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THE
PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS
IN
POSTAUTHORITARIAN CHILE

INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS
TO
DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

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List of Tables

Acknowledgments

Introduction

- 1 The 1980 Chilean Constitution: Democracy: Exaggerated Pre-Majoritarianism
- 2 The Aylwin Administration : A Preliminary Assessment of
- 3 Socioeconomic and Political Chile in the 1990s
- 4 Continuity and Change in the Chilean Party System
- 5 Multipartism, Exaggerated Weakness: Constraints to Democratic Governability
- 6 Electoral and Legal Constraints to Democratic Governability
- 7 Conclusions: Theoretical Overview of Reform

Appendix: Interviews and

References

Index

necessarily change. Whereas the traditional class and religious cleavages that differentiated parties in the past have narrowed, issues of social and environmental policy, questions of political representation, and quality-of-life concerns serve to substantially differentiate party platforms.

Finally, purely political issues and struggles for power may also produce divisions within the Concertación coalition, making for a more traditional pattern of competition between the Center and the Left. There are indications that the parties of the Left are beginning to tire of their junior party status within the Concertación. This is in part a result of some of the divisive decisions made by the Frei administration (see Chapter 2) and a fallout from the struggle to nominate a single Concertación candidate for the 1999 presidential elections. However, leaders on the Left have also contended that their parties' national stature and importance have been overshadowed by the dominance of the Christian Democrats during the first ten years of democracy. In order to reassume their due role on the national political stage and to clarify their separate programmatic commitments, certain leaders on the left have contended that they must present the Left as an independent option not tied to the Christian Democrats. This may be particularly attractive if the Frei administration fails to perform well in its final years.

In terms of the competitive dynamic of the party system, it is also important to ask whether the direction of competition between parties in the future is likely to be centripetal or centrifugal. Supporters of the binomial electoral system have employed Downsian⁴⁷ logic to suggest that parties will seek to compete for centrist positions.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, game theoretical and empirical analyses suggest that the binomial system may actually encourage centrifugal competition because it establishes dual electoral equilibria.⁴⁹ Analysts employing Downsian logic overlook the fact that double-member districts create a distinct dynamic of competition compared with the single-member district systems on which Downs's analysis was based.

Although there are many indicators of continuity within the party system, it has also been transformed in some fundamental ways. The two-alliance pattern of competition that has characterized Chilean politics for the first ten

47. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*.

48. Rabkin, "Redemocratization, Electoral Engineering, and Party Strategies in Chile, 1989-1995," and Guzmán, "Reflexiones sobre el sistema binominal."

49. See Eric Magar, Marc Rosenblum, and David Samuels, "On the Absence of Centripetal Incentives in Double Member Districts: The Case of Chile," *Comparative Political Studies* 31 (December 1998): 714-39, and Jay Dow, "A Spatial Analysis of Candidate Competition in Dual Member Districts: The 1989 Chilean Senatorial Elections," *Public Choice* 97 (1998): 451-74.

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