that minority party deputies attempt to use debates and committees to affect changes in legislation.

The principle conclusion suggested by these findings in combination with the data presented in Table 1 is that the Chamber of Deputies plays a relatively insignificant role in the legislative process. It neither initiates nor amends much legislation. Moreover, it has only recently begun to debate the majority of the bills it passes.[43]

Several factors contribute to this situation. The first, the historical relationship between the Chamber and the executive, has already been discussed. Another is that bills are submitted to the Chamber after they have been discussed with concerned groups outside the Chamber. A third factor is that it is politically unwise to do anything but support the executive and his proposals. Fourth, the deputies may not feel competent to deal with major legislative

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43. Pablo Gonzalez Casanova points out that, as expected, there is almost no opposition in voting either. Gonzalez Casanova, op. cit., Table 4, p. 173.

issues. A fifth possible reason might be the nature of the legislation passed.

There is evidence to the effect that legislation is drafted and debated outside of the Chamber and only then is it submitted to the Chamber. One scholar states that "Decisions are reached, and legislative initiatives are hammered out before Congress is consulted."[44] Robert Shafer's finding that business groups deal with the executive rather than with the legislature supports this view.[45] Of over 20 respondents asked, none stated that there was any systematic contact between the executive or his assistants and the Chamber. Deputies learn the contents of bills so that they will be prepared to defend them in debate, but they do not have much input into the formulation of the measures.[46] A PRI deputy described this process. "If the President is going to present a law, before he does he engages in extra-chamber consultations. This is done without publicity. He then decides whether to accept the view given him. So, when the law comes to the Chamber the concerned committees are already familiar with it."

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44. Padgett, op. cit., p. 159.

45. Shafer, unpublished manuscript on business organization in Mexico.

46. Parliament in Tanzania follows a similar pattern. Tordoff, op. cit., p. 92.

Professor Cosio Villegas indicated that deputies feel it is in their best interest to support any and everything the government leaders do. A PRI deputy voiced almost this exact view.

> "I will say that there is a disposition to disproportionate submission to the executive on the part of the legislature. This is in practice, not in theory, and that is what you are asking, right? This has been bad. Deputies seem not to have heard the President's request for honest constructive criticism. Because of their political plans they are overly submissive."

This statement is particularly significant because it was made by a deputy serving at least a second term after an absence of several years, and who believes that the Chamber has not changed substantially since his prior service.

As shown on page 45, several respondents suggested that they were not competent to deal with major legislative issues. This lack of competence reflects on the deputies as a group, not as individuals. In other words, the deputies do not have the background, information or institutional resources to deal with major legislation, despite their own individual abilities and training.[47]

The fifth factor possibly affecting the Chamber's legislative activity might be the nature of the legislation passed. Although the legislation is of national importance,

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47. Business groups share this low evaluation of the Chamber's capacity. Shafer, business organizations, op. cit.

it might well be that most of it falls within the bounds of long existing consensus.[48] However, when major issues arise the Chamber becomes active and its role is transformed into a more significant one. In 1942, the Chamber held prolonged debates on whether or not to reinstate the death penalty; PRI deputies were divided on the issue and finally voted 76-25 not to reinstate the penalty.[49] In 1962, the Chamber debated the Law of the Rights of Authors for six sessions and PRI deputies made numerous amendments to it during debate as well as in committee. The Senate returned this bill in 1963 because it refused several of the changes made by the deputies. The deputies unanimously refused to accept the Senate version and insisted on "maintaining the terms of our original dictamen."[50] In 1970 the legislature proceeded similarly with the Agrarian Reform bill which was amended over 100 times in debate and committee. As in the above cases, PRI deputies as well as PAN and PPS members presented their views in public debate.[51]

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48. Frank Brandenburg discusses this kind of elite consensus on certain issues. Chapter 1, op. cit.; pp. 1-18, especially pp. 7-18.

49. Diario, Nov. 24, 1962, p. 1.

50. Diario, Oct. 18, 23, 25, 30, Nov. 16, 1962, and Oct. 8, 1963, p. 1.

51. Professor Cosio Villegas pointed to the Chamber's actions on this bill as an indication of increasing legislative input.

Without overemphasizing this aspect of Chamber activity, it does seem necessary to underscore its potential significance. Perhaps on these occasions neither the President nor his associates had taken a definite stand on the issues, although agreeing in general on the desirability of the legislation. It is also possible that these debates were for public consumption. Although such a possibility would not be disregarded by Mexican knowledgeables, it is not convincing to this researcher. A third view is that there were powerful interests represented in the Chamber that could not be totally controlled. After failing to make their case in committee they did so in debates. Thus, after presenting their amendments, they supported the final Chamber decision and voted in support of whatever version the Chamber accepted. A fourth possibility is that committees are not competent to cope with major issues, and it is both easier and politically more convenient to work out agreements in public. These last two interpretations are supported by the fact that PRI deputies do not attack each other in debates, and following debate vote according to majority wishes. All but the second interpretation support the proposition that the Chamber does make substantive contributions to lawmaking. Although few in number, these are important and must be kept in mind when evaluating the Chamber.

Another factor that would seem to have a major impact on the low level of bills amended is the nature of

minority party participation in the formal lawmaking process. The PRI systematically excludes the PAN from participating in committee deliberations. The PRI justifies this on political grounds.

> "No, they (PAN deputies) do not participate, and why should they? If they came to the sessions with the idea of contributing positively, that would be all right. If they came to the sessions with their present attitudes, they would come like hunters on the prowl, and as long as they have that attitude they are not going to participate. Here is what would happen if they did. A PRI deputy would voice a criticism of a bill that a PAN member also held but had not raised. If the committee did not accept it, the PRI man would drop it and not speak out in debate. At that point, however, the PAN man would go to the rostrum, voice his view and add this criticism is shared by Fulano de Tal of the PRI, but he does not have the courage to come up here and speak out. Also, if the PAN were to participate in committee hearings, we would know their views and be prepared for them in the debates. They do not want that."[52]

The PRI also contends the PAN is largely to blame because of its lack of interest in Chamber affairs. "There were no PAN members present when we discussed the water bill. They were not present because at no time did a PAN member come to a member of the committee to give his point of view or to ask to participate. They could have done this at any time."

## Deputy Initiatives

Although it has long been known that the Chamber does not regularly oppose executive legislation, scholars

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52. Two high ranking deputies voiced this view.

have not systematically examined the nature and extent of initiatives introduced by deputies. Given the relationship between the executive and the Congress, however, certain patterns should characterize this aspect of Chamber activity.

Proposition 6. PRI deputies introduce much more legislation concerned with Chamber procedures or symbolic issues than with substantive issues.

The data of Table 3 indicate proposition 6 is invalid. PRI deputies introduced more substantive legislation than ceremonial and procedural legislation combined in every Congress examined since 1940. The reasons for this would seem to be the same as those explaining deputy action on the executive legislation cited above. In view of the low success ratios of substantive bills compared with the high ratios of procedural and ceremonial bills, it seems reasonable to argue that deputies do articulate their views without prior approval of the executive. Deputies do this, it would appear, as representatives of major groups or interests that feel it necessary to emphasize publicly their position so as to spur some kind of action from the executive either through the Chamber or through administrative channels. Evidence supporting this view can be found in 1953 when labor deputies protested that there had been no committee action on the bills they had introduced, and they asked that these bills be reported to the floor so action could be taken.[53]

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53. Diario, Dec. 29, 1953, pp. 103-104.

TABLE 3

TYPES OF LEGISLATION INTRODUCED BY PRI DEPUTIES, SELECTED SESSIONS, 1940-1970

| | Substantive Bills | | | Procedural Bills | | | Ceremonial Bills | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Introduced | Passed | | Introduced | Passed | | Introduced | Passed | |
| 1940-42 | 62 | 19 | 31% | 5 | 5 | 100% | 5 | 4 | 80% |
| 1946-48 | 45 | 16 | 36% | 22 | 16 | 73% | 8 | 8 | 100% |
| 1952-54 | 13 | 1 | 8% | 5 | 5 | 100% | 6 | 3 | 50% |
| 1961-63 | 18 | 11 | 61% | 5 | 2 | 40% | 5 | 5 | 100% |
| 1964-66 | 24 | 11 | 46% | 15 | 13 | 87% | 4 | 3 | 75% |
| 1970 | 3 | 3 | 100% | 0 | 0 | - | 0 | 0 | - |
| Totals | 162<br>+3 | 58<br>+3 | 36.4% | 52<br>+0 | 41<br>+0 | 80% | 28<br>+0 | 23<br>+0 | 81% |

In this respect it is also noteworthy that few bills are introduced by individual deputies; rather, numerous deputies endorse bills and occasionally entire PRI sectors do.[54]

Other seemingly possible reasons for why deputies initiate substantive legislation can be disregarded. It is unlikely that the executives invite deputies to introduce bills to improve existing programs or to suggest new ones since this same end could be achieved through administrative channels. However, utilizing the Chamber in this way would serve to increase the status of deputies and the institution. Aside from serving as spokesmen for major interests groups, there is no evidence that deputies introduce legislation in behalf of their district. Not one respondent indicated that his constituents had contacted him on how he should vote on issues or what kinds of bills he should introduce. Finally, given the high level of PRI control in and out of the Chamber, it is most unlikely that individual deputies introduce legislation over the objections of party leaders.

It seems reasonable to conclude, then, that deputies make important, albeit limited, contributions to lawmaking.

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54. The PRI is organized into three sectors--Farm, Labor and Popular. These sectors are the principle channels of interest articulation within the party, and through these sectors member groups also have the potential to make their views known to the executive. President Cardenas structured the Partido Revolucionario Mexicano, the PRI's predecessor, along these lines to incorporate those groups that supported him into one party. Originally, the military was a fourth sector within the PRM but when President Avila Camacho restructured the party and created the PRI he excluded the

Whether they introduce legislation to emphasize certain points of view, or whether they are allowed to do so, so as to aid the executive can not be ascertained. What should be understood is that deputies introduce substantive legislation on a regular basis and some of this passes regularly. As important as the amount of legislation introduced, is the pattern of activity since 1940 (Fig. 2).

PRI deputies introduced significantly more substantive legislation in the 1940's than they have since. Not even the presence of party deputies has spurred them to greater activity. This supports the hypothesis suggested as to why deputies initiate legislation, but it also requires modifying the possible explanation.

In the 1940's substantial opposition to the ruling elite emerged. The change in national policy following President Cardenas' term probably contributed to this. The presidential election of 1940 was bitterly contested and chamber activity reflected this. In 1940-42 supporters of President Avila Camacho dominated the Chamber but were challenged by deputies committed to the defeated challenger Juan A. Almazan.[55] As the years progressed, the ruling elite

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military from official participation within the party. Scott, Mexican Government, op. cit., pp. 115-144. For examples of sector initiated legislation, see Diario, Dec. 15, 1970, p. 1; Sept. 24, 1965, p. 1.

55. For an example of the political competition that existed between these groups, see the Diario, Oct. 3, 1941, pp. 21-23.

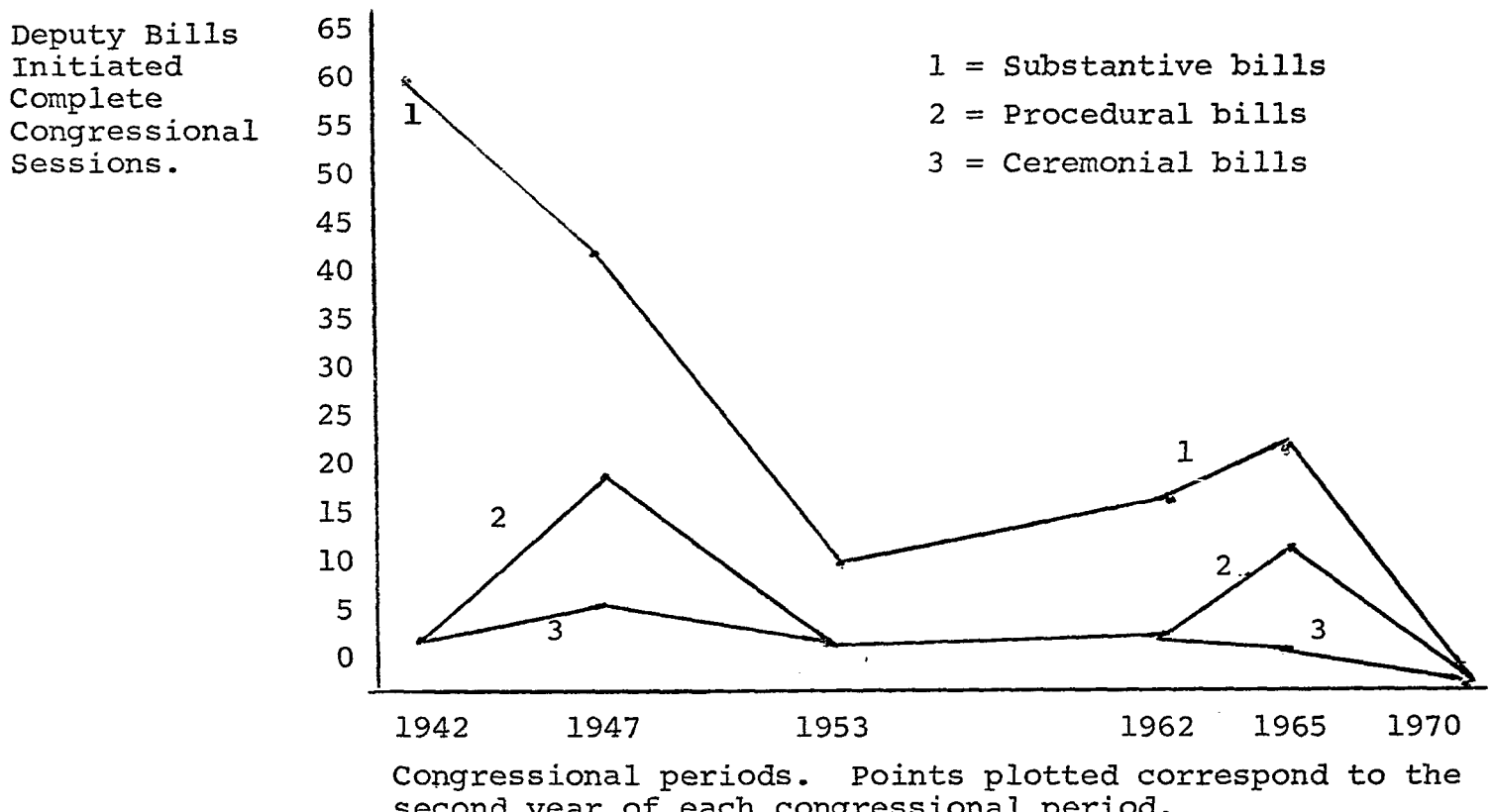


Figure 2. PRI Deputy Initiated Legislation: Types and Trends.

cooped or eliminated its opposition, and this resulted in decreasing independence in the Chamber. In the 1960's, deputies began to introduce more substantive legislation, possibly as a result of the increasing complexity of the Mexican political system. The ruling elite headed by Lopez Mateos seemed to recognize the need to allow decisions to be made at various levels of government, and they also encouraged the Chamber to become more active.[56] Thus some legislative input was and is welcomed.[57]

The improved success of deputy initiatives lends weight to this interpretation. During the early 1940's and early 50's the success ratio of deputy substantive deputy bills was .25. In the 1960's this has more than doubled, averaging .635. Thus it does appear that in the 1940's deputies initiated legislation without prior consultation and because of policy disagreements. In the 1960's their success ratio improves markedly, suggesting either more prior consultations or a greater awareness of the kind of legislation acceptable to the regime combined with a greater willingness on the part of the regime to have deputies initiate legislation.

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56. Scott, op. cit., p. 306.

57. One deputy who has served in the Chamber under several presidents showed this researcher several bills he had introduced. In discussing them it became evident that he was quite proud of his effort.

The few procedural bills introduced are evidence of the impact of high turnover in the Chamber. PRI deputies usually serve only one term and, consequently, they have little stake in the institution. They, therefore, are unconcerned with procedural modifications, moreover, because of their party's control of the institution procedural factors are not obstacles to achieving their ends.

Because of their tenuous position in national affairs, it is hypothesized that opposition deputies introduce substantive legislation rather than procedural bills because the Chamber provides the only opportunity they have to air their views in an unobstructed fashion.[58]

Table 4 verifies this. Minor party deputies dedicate their efforts to substantive legislation. Despite these efforts, no minor party bills passed until 1964 when party deputies entered the Chamber. This change would seem to be a function of the increased openness of the government that began under Lopez Mateos. Several PAN deputies and one PRI deputy substantiated this. They stated that the PAN and PRI maintained cordial relations during the regimes of Lopez Mateos and Diaz Ordaz until the PAN refused to support the President's actions in the 1968 student strike.

Also noteworthy is the difference in levels of activity between the PAN and PPS. Although this can be

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58. Chapters 3 and 4 discuss the obstacles PAN deputies face in their political activities.

TABLE 4

TYPES OF LEGISLATION INTRODUCED BY NON-PRI DEPUTIES, 1940-1970

| | Substantive | | | | Procedural and Ceremonial | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Introduced | Passed | Defeated | No Action | Introduced | Passed | Defeated | No Action |
| | | | | PAN Legislation | | | | |
| 1946-48 | 25 | 0 | 9 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1952-54 | 10 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1961-63 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 1964-66 | 37 | 16 | 3 | 18 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| 1970 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 79 | 16 | 22 | 41 | 10 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| | | | | PPS Legislation | | | | |
| 1961-63 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1964-66 | 13 | 0 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| 1970 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 19 | 0 | 5 | 14 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 |

partially explained as a function of numbers, the PAN has had 20 deputies in the Chamber since 1964 and the PPS only 10. It also reflects the differences in the relationship each party has with the government. The PAN is the principle opposition, while the PPS is more a supporter than an opponent of the ruling elite. It "has moved so close to the center that many consider it to be an adjunct of the PRI."[59] This relationship is so close that the government awarded the PPS 10 deputies in 1964, even though their vote total did not warrant this.[60] The PPS, therefore, has little need to introduce its own program but the PAN has no alternative but to do so. Both parties protest, nonetheless, that the Chamber refuses to act on their bill.[61] Table 4 indicates the validity of these complaints. More PPS and PAN bills are left in committee than are defeated on the floor.

As implied above, PRI deputies were hypothesized to have introduced different kinds of legislation than non-PRI deputies. Testing this proposition for those Congresses in which party deputies were present yields a Q of -.59. This suggests a relatively strong relationship between party

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59. Kenneth F. Johnson, op. cit., p. 5.

60. Paul Kelso, op. cit.

61. Diario, Nov. 11, 1947, p. 1; Dec. 7, 1961, p. 1; Dec. 21, 1962, p. 1; Dec. 28, 1963, p. 1; Oct. 13, 1970, p. 1.

identification and types of bills introduced.[62] This relationship indicates that non-PRI deputies regularly introduce substantive legislation but that PRI deputies are much less likely to do so. Nonetheless, PRI deputies do introduce substantive legislation, but as explained earlier, they do so for different reasons than opposition deputies.

## Conclusions

Scholars have long known that the Chamber of Deputies is subservient to the executive in Mexico. Other aspects of this relationship were unclear, and it was possible that the Chamber might make significant contributions to lawmaking. In other words, it was felt that the Chamber might initiate legislation and/or amend executive initiatives and thus play an important part in the legislative process. This chapter examined these possibilities. Quantitatively, the Chamber of Deputies has been less active recently than it was in the 1940's. Deputies introduce fewer legislative proposals today than they did earlier, but they do amend more executive legislation now than they did

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62.

| Party Affiliation | Types of bills introduced: Substantive | Other | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|
| PRI | 117 | 60 | 177 |
| Non-PRI | 98 | 13 | 111 |
| Totals | 215 | 73 | 288 |

Q = -.59

For a discussion of this statistic and its applications, see Hubert M. Blalock, Social Statistics (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1960), pp. 231-232.

before. Their levels of activity in both areas are low, however, and it can safely be said that only the introduction of party deputies has given new life to the Chamber.

Although the Chamber does not regularly oppose the executive, it appears reasonable to suggest that it does serve an important if limited function in the legislative process. Deputies in recent sessions have studied routine Presidential initiatives and have amended a significant number of them. More importantly, the Chamber has studied, debated and amended major pieces of legislation, and has also introduced significant bills of its own. The importance of these activities should not be exaggerated nor should it be disregarded.

The executive consults with concerned groups outside Congress and considers their views when drafting his legislation. He then sends the legislation to the Chamber and there it is reviewed once more. Although the deputies do not amend these bills without executive approval, the point is that they do, in most cases at least, examine the legislation and often amend it. Many times the amendments are only stylistic. On other occasions they are substantive and significant as in the case of the agrarian reform bill. Furthermore, deputies do introduce substantive legislation that is of national import. Given the relationship between the President and the Chamber and the limitations of the institution, especially the non-re-election of deputies, these

contributions are significant and indicate that the Chamber contributes more to the legislative process than originally believed.

## CHAPTER 3

## THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES AND SYSTEM COMMUNICATIONS

The communication function, that is the transmission and exchange of information, is perhaps the function most vital to the development and continued existence of a political system. In the broadest sense, communication "is the web of human existence,"[1] It is central to all aspects of societal activities, and its importance to politics is such that Karl Deutsch has proposed reconceptualizing the discipline entirely in terms of communication.[2] Others have analyzed the import of communication patterns and systems on political development and politics in general.[3] Thus, communication activities are intrinsic to all political activities. Here, the role of deputies as communicators is analyzed. Stated in other terms, the analysis here seeks to identify the nature and amount of deputy-constituent communication and assess its importance to system maintenance.

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1. Lucian W. Pye, "Introduction" in Lucian W. Pye, ed., Communications and Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 4.

2. Karl W. Deutsch, The Nerves of Government (New York: The Free Press, 1966).

3. Pye, "Introduction," op. cit.

Traditionally, legislative studies have analyzed two types of communication activities: those within the Chamber and those between the Chamber and outsiders, such as the executive, interest groups, and constituents.[4] Communications within a legislature can be highly significant. For example, control of information systems is a major explanatory factor of leadership in the American Congress.[5] However, external variables explain legislative behavior almost totally in Mexico and understanding the internal communication patterns adds little to the understanding of the institution and its relationship to the polity.[6]

## Deputies as Political Communicators

One of the functions for which deputies in developing countries are particularly well suited is as a

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4. For an excellent bibliography of research endeavors in both areas, see Norman Meller, "Legislative Behavior Research," in Michael Haas and Henry S. Kariel, eds., Approaches to the Study of Political Science (Scranton: Chandler Publishing Co., 1970), pp. 239-266. For a summary of research findings, see Malcolm E. Jewell and Samuel P. Patterson, The Legislative Process in the United States (New York: Random House, 1966).

5. Randall Ripley, Party Leaders in the House of Representatives (Washington, D. C.: The Brookings Institution, 1967), pp. 66-72.

6. Chapter 2 explains the relationship between the Chamber and external variables. For a discussion of internal and external variables and their potential impact on legislative behavior, see Allan Kornberg, Canadian Legislative Behavior: A Study of the 25th Parliament (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), pp. 7-12; also Meller, op. cit.

communication link between the government and the people. They "can inform the authorities of public demands and of reactions to earlier outputs, and they can inform the public of the decisions of the authorities."[7] Although in some nations they do not carry out this function, in others it is their primary activity. In Kenya, MPs are not communicators.[8] In Tanzania, ". . . the MP who is not a member of government is above all else a communication link, a popularizer and legitimizer for the Party and the Government. He is not a lawmaker."[9] The Mexican deputy, also not primarily a lawmaker, has the same theoretical potential as his Tanzanian counterpart as a communicator.

As a party member, the deputy could be asked to convey information to his district or to specific groups throughout the nation; he could also be instructed to gather information from various groups and relay this to government leaders. In this capacity the deputy serves primarily as a conduit for the government or as a pipeline for public reaction to government programs.[10] A second possibility is that

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7. Newell M. Stultz, "The National Assembly in the Politics of Kenya," in Allan Kornberg and Lloyd D. Musolf, Legislatures in Developmental Perspective (Durham: Duke University Press, 1970), p. 321.

8. Stultz, op. cit., p. 324.

9. Raymond F. Hopkins, "The Role of the M.P. in Tanzania," APSR, 64 (Sept., 1969), p. 770.

10. The later type of information has been classified as feedback. See David Easton, "An Approach to the Analysis

groups or individuals would utilize a deputy as an interest articulator. This differs from the former pattern in that citizens rather than government officials initiate the communication cycle; it is similar in that the deputy is a channel through which information is exchanged between the government and the public. This type of communication may well be the most significant because it not only provides a feedback function, but it also allows the public an opportunity to articulate its demands and develop a sense of efficacy in dealing with the government. Such an experience could lead to generating a "reserve of support" which is of great importance to the continued existence of a political system.[11] Each of these types of information exchange is important to the system, and here the extent to which deputies are active in these areas will be discussed.

## Communications in the Pre-Election Period

A deputy's career can be separated into two parts--the pre-election period and the post-election period. Each provides the deputy with the opportunity to engage in communication activities, and the manner in which deputies behave

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of Political Systems," World Politics, 9, (April, 1957), p. 384.

11. The importance of non-specific support, i.e., support unrelated to specific system outputs, is discussed by David Easton, "An Approach," op. cit., pp. 394-400.

during each will suggest their contribution to system communications.

Elections in Mexico serve many of the same purposes as they do in the United States. They reinforce party identification, educate the public, activate party members and help to recruit party members.[12] The major difference is that in the United States the public can use elections to oust officials, and incumbents must keep this in mind in performing their duties.[13] In Mexico, elections provide no such opportunity.

The PRI is triumphant in any election the Ruling Elite deems important whether or not it has a majority of votes. Because of the Ruling Elite's control of the political process, one of the principle characteristics of elections in Mexico is the cry of fraud.[14] Apparently, the

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12. Karl Schmidt, "Congressional Campaigning in Mexico: A View from the Provinces," Journal of Inter-American Studies 11 (Jan., 1969), p. 96.

13. On the local level there is reason to doubt the importance of electoral sanctions as a means by which the public controls its officials. See Kenneth Prewitt, "Political Ambitions, Volunteerism, and Electoral Accountability," American Political Science Review, 64 (March, 1970), pp. 5-17.

14. The following sources contain discussions of electoral fraud. Kenneth F. Johnson, Mexican Democracy: A Critical View (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971), pp. 134-140; Frank Brandenburg, The Making of Modern Mexico (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), pp. 155-156; Excelsior, Sept. 19, 1971, p. 4; Sept. 21, 1971, p. 19; Latin American Digest, 6 (Oct., 1971), p. 2. Surprisingly, one respondent, a state party leader, admitted the PRI was guilty of such activities.

opposition is allowed to win occasionally, either because the contest is unimportant, or because imposing the PRI candidate will cause excessive conflict, or because opposition party victories enhance the democratic reputation the ruling elite seeks to maintain. In Yucatan, for example, the PRI manipulated the 1967 Congressional election to insure that a PPS candidate could be elected as a minority party deputy.[15]

It seems, then, that the primary function of Mexican elections is to provide the government with a continuous opportunity to present its program to the people and to instill a sense of participation in them. L. Vincent Padgett feels they are useful in mustering large audiences, propagating the gospel of the regime, and stirring a sense of participation in the masses.[16] Karl Schmidt arrives at similar conclusions.

> "The primary function of congressional campaigning in Mexico is nation-building . . . . It is significant to note that the staggered nature of elections in the country gives a regular and continuing sense of participation in the political process to the masses who only marginally are aware of the larger developments of Mexican national life. Elections are a part of the educational process in the long and arduous task of nation-building, of turning illiterate campesinos, Indians, and an uneducated and culturally backward people into Mexican citizens. Election campaigns constitute

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15. Schmidt, op. cit., p. 109.

16. L. Vincent Padgett, The Mexican Political System (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966), pp. 85-86.

> one method of communication, instruction and indoctrination . . . ."[17]

Certain propositions can be tested to determine if deputies perform as these statements suggest.

Proposition 1. During campaigns deputies travel throughout their districts visiting major cities, small towns and villages.[18]

Deputies were asked to describe their campaign. They were not asked how extensively they had travelled or to identify the groups with whom they met. Eighteen PRI respondents stated, and many did so with considerable pride, that they visited their entire district. The following responses are typical.

> "During my campaign I travelled the entire district. There are 253 communities in my district and I did not ignore even one rancheria. If there were three houses there, I visited them and talked to the people."[19]

> "During my campaign I had direct contact with my district. I visited the entire district ten times. This is something all of us candidates did. I represent the ___ district. It has two zones, a residential (upper class) one and a proletarian one. (The respondent then recited a long list of names.) As you can see, I know the name of every neighborhood in my district."

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17. Schmidt, op. cit., p. 97.

18. It is important to recall that the data presented here are from interviews with current deputies only.

19. A rancheria is a very small rural population center.

> "My district has ten major towns, and I visited them and the rest of my district. Sometimes the people would accuse me of coming around only when there was an election. I responded that at least I came that once which was more than the PAN candidates did."

The remaining seven PRI deputies also described their campaigns as extensive but did not go into details.

PAN and PPS deputies described their campaigns similarly. Only one PAN deputy said he limited himself to the major towns in his district, and the remainder, eleven, stated they tried to visit every city and small town. In combination, these responses indicate Proposition 1 is valid, and this conclusion is further supported by Karl Schmidt's description of campaigning in Yucatan in 1967.[20]

The nature of the campaign is as significant as its extent. Of particular interest are the audiences with whom deputies meet and the subjects they discuss. Propositions 2 and 3 consider these aspects of the campaign.

Proposition 2. Speeches by PRI deputies emphasize national government programs and/or past governmental achievements.

Proposition 2A. Non-PRI deputies attack government performance and emphasize their party's platform in their speeches.

These propositions reflect the political situation in Mexico. PRI candidates are chosen by the party and

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20. Schmidt, op. cit., p. 102.

therefore can be expected to emphasize national achievements and programs rather than stress local problems as they might if they were selected by the citizens in their district. Also, emphasis on local and regional issues could generate regional conflict and lead to airing publicly the competition for resources and programs that must characterize the party's and government's internal affairs. PAN candidates, on the other hand, can be expected to use the campaign to attack the PRI because this is one of the few opportunities they have to present their views to large audiences. Moreover, it is in the best tradition of politics for the "outs" to criticize the performance of the "ins."

PRI deputies were asked to describe what they spoke about during their campaigns. They had two basic responses: local problems primarily, or local problems and general governmental programs and achievements. Fifteen deputies stated that their objective during their campaign was to become acquainted with the problems of the district and most agreed that they did this by listening rather than by talking. For example: "My district is basically a campesino district. I focused on their problems. I spoke first, then they spoke, and then I answered." Another deputy said: "Rather than talk to them I preferred to listen to them, to see how I should act. I tried to orient them on what a deputy is; they really do not understand." A third respondent stated:

> "The issues you deal with and those that are of greatest concern are roads, schools, hospitals, land holding problems, electrification, potable water and, above all and most serious, is the need for private and official credit to promote productive activity in areas where a potential exists undeveloped because of a lack of money."

Five PRI representatives indicated they emphasized both party activities and local problems.

> "When I spoke to them the first item I emphasized was the party's objectives but I listened more than I spoke. They presented their problems to me--water shortages, the lack of schools and roads. You have to conduct this kind of campaign because you have to keep the party continuously informed of your activities."

> "The major themes of my speeches sought to inculcate a spirit of improvement among the people, explain the postulates of the party, since they coincided with President's campaign, and make known Luis Echeverria Alvarez's thoughts. This was in rural areas. In small towns we discussed the best ways to develop the region and their problems."

These responses indicate Proposition 2 is invalid. The great majority of deputies stated that they emphasize local problems rather than general national themes in their campaigns. These responses suggest that the ruling elite recognizes the need to provide channels of articulation for the general public and that continued support for the government is dependent on providing needed services to the people. The deputies, therefore, are used to establishing communications with the public and learn the specific needs of each area.[21]

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21. Several deputies stated that the PRI made them keep a daily record of their campaign which included a list

These findings appear to conflict with the conclusions of Karl Schmidt. He states that in Yucatan Congressional campaigning "was designed more to assert the relevance of the doctrines and principles of one or another of the parties to modern Mexico than it was to raise and debate concrete issues and problems of the state of Yucatan."[22]

Reconciling these differences is difficult. Perhaps they result from the different research techniques. Professor Schmidt observed a campaign; the data here are from descriptions of the campaign by respondents. As an outside observer, Schmidt may have been most impressed by public activities. The deputies, however, may consider those secondary and emphasize their private meetings, meetings which outside observers do not attend. Whatever the reason, PRI deputies in Mexico are concerned with local problems, and they use their campaign to establish contact with their district and to identify the major problems affecting their constituents.

PAN deputies emphasized three themes in their campaign speeches. Four spoke on specific national issues or district problems; three identified politicization and the need to activate the public as their major theme; and four

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of all identified needs of the districts. Apparently, these records are used to help determine how resources will be allocated throughout the nation.

22. Schmidt, op. cit., p. 103.

emphasized party doctrine, attacks on the government, or general themes such as liberty and legal reforms.

Again, the data do not support the original proposition. PAN deputies did not use their campaigns primarily to attack the PRI nor were they primarily concerned with recruiting new members to their party through preaching the party doctrines. Instead, they focused on local issues and problems, on specific national issues such as the government's response to the 1968 student strike, and on educating the public. Only one stated that he emphasized party doctrine, and only four emphasized general criticisms of governmental performance.

Proposition 3. PRI deputies address two types of audiences during their campaign: associational interest groups in private meetings, and non-associational interest groups and unorganized citizens in mass rallies.

Proposition 3A. Non-PRI deputies meet with unorganized citizens in mass rallies.

The principle characteristics of associational interest groups is the "explicit representation of the interests of a particular group, a full time professional staff, and orderly procedures for the formulation of interests and demands." They include trade unions, business groups, ethnic associations and civic groups. Non-associational interest groups include "ethnic, regional, status and class groups which articulate their interests intermittently

through individuals, cliques, family, and religious heads, and the like."[23]

The difference in audiences is expected because of the national political situation. The PRI is part of the government, albeit unofficially, and thus almost all interest groups in the nation are anxious to maintain good relationships with it. Many of these groups are also components of the party sectors and, therefore, it is their duty to welcome party candidates. For groups not in the party, welcoming candidates offer them the opportunity to present their views and establish a closer relationship with the PRI.[24]

Twelve PRI deputies identified the audiences to whom they spoke. Nine stated that much of their campaigning involved house calls or meetings with small neighborhood groups, i.e., non-associational interest groups. Several of the nine combined house calls with meetings with associational interest groups such as Chamber of Commerce or local party sector groups. The three remaining respondents indicated they utilized mass rallies and meetings with party and community leaders primarily.

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23. Gabriel Almond and J. Bingham Powell, Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1966), pp. 76-78.

24. For a discussion of PRI organization and membership, see Robert E. Scott, Mexican Government in Transition, revised edition (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964), pp. 145-176.

These responses suggest that Proposition 3 is correct but must be expanded to include personal contact. In other words, congressional candidates employ a wide range of methods to meet their constituents and air their message. The significant finding is that mass rallies were not heavily relied upon while personal and small group contacts were.[25] Proposition 3A must also be expanded. Like PRI deputies, PAN and PPS candidates met with small groups and emphasized personal contact. This emphasis on personal contact might reflect the importance of personalismo in Mexican politics.

During the campaign, therefore, deputies are active as communicators. They travel throughout the nation and deliver the government's message to some of the more isolated villages of the republic. They also gather information from their constituents which they can feed back to government decision makers. Unexpectedly, candidates appear to be primarily concerned with the latter. The degree to which this concern continues in the post-election period and to which the feedback activity is actually realized will now be discussed.

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25. During the 1967 Congressional campaign in Yucatan, candidates also did not employ mass rallies to any great extent. Schmidt, op. cit., p. 102.

Communications in the Post-Election Period

Deputies can carry out two kinds of communication activities once they have begun their terms. As lawmakers, they might possibly articulate the demands of their constituencies, of the interest groups of which they are members, or of major national interest groups in general. As indicated in Chapter 2, however, deputies exercise little discretion in the lawmaking process, and, therefore, it can be concluded that they do not systematically represent their constituencies or other groups in the Chamber.[26] Deputies might also represent their districts in dealings with the bureaucracy which result from the demands constituents articulate during the campaign and in subsequent contacts. There has been no investigation of the role deputies play in this area, and it is this activity that will be described here. Before beginning, however, it is necessary to explain a methodological problem related to this section.

The original hypotheses of this research predicted that deputies would maintain close contact with their districts and represent their views when drafting legislation. Although it was felt that deputies might engage in some constituency service, the degree to which they do so was unanticipated. The findings presented here, therefore, are only descriptive. The original hypotheses dealing with deputy-

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26. Scott, op. cit., p. 266; Brandenburg, op. cit., pp. 154-156.

district contact will be presented, but it should be kept in mind that the reasons deputies maintain contact with their districts and the matters discussed are not as predicted.

Proposition 4. Deputies maintain continuous communication with their district.

Continuous communication is defined as personal visits to the district at least once per week. The data presented are from responses to "What kind of contact do you have with your district?" In most cases there was no further probing.

Thirty PRI deputies responded to this question, and their answers lend support to the proposition. Fifteen respondents stated they returned to their district at least weekly during the session; eight said that they did so at least once or twice monthly; the remaining seven either mentioned occasional visits or indicated they had no regular contact at all. An added factor in the responses is that almost all respondents commented on the importance of returning to their district regularly; those who were unable to do so explained why. The major reasons given were the distance from their district to Mexico City and their inability to leave the Chamber because of their legislative responsibilities. Those who cited the latter reasons were among the most active in the Chamber. It is also noteworthy that many of those who do not return to their district regularly during the session said they did so following adjournment.

PAN deputies also said that they maintain close contact with their constituents. Of the 13 respondents, nine stated that they visited their district continuously; three said they did so about twice monthly, and only one indicated minimal contact.

PPS respondents differ from those of the PAN and the PRI. They see themselves as having an obligation to their party, not to their district, and therefore are unconcerned with maintaining contact with their constituents. The following quotation typifies their view: "We have no contact with our district. We are not elected by a district; we are party deputies, not district deputies . . . . We are part of the people so we do not have to establish contact with the people. We are the people."

These data support Proposition 4. Over half of the respondents stated that they maintained continuous personal contact with their district. Of the remainder only the PPS deputies, one PRI and one PAN deputy displayed a lack of concern with constituency visits. The others stated they tried to keep in constant contact with their constituents but were unable to do so for a variety of reasons. Given the rather strict definition of continuous contact, this finding is indeed impressive and illustrates the concern deputies have for their districts. Of equal importance is the role constituents play in initiating contact. This question is examined in Proposition 5.

Proposition 5. Constituents initiate continuous contacts with their deputies.

Continuous here can not be defined as precisely as in Proposition 4 because of the variety of ways in which a deputy may be contacted, because of the great number of potential contact initiators, and because of the need to rely on the deputy to identify the frequency with which he is contacted. For these reasons continuous contact is meant to suggest an ongoing process in which constituents contact their deputy in a variety of ways. The data used here come from the responses to the same question asked above, from the role perceptions of respondents and from observing activities in the Chamber during the 1971 regular session.

The available data suggest Proposition 5 is valid. Without any probing whatsoever, 14 of 30 PRI deputies stated that they regularly received letters from their constituents or that delegations from their districts called on them in Mexico City. Additionally, several pointed out that when they returned to their districts they were besieged by their constituents. Twelve PAN deputies also stated either that they regularly had delegations visiting them or that they regularly received mail from their constituents. One PAN member said they received neither visits nor mail.

These responses are substantiated by this researcher's observation during the 1971 regular session. Groups of people, usually either peasants or lower class people,

regularly gathered at the Chamber hoping to meet with their representative. Often times they did not know who their deputy was, but when they found him he would take time to meet with them. These groups varied in number from two or three to 20. Although most of these people were by appearance peasants or workers, numerous well-dressed citizens also visited the Chamber in the hope of talking with their deputy. On several occasions deputies interrupted or delayed interviews so that they could attend their constituents. Numerous times I asked these people why they had come and the responses were always the same: to get a letter of recommendation or other personal assistance, or to present a petition in behalf of some group or small town. Moreover, one of the first things deputies usually did when arriving at the Chamber was to check their mail. A brief examination of Chamber mail records further convinced this researcher that deputies did receive substantial amounts of mail from a variety of sources. Finally, several deputies proudly showed this researcher letters they had received from their constituents.

A final indicator of the frequency with which constituents contact their deputies is the manner in which deputies perceive their role. Fourteen of 23 PRI respondents defined their role primarily or secondarily as gestores (petitioners). Only four PAN deputies identified themselves as gestores, however. This difference reflects the

political situation in Mexico. Because their party holds few offices and controls almost no resources, PAN deputies are in no position to distribute jobs or other benefits. They utilize their position to attempt to oversee governmental activities and initiate policy changes. PRI deputies, on the other hand, are relatively unconcerned with legislative matters and can dedicate themselves to other activities. They also have access to major and minor government and party officials. The people, aware of this, seek them out and request their aid.

Another important aspect of the deputy's communication function is the audience with whom he deals. Members of the PRI said they met regularly with associational and non-associational interest groups, with government officials, and with individual citizens. Many deputies added that they discouraged visits and petitions by individual citizens. PAN deputies indicated that they met with non-associational interest groups such as residents of a particular housing project or farmers from a certain village and with individual citizens; they also discourage individual petitioners. This difference in audiences is another reflection of the national political situation. Organized interest groups approach deputies who can offer them assistance, and only PRI deputies are able to do so. Less organized groups approach the PAN either because they are unaware of the differences

between the parties or because they are in such dire need of assistance that they turn to anyone.

Taken together, the following statements by deputies illustrate the various communication patterns that characterize deputy-constituent relations in Mexico.

> "I maintain personal contact. I return to my district on Thursday and leave there on Mondays. When I am there I travel the district and visit two or three towns every weekend. I also have contact through the telegraph and I receive mail."

> "There are three common channels. The first is the regular media, newspapers, radio, etc. The second is through frequent visits through the district. I am always doing this. The third is through mail I receive from them. Here, let me check my mail to see if I received anything today. (Respondent opens an envelope and shows me the letter.) A rural community in my district does not have electricity so they wrote asking me for my assistance. They asked me what they should do. I took their letter to the Federal Electric Commission. Here you have the letter from the Commission stating that electrification is in process. This shows you that I am not here sleeping and that I am serving my district. This is an example of how constant communication with the district facilitates progress for the district."

> "I am constantly checking. I make visits to my district and study their problems so as to be able to focus on them as is necessary and achieve rapid responses wherever possible. I visit the district frequently, and if I do not, they visit me. I have a schedule for receiving them, and this is in addition to my visits. I am there once-a-week, and when I return, my home looks as if there were a pinãta. I am considering adding an office to my home."[27]

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27. A pinãta is a special party.

> "Fundamentally, I maintain personal contact because I visit some part of my district weekly. I seek contact with all types of organizations--city governments, parent groups, unions, business groups, farmers. In a society such as ours the problems of the collectivity are concretized and naturally channelled into these types of organizations. Of course, the points of view and problems of individual citizens are not ignored, but it is very difficult to have personal contact with all the citizens in my district."

> "In the first place, the deputies of the state of _____ have a permanent contact with the Governor who is constantly visiting the districts of the state, and we accompany him on these visits. Secondly, we are personally in contact with mayors so as to help them with any problems they might have in which federal authorities should participate. We are the contact between the federal government and the state authorities."

As these statements and the preceding data indicate, there is a continuous flow of information between the deputy and his constituents. The primary function of this contact appears to be to gather information related to local problems in order to help resolve them. Eleven of the 13 PAN deputies stated this was the objective of their visits, and the PRI respondents explained their visits similarly. Moreover, one PRI respondent with prior experience in the Chamber and a long record as a labor leader suggested that to meet with constituents for other reasons "can be interpreted as creating agitation. That is why we do not have regular meetings."[28]

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28. For an example of this kind of problem, see p. 95.

It would seem, then, that in their communications with their constituents deputies are almost exclusively concerned with learning the demands of district so that they may articulate these to various governmental agencies. This is not to say that deputies are not involved in other kinds of information exchanges. For example, during the past session deputies delivered speeches on national economic policies at party meetings and at party cadre development courses.[29] They also constantly travel throughout the country attending ceremonies ranging in importance from dedications of statues to gubernatorial inaugurations. There are no data on what information is exchanged at these ceremonies, but it can be assumed that political matters are discussed. It is also reasonable to suggest that deputies engage in similar activities within their own districts. Nonetheless, the data indicate that their primary concern is learning the problems of their district so that they can help resolve them. Because it was totally unexpected and because of its potential significance for the political system, this finding will be elaborated upon here.[30]

As previously shown, 18 of 23 PRI respondents said that their primary or secondary role as deputies was that of

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29. Excelsior, Sept. 7, 1971, pp. 1, 4; Sept. 13, 1971, p. 11.

30. Daniel Cosio Villegas, Mexico's noted historian, expressed considerable amazement when he learned deputies served as gestores. Interview, Dec. 9, 1971.

gestor. Two former deputies, including a current high ranking official, stated they, too, were active gestores when they served in the Chamber during the 1960's which indicates that deputies have been active in this area for at least 10 years and probably before that. Non-PRI members also recognized this obligation albeit reluctantly. Both PAN and PPS deputies pointed out that the function of the deputy is to legislate but that they were forced to serve as gestores because of the example set by PRI deputies. This further documents the activity of PRI deputies in this area. The following quotations illustrate the concern of deputies with gestiones.

> "Many think deputies should only legislate. I think a deputy should become a gestor for his people. This yields good results not only for the district, but it is also beneficial for the party because it improves the opinion people have of the party."

> "The deputy, it is generally thought, arrives here with the objective of making laws and amending them. But the panorama of the deputy has changed. Now he is a promoter of requests. The deputy has to go and petition for his people. This is why people continue to have confidence (in us); they see that their representatives care about their problems."

The following statement typifies the view the minority parties have of this role. "Because of that corruption (i.e., serving as gestores) that has affected the deputy, many people think the deputy should get them jobs, etc. I insist that a deputy is a legislator."

The matters with which deputies deal vary from individual requests for jobs or other personal assistance to community requests for schools and road construction. Deputies often must coordinate these requests with local officials or with the governors of their respective states as well as present them to the appropriate executive agency. The following statements provide examples of this process.

> "I receive requests from parents to help their children enroll in the National Normal School or in a preparatory school . . . . I have many requests dealing with property matters--people asking me to legalize their titles with state or federal officials. Commercial groups contact me frequently to protest a decree they feel is wrong. They explain how the decree has hurt them, and with their information I go to the ministry and request the decree be changed. I point out the difficulties with the law and how it can be resolved."

> "There is a road that goes around Lake _____. It connects several small towns in perhaps the nicest area of the lake. The people from _____ came and asked me to continue the road to their town--a distance of two or three kilometers--and beyond. I went to the governor with this because the people were insistent and I thought it a good idea. The governor was interested in the project and told me to take the state head of tourism to the site. I did so and he supported my idea. The head of highway construction said we would need help from the people in the district. Most of them had nothing they could contribute, but they did provide me a list of those who could give something. We went to them and got their contributions--$400,000 p.m. With this we went back to the highway department, but by then they had exhausted their budget, so now we are waiting to see if we can complete the project this year."

> "I heard the complaints of the cane cutters who were being exploited by a private company. I was invited to a fiesta and had the opportunity to accompany the mayor. We visited the area where the cane cutters live, and there I was directly informed of the situation. They were not being paid the minimum wage and they were working more hours than they were supposed to. I immediately tried, as did the mayor, to inform the governor of the problem, but the governor, we could not see him. I denounced this via telegram to the President, to the Secretary of Labor, to the Secretary of Gobernacion, and to the then head of the Gran Comision. The problem resulted in considerable agitation. The governor accused me to Gobernacion of being an agitator. They called me from Gobernacion and I explained everything. I told them there was no political problem. The cane cutters are being paid less than the minimum wage. That is all there is to it. The cutters were being paid 1-1/2 cents per linear meter. We managed to have this raised to 4 cents per linear meter. I am not satisfied that that is enough though."

Deputies emphasized that not all of their petitions are successful. Sometimes the projects requested demanded too great an investment or were economically unrealistic. Other times they were unable to convince the executive agency of the need for the request. How the agencies decide which petitions are unacceptable is unclear.

The only indication of how projects are selected is that usually it must be possible to incorporate them into existing programs. For example, if there is a program for fresh water-well development, deputies petition the appropriate agency to insure that their districts are included in the implementation of the plan. Occasionally, however, these petitions result in new investments.

> "The gestiones generally coincide with programs that are already planned. This is a function of our coordinated efforts. Often, however, they deal with new problems and expenditures. An example, although it does not deal with my district but with _____ where of 50,000 hectares only 20,000 were being harvested and badly harvested at that. Because of aggressive and violent intervention by the Chamber of Deputies the federal government is now paying attention to this problem. By violent, I mean there were exchanges of opinion in which abusive names were used."

Deputies engage in these activities for several reasons. Seven respondents cited a moral obligation to their constituents. "The party does not demand you do this. The sanction is the worst of all--the bad faith of your constituents." Fourteen cited their obligations to their district as well as party sanctions as the reasons for regularly serving their district.

> "The party asks that you be a gestor, but does not do so explicitly. It recommends that you attend the people in your district. Those who do not comply with this are not punished, they just do not continue advancing. If I do not work they will not expel me from the Chamber, they just will not promote me. If I comply and am active, then in the future they may look to me again. You see, in politics, as in everything here, there is a scarcity of talent."

PAN deputies point out that given that they have no political future they serve their district because of the responsibility they feel to it.

## Summary and Conclusions

The original propositions predicted that deputies actively served as communicators through which the government relayed its message to the people and the people articulated their demands to the government. It was found that deputies did engage in this kind of information exchange, but the emphasis appeared to be on gathering information from constituents rather than on presenting information from the government. Once in office, deputies continue to maintain contact with their constituents and to emphasize constituent demands in their communication. Indeed, their primary activity as legislators appears to be that of articulating the interests of their constituents before executive agencies. They engage in this work both because they feel an obligation to their district and because they enhance their career possibilities by so doing. Minority party respondents, on the other hand, complain that deputies should be lawmakers and constituent-servants.

Overall, the deputies' contribution to system communication is great. It begins during the campaign when they visit even the more isolated regions of the country, and it continues throughout their three-year term. Throughout this period deputies are primarily concerned with learning the needs and demands of the people in their districts and with conveying these to administrative agencies. They also deliver the government's message to their districts.

Although it is very likely that other party officials would carry out these functions if deputies did not, the point to be emphasized is that deputies appear to be responsible for maintaining this kind of communication between the government and certain segments of the nation. Their mere presence in isolated regions must serve to convey a sense of governmental concern to the people in those areas. By taking the demands of the district to the proper sources and often resolving the problems, the deputy helps to establish ties between the government and the people.

Another important aspect of this activity is that it is almost exclusively in behalf of the lower classes. Only one deputy identified business groups as petitioners; the remainder described the people with whom they worked as communal farmers, urban workers, or as poor individuals. Furthermore, the great majority of the visitors to the Chamber during the past session appeared to be peasants or members of the urban proletariat. Given that business groups and other more affluent interests deal directly with executive agencies and have no need to approach congressmen, the fact that peasants and workers do suggest that deputies are the major link they have with the government. Unable or unwilling to introduce pork barrel legislation, deputies achieve the same ends by convincing administrative officials to invest funds or carry out programs in their respective districts. Thus it is possible that deputies provide the

principle means through which the lower classes articulate their demands and through which the government responds.

The final point to be made is that by serving the public in this manner the deputy sustains the paternalism that characterizes the Mexican political culture.[31] Today, 62 years after the Revolution,

> ". . . the inferior in Mexican society does not consider what he receives as something to which he is entitled but rather as favors or lagresse on the part of the superior . . . . The Mexican bourgeois has the same attitude toward a higher government official, up to the President. It is always the expectation that those above have favors to give, and one's energy is spent not so much in one's projects as in trying to manipulate the superior."[32]

The deputy's constituents go to him and ask his assistance. It is to his advantage to satisfy their request, so he in turn presents the request to his superiors. If at all possible, the superiors comply with it because it is in their advantage to do so. At no point in the process is there evidence of pressure or threat. Rather, each level is and admits to being dependent on the next higher level, and only by complying with many of the demands that are generated at

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31. See Robert E. Scott, "The Established Revolution," in Lucian W. Pye and Sydney Verba, eds., Political Culture and Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 330-395.

32. Erich Fromm and Micheal Maccoby, Social Character in a Mexican Village (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1970), p. 110.

the grass roots can the dependency relationships upon which the paternalistic structure depends be maintained without resorting to force. Therefore, by relying on deputies to serve as the link between the government and the lower economic classes, the government has made the deputy a vitally important part of the national communications system.

## CHAPTER 4

## THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES AS A LEGITIMIZING AGENT OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL SYSTEM

The objective of this chapter is to determine if and how the Chamber of Deputies as an institution serves to legitimize the Mexican government and political system. Implicit here is the acknowledgment that the current government is legitimate; that is, the process by which the ruling elite gains power, holds power and makes and implements decisions is congruent with the political culture of Mexican participants.[1] All available evidence supports this premise.

The Mexican public is proud of its government.[2] Even the government's principle opposition supports it and recognizes its achievements. "It has to be recognized that the PRI has not done everything wrong. In fact, they have done many things right. We have unity in this country, and

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1. See page 23, Chapter 1, of this study.

2. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1965), pp. 64-66. A recent study verifying the Almond and Verba findings is Robert L. Peterson and C. Richard Bath, "Political Socialization in Northern Mexico: A Preliminary Report," a paper submitted for presentation at the Rocky Mountain Social Science Convention, April 27-29, 1972. Cited by special permission of the authors.

this has to be credited to the PRI."[3] The government has stable political institutions and effective leadership, and "In general, Mexico seems to be the most self-fulfilling society in Latin America."[4] Reiterating, then, proceeding from the premise that the Mexican political system is legitimate, the purpose here is to determine how the Chamber has contributed to legitimizing the political system and how it contributes to sustaining this legitimacy.

## Political Legitimacy: Definition and Strategies for Operationalization

"A legitimate government is one that has the support of those who are subject to it."[5] This definition clearly suggests why governments throughout history have sought to achieve legitimacy. When a government is legitimate, it is able to make and implement decisons and policies without continuously having to justify each and every one of them. Moreover, a legitimate government can depend on continued

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3. As quoted in Antonio Ugalde, Political Power in a Mexican Community (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1970), p. 17. Several PAN respondents voiced similar view to this researcher.

4. Peter Ranis, "Modernity and Political Development in Five Latin American Countries," Studies in Comparative International Development, IV, #2, 1968-69, p. 38. Kenneth Johnson recognizes the past legitimacy of the political system, but states that "Mexico now faces a crisis of political legitimacy." Johnson, Mexican Democracy: A Critical View (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971), p. 3.

5. H. V. Wiseman, Political Systems: Some Sociological Approaches (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), p. 102.

support even if not all policies achieve their desired ends because the public's attachment to the system transcends specific outputs, and is instead a function of historical conditions, socialization and other factors.[6]

The importance of legitimacy to modern, complex systems can not be over-stated. Even with the sophisticated communication systems available to modern governments, it would be an impossible task to convince the public of the desirability of every government decision. Lacking legitimacy, a government would either fall or resort to force to implement its policies. Because force is not as effective or efficient as legitimacy in securing a desired response from citizens, all governments seek to achieve and maintain legitimacy.[7] Given the importance of legitimacy to a government and a political system, if the Chamber of Deputies contributes to legitimizing the government and political system, it follows that the Chamber has a major role in the national political structure.

The Chamber is capable of generating support for the political system because of its place within the official government structure. Support for the Chamber as part of this structure can generate legitimacy for the regime and

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6. For a discussion of legitimacy and diffuse support, see David Easton, A Systems Analysis of Political Life (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1965), pp. 278-288.

7. Wiseman, op. cit., p. 105.

there is also the potential for simultaneously generating support for incumbent officials. Thus, the Chamber as part of the government can legitimize the political system as a whole as well as component parts of the system if the Chamber itself has support, i.e., is legitimate.[8]

There are a number of ways to determine if the Chamber is legitimate. The most direct method would be to survey the Mexican public. As explained in Chapter 1, it was impossible to conduct such a survey. Even if it had been carried out, the results might have been inconclusive because of the nature of the Mexican political culture. The populace at large has very little information on the government; only 15 percent follows governmental affairs regularly.[9] Yet this lack of information does not prevent the people from supporting the government. Because it was impossible to conduct a national survey, several other methods were employed.

Methods of Concept Operationalization

The methods by which the Chamber's legitimizing function is measured are:

1. An historical description of the Chamber's place in the Mexican government. The objective of this sketch will

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8. For a discussion of the sources of systemic legitimacy, see David Easton, loc. cit.

9. Almond and Verba, op. cit., p. 54.

be to determine if the Chamber is considered an important part of the government, and if so, for how long has this been true.

2. A content analysis of newspaper coverage of the Chamber. This will show the amount of public information on Chamber activities available to Mexican elites.

3. An analysis of the importance incumbent deputies attach to the Chamber and to Chamber activities. These responses will provide insights into how deputies see the role of the Chamber. Of particular importance are the responses of minority party deputies.

4. A description of the way in which the executive uses the Chamber to air his programs. Examining this aspect of the executive-legislative relationship will provide insights into the importance the President assigns to the Chamber.

5. A description of Chamber ceremonial functions. This will suggest the degree to which the Chamber serves as a national symbol of authority.

6. A description of public petitions to the Chamber. Public petitions suggest a recognition of Chamber authority. It should be noted that each of these indicates both the legitimacy of the Chamber as well as the degree to which the Chamber legitimizes its environment.

## The Chamber of Deputies in Mexican History

With but one brief interruption, the Chamber of Deputies has had a voice in Mexican politics since Independence. Given that most presidents almost totally controlled Congress, it is significant that they did not attempt to destroy the institution. Rather, they used the legislature in what appears to have been an effort to legalize their activities. By gaining congressional approval for their decisions, governmental leaders wrapped themselves in the cloth of respectability and constitutionalism. "When the legislature gives other agents of government permission to act (that is, when others are authorized to exercise power), their exercise of authority is legitimized in the process (that is, they have the right as well as the power to act).[10]

The nominal respect shown for the Chamber of Deputies during the nineteenth century was a function of a number of factors. The leaders of Mexican independence, imbued with democratic ideals and impressed by the United States experience, modeled their government on the design of the United States government.[11] Strong presidents, unwilling to

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10. Malcolm E. Jewell and Samuel P. Patterson, The Legislative Process in the United States (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 13.

11. William P. Tucker, The Mexican Government Today (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957), p. 73. For a general discussion of the relationship between the United States experience and developments in Latin America, see Arthur P. Whitaker, The Western Hemisphere Idea: Its

challenge this democratic facade and having no need to, reinforced the position of the Chamber by nominally submitting their programs for congressional approval. In this way they legitimized their policies and simultaneously institutionalized the place of the Chamber within the political system. Evidence of the growing legitimacy of the Chamber during this period is that when the legislative structure was modified, the Senate and not the Chamber was abolished.[12] Thus, by the end of the nineteenth century the Chamber of Deputies had become an integral part of the governmental structure.

Developments in the twentieth century have cemented the place of the Chamber in Mexican politics. Most significantly, the Revolution's ideology is committed to having the Chamber play a formal role in decision-making. Respect for the Constitution is one of the Revolution's principle tenents, and the Constitution clearly delineates the formal powers of the lower house. Therefore, respect for the Chamber and for the formal relationship among the branches of government is part of the regime's ideology.[13]

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Rise and Decline (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1954), pp. 1-40.

12. It is interesting to note that contemporary critics continue to call for dissolution of the Senate but support the Chamber. Antonio Castro Leal, editorial, Excelsior, Sept. 15, 1971, p. 8A.

13. Frank Brandenburg, The Making of Modern Mexico (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), pp. 10-11. Pages 7-18 describe the Revolutionary Creed in detail.

Also contributing to the place of the Chamber in decision-making is the behavioral commitment to the Chamber's formal decision-making role. Presidential decrees and bills are submitted to the lower house, and the House acts on them. The President does not disregard this procedure even though it is essentially perfunctory. As was true in the nineteenth century, this practice legitimizes the executives' policy and also legitimizes the Chamber. Pablo Gonzalez Casanova describes this process.

> "Apparently the legislature has a symbolic function. It approves Executive acts. It gives them a validity and a foundation of a traditional and metaphysical type, in which the acts of the Executive acquire the stature of laws, or they lean on and are supported by the nature of the laws, obeying a very old symbolic mechanism, even if one of a lay type. In effect, in the same way that ancient rulers claimed they governed in the name of the Law and that the Law was supported by Divinity, all of which had a functional symbolic-religious sense, in our culture the Chamber of Deputies performs the same functions; its theoretical significance appears in the community as a legal belief, since the rational thought of the eighteenth century transfers the legislative act of God to the people, and to the representative of the people."[14]

It seems, then, that the Chamber has been an integral part of the government since Independence even if it has not exercised its powers independent of Executive control. Because of its almost continuous existence since 1821 it appears reasonable to suggest that political participants

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14. P. Gonzalez Casanova, La Democracia en Mexico, (Mexico, D. F.: Ediciones ERA, 1965), p. 18.

have developed an attachment to the Chamber as part of the decision-making mechanism and that the relationship is invested with "a special sanctity."[15] The strength of this attachment is suggested by the words on one PRI deputy. "Imagine yourself! If there were no Chamber we would be in anarchy!"

In nations with a relatively short record of congressional activity legislative bodies have become a central part of the government. "In Africa, as elsewhere, a national political life without a parliament would appear unthinkable."[16] Yet in most of these countries legislatures engage primarily in legitimizing the regime and do not function as lawmaking bodies. In Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon and the Central African Republic parliaments provide "a semblance of parliamentary approval" that serves to legitimize the regime.[17] In Guinea, "The function of the legislature as a ratifying body for the decisions of the Political Bureau has tended more and more since independence to take on symbolic

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15. David Easton describes the manner in which structural arrangements become legitimate and then generate support for the political system. Easton, Systems, p. 300.

16. Newell M. Stultz, "The National Assembly in the Politics of Kenya," in Allan Kornberg and Lloyd D. Musolf, eds., Legislatures in Developmental Perspective (Durham: Duke University Press, 1970), p. 305.

17. John A. Ballard as quoted in Robert A. Packenham, "Legislatures and Political Development," in Kornberg and Musolf, op. cit., p. 539.

and ceremonial aspects."[18] Similarly, the legislatures in Liberia and Ghana serve primarily as legitimizing agents of their respective governments.[19]

In view of these statements, it seems reasonable to conclude that the Chamber in Mexico, having a history far longer than any of the above mentioned parliaments, is an integral and legitimate part of the government. Moreover, there is reason to believe that it has been an important part of the system since independence. As an accepted part of the government it has the potential to legitimize the political system, governmental policies and the authorities themselves. This potential can be realized only if there is public awareness of congressional activities. The following sections examine this question.

## Newspaper Coverage of the Chamber of Deputies

Mexican citizens share a belief in the political system despite having very little information about it. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba found Mexicans the least informed citizens in their five-nation survey.[20] Those that do follow politics rely primarily on newspapers as their

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18. L. Gray Cowan, as quoted in Packenham, op. cit., p. 543.

19. Packenham, op. cit., pp. 540, 543.

20. Almond and Verba, op. cit., p. 58.

information sources.[21] Therefore, if the legitimizing potential of the Chamber is to be realized it is reasonable to expect that newspapers report Chamber proceedings. Furthermore, if Chamber activities are important to the concerned public, it is likely that Chamber-related articles will be carried on the front page.

The newspapers analyzed are Mexico City's Excelsior, Guadalajara's Informador, and Monterrey's El Norte. These papers were selected because each is the most important daily in these three major cities and because it was possible to analyze the necessary copies of each throughout the prescribed time period. The analysis is of daily coverage for one month of each of the ten legislative periods from 1940 to 1970. The months and years included are October, 1940; September, 1944; December, 1947; October, 1949; December, 1954; November, 1957; October, 1958; December, 1962; November, 1965; September, 1968.

Proposition 1. Mexican newspapers regularly carry news stories on the activities of the Chamber of Deputies. Table 5 indicates the number of stories each paper carried. On first glance, it appears that there is little coverage of the Chamber. El Norte averaged approximately one story every three days, El Informador averaged one every two days, and only Excelsior averaged approximately one daily.

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21. Almond and Verba, op. cit., p. 56.

TABLE 5

NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES[a]

| Date | El Norte | | | Informador | | | Excelsior | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Page 1 Stories | Other | Total | Page 1 Stories | Other | Total | Page 1 Stories | Other | Total |
| October, 1940 | 5[b] | 0 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 9 | 17 | 5 | 22 |
| September, 1944 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 9 | 4 | 13 | 23 | 8 | 31 |
| December, 1947 | 10 | 1 | 11 | 16 | 1 | 17 | 36 | 26 | 62 |
| October, 1949 | 18 | 1 | 19 | 23 | 0 | 23 | 20 | 10 | 30 |
| December, 1954 | 26 | 0 | 26 | 23 | 0 | 23 | 28 | 13 | 41 |
| November, 1957 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 6 |
| October, 1958 | 13 | 2 | 15 | 15 | 0 | 15 | 11 | 16 | 27 |
| December, 1962 | 23 | 4 | 27 | 34 | 0 | 34 | 30 | 14 | 44 |
| November, 1965 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 10 | 8 | 18 |
| September, 1968 | Unavailable | - | -- | 15 | 5 | 20 | 14 | 15 | 29 |
| Total | 105 | 14 | 119 | 145 | 13 | 158 | 195 | 115 | 310 |
| Average number of stories per month | | | 13.2 | | | 15.8 | | | 31 |
| Average number of stories in December | | | 21.3 | | | 24.7 | | | 49 |

a. The data refer to number of articles published.
b. October issues were unavailable; November was coded instead.

However, when compared to levels of Chamber activity this amount of coverage is very high.

Newspaper coverage reflects the monthly changes in the levels of Chamber activity. The Chamber begins its sessions in September, but it is not until late November or December that the President introduces the majority of his substantive bills. Thus, articles on Chamber proceedings during December equalled over 50 percent of all Chamber related stories coded, even though December appeared as the unit for coding in only three of the ten years selected. In December, El Norte carried articles on the Chamber approximately two of every three days; El Informador had legislative materials five of every six days, and Excelsior had approximately five stories every three days. Moreover, for the first three months of the session the Chamber meets only twice weekly. The lower coverage during those months also reflects the Chamber's low level of activity. Overall, then, newspapers tend to report on all daily sessions of the Chamber. These data validate Proposition 1.

Proposition 2. Newspaper articles concerned with Chamber proceedings are carried on page 1. A page 1 story is defined as any story beginning on this page but that may be continued on other pages.

The data in Table 5 also validate this proposition. In all but one of the 29 possible cases, the number of front

page articles on the Chamber exceeded the number of articles on all other pages. Furthermore, 88 percent of the El Norte articles were on page 1; 91 percent of the articles in El Informador were on the front page; and Excelsior published 63 percent of its Chamber related material on page 1.

A third aspect of this relationship is the change in coverage over time. An increase in reporting from 1940 to 1968 will suggest the Chamber has become more important to the political system. Conversely, decreasing coverage will suggest diminishing importance for the Chamber.

Proposition 3. Newspaper coverage of the Chamger has increased since 1940.

To properly test this proposition, it is necessary to compare coverage during the same months in different years. Table 6 presents the data in this fashion.

The data in Table 6 support Proposition 2. On only three occasions did coverage in the 1940's exceed coverage in the 1950's and 1960's. In two of these instances Excelsior's September coverage in 1944 and 1968, and its December coverage in 1947, 1954 and 1962, only one newspaper decreased its coverage. In the other instance, October, 1949-1958, all newspapers acted similarly. In the latter case this probably reflects the lower level of Chamber activity that characterized the final months of a presidential regime. Apparently, the incumbent chose to allow his successor to present his own legislative package following his

TABLE 6

NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES - MONTHLY COMPARISONS OVER TIME

| Date | El Norte | El Informador | Excelsior |
|---|---|---|---|
| September, 1944 | 10 | 13 | 31 |
| September, 1968 | -- | 20 | 29 |
| October, 1940 | 5 | 9 | 22 |
| October, 1949 | 19 | 23 | 30 |
| October, 1958 | 15 | 15 | 27 |
| November, 1957 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| November, 1965 | 3 | 5 | 18 |
| December, 1947 | 11 | 17 | 62 |
| December, 1954 | 26 | 23 | 41 |
| December, 1962 | 27 | 34 | 44 |

Inauguration on December 1. Moreover, the incumbent deputies during the last months of a presidential term owe their allegiance to the president-elect, and thus they are probably deliberately inactive during these months.[22] The unusual pattern in the former case has no apparent explanation.

Another important aspect of newspaper reporting on the Chamber is the relationship that exists between coverage in Mexico City and in Guadalajara and Monterrey. Excluding the first exceptions cited above, there is a constant direct

22. The role the president-elect plays in selecting deputies is discussed in Brandenburg, op. cit., pp. 148-149, and L. Vincent Padgett, The Mexican Political System (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966), p. 139.

relationship between coverage in Excelsior and in El Norte and El Informador. Excelsior always contains more Chamber related information than the other two, but all three increase or decrease their coverage in unison. Because these papers operate independently of each other, this pattern suggests that there is consensual agreement on the importance of the Chamber and on what aspects of Chamber behavior merit reporting.

Another important facet of newspaper coverage of the Chamber is the number of editorials concerned with the lower house. As Table 7 shows, there has not been a significant amount of editorial attention directed at the Chamber; moreover, it received more attention in the 1940's than it has recently. Again, it is difficult to explain this pattern.

Summary

In summary, this analysis has shown that:

1. There is regular coverage of Chamber activity in the major daily newspapers of Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Monterrey.

2. Chamber-related articles are usually carried on page 1.

3. Newspaper coverage has increased since 1940 in each of these three cities.

In combination these findings suggest that the Chamber realizing its system-legitimizing potential. The concerned public has access to information concerning the

TABLE 7

EDITORIALS CONCERNED WITH THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

| Date | El Norte | Informador | Excelsior |
|---|---|---|---|
| October, 1940 | 3 | 0 | 13 |
| September, 1944 | 3 | 9 | 1 |
| December, 1947 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| October, 1949 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| December, 1954 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| November, 1957 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| October, 1958 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| December, 1962 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| November, 1965 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| September, 1968 | - | 0 | 6 |
| Totals | 9 | 14 | 37 |

Chamber's activities. Participants are aware that the President submits his programs for congressional approval, and that the Chamber nominally studies these measures, frequently debates them, occasionally amends them, and ultimately approves them. By carrying out its constitutional functions, and having its activities reported in the press, the Chamber legitimizes the policies of the government and the authorities themselves.

## Deputy Perceptions of the Importance of Chamber Activities and of the Chamber

Deputy perceptions of the role of the Chamber in national life are a function of party affiliation. PRI members point to the Constitution to cite the Chamber's responsibilities in national life and its consequent importance to national political affairs. They see the Chamber as the national lawmaking body, as the protector against executive usurpation of power, and as the representative of the people. Opposition deputies see the Chamber as subservient to the executive and therefore failing in its constitutional duties. They agree with the PRI deputies that the Chamber represents the people. All parties agree, moreover, that the Chamber is a vital part of the governmental structure. They disagree in their evaluation of the Chamber's performance. The major difference between the two, then, is that opposition deputies feel the Chamber's lawmaking potential has not been realized because the lower house is subservient to the executive, while PRI members argue that they support the executive because they agree with him and not because they are subservient to him.

One of the reasons deputies believe that the Chamber is a vital part of the political system is that they attach great importance to Chamber debates. PAN, PPS and PRI deputies agree that these debates are vital to Mexican democracy and that they are one of the most important aspects of

national political life. Of the 40 respondents who commented on debates, 32 said they were of great importance because they provided an opportunity for each party to make its views known and to challenge the programs and policies advocated by the other parties. Only two respondents, both PAN members, felt the debates to be meaningless. The following statements typify the views of current deputies.

> "The debates are of a fundamental importance. The Congress, as has often been said, is the highest tribunal in the land. Our debates are followed by the people, and through them conflicting ideologies confront each other and make themselves known. As the Maestro Vincente Lombardo Toledano said, we make our points in the debates even though our bills are not passed."[23]

PAN deputies echo the views of the PPS.

> "I give them little importance as a means for amending legislation. But they are useful in that they provide the press an opportunity to listen to these debates and report them to the public."

The PRI deputies also have a high regard for the debates and their responses suggest more explicitly why minority party deputies feel as they do.

> "They have a great deal of importance because in a country such as ours, where freedom of the press and expression exist, there are also serious exceptions to these freedoms because of self-censorship resulting from the

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23. The PPS attaches so much importance to Chamber debates that it has introduced legislation to have them televised and broadcast throughout the country. The bill was defeated, but a PPS respondent told this interviewer that his party continues to advocate this measure. Diario de Debates de la Camara de Diputados del Congreso de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, Nov. 10, 1964, p. 1.

> fear of economic sanctions. Thus, the only tribunal where in-depth debates can be held, where there can be a confrontation of views without limitation by the government, is in the Chamber."
>
> "The debates reflect the nation's thinking. It is very healthy that here all political currents can be expressed. There is a minority view held by several parties and a majority view held by one. Since Lopez Mateos initiated the election of party deputies you have had represented the views of all groups. In other words, the possibility that all views can be expressed is healthy. We tear each other apart here; we fight, but we do it here. There is no censorship. Everything can be said from here.

A newspaper reporter for the PAN agrees that the Chamber floor is the only forum the opposition has to challenge the government.

> "The debates have only a testimonial value for the opposition. The PAN deputies are certain their proposals will be ignored, but they know there is a testimonial of their views and they hope the press will report this. The press does not always do this since almost all reporters receive some sort of subsidy from the government. There is no explicit agreement on this, but there is a tacit understanding that the PAN will not be played up."[24]

Summary

The clashes that characterize debates contribute to legitimizing the government and its policies. This is as

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24. Government censorship of newspapers and other media is a well known characteristic of Mexican politics. For an example of the sanctions imposed on uncooperative publishers, see William Tuohy and David Ronfeldt, "Political Control and the Recruitment of Middle Level Elites in Mexico: An Example from Agrarian Politics," Western Political Quarterly, 22 (June, 1969), pp. 365-374.

true today as it has been in the past.[25] They provide the opposition an opportunity to challenge and modify projected programs, and the government must defend its proposals. The public is thus informed of the strengths and weaknesses of a given piece of legislation, and, what is more important, the government is able to show the public that the policy was agreed upon in an open forum after serious debate.

This procedure also defuses potential challenges by the opposition because they were a part of the lawmaking process. "The legislature can not accede to the demands of all interests, sometimes not even partially, but it can grant these interests a hearing--perhaps not obtainable elsewhere--and this hearing can be an important factor in the management of conflict."[26] In Mexico, the government has created party deputies to insure that minority views be given a hearing. Recently the age requirement for deputies was lowered to allow younger citizens to voice their opinions in

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25. For examples of major Chamber debates, see Moises Ochoa Campos, Grandes Debates Legislativos: Los debates sobre la adopcion del Sufragio Universal y del Voto Directo (Mexico, D. F.: Camara de Diputados, 1971); Ochoa Campos, Grandes Debates Legislativos: Los debates sobre la No Reeleccion (Mexico, D. F.: Camara de Diputados, 1971); Alberto Morales Jimenez, El Debate sobre el Articulo 123 en el Constituyente de 1917 (Mexico, D. F.: Camara de Diputados, 1971); Hector Contreras Rodriguez, El debate sobre Federalismo y Centralismo (Mexico, D. F.: Camara de Diputados, 1971).

26. Jewell and Patterson, op. cit., p. 12.

the Chamber.[27] In sum, the ruling elite has structured the Chamber to insure that it includes most political interests. The clash of views that automatically results from this situation serves to legitimize the Chamber in the eyes of the deputies and the concerned public.

## The Chamber of Deputies as a Forum for the Government

Because the President dominates the Chamber, he is able to manipulate Chamber proceedings to insure that his programs will be presented in a most favorable way. He uses his annual report to Congress to describe the achievements of his regime.[28] The media give a tremendous amount of coverage to this speech, and it is a principle vehicle for the President to describe the success of his programs and explain future objectives.[29] Following the President's speech,

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27. The Secretary of Gobernacion suggested these were principle reasons for the constitutional amendment introduced by the President in 1971. See, Diario, November 25, 1971, pp. 4-27.

28. Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (New York: Atheneum, 1966), pp. 351, 362, 387.

29. Howard F. Cline, Mexico: Revolution to Evolution, 1940-1960 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 144. The President's annual report appears to be much more important in Mexico than in the United States. In 1971, for example, there was a parade before and after his speech, and newspapers and magazines were filled for weeks with stories on the speech. Undoubtedly, this is closely related to the importance of personalismo in Mexican politics.

the Chamber President responds to the national executive, and his response contains little more than adulatory praise for everything contained in the President's address.[30] One Chamber President chose to respond in only mildly critical terms, and his actions caused a political uproar, culminating in removing him from the presidency of the Chamber and in delegations of senators and deputies streaming to the President to assure him of their allegiance.[31]

The President also sends bills to the Chamber to test public reaction to them.[32] When these bills are controversial, the executive refrains from declaring his views and allows the Chamber to determine whether the public will accept or reject the legislation. An excellent example of this process is the action taken on the constitutional amendment allowing the re-election of deputies. The bill was debated and passed in the Chamber, but the opposition to it could not be quelled and the Senate defeated it. The Senate returned the bill to the Chamber where it was "filed" following minimal debate.[33] As suggested in Chapter 2, the

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30. For a critique of the response to the President's speech, see Ricardo Garibay, "Sin Novedad en el Frente," Excelsior, Sept. 2, 1971, pp. 12-13.

31. Excelsior, Sept. 2-7, 1944.

32. Padgett, op. cit., p. 159; Scott, op. cit., p. 265.

33. Diario, op. cit., Dec. 30, 1964, p. 1; Diario, op. cit., Oct. 15, 1965, p. 1.

President appears to have followed a similar course in 1942 on the issue of capital punishment and in 1962 on Law of the Rights of Authors.[34]

The executive also uses the Chamber to diffuse potentially troublesome issues. The President appointed a joint legislative committee to study the repeal of the Law of Social Dissolution. This served to reduce pressures on the executive.[35] The Chamber's role in examining student demands and the 1968 riots served a similar function.[36]

The President also presents and justifies his program or major new policies by sending his Secretaries to the Chamber. In the nineteenth century it was common practice for Secretaries to be on hand to explain government policies, but until recently this practice had been discontinued.[37] PAN deputies regularly move to have Secretaries explain their policies to the Chamber but the PRI majority defeats their motions.[38] The current President has renewed the practice of sending his associates to the Chamber.

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34. Chapter 2, p. 50.

35. Paul Kelso, op. cit.

36. Excelsior, Sept. 21-29, 1968.

37. Daniel Cosio Villegas, Interview, Dec. 9, 1971. According to Professor Cosio Villegas, in the 1800's a State Secretary was always on hand to answer questions.

38. Excelsior, Dec. 30, 1957, p. 1; Scott, op. cit., p. 282.

Under the current regime, the arrival of a Secretary at the Chamber is a major event. His presentation is covered by all the media, and attendance at the session is restricted primarily to party officials and other prominent individuals. The Secretary makes his statement, explaining the history of the policy, why changes are needed, and how the proposed modifications will benefit the nation. Numerous deputies from each party are then permitted to question him. Each deputy may ask only one question and may not respond to the Secretary's answer, even if it is totally unrelated to the original question they asked. PAN deputies complain that this rigid format prevents them from genuinely questioning the speaker.

PRI deputies ask questions designed to highlight the objectives of the legislation. For example, after the Secretary of Gobernacion (Interior) explained the objectives of the constitutional amendment reducing the age requirements for deputies and senators, a PRI deputy asked:

> "We disagree with those who state that young men and women 21 and 30 years of age respectively, do not have the maturity, capacity, or education necessary to confront with responsibility and confidence this public position. Nevertheless, we would like to hear your views on the issues so as to add to the information contained in the initiatives of President Luis Echeverria."[39]

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39. Diario, op. cit., November 25, 1971, p. 10. The text of the Secretary's speech and all questions are found on pp. 4-27.

Summary

Taken together, these examples indicate that the President believes Chamber approval legitimizes his policies. By going through the motions of defending his programs the executive implies that the Chamber is free to reject his proposals and that he seeks the approval of the deputies on the merits of his legislation. Using the Chamber in this way also shows that the executive believes the public follows Chamber activities. Overall, the procedural respect the executive shows the deputies indicates that the President feels congressional approval of his policies is an important aspect of the decision-making process, and by approving executive programs the Chamber helps legitimize them.[40]

## Chamber Ceremonial Functions

The importance of the Chamber to the political system and its role in legitimizing national political decision is also manifested through the roles the Chamber has in national ceremonies. Throughout the time period analyzed in this study the Chamber regularly participated in ceremonies of all types throughout the nation. When cities dedicate a monument or commemorate a local hero, they ask the Chamber to be present. Mayors and governors invite the Chamber to attend their inaugurations and their annual reports. On any

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40. It is interesting to note that the Kenyan parliament is used in almost identical fashion. Stultz, op. cit., p. 323.

given day the Chamber receives and accepts several of these invitations and commissions one or a number of deputies to attend the ceremony as Chamber representatives. This is undoubtedly the most time consuming activity of the Chamber.

These invitations indicate how state and local officials perceive the Chamber. The presence of a deputy enhances the importance of an event. If it is an inauguration, a deputy's presence somehow seems to suggest that transfer of power is legitimate; otherwise, the deputy would not countenance it. Thus, by inviting the Chamber to civic, social and political events, the public acknowledges the importance of the Chamber in national life. By accepting these invitations the Chamber implicitly grants its approval to the functions it attends.

## Public Petitions and the Chamber

As shown in Chapter 2, there is no evidence that constituents request their deputies to take any kind of specific actions related to legislative matters. There is evidence, however, that groups approach the Chamber of Deputies as an institution to request assistance which the Chamber is constitutionally competent to provide. In 1947 a union of educators appealed to the Chamber for protection from union leaders.[41] In 1962 the Partido Obrero-Campesino asked the

41. Excelsior, December 13, 1947, p. 1.

Chamber to repeal the Law of Social Dissolution.[42] In 1967 a union in Baja, California asked the Chamber to assist it in resolving its dispute with management.[43] In 1971, three groups appealed to the Chamber for similar types of assistance. These groups were present en masse at the Chamber and distributed flyers to all deputies as they entered. They also carried banners into the Chamber and displayed them in direct view of the deputies.[44]

The fact that groups approach the Chamber suggests they perceive it as an authoritative body capable of assisting them. In each of the cases cited the groups asked that an illegal or unjust situation be remedied. By requesting the Chamber's intervention, the groups are acknowledging the Chamber's role in decision-making, and this further documents the degree to which Chamber decisions legitimize governmental actions.

## Summary and Conclusions

The objective of this chapter was to determine if and how the Chamber of Deputies serves to legitimize the government. It was suggested that if the Chamber itself

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42. Excelsior, December 1, 1962, p. 1.

43. Antonio Ugalde, op. cit., p. 92.

44. The groups were the Sindicato de Trabajadores y Empleados de la Comision Nacional de los Libros de Textos Gratuitos, the Frente Constitucionalista Mexicano, and the Trabajadores Libres de la Ex-Compania Terminal, Puerto de Veracruz.

were legitimate, its actions would contribute to legitimizing the government and the political system. Using six distinct indicators it has been shown that the Chamber is legitimate, that the public is aware of Chamber activities, and that the executive, aware of the formal role of the lower house in national decision-making, uses the Chamber to gain public approval of his policies.

Although the Chamber is an integral part of the government and plays a role in mobilizing support for the government, it must be remembered that the Chamber has no real institutional independence. Nonetheless, it does serve a major function in the political system. As Pablo Gonzalez Casanova stated, the Chamber has symbolic importance; it serves to preserve the legal facade behind which political decisions are actually made. By so doing it helps to mobilize support for the government. In view of how important such support is to a complex political system, it must be concluded that the Chamber as a principle legitimizing agent has a major role in the Mexican political system.

# CHAPTER 5

## THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES AND ELITE RECRUITMENT

An ongoing activity in all political systems is the recruitment of citizens into political roles. Continuous recruitment "must be performed in all political systems if its roles are to be manned and if its structures are to function."[1] Recruitment begins indirectly when individuals first develop political attitudes.[2] The process is completed when members of the community become public leaders and/or office holders. As this cycle runs its course, the number of individuals involved continually decreases so that those who eventually become the political leaders of the community are but a small percentage of those who initially develop political attitudes.[3]

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1. Gabriel Almond and J. Bingham Powell, Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966), p. 22.

2. See Richard E. Dawson and Kenneth Prewitt, Political Socialization (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966), for a discussion of how political attitudes develop.

3. Kenneth Prewitt, "From the Many are Chosen the Few," American Behavioral Scientist, 13 (Nov.-Dec., 1969), pp. 169-188.

Understanding how these leaders attain office and what skills a nation rewards provides useful insights into the nature of a political system. The skills required for access to leadership positions have varied with time and place.[4] The manner in which leaders are selected in primitive and traditional political systems is unlike the recruitment process in complex contemporary societies.[5] The objective of this chapter is to determine whether the Chamber of Deputies plays still another role in the Mexican political system by contributing to the training of individuals for high political positions. This portion of the study, it is hoped, will offer additional insights into the selection process for Mexican elites and the skills required of national leaders.

In order to understand how the Chamber contributes to elite recruitment, it is first necessary to understand the recruitment process for the Chamber itself. The first part of this chapter will describe the social and educational backgrounds of deputies, their motivations for seeking a Chamber position, how they were nominated, and who they feel

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4. Harold Lasswell, Politics: Who Gets What, When, How (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1968), pp. 80-112.

5. Almond and Powell, op. cit., pp. 220-221, 238-240, 250-251. See also W. H. Morris-Jones, "Political Recruitment and Political Development," in Colin Leys, ed., Politics and Change in Developing Countries (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 113-134.

they represent in the Chamber. With this background, part two will describe how deputies evaluate the importance of Chamber experience for career development and the kinds of things deputies learn that enhance their career possibilities. The actual relationship between Chamber experience and promotion to higher positions will then be measured. Taken together, the data presented in this chapter should indicate how leadership is recruited in contemporary Mexico, what skills are most important to the political system, and what role the Chamber of Deputies plays in training members for the national political elite.

## Recruitment into the Chamber of Deputies

### Socio-Educational Characteristics of Mexican Deputies

"One of the firmest generalizations which can be made about the social composition of legislatures is that they do not mirror their population."[6] In the United States, representatives tend to be from prestigious occupations such as the law, real estate, insurance and farming.[7] Furthermore, more than half of United States congressmen are from middle and upper middle class families.[8] In Tanzania, over

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6. Samuel C. Patterson, "Comparative Legislative Behavior: A Review Essay," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 12 (Nov., 1968), p. 602. A bibliography of studies documenting this statement can be found on p. 603.

7. Malcolm E. Jewell and Samuel P. Patterson, The Legislative Process in the United States (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 107.

8. Jewell and Patterson, op. cit., p. 104.

two-thirds of the MP's have attended secondary school and thus are members of the nation's educated elite.[9] In Turkey, where over 60 percent of the male population is illiterate, over 60 percent of national deputies are university trained.[10] It is expected that Mexican deputies are also highly educated relative to the national population.

Table 8 indicates the educational levels of Mexican deputies. Comparing these figures to national levels of education shows that deputies in Mexico are significantly more educated than the public at large. In 1960, 62.23 percent of the population was illiterate.[11] In 1961, 56 percent of the deputies were professionals. Thus in the early 1960's the percentage of deputies with a profession was almost as great as the percentage of the general population that was illiterate.[12] In 1970, only 4.3 percent of the 20 to 24 year olds were enrolled in higher education; in 1970, over 60 percent of the deputies were professionals.

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9. William Tordoff, "Parliament in Tanzania," Journal of Commonwealth Studies, 3 (July, 1965), p. 87.

10. Frederick W. Frey, The Turkish Political Elite (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1965), pp. 70-71.

11. Pablo Gonzalez Casanova, La Democracia en Mexico (Mexico, D. F.: Ediciones ERA, S. A., 1965), Table 26, p. 205.

12. Mexico, 1970: Facts, Figures and Trends (Mexico, D. F.: Banco Nacional de Comercio Exterior, 1970), p. 21.

TABLE 8

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS OF MEXICAN DEPUTIES*

| Year | Professionals | (%) | Others | (%) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1952-54 | 74* | 46 | 87 | 54 | 161 |
| 1961-63 | 103 | 56 | 81 | 44 | 184 |
| 1964-66 | 119 | 56 | 92 | 44 | 211 |
| 1970-72 | 134 | 63 | 70 | 37 | 214 |

*Levels of education were determined from official Chamber membership lists. Beginning in 1952 educational titles accompanied individual names. It is possible that not all Chamber members listed their titles, and therefore the data presented here reflect the minimum number of professionals in the Chamber. Data on deputies prior to 1952 is too incomplete to be of any value. The total number of deputies identified equals the number in the official role, including suplentes who took office. Professionals are defined as including all university graduates, normal school graduates, military officers, and all others with at least 15 years of formal education.

Lawyers make up 52 percent of all professionals listed in Table 8.[13]

13. Law is the most common profession in the United States and other legislatures. (See Frey, op. cit., p. 80; Patterson, op. cit., p. 605; Bonnie Ann Stewart, "An Intra-Country and Comparative Elite Analysis of the Chilean Legislators of the 1965 Senate and the Indian Legislators of the 1967 Lok Sabba." An Honors Thesis (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1970), pp. 24-25.

Like United States representatives, Mexican deputies are middle aged.[14] The average age of Mexican deputies in 1967 was 47. In 1970, the average deputy was also slightly over 40. In 1973, however, deputies will probably be younger overall because of the constitutional amendment lowering the minimum age for deputies from 25 to 21.[15]

Another important characteristic of Mexican deputies is the manner in which they first learned about politics. Of the 23 PRI deputies who discussed this, 13 stated they had no relatives in politics and that they became interested in politics as a result of factors external to their home situation. Nine of 12 PAN respondents also indicated that their families had not been politically active. The one PPS respondent who discussed this stated he had no relatives in politics. Both PAN and PRI members became active at a relatively young age; 16 of 23 PRI deputies stated they began participating in politics before they were 20, and 11 of 12 PAN respondents began their careers before they were 21.

Respondents began their political careers in a variety of ways. Many used student politics as their first stepping stone. Seven of PRI respondents and three PAN deputies

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14. For a discussion of the ages of American deputies, see Jewell and Patterson, op. cit., p. 114.

15. See William P. Tucker, "Mexican Elites," Journal of Politics, 31 (August, 1969), pp. 804-807, for a discussion of the socio-educational backgrounds of Mexican leaders in general.

who stated that they had no relatives in politics became active initially through student politics. Four PRI respondents explained their political activism as a function of their involvement in the labor movement, and five PRI deputies and six PAN deputies indicated that they became politically active as a result of participating in national party politics and campaigns. The following statements by PRI deputies illustrate the various ways in which deputies began their careers.

> "I became interested in politics around 1934. I began working in the national arms factory at that time and there were some changes made in the work force. So, we formed a union. I became the communications link between my friends who had been fired and were on the outside and those who remained on the inside. Over the years I was elected secretary general of the union five times."

> "I became interested in politics when I was around 11. At that time there were some educational reforms, and a system of student societies were instituted in the primary grades. I became involved in these, enjoyed it, became president of the group, and that is where it all began."

> "I have always been interested in politics. There is no difference between student politics and this except for the issues. I became involved in politics when I was in a boarding school built by General Cardenas for the sons of workers. My father is a musician and my mother is a campesina."

Although it appears that the majority of PRI deputies attain their position through their own merits, others

utilize family ties and personal connections to reach the Chamber. The following statement suggests how some deputies view this.

> "I became involved in politics and achieved what I have achieved through my own effort. There were no family ties, no pull of any kind. It has been entirely on merit. Unfortunately, too few of our politicians become involved in this way. Many of them are politicians because they have family ties or something of the kind that guarantees them a good possibility for a career."

This section has described the types of individuals who serve in the Chamber and how they became interested and involved in politics. As important as knowing these characteristics is knowing how candidates are selected and why citizens aspire to serve in the Chamber. The following sections attempt to answer these questions.

## Deputy Selection Procedures

National leaders select nominees to the Chamber of Deputies in a number of ways. In the years following the Revolution, it appears that the President decided on or personally approved all nominations. In more recent years scholars have concluded that the President and his inner circle including governors and major interests within the party select nominees.[16] The President hand picks approximately 20 percent of the PRI candidates, governors and other

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16. L. Vincent Padgett, The Mexican Political System (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), p. 139.

regional leaders select 15 percent, and leaders within the PRI select candidates for the remaining positions.[17]

Although the President only selects 20 percent of his party's deputies, he tacitly or explicitly approves them all. Indeed, presidents and presidents-elect use nominations to the Chamber as a means of rewarding deserving supporters.[18] The President's control of the nominations is such that if he becomes dissatisfied with a PRI nominee prior to the official election, he can see to it that the opposition "wins" that particular seat.[19] Furthermore, with the President's support individuals who are not members of the PRI are brought into the party's popular sector so that they can become PRI nominees.[20] Thus, it is only partially correct to state that in Mexico "all recruitment is through the party."[21] It is more correct to state that the leaders of

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17. Frank Brandenburg, The Making of Modern Mexico (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1964), p. 105.

18. There is disagreement as to whether the incumbent or the president-elect determines nominations to the Chamber. Pablo Gonzalez Casanova, op. cit., p. 17, argues that the incumbent exercises this power. Brandenburg, op. cit., p. 155, contends that the president-elect determines who will serve under him as deputies. Through their responses incumbent deputies indicated that the latter view is correct. Brandenburg, op. cit., p. 155 and Padgett, op. cit., p. 139, discuss using deputy-ships as spoils.

19. Brandenburg, op. cit., pp. 148-149.

20. Brandenburg, op. cit., p. 105.

21. Karl Schmidt makes this statement in "Congressional Campaigning in Mexico: A View from the Provinces," Journal of Inter-American Studies, 11 (January, 1969), pp. 96-97.

the Revolutionary Family oversee all recruitment, and that they use the party to channel and legitimize their decisions.

In the past, national leaders selected candidates to the Chamber based on consultations with regional leaders but with little regard for public sentiment. "We must recognize . . . that in the elections for deputies and senators the will of the electors is usually ignored in the selection of the candidates, or violated at the polls . . . ."[22] Deputies were usually uneducated regional leaders rewarded for their ability to keep the peace. Carlos Fuentes, Mexico's foremost novelist, described these men and how they gained office.

> "The mayor climbed to the rostrum and introduced him and praised him, and he accepted his nomination as a federal deputy that had been arranged months earlier in Puebla and Mexico with the government that recognized his revolutionary merits, his good example of retiring from the Army so as to comply with the postulates of the agrarian reform, and his excellent service in substituting for the absence of authority in the region, establishing order at his own cost and risk."[23]

There are indications that the selection process has changed in recent years. As the political system became more complex, the ruling elite relinquished some control

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22. Marte R. Gomez, "Los Procesos Electorales," in Mexico: Cincuenta Anos de Revolucion, III. La Politica (Mexico, D. F.: Fondo de Cultura, 1961), p. 444.

23. Carlos Fuentes, La Muerte de Artemio Cruz (Mexico, D. F.: Fondo de Cultura, 1962), p. 109.

over elective middle level positions, and the public began to demand that middle level officials represent their interests before the national elite. "Middle elites are desired who will responsibly perform such input functions as the communication of popular demands to higher decisional areas, and whose own behavior promoted these interests as perceived by the publics involved."[24] These public demands have become so important that it is increasingly difficult for men like Artemio Cruz to become RPI nominees.

> "It is no longer possible to give as a wedding present to the son of a senator-friend the position of a deputy; nor to have a friend become a deputy from a district of which he is not a native and in which he has never set foot. The Senator, the Deputy of our days should be natives of the entity which they represent and be known there. They must count, furthermore, on the support of some of the representative (party) organizations."[25]

The responses of the deputies substantiate the changes in the selection process.

> "Within our party our members have a record of their activities and backgrounds--what is commonly called a curriculum vita. In accord with requests from certain groups of citizens, several names are selected and analyzed, and then the party determines who the candidate will be. This is not the first time I have been a candidate. Groups had nominated me for the senate, for governor. All these things are taken into account."

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24. William Tuohy and David Ronfeldt, "Political Control and the Recruitment of Middle Level Elites in Mexico: An Example from Agrarian Politics," Western Political Quarterly, 22 (June, 1969), pp. 369.

25. Gomez, op. cit., p. 444.

> "There are several reasons why I was nominated. (1) There is a general tendency to promote young men, and I am a young man. (2) PRI candidates are very frequently accused of continuismo and dishonesty, but these charges could not be leveled against me. I was young and a student leader. (3) Because I grew up in my district and knew the people and problems there."

It appears furthermore that the PRI has structured the selection process to insure that local interests have a voice in determining their nominees. "The practice of allowing the sector with the most party members in a specific locality to nominate the party's legislative candidate for the locality has encouraged membership drives that contribute to the inclusive character of the party and thus help to maintain its overall strength in the society."[26]

Not all deputies receive the nomination because local groups support them, however. The majority is nominated primarily because they represent particular interest groups within the party. Labor and campesino leaders, for example, are always present in the Chamber.[27] The party nominates others to reward them for their service and achievements. Significantly, however, only one deputy attributed his candidacy to having been selected by the governor. The

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26. Martin C. Needler, "Mexico as a Case Study in Political Development," International Development Review, 10 (March, 1968), pp. 9-13.

27. Brandenburg, op. cit., pp. 154-155. The great majority of current deputies from the Labor sector hold high positions in state and national unions.

following statements illustrate the various recruitment channels respondents described.

> "I was nominated because my union has 100,000 members. As is true in the United States, unions have their interests to defend. I had been in leadership positions on occasion, although I have never been the national leader, and have served in the union since I was very young."

> "I had served as Press Director for the Chamber of Deputies and then later served in the party's publishing office. There I managed all party publications for _____'s campaign through the national publications committee. From there the party named me to be a deputy."

> "I received the nomination because of my past activities. Also, the governor selected me. He asked me to serve. I had held numerous posts including Secretary of State (at the state level) and had been the Governor's campaign manager."

The PAN and PPS select their candidates on the basis of years of party service. Like the PRI deputies, PAN and PPS members state that support in their district is also important. Table 9 illustrates the various reasons for which deputies feel they were nominated.

Table 9 clearly shows that the most important factor affecting nominations to the Chamber is a history of party service. Combining all responses that include "prior service" shows that 21 of 25 PRI deputies feel they were nominated because they had contributed to the party in some way prior to receiving the nomination. Usually the services rendered were within a specific sector of the party. The national elite allocates a specific number of seats to each sector, and then sector leaders select their nominees.

TABLE 9

FACTORS DETERMINING NOMINATIONS TO THE CHAMBER AS IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS

| | | PRI | PPS | PAN | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Education | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| 2. | Prior Service | 15 | - | 4 | 19 |
| 3. | People's candidate/ familiarity with the district | 2 | - | 4 | 6 |
| 4. | Self-sought | 1[a] | - | 2 | 3 |
| 5. | Combination, #2 and #3 | 3 | 2 | - | 5 |
| 6. | Combination, #1 and #3 | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| 7. | Combination, #2 and youth representative | 2 | - | - | 2 |
| 8. | Combination #2 and selected by governor | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| | Totals | 25 | 2 | 11 | 38 |

[a]One respondent who had served in two legislatures indicated he had been nominated for different reasons each time.

Frequently the sector leaders name themselves as nominees, but they also select locally and regionally important leaders from throughout the nation.[28]

The number of seats allocated to a party sector appears to be a function of its strength in national politics. As Table 10 shows, at least since 1952, the Popular sector has had the majority of PRI seats in the Chamber. This allocation of Chamber positions to the middle class that makes up the party's Popular sector reflects the government's policies emphasizing industrialization at the expense of the labor and peasant groups.[29]

Another way of examining recruitment into the Chamber is from the perspective of the manner in which deputies define their roles.[30] "Role, for any individual legislator,

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28. Brandenburg, op. cit., pp. 154-155; William P. Tucker, The Mexican Government Today (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957), p. 100.

29. For a discussion of governmental policies, see Brandenburg, op. cit., pp. 205-233.

30. Studies of legislative behavior have documented the validity of research into legislative role perceptions. The pioneering study in this area is John C. Wahlke, Heinz Eulau, William Buchanan and Leroy C. Ferguson, The Legislative System: Explorations in Legislative Behavior (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1962). For examples of research indebted to this pioneering effort, see Roger H. Davidson, The Role of the Congressman (New York: Pegasus, 1969), and Allan Kornberg, Canadian Legislative Behavior: A Study of the 25th Parliament (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967). This type of research was expected to add greatly to our understanding of legislative behavior. To date, this potential is unrealized. For a critique of research in this area, see Malcolm E. Jewell, "Attitudinal Determinants of Legislative Behavior: The Utility of Role Analysis," in

TABLE 10

SECTOR REPRESENTATION IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

| Selected Years[a] | Popular | Labor | Peasant |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1952 | 90 | 35 | 36 |
| 1967 | 91 | 38 | 44 |
| 1970 | 94 | 36 | 47 |

[a]Chamber records were available only since 1967. The 1952 data is from Tucker, op. cit., p. 100. The 1967 and 1970 data are from official Chamber records. The data are not complete because several biographical sheets had been removed.

refers to a coherent set of 'norms' of behavior which are thought by those involved in the interactions being viewed, to apply to all persons who occupy the position of legislator."[31] Within their general role, legislators have different types of roles. Understanding whom deputies feel they represent, i.e., their areal roles, will provide insights into how Mexican deputies are recruited.[32]

Mexican deputies define their constituencies in a variety of ways. Minority party deputies tend to identify

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Allan Kornberg and Lloyd D. Musolf, Legislatures in Developmental Perspective (Durham: Duke University Press, 1970), pp. 460-500.

31. Wahlke, Eulau, Buchanan, and Ferguson, op. cit., p. 8.

32. For a discussion of the various roles within the general role of the legislator, see Wahlke, Eulau, Buchanan and Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 10-12, 237-376.

with the nation while PRI deputies tend to identify with their district. This difference reflects the way in which minority party deputies define their role. They see themselves primarily as lawmakers and attempt to legislate in behalf of the nation. PRI deputies emphasize their role as gestores much more than PAN and PPS deputies, and therefore it is reasonable for them to feel they represent their district. The following responses illustrate the various ways deputies define their constituencies.

> "All deputies are representatives of all the people, but they are elected by districts for administrative reasons. That is why there is an immediate connection between the deputy and his district. I represent my district."

> "The Constitution states this very clearly. We represent the people. Those who say they represent their district or their state do so because of their lack of understanding. You will always find those who lack understanding among any group of people."

> "The theory of the PRI is that I represent a pluralistic group, but speaking in strictly political terms the group I represent and whose interests I defend is a middle class group of rural landowners, farmers and ranchers."

> "I am here representing a district because of circumstance, but I am a railroad man. Therefore, I can not speak to you without the prior authorization of the Secretary General of my union. If you were interested in the union rather than the Chamber, maybe then I could talk to you."

> "I am a party deputy and I do not forget this. I represent the people who vote for the PAN--2,000,000 officially recognized votes. They have something to say, and we have to make them count."

Table 11 suggests the increasingly important role played by local interest groups and public opinion in the

TABLE 11

AREAL ROLES OF MEXICAN DEPUTIES

| Party | Primary Areal Roles | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | District | State | Nation | Party | Specific Group |
| PRI | 15 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 8 |
| Non-PRI | 4 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 2 |
| | Secondary Areal Roles | | | | |
| PRI | 3 | 0 | 10 | 1 | 1 |
| Non-PRI | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

selection of nominees to the Chamber. Given the structure of the PRI, deputies could be expected to represent their sector or groups within it. Instead, half of the PRI respondents identified their constituency as their district; only eight identified a specific group or party sector. These findings indicate that local interest groups, and perhaps local public opinion in general, have a stronger voice in the selection of nominees than has generally been concluded.[33]

This apparent willingness to allow local interests a voice in selecting their congressional representatives is

33. Karl Schmidt, for example, states that "deputies represent, if only theoretically, national interest groups first and local power centers only secondarily." Schmidt, op. cit., p. 97.

important but should not be exaggerated. It would appear to indicate that national leaders are willing to allow districts to nominate "acceptable" candidates, but it should not be interpreted to suggest that the leadership will accept any candidate merely because he has popular support.[34] Moreover, there is no evidence suggesting that deputies who were nominated because they had support in their district will identify with their district after they are in the Chamber. Deputies who feel they were nominated because of their support in the district are only slightly more likely to "represent" their districts than are deputies who were nominated for reasons other than popular support within the district.[35] Similarly, the way in which a deputy defines his primary responsibilities in the Chamber is unrelated to

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34. For an example of the government's unwillingness to accept candidates merely on the basis of public support, see Tuohy and Ronfeldt, op. cit., pp. 365-374.

35. Employing Kendal's Q to determine the strength of the relationship between the reasons with which respondents explain their nominations and their areal roles indicates that there is no relationship between these two variables.

| Factors Determining Nominations | Areal Roles of Deputies | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | District | Other | Total |
| "People's Candidate" | 6 | 6 | 12 |
| Other | 10 | 12 | 22 |
| Total | 16 | 18 | 34 |

Q = .091.

See Hubert M. Blalock, Social Statistics (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1960), pp. 231-232, for a discussion of this statistic.

how he defines his constituency. Only two of 19 respondents who claim to represent their districts defined themselves primarily as gestores. In sum, then, it is important to note that local interests do have a voice in selecting their nominees, but the actual impact of their views in the selection process and on the behavior of deputies as indicated by their responses is unclear.

Overall, it seems that the process for selecting PRI nominees to the Chamber has changed in recent years. Although some candidates continue to be nominated because of their ties with governors or other high-placed individuals, the great majority of candidates have a long record of service to the party. The fact that 20 percent of the respondents feel they were selected at least partially because they had support in their districts and were familiar with local problems combined with the party's apparent willingness to allow locally dominant interests to propose a district's candidate suggest that national leaders have become more sensitive to public demands for a voice in the selection process. The willingness of national leaders to allow these local interests to have a say in the selection process is significant but it should not be exaggerated. There is no reason to believe that candidates unacceptable to the national leaders will attain deputyships or other prominent national positions even if they have public support. Also, there is no evidence suggesting that deputies who were

nominated because of support in their district define their obligations or constituencies differently than do other deputies.

PAN and PPS deputies emphasize both their party records and public support as the reasons for receiving their nomination. Over half of the minority party respondents indicated they were nominated at least in part because of their support in their districts. Furthermore, over half of the non-PRI respondents had their district as their primary or secondary areal focus. In view of the problems minority parties face in Mexico, it is not surprising that PPS and PAN candidates are well known in their district and that they attempt to represent their district in the Chamber. To nominate different types of candidates would seriously reduce the already small possibilities of winning elections.

## Motivations for Seeking Deputyships

L. Vincent Padgett states that there are three reasons for seeking positions in the Chamber. "There is added influence, access to the President, prestige, and some income connected with these positions . . . ."[36] Deputies themselves suggest several other motivations. There is the possibility of using the Chamber to develop a political career. The Chamber attracts others because they see serving in the Chamber as an opportunity to serve the people.

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36. Padgett, op. cit., p. 130.

Serving in the Chamber appeals to minority party members because it offers them an opportunity to present their party's programs and ideology. Table 12 indicates the frequency of these responses.

The most surprising finding is that almost half of the PRI respondents stated that they did not seek to be deputies. These responses appear to be a result of the way the ruling elite selects deputies. As shown on page 143 the party sectors select the majority of deputies because of their service to their sector. This results in two types of deputies, "those who are there because they were named and who do not really care about it, and those who are there and have political ambitions." The former include union and campesino leaders. "Coming to the Chamber enhances their personal prestige and that of their union as well. Many of these men return several times to the Chamber." They "do not have the qualifications to be governor or to reach the presidency," and therefore do not see the Chamber as an important step in developing a career. Moreover, they contribute little to the Chamber even when they return. Over half of all deputies who served at least two terms never participated in debates during their second or subsequent terms; over one-third introduced no legislation of any kind; and over 60 percent held no offices in the Chamber.

For those who have political ambitions, the Chamber is but one of several ways to develop a career, and they

TABLE 12

MOTIVATIONS FOR SEEKING DEPUTYSHIPS[a]

| | Party Identification | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | PRI | PAN | PPS |
| Unsought | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| Prestige | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Service | 6 | 3 | 0 |
| Program/Ideology | 1 | 7 | 3 |
| Prestige and Service | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Service and Lawmaking | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Lawmaking and Program | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Service and Career Development | 1 | 1 | 0 |

[a]The data presented here are from responses to the question: Why did you want to be a deputy?

became deputies because of situational factors rather than as a result of deliberate planning. The following responses illustrate these patterns.

> "I consider my position as transitory and not as part of a political career. I owe my position to my organization. I work in a textile plant and when this legislature ends I will return to my base and serve my organization. I disregard the political career aspect of serving here, although I do try to be of service to the nation and the party."

> "I did not want to be a deputy. It is not something you want. If politics is getting what you want, it would be very easy. Being a deputy is one step in my career. I think politics is a career, and being a deputy is part of that career. It is

like being a doctor. You do not ask him if he wants to perform an appendectomy. You do not ask a politician if he wants to serve in the Chamber. You play with different possibilities as your career develops. You gain political maturity and this provides a series of options, and you accept or reject these. All my political history is one of trying to achieve higher positions without focusing on a specific post. This is what I think a political career is."

"I did not want to be a deputy. I was originally slated to be a senator, but other more important political interests intervened and another candidate received the nomination. So, the governor called me in and asked me to be a deputy. What I was interested in was being a state party officer, and since I already had that post I accepted."

Even though politically ambitious citizens do not focus exclusively on the Chamber as the means for developing their career, it is clear that serving as a deputy does enhance career possibilities and therefore ambitious politicians are willing to serve in the Chamber. One respondent who served in the Chamber in the 1940's and went on to hold numerous positions including that of presidential assistant said: "If you have political ambitions it is better to be a deputy than a technical adviser. Much better." The following responses explain why this is so.

"The Chamber of Deputies is a type of 'school of politics.' You meet all kinds of people and make contacts, you learn how the government operates, and you participate in law-making which is very important. This is why being a deputy can help you."

"Serving in the Chamber gives you contacts. As a comparison, I have spent 20 years in politics in _____. If I had been in Mexico City I would likely have a more important national position.

> The fact that I am here allows me to get to know who is active in national politics and, more important, it is an opportunity to have them get to know me. Coming here is really the first step in a national career."

Those deputies selected by PRI organizations who have no political ambitions and do not seek to serve in the Chamber seem to accept the nominations because it is prestigious and economically rewarding to do so. Even though deputies are among the most ridiculed government officials in Mexico, the public recognizes their official status and addresses them with the title of Señor Diputado.[37] The deputies themselves evidence pride in their position as the following statements illustrate.

> "Becoming a deputy, you could say, is almost the culmination of a political career because all that is left is being a governor or senator. To achieve that is very difficult. At least we were able to come this far. There are only 178 of us, and we are satisfied to have achieved this. There are many men who would like to have done the same."

> "Serving as a deputy is one of the greatest honors I have had. There are 50,000,000 Mexicans and only 203 deputies. Also, given that it is in the Chamber of Deputies that you make the laws that govern the nation, well, that should tell you how important it is to be a deputy."

> "Undoubtedly, it is very important to be a deputy. If you count, there are 203 deputies, 60 senators, 30 governors, and 50 men in the executive branch. This indicates that we are within the 500 most

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37. Gonzalez Casanova, op. cit., p. 18, states that deputies are the most ridiculed officials in Mexico. For examples of caricatures of deputies, see Rius, Los Agachados, 16 (Mexico, D. F.: Editorial Posada, 1971); Los Supermachos, 296 (Mexico, D. F.: Editorial Meridiano, S. A., 1971). Also,

important--we are in the group that runs the country. I personally feel very proud of being a deputy."

Another indication of the status of deputies is that the position has a "political personality." That is, deputies have access to top level government officials, and they are able to use their position to raise important issues.[38] For similar reasons labor leaders within the Chamber are better able to defend their unions than are leaders outside the Chamber.[39]

Deputies, especially PRI deputies, indicated that they receive substantial incomes. When they arrive at the Chamber deputies receive $33,000 pesos for miscellaneous expenses that may be incurred during their term.[40] All deputies earn $10,000 pesos monthly throughout the year, even though the Chamber meets for only four months. Members of the Gran Comision and Permanent Comission receive additional

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Brandenburg, op. cit., p. 158, rates the Chamber ninth on a 12 point prestige scale of Mexican officials.

38. See Tuohy and Ronfeldt, op. cit., 370-371, and Chapter 3, p.123, for examples of deputies using their positions in this manner. Several deputies used the phrase "political personality" to describe their status.

39. As shown on pp. 153-154, several deputies stated that union leaders enhance their own prestige and simultaneously that of their organization by serving in the Chamber. Brandenburg, op. cit., pp. 154-155, voices a similar view.

40. Deputies have the option of receiving this as a lump sum payment or in monthly installments. Several deputies pointed out that they used the lump sum to defray their campaign expenses.

pay, and the Chamber leaders can earn as much as $25,000 pesos monthly.[41] The majority leader earns even more, according to several deputies. "Maybe Luis Ducoing (the current majority leader) earns $50,000 pesos monthly. Maybe. He has a free hand with the budget. I know that Martinez Dominguez (a former majority leader) could use money as freely as he chose. If you need money, you can go ask him and he can get it for you."[42]

These figures, impressive in their own right, are even more impressive when compared to typical incomes in Mexico. In 1965, persons working in commercial establishments earned an average of $7,059 pesos annually; employees in service industries averaged $8,378 pesos.[43] The lowest paid deputy in 1970 earned over $120,000 pesos.

Serving in the Chamber also provides numerous opportunities to earn additional income during the three-year term and after. "Many deputies are granted leave with pay from their organizations so they have a double income. Others, and a good number at that, take advantage of their positions to make extra money." One respondent, a deputy who served in the Chamber in the 1940's and went on to hold many higher

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41. Members of these commissions did not reveal the amount of the additional income.

42. Antonio Castro Leal also estimates that the leadership earns $50,000 pesos monthly. Excelsior, Sept. 15, 1971, p. 9.

43. Mexico, 1970, op. cit., pp. 114-118.

positions including personal assistant to the President, said that although deputies earn good incomes, the positions "are not influential enough to warrant seeking the office for wealth. They could not steal even if they wanted to."[44] Other deputies use their years in Mexico City to develop relationahips that will aid them in their professions after they leave the Chamber. One deputy described this.

> "It is very possible to establish contacts which benefit you after you leave. For example, as a lawyer I will have met all the government officials in the Federal District. When I hear of some work they are doing in my state I can call them and ask for the assignment. They might give it to me."

Several deputies indicated that they were in the Chamber because of their desire to serve the public. Those sharing this view tended to be non-PRI deputies or older PRI deputies. The following statements typify this response.

> "This is an opportunity to serve. That is how it should be seen, not in terms of what advantages come to you for being a deputy. That is how I see it and how I will always see it."

> "I wanted to serve in the Chamber because I thought that as a deputy I could do something for my neighbors. It is not political ambitions since as Panistas we can not go anywhere. It is not money, either."

Significantly, almost all non-PRI deputies stated that they could present and defend their party's program and

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44. In view of the respondent's experience, the fact he is not impressed by the incomes deputies earn suggests the enormous sums top level officials must have access to.

ideology. Only one PRI deputy gave this as his reason for wishing to serve in the Chamber.[45]

## Summary and Conclusions

Part one of this chapter has attempted to describe the types of individuals recruited into the Chamber, how they are selected, and why they wish to serve. The data indicate that, as a generalization, deputies are well educated, first-generation politicians with a long record of party service. Although national leaders weigh public opinion when selecting nominees, they give much more consideration to a candidate's "acceptability" and party record than to his level of popular support. As a rule, PRI members do not aspire to serve in the Chamber, but they do recognize that being a deputy provides an excellent opportunity for launching a political career. For those not seeking a political career serving in the Chamber offers economic benefits and psychic rewards in the form of status.

Overall, it appears that the manner in which deputies are recruited has beneficial ramifications for the political

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45. The relationship between party identification and motivations for seeking deputyships is extremely strong yielding a Q value of -.972. This reaffirms the statements by minority party deputies presented in Chapter 4 regarding the importance of the Chamber to Mexican political life.

| Party Identification | Motivations for Seeking Deputyships | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Program/ideology | Other | Total |
| PRI | 1 | 21 | 22 |
| Non-PRI | 10 | 3 | 13 |
| Q = -.972 Totals | 11 | 24 | 34 |

system. As is true of the British parliament, recruitment into the Chamber in Mexico is increasingly open to the middle and lower classes. This serves to support the government's democratic image.[46] Furthermore, national leaders select candidates in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons, but it appears that fewer and fewer are selected merely because of personal ties. The deputies believe that, regardless of their background, if they are competent they will be able to achieve high positions.[47] They also feel that their experience in the Chamber will help them attain these high positions. The analysis in part two will determine whether or not their beliefs are justified.

## Recruitment from the Chamber

Serving in a nation's parliament provides a politician an excellent opportunity to advance to even higher political offices. In the United States, representatives often go on to hold other major public positions. Over 40 percent of Ohio governors who served between 1870 and 1950 came directly from Congress. Twenty-eight percent of United States senators who held office between 1947 and 1957 had served

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46. See Almond and Powell, op. cit., p. 262, for a discussion of recruitment into the parliament in Britain. W. G. Runciman presents an excellent review of major works discussing the relationship between styles of recruitment, elites, democracies and oligarchies. See W. G. Runciman, Social Science and Political Theory (Cambridge: University Press, 1969), pp. 64-86.

47. Schmidt, op. cit., p. 99, also holds this view.

previously in the House.[48] Moreover, the last three American Presidents--John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Richard M. Nixon, began their national careers as representatives. The Brazilian Congress also prepares its members for future positions. It

> ". . . recruits, socializes and trains politicians to and for other roles in the political system in which they may wield more power than they do as national legislators. They learn the norms of the elites, they learn political skill, and they acquire visibility, maintaining and utilizing these other roles. In this sense the activities of the Brazilian Congress constitutes a training ground for Brazilian politicians."[49]

The Chamber of Deputies performs a similar function for the Mexican political system. Because the PRI is a part of the dominant political apparatus, members of opposition parties never attain high office. Therefore, the analysis here includes only PRI members.

Fifty-eight PRI deputies who served during the years analyzed in this study went on to hold 81 major political positions, and 20 did so immediately after their Chamber experience. Thirty-one deputies became governors, 17 became senators, and others served as members of the Cabinet, assistants to Cabinet Secretaries, directors or assistant directors or assistant directors of semi-autonomous government

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48. Jewell and Patterson, op. cit., p. 118.

49. Robert A. Packenham, "Legislatures and Political Development," in Allan Kornberg and Lloyd D. Musolf, eds., Legislatures in Developmental Perspective (Durham: Duke University Press, 1970), pp. 530-531.

agencies, as PRI national officials, or as leaders of national unions. Table 13 presents these data.

Table 13 lists only half of all deputies who served from 1940 through 1969. Because the sample was randomly selected, it was expected that an equal number of deputies from the legislatures analyzed and from thos unanalyzed would go on to hold high positions. For reasons explained later in this chapter, however, far more deputies from the latter legislatures have gone on to hold high positions. Overall, then, 161 deputies, including those who served in the Chamber in 1970, have gone on to serve in major governmental and political positions. Furthermore, many of the deputies who have served since 1961 are still active politically and can be expected to achieve some high positions in the near future. Thus, it can be concluded that the Chamber does serve as a training ground for national elites.

Serving in the Chamber offers aspiring politicians two types of opportunities. They are in a position to study, amend, propose and debate legislation, and they are able to meet national leaders and develop personal contact which can aid them in the future. As shown in the previous section, the respondents believe these contacts essential to a political career. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to measure the degree to which deputies develop contacts. Therefore, this study will measure the relationship between observable legislative behavior and promotions from the Chamber.

TABLE 13

PROMOTIONS OF DEPUTIES TO MAJOR POLITICAL POSITIONS*

| Positions | Legislative Term in which Deputy Served 1940-1942 | 1946-1948 | 1952-1954 | 1961-1963 | 1964-1966 | 1970-1972 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Governors | 10 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 3 | - | 31 |
| Senators | 4 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 2 | - | 17 |
| Attorney General | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 2 |
| Attorney General, D. F. | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| Sec'y. of Agr. and Ranching | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | 3 |
| Dept. Agrarian Affairs (DAAC) | - | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | - | 4 |
| Sec'y. Hydraulic Affairs | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| Petroleos Nacionales | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | 2 |
| PRI President or Sec'y. Gen. | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 3 |
| CONASUPO | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 |
| Federal Unions | | | | | | | |
| F.T.S.E. | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | 3 |
| I.S.S.T.E. | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 2 |
| Sec'y. of Navy | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| Sec'y. of Public Education | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 3 |
| Sec'y. National Patrimony | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 2 |
| Presidential Aides | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 2 |
| Sec'y. Health | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 23 | 12 | 14 | 20 | 10 | 2 | 81 |

*These data are from a forthcoming publication on career patterns by Roderic Camp, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Central College, Pella, Iowa.

There are two types of observable behavior that would appear to contribute to developing a political career. The first is legislative activity, that is, introducing, amending and debating legislation or discussing other issues on the Chamber floor; the second is serving as a Chamber officer. PRI deputies recognize the importance of each and agree that both enhance career possibilities.

For a PRI deputy speaking in the Chamber is important for at least two reasons. First, and most important, it indicates that a deputy has gained the confidence of the leadership. Chamber leaders closely control the activities of deputies within the Chamber, and they select speakers who they feel are competent to present the government's view. Others are simply not recognized.[50] Secondly, going to the rostrum provides a deputy with public exposure; newspapers frequently photograph Chamber speakers and interview them following the session. Some deputies suggest the importance attached to speaking in the Chamber by their diligence in avoiding the rostrum. The following statements suggest the importance deputies attach to speaking in the Chamber.

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50. Numerous respondents pointed out that only on rare occasions did deputies speak without the majority leader's approval, and those who did suffered for it. The deputy who did so was "put on ice for over a year." For an example of the control the majority leader exercises over deputies, see Excelsior, Sept. 12, 1971, p. 16.

> "Speaking in the Chamber is dangerous. You can make a mistake. You can promote yourself in other ways. If you make a mistake up there, that can be the end. You were there when the (Chamber) President made the mistake last week. People have been joking about it ever since. That is the third time he has been a deputy, and he is one of the Labor sector's most important men."[51]

> "Speaking in the Chamber is a great opportunity and a high distinction. If you do it badly, it counts against you. Here in the Chamber there are some deputies who have limitations at the rostrum and there are those of us who have greater speaking abilities. You have to take this into account in weighing the importance of speaking in the Chamber."

> "The majority leader seldom or never speaks to defend a bill. If he did and were embarrassed by the opposition he would lose face and power. Therefore, he assigns speakers who defend his case. They run the total risk."

> "The majority leader never speaks. Why should he. He has 178 others who can speak for him. If they make a mistake, it is only one of them. If he makes a mistake, they chop off his head."

Deputies also recognize the value of introducing and amending legislation, but they do not seem to assign as much importance to this as they do to speechmaking. This is not surprising in view of the limited amount of legislation initiated and amended by Chamber members over the years. Moreover, deputies point out that their important contributions are made in the secrecy of committee hearings. "The use of

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51. The error referred to is that when the Chamber president administered the oath of office to a suplente he listed the deputy's responsibilities and then said, "If you do these things, may the people hold you responsible," rather than "If you do not do these things, may the people hold you responsible."

the rostrum is an important part of the deputy's role, but it is only one part. Not all those with political ambitions necessarily participate in debates. Some dedicate themselves to working in committee, and if they do it well the party rewards them later." Nonetheless, some amendments are also made on the floor and deputies do introduce some legislation. These publicly observable actions will be used to suggest the importance of legislative activity to recruitment from the Chamber.

Serving as a Chamber officer enhances a deputy's career potential because it provides an opportunity to develop close relationships with the majority leader and other government officials. Chamber leaders reward deputies who have performed their duties well by having them elected to Chamber offices.[52] As is true of speaking in the Chamber, holding an office is both an opportunity and a risk. The following statements indicate how deputies become officers and what opportunities they derive from these positions.

> "Being president of the Chamber is only a bureaucratic position. Of course, it is an honor; there are only four presidents each year. Determining how a president is selected is a $64,000 question. He is always selected according to dominant political currents. Selecting him is never discussed with us. We are told who the candidates are."

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52. Minority party members regularly serve as Chamber vice-presidents because this is a relatively unimportant office. However, the majority leader determines which minority deputies will serve. The PRI leaderships in the Chamber nominates the minority party members without consulting with the leadership of the minority parties.

"It is important to be Chamber president. I never thought I would be president. Coming from the province, being president helps me become known. In my case, I got to know the majority leader and worked hard at my job. I did not know him when I arrived, so I immediately began trying to get to know him. I spoke to him and tried to demonstrate my abilities. He appreciated my going in and telling him who I was, and he began assigning me small tasks. He saw that I was competent. When it came time to select another president the majority leader called and said they wanted me. They informed me that they had selected me and asked what I thought. I am certain they considered all of this in selecting me or any other president. They want someone who can handle the debates and represent the Chamber with dignity."

"I was named to the Permanent Commission because last year and throughout the recess I tried to accomplish efficiently the tasks they assigned me, and because I have had special care to maintain not only political relations but also friendly and personal relations with the Chamber leader."

"Of course serving on the Permanent Commission is important politically. During the regular session the Chamber's activities are carried out by around 200 deputies; here they are carried out by 15. That gives you a mathematical response. You have closer contact with individuals and with other branches of government."

"Being on the Permanent Commission indicates a further development in your political career. I think I was selected because of some speeches I gave during the last session and because of some of my committee work."

By far the most important officer in the Chamber is the president of the Gran Comision who is also the majority leader. Formally, the members of the Gran Comision elect the majority leader; in reality, he is selected by major government and party officials after a long series of discussions with various political leaders. "Undoubtedly, the

Secretary of Gobernacion (Interior) and the president of the party have a say in this. The President, of course, must approve him, but he does not appoint him. Maybe he used to, but not anymore." The following statement reflects the intricacies of selecting a majority leader.

> "When I came to Mexico, the governor had me call on the president of the party who was a good friend of ours. I asked him how things were going for the selection of the new leader, and he suggested I go see the Secretary of Gobernacion. I did and we talked for a while. He said there were two men being considered and that I might want to go see Senties (the past majority leader). I went to see Senties and told him we were supporting him."

Thus far this chapter has shown that deputies believe that serving in the Chamber will enhance their political career, especially if they are active in the legislative work of the Chamber and/or hold offices. They also suggest that much of what they do to develop their careers is not readily visible to the public. One deputy explicitly stated this.

> "North American researchers are very detailed in their work; they are very precise, but they never understand the real intimacies. For example, I just told you what I should do to continue with my career, but I might do all these things and then not make it. In your individual political development there are many other factors, many other factors. It is almost random."

Cognizant of the "intimate" aspects of career development, it is also reasonable to suggest that there is a relationship between the observable aspect of Chamber behavior and promotions from the Chamber. Furthermore, given the manner in which the Chamber operates, it is fair to say

that the observable aspects of deputies' behavior indirectly reflect the behind the scenes activities of deputies. Chamber leaders select speakers who they know and in whom they have confidence. They select Chamber officers in the same way. Thus, even though the manner in which these deputies develop relationships with Chamber leaders remains obscure, the fact that they have the confidence of the leaders manifests itself when these deputies become active in the Chamber. Overall, then, it does seem reasonable to expect observable Chamber behavior to be related to promotions from the Chamber. This relationship will now be tested.

Hypothesis 1. If deputies are active speech-makers, they will be promoted. Because 64.3 percent of all deputies never spoke in the Chamber, an active speech-maker is defined as any deputy who spoke on one or more issues. Considering only deputies who served prior to 1970, there is a positive but weak relationship between these two variables. With a sample size of 834, the analysis yields a Q = .447. However, of those deputies who were promoted, 66.6 percent were active speech-makers. Moreover, analyzing the promotion pattern by legislative session suggests that in time this overall relationship will improve. Of those deputies who were speech-makers in 1940-1942, 66.7 percent were promoted; in 1946-1948, 70 percent went on to hold higher positions; and 80 percent of active speakers in 1952-1954 served in higher positions. In 1961 and 1964, the promotion rates of

active speakers were 50 and 62 percent, respectively. Because many deputies who served in these sessions are still active politically, it is reasonable to expect that several of them will arrive at high positions and increase the overall relationship between these two variables.[53]

Hypothesis 2. If deputies are active legislators, they will be promoted. Active legislators are defined as those who introduced at least one bill or amendment from the floor. Only 46.9 percent of all legislators, including those in the Chamber during the 1970 session has introduced any legislation or proposed any amendments from the floor. The relationship between these variables is positive but weak. With a sample size of 1016, Q = .349. Nonetheless, 63.8 percent of all promoted deputies were active legislators. As was suggested in reference to the relationship between speech-making and promotions, it is possible that deputies who served in the Chamber in 1961 and thereafter and were active legislators will attain high office, but because of

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53. The Q value for each session from 1940-1942 to 1964-1966 is .563, .432, .720, .124, .371. The table for the overall Q calculation is

| Speech-making | Promoted Deputies | Deputies not Promoted | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Active | 36 | 327 | 363 |
| Not Active | 19 | 452 | 471 |
| Total | 55 | 779 | 834=N |

the relatively insignificant lawmaking role of the Chamber it is unlikely that this will occur.[54]

Hypothesis 3. If a deputy serves as a Chamber officer, he will be promoted. Chamber officers include the president, vice-presidents, secretaries, and members of the Gran Comision and Permanent Commission. The relationship between these variables is positive and moderately strong, yielding a Q = .62 with a sample size of 1095.[55] Of those deputies promoted, 72.4 percent had served as Chamber officers. This indicates that even though Chamber offices are not in themselves decision-making positions, they do serve as a base from which to attain powerful positions.

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54. The Q value is derived from the following table.

| Legislative Activity | Promoted Deputies | Deputies not Promoted | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Active | 37 | 440 | 477 |
| Not Active | 21 | 518 | 539 |
| Total | 58 | 958 | 1016 |

Q = .349

55. The Q value is derived from the following table.

| Chamber Officers | Promoted Deputies | Deputies not Promoted | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Officers | 42 | 369 | 411 |
| Not Officers | 16 | 589 | 605 |
| Total | 58 | 958 | 1016 |

Q = .615

The total of Chamber officers listed does not include the 1940 Gran Comision members or the presidents and vice-presidents for October, November and December, 1963. Occasionally state delegations rotate their Gran Comision member monthly. Those deputies who served on the Gran Comision in this manner are also not included as Chamber officers.

Overall, then, it is difficult to determine the relationship of Chamber experience to career development. Although a significant number of deputies goes on to hold major governmental positions, the overwhelming majority does not. The majority of those deputies promoted are active in the Chamber, but the majority of active deputies does not go on to hold major offices.

The difficulty in determining the relationship between Chamber behavior and promotions to high offices probably results from an unanticipated characteristic of Mexican recruitment practices. The premise of the research design was that if deputies were recruited to high positions, an approximately equal number of deputies would be recruited from each of the ten legislatures between 1940 and 1970. Through randomly selecting five of these ten legislatures and analyzing the behavior of deputies within the Chamber, this researcher expected to be able to establish a relationship between certain types of Chamber behavior and promotions. It is now clear that the first assumption, that is, that recruitment from the Chamber is not dependent on serving in any particular session or sessions, is invalid and therefore the data analyses presented here are difficult to evaluate.

Rather than recruiting deputies regularly from each session, it appears that deputies who serve during the latter half of a presidential term are much more likely to be

promoted than are those who serve during the first three years of a presidential term. Four of the five legislatures analyzed here coincided with the first three years of an executive's term, and 58 deputies who served in these went on to hold 81 major positions. Four of the five terms not analyzed coincided with the second half of a presidential term, and 103 deputies who served in these went on to hold 158 major positions. In other words, 77 percent more deputies were promoted from the latter period and went on to hold 95 percent more offices than did those in the period studied here.

Because the original research design did not anticipate this pattern there are no data available now which would allow testing the relationship between behavior in these unanalyzed legislatures with promotions to high positions. It is possible to utilize the data presented here to speculate as to the nature of the relationship between these variables in the unanalyzed legislatures.

Deputies whose terms coincide with the first three years of an executive's term are much less likely to be promoted than are those who serve during the second half of that term. However, of those who are promoted over 60 percent are active in the Chamber and over 70 percent served as Chamber officers. This suggests that these types of Chamber behavior are significant enough to compensate for the handicap of serving in these years. If this is the case, and

this writer believes it is, then it would seem that similar behavior in sessions coinciding with the second half of presidential terms would be much more likely to be rewarded. Only future research can determine the validity of this hypothesis, however.

A final point that merits discussion is this unexpected recruitment pattern. The most likely explanation for this is that deputies who serve during the second half of executive terms are available when the majority of governmental positions are to be staffed. The majority of these posts become available when a new president takes office. When the president-elect begins looking for men to fill these offices, it is likely that he considers those deputies who are completing their terms in the Chamber. These deputies are educated, experienced, and they have had ample time to demonstrate their abilities and loyalty; what is more important, they are immediately visible and available. Therefore, the president-elect probably selects many of them to fill the upcoming vacancies in the bureaucracy. In this way, these deputies have a much greater opportunity to continue their careers than do those who serve during the first three years of a presidential term.

# CHAPTER 6

## CONCLUSIONS

Scholars who have studied Mexican politics agree that the President and the inner circle of the Revolutionary Family dominate political decision-making. It would be incorrect to conclude on the basis of this finding, however, that other political actors are of little importance to the system. Recognizing this trend in existing studies of Mexican politics, L. Vincent Padgett warns against it. "For it is possible to assume so much power in the President and the inner circle of the Revolutionary Coalition that no significance attaches to people at other levels, such as legislators, who through their political militancy or activism provide the dynamic, the input of active support necessary for the system to function."[1] This study accepted the wisdom of this type of warning and, rather than conclude the Chamber of Deputies was largely irrelevant to Mexican politics as had prior studies, began with the question of how the Chamber "contributes to the decisional function in the society of which it is a part."[2]

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1. L. Vincent Padgett, The Mexican Political System (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), p. 147.

2. See Chapter 1.

To a significant degree the findings of the earlier studies reflect the bias of the research methods employed by scholars and a concomitant insensitivity to cultural difference between Mexico and the United States. Because the Mexican governmental structure resembled the structure of the United States government, American scholars assumed that research techniques and emphasis suitable for studies in this country would be applicable to research in Mexico. This was and is an erroneous assumption and it leads to invalid conclusions.

Although structurally the Mexican government resembles the United States government, the two function rather differently. Antonio Ugalde points out that Mexico has a bicameral Congress, a federal system, political parties, and the three branches of government, but it has never assimilated these institutions.

> "The country developed a political style of its own, unrelated to the imported forms. Thus the three branches have never served as a means of checks and balances; the executive branch has had total dominance over the legislative branch and has exercised a tight surveillance over the judicial branch . . . . The question that should be asked is: To what purpose does the regime keep alive the semblance of these dead political institutions?
>
> In part, it does so because it regards the 'traditional' institutions as constitutive elements of a democratic society, and keeps them as symbols that in Mexico do not generate democratic behavior but are worth preserving because they allow manipulation of the masses . . . . The

> regime has adapted these institutions to the performance of new functions crucial for the political stability and economic development of the nation."[3]

Cognizant of the structural similarities but sensitive to the functional differences between the Mexican Chamber of Deputies and the United States House of Representatives, this research has attempted to determine if the Chamber plays a role in four major systemic functions, lawmaking, communications, legitimization, and elite recruitment, and if so, to evaluate the importance of these roles to the maintenance of the political system.

The second chapter shows that the Chamber is not primarily a lawmaking body. In itself this finding only substantiates the conclusions other scholars have reached. However, deputies initiate significantly more legislation than other studies would indicate, and since the 1960's they have become much more active than they were in earlier years. Moreover, on occasion the Chamber has substantively amended major piece of executive-initiated legislation. Nonetheless, it is correct to state that the Chamber is not primarily a lawmaking body; it initiates only a relatively small amount of legislation, and it does not seriously amend the majority of the executive's bills.

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3. Antonio Ugalde, Political Power in a Mexican Community (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1970), pp. 170-171.

Other studies, reaching the same conclusion, have stated that the Chamber was irrelevant to national politics. This statement implicitly suggests that lawmaking is the principle function of all legislatures. In fact, the opposite is true.

> "Thus, although in some legislatures--e.g., the United States, the Philippines--legislating may be the most important function, these cases definitely seem to constitute a minority of national legislatures. Most of the world's legislatures do not legislate very much; of only a very few of them may it be said that legislating is the principle function."[4]

In comparison with most national legislatures, therefore, the Mexican Chamber's lawmaking role is rather typical. To conclude that all such legislatures are irrelevant to decision-making in their respective national political systems is to ignore cultural differences and to revert to the most parochial type of political analysis. In other words, only those who assume without any objective basis that legislatures to be relevant to their political systems must behave as does the American Congress can conclude that all other types of legislatures are irrelevant to national politics.

Although the Chamber is not a lawmaking body, it does perform major functions for the political system. Undoubtedly the most important of these is the role deputies

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4. Robert A. Packenham, "Legislatures and Political Development," in Allan Kornberg and Lloyd D. Musolf, eds., Legislatures in Developmental Perspective (Durham: Duke University Press, 1970), p. 546.

play as interest articulators for Mexico's lower economic classes. As a generalization, the public does not determine who will receive nominations to the Chamber. Nonetheless, deputies express a sense of obligation to their district, and they are very much involved in providing a variety of services to their constituents. They do this both because the party instructs them to and because they feel a need to serve their district.

By serving as gestores, deputies become a major link between the government and the governed. Citizens from the lower economic classes and a few from middle class groups as well appeal to their deputies to have the government extend certain services to their village, neighborhood, union or business organization. In so doing the deputies inform the government of the public's specific needs. By responding to many of these requests the government demonstrates its responsiveness, and this generates support for the system. Without this kind of continuous information the government would be unable to be as responsive as it apparently has been, and lower levels of responsiveness would in time lead to higher levels of protest and ultimately to system instability.

It is unclear why deputies rather than other officials are so involved in this type of activity. In part, this would seem to be related to the deputy's position in Mexican politics. Although he is a respected official, he

is not as inaccessible as are so many high government officers. Also, unlike other officials, deputies make a deliberate effort to meet with their constituents on a regular basis. Furthermore, as a national elected official with little else to do, the deputy can dedicate a significant amount of time to this task.

Finally, because as a group deputies are in constant contact with all parts of the nation and with the national government as well, it is reasonable that they, rather than local officials, would be asked to request specific programs from national bureaucratic officials. Whatever the reason, however, the point that must be made is that by carrying out this function deputies perform a vitally important service for the political system.

The Chamber also provides a major service to the political system by training future members of the ruling elite. Service in the Chamber provides politically ambitious individuals the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and become known by the national decision-makers. Serving as deputies also allows these individuals to learn the behavior patterns of national elites. In this way politically ambitious individuals use the Chamber to develop their careers, and the ruling elite uses the Chamber to train future leaders.

An important service is also provided by the Chamber to the political system through the process by which it recruits its own membership. The individuals who become

deputies are from various types of backgrounds. Although the majority are university trained, many are not. Furthermore, the majority of deputies in the current session are first generation politicians. By recruiting these varied types of citizens to the Chamber, the national government demonstrates that all types of citizens may attain high office, and that skills and competence rather than social status determine who will achieve high office.

The Chamber of Deputies is also important to the political system because it legitimizes the decisions made by the ruling elite. The Chamber has become an integral part of the governmental structure in Mexico, and the news media regularly report the Chamber's activities. Through its debates, the Chamber demonstrates to the public that the opposition has the opportunity to voice its views, and this serves to enhance the government's democratic image. Although the policy decisions are made elsewhere and the Chamber only ratifies them, because the Chamber is an integral part of governmental structure the mere act of formal approval of these decisions increases the probability that the public will accept them.

Overall, then, there is no doubt that the Mexican Chamber of Deputies makes significant contributions to the national decision-making process. It provides some input into lawmaking; it recruits and socializes future leaders; it legitimizes national decisions and policies; and its

members serve as a link between the government and the people and thus contributes to political stability. Thus, even though the Chamber does not carry out its constitutionally defined obligations and does not operate independently of the executive, it is a vitally important institution to the Mexican political system.

Finally, this study also suggests the validity of employing functional categories when researching the roles of legislatures in developing political systems. As was shown here, there are many similarities between the Mexican Chamber of Deputies and legislatures in other developing systems. Because of their comparable structure and place within all national governments, it seems that legislatures are inherently capable of performing the functions the Mexican Chamber performs. Furthermore, since most legislatures function within an executive-dominated political system, it is reasonable to suggest that leaders in those countries utilize their legislatures and legislators as do the Mexican leaders. Future research will determine the validity of this hypothesis. At this juncture what is clear is that if this research is to be fruitful, it must be sensitive to cultural differences and employ research strategies not generally applied to the study of legislatures in the United States or other "developed" nations.

## APPENDIX A

## ORIGINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Different people generally become interested in politics at different ages. Can you remember how old you were when you first thought about politics?

   1. 0-10
   2. 11-15
   3. 16-20
   4. 21-over

2. How old were you when you first worked in politics?

   1. 11-15
   2. 16-20
   3. 21-25
   4. 26-30
   5. 31-over

3. What was the first political work you were involved in?

4. Was there any person or group that encouraged you to enter politics? (DO NOT PROMPT.)

   1. No
   2. Family
   3. Friends
   4. Party officials
   5. Business groups
   6. Labor groups
   7. Other groups
   8. Farm groups
   9. Other

5. Have any members of your family held offices in the government or in a political party?

   1. No
   2. Yes: father/local government
   3. Father/state government
   4. Father/national government
   5. Father/ state party
   6. Father/national party
   7. Other members of the immediate family/local government
   8. Other members/state government
   9. Other members/national government

10. Other members/ party state
11. Other members/ national party
12. Uncles, cousins, others/local government
13. Uncles, et. al., state government
14. Uncles, et. al., national government
15. Uncles, et. al., state party
16. Uncles, et. al., national party

6. Why do you think you were nominated to Congress?

7. Why did you accept the nomination? By this I mean, why did you want to be a congressman? (PROBE)

8. Now that you have been a congressman for two years, what is it you like most about your job?

9. What do you dislike most about it?

10. Are there any public offices you would like to hold in the future?

1. No
2. Yes, local government
3. Yes, state government
4. Yes, national government
5. Yes, state party
6. Yes, national party
7. Uncertain
8. Other

(IF ANSWER IS 2-7, ASK #11; OTHERWISE, CONTINUE TO #12.)

11. Do you think your experience here will help you achieve this office?

1. No

2. (Yes) If yes, how will it help you? (THE RESPONSE TO THIS QUESTION WILL BE CODED.)

12. If you don't want to go on in politics, will your experience here help you in any other career?

1. No

2. (Yes) If yes, how will it help you? (THE RESPONSE TO THIS QUESTION WILL BE CODED 2 THROUGH N.)

13. What is the most important thing a legislator should do to do his job well?

14. Who do you feel you represent in Congress?

15. Are there any important differences between what you think your job is and the way your constituents see it? (CONSTITUENTS HERE REFERS TO THE RESPONSE TO #14.)

16. Ramon Victor Santoyo, in his book Hechos y Hombres del Parlamento, states that in 1935 the meetings of the bloque del partido were more important than those of the Chamber itself. Is this still true? I mean, do PRI deputies/senator meet outside of the Chamber to decide on their legislative objectives and programs?

16a. Who attends these meetings?

16b. How often are they held?

16c. At these meetings, do legislators attempt to have their own programs considered, or do party leaders (or government leaders) present a program to the members and the members are then expected to approve it?

16d. Would you say the PRI is pretty united, or are there several groups within it, each having somewhat different objectives?

16e. (IF THERE ARE DIFFERENT GROUPS WITHIN THE PRI) Do the members of these groups vote together against the government, or do they usually go along with the government even when they do not agree with it?

16f. (IF THERE ARE DIFFERENT GROUPS WITHIN THE PRI) What are the issues around which these groups unite? For example, is there a group of legislators that emphasizes agrarian reforms, a group that is primarily concerned with labor legislation, or a group that is primarily concerned with rural problems or urban problems, regional problems such as those affecting the north or the south?

17. What is the relationship between the PRI and the government?

18. Do any of your constituents, i.e., citizens from your district/state, ever meet with you in Mexico City to discuss their wishes?

1. Never
2. Yes, seldom
3. Yes, sometimes, but not often
4. Yes, often

19. Do these citizens represent groups or associations, or are most of them acting as private citizens.

    1. Most of them represent groups. (Identify groups)

    2. Most of them are acting as private citizens.

    3. Both

    4. Other

20. Do you think you know what your constituency (as defined in #14) wants you to do?

    1. Yes, definitely
    2. Yes
    3. Not very well
    4. No

21. (OMIT THIS IF ANSWER TO #14 IS THE PARTY.)

    Is there any difference between what you feel you should do as a congressman and what your party wants you to do?

    1. No

    2. (Yes) What is the difference?

22. When your party wants you to do one thing and you want to do another, what do you decide to do?

    1. I do what I think is right.

    2. I do what the party thinks is right.

    3. I try to compromise my beliefs with the party's wishes.

    4. Other

23. Is there any difference between what you feel you should do as a congressman and what the people in your district/state want you to do?

    1. No

    2. (Yes) What is the difference?

24. When the people in your constituency want you to do one thing and you want to doanother, what do you usually decide to do?

1. I do what I think is right.

2. I do what my constituency wants.

3. I try to compromise my beliefs with the party's wishes.
4. Other

25. If your party wanted you to do something and the people in your district/state wanted you to do something else, what would you do?

1. I would do what I thought right.

2. I would do what the party wanted.

3. I would do what the people from my district/state wanted.
4. I would try to compromise between what my party wanted and what the people wanted.

26. Have any of these things happened to you?

1. No

2. If yes, probe for examples.

27. When you were nominated, did you live in your district?

1. No (If no, where?)

2. Yes

28. Do you live in your district now, or do you live in Mexico City?

1. In my district
2. In Mexico City
3. In both
4. Other

29. How often do you visit your district/state while Congress is in session?

1. Weekly
2. Monthly
3. Every two months
4. Never
5. Other

30. How often do you visit your district when Congress is in recess?

    1. Monthly
    2. Every two months
    3. Every three months
    4. Never
    5. Other

31. (OMIT IF ANSWER TO #29, 30 is never.)
When you visit your district/state, do you go to the major cities, or do you also go to other cities and towns?

    1. I only visit the major cities.

    2. I visit the major cities and some smaller towns and villages.

    3. I try to visit every city, town and village in my district.

32. Was it your idea to make these visits, or did someone suggest that you do this?

    1. It was my idea.

    2. Someone suggested it to me. (IF #2, IDENTIFY WHO SUGGESTED IT.)

33. What is the primary purpose of these visits?

34. Part of being a politician is giving speeches. Have you given any speeches in your district/state since you were elected?

    1. No
    2. Yes, a few
    3. Yes, some but not many
    4. Yes, many

35. What are these speeches usually about?

36. Have you given any speeches outside your district?

    1. No
    2. Yes, a few
    3. Yes, some, but not many
    4. Yes, many

37. What are these speeches usually about?

38. Do you receive mail from your constituents?

1. No
2. Yes, a little (TRY TO BREAK THIS DOWN INTO LETTERS PER WEEK)
3. Yes, some, but not a lot.
4. Yes, a lot

39. Is most of this mail from individuals or from groups?

1. From individuals
2. From groups
3. From both
4. Other

40. What is most of this mail about?

41. Do you try to provide the information or assistance requested in this mail?

1. No
2. (Yes) If yes, about how many hours per week do you devote to this?

3. 1-5
4. 6-10
5. 11-15
6. 16-20
7. 21-25
8. 26-over

42. Do you receive mail from individuals or groups outside your district/state?

1. No
2. Yes, little (Break this down into pieces per week)
3. Yes, some but not a lot
4. Yes, a lot

43. Since you have been a congressman, have you ever helped resolve conflicts between local groups in your district?

1. No
2. (Yes) If yes, PROBE FOR EXAMPLES AND FREQUENCY.

44. Have you been active in your district/state in any other way since your election?

1. No
2. (Yes) If yes, PROBE FOR EXAMPLES.

45. Do local officials ever ask you to help them in any way?

    1. No

    2. (Yes) If yes, PROBE FOR EXAMPLES.

46. Do you have an office in your district?

    1. Yes

    2. No

47. When you campaigned for office, did you visit most of the cities in your district?

    1. I was only able to visit the major cities.

    2. I visited the major cities and some smaller towns as well.

    3. I visited almost every city, town, and village in my district.

    4. Other

48. About how many speeches did you give during your campaign?

    1. None
    2. A few (PROBE FOR NUMBERS)
    3. Some, but not many
    4. Many

48a. What did you emphasize in these speeches?

49. Do you think the people in your district know what you do as a congressman?

    1. Yes, definitely
    2. Yes
    3. Not always
    4. No
    5. Don't know
    6. Other

50. (IF ANSWER TO #49 IS 4, 5, 6, go to #51)

    How do they learn about what you do?

    1. From the newspapers
    2. From radio and TV
    3. From my speeches
    4. Other

NOW I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT CONGRESS ITSELF.

51. Who introduces most of the bills in the Senate/Chamber of Deputies.

    1. The President
    2. State legislatures
    3. Congressmen
    4. Don't know

52. What kinds of bills do congressmen usually introduce? I mean, what subjects do they deal with?

53. What do you consider to be the most important types of bills?

54. Do you have a particular area of specialization in which you introduce bills?

    1. No
    2. (Yes) If yes, IDENTIFY THE AREA OF SPECIALIZATION.

55. Do most congressmen have an area in which they specialize?

    1. No
    2. A few do
    3. Some, but not all do
    4. Almost all do.

56. Have you introduced any bills?

    1. No
    2. Yes, a few (PROBE FOR NUMBERS)
    3. Yes, some but not many
    4. Yes, many

57. Are the bills introduced by the president usually amended by Congress, or are they accepted without changes?

    1. Always accepted without changes
    2. Usually accepted without changes
    3. Sometimes accepted without changes
    4. Always amended.

58. Are the bills introduced by Congressmen amended or are they accepted without changes?

1. Always accepted without changes
2. Usually accepted without changes
3. Sometimes accepted without changes
4. Always amended

59. Where are bills usually amended?

1. In committees
2. In floor debates
3. In private sessions with government officials
4. Prior to their being introduced
5. Other

60. Have you introduced any amendments to executive legislation?

1. No
2. Yes, once or twice (PROBE FOR NUMBERS)
3. Yes, a few times but not often
4. Yes, often

61. Did you do this in committee, in debates or where?

1. In committee
2. In debates
3. Elsewhere

62. Do congressmen ever meet with government officials to discuss a bill before it is introduced?

1. No
2. Yes, seldom
3. Yes, sometimes, but not often
4. Yes, often

63. (IF ANSWER TO #62 IS 1, GO TO #67)
With whom do they discuss these?

1. The President
2. Ministers
3. Others

64. Have you ever participated in this kind of discussion?

1. No

2. (Yes)
(IF YES, PROBE FOR AN EXAMPLE)

65. Are these meetings at your suggestion, or do government officials suggest them?

1. I always suggest them
2. I usually suggest them
3. They usually suggest them
4. They always suggest them
5. Other

66. Are there particular groups of legislators that meet with government officials to discuss specific kinds of legislation?

1. No

2. Yes. (PROBE FOR EXAMPLES)

67. Do government officials ever contact you for help on administrative problems in your district?

1. No
2. Yes, but seldom
3. Yes, sometimes
4. Yes, often

(PROBE FOR EXAMPLES)

68. What committees would you say are the most important in this Chamber?

1._____ 4._____

2._____ 5._____

3._____

69. What are the most important positions in this Chamber?

1._____ 3._____

2._____ 4._____

70. How is it decided who will fill these jobs?

71. How are committee assignments made?

72. What committees are you on?

73. I understand that every legislature has unofficial rules of the game--certain things members must do and things they must not do, if they want the respect and cooperation of fellow members. What would you say are the most important such rules in this Chamber?

    1.

    2.

    3.

74. What can happen to a member who doesn't follow these rules?

75. How did you learn these rules?

76. Recently I read that several legislative study committees were visiting different sections of the country. What is the purpose of these committees?

77. Do members of the PRI criticize bills introduced by the executive in general debate?

    1. No
    2. Yes, but seldom
    3. Yes, sometimes but not often
    4. Yes, often

78. How does the government react to this?

79. Do members of the PRI vote against bills introduced by the executive?

    1. No.
    2. Yes, seldom
    3. Yes, sometimes but not often
    4. Yes, often

80. How does the government (party) react to this?

81. Do PRI members oppose bills introduced by the executive in committee?

    1. No
    2. Yes, seldom
    3. Yes, sometimes but not often
    4. Yes, often

82. How does the government react to this?

83. Do members of the other parties oppose the President's bills?

1. No
2. Yes, seldom
3. Yes, sometimes but not often
4. Yes, often

84. How does the government react to this?

85. How often have you opposed such bills in committee?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Sometimes, but not often
4. Often

86. How often have you voted against such bills on the floor?

1. Never
2. Seldom
3. Sometimes, but not often
4. Often

(PROBE FOR NUMBERS)

87. What do you think the value of general debates is?

88. How many speeches have you made in these debates?

1. None
2. A few
3. Some but not many
4. Many

88a. How would you describe most of these speeches?

1. Supportive of executive bills
2. Critical of executive bills
3. Supportive of the government in general
4. Critical of the government in general
5. Other

89. What do you think the value of committees is?

I ONLY HAVE A FEW QUESTIONS LEFT.

90. What was your occupation before you were elected?

91. What percent of your total income do you earn being a congressman?

1. 100
2. 99-76
3. 51-75
4. 26-50
5. 1-25
6. No response

92. Do you also have another job?

1. No
2. (Yes) If yes, how many hours per week does it demand?
3. 1-10
4. 11-20
5. 21-30
6. 31-40

93. What was your father's occupation?

94. What government and/or party positions had you held before becoming a congressman? (INCLUDE LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL OFFICES.)

95. How many years of education have you completed?

1. 1-6
2. 7-12
3. 13 (Entered college but did not graduate)
4. College graduate

96. How many years did your father go to school?

1. 1-6 (Prim.)
2. 7-12 (Sec.)
3. 13 (Entered college but did not graduate)
4. College graduate

97. Is there anything else you think I should know or that you would like to add?

Thank you for your cooperation. I realize how busy you are, and I am very grateful for your having taken time to speak to me. Thank you again.

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