Breaking Out is Hard to Do: Exit, Voice, and Loyalty in Mexico's One-Party Hegemonic Regime

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ABSTRACT

Theoretically based on Albert O. Hirschman's *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*, this study examines three cases of rupture or exit by Mexican presidential contenders, in 1940, 1952, and 1988, and one "non-case," in 1999, with a view to how dissidents' strategies shape political institutions. Mexico's PRI-dominated political system depended on its leaders' ability to create an equilibrium based on mutual incentives to remain loyal to the regime.

The Mexican political system historically has been famous among Latin American political regimes for its long-lived stability under the rule of a predominant one-party state. The dominance of the ruling party (the Party of the Institutional Revolution, or PRI) was made possible not only by the incorporation of the masses into the regime (Collier and Collier 1991) but also by the ability of the regime's leaders to end the ruptures within the governing coalition.

Politicians in the coalition who were dissatisfied with their career prospects had the option to complain about the presidential nomination process, to exit the coalition and run against its official candidate, or to remain loyal. The PRI created equilibria in which it was in all coalition actors' interests, including those who had lost out in the presidential succession, to remain loyal to the regime.

This study maintains that political stability can be placed on microfoundations by examining actors' strategies and interactions in a changing structural context. Using the optic of Albert O. Hirschman's *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty* (1970), it compares three "exits" from the official regime (which is defined as the party together with the executive bureaucracy and the presidency). In 1940, 1952, and 1988, powerful PRI functionaries and members of the "revolutionary family" challenged the entire structure of the Mexican political regime by leaving the governing coalition and running against the party's official candidate in the presidential election. In all cases, these challengers had been unsuccessful presidential precandidates for the official party.

Comparing the exits of Juan Andrew Almazán in 1940, Miguel Henríquez Guzmán in 1952, and Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and Porfirio Muñoz Ledo in 1988 underscores the importance of elite dissension in the for-

mation and breakdown of political institutions in Mexico.[1] From 1952 to 1986–87, no exit attempts occurred; the question of how the leaders of the system managed to squelch internal dissent during that long period thus becomes central. The three most important exit attempts are further compared to that of Roberto Madrazo in 1999, a "noncase"—that is, an attempt to organize a coalition rupture that failed. The comparison will help elucidate both the structural conditions and the strategic interactions of institution building and transformation.

The hypothesis of this study is that three factors created the incentives for disgruntled coalition members both to exercise voice and later to leave the organization. The closing off of future possibilities for their factions within the ruling coalition, combined with a major change in Mexico's economic development model to create alliance potential for groups in both society and the government to support exit attempts. A change in the structural context therefore had to be present. After the 1946 electoral reform, it became more difficult to register new parties. Institutional elements, principally electoral rules, constitute the third factor: when political parties could be formed easily, as they could before the 1950s, dissenters paid lower costs to leave the regime. Electoral reforms passed in 1986, however, made coalition candidacies more worthwhile and gave a coopted party the incentive to allow a challenger to "piggyback" on its registration. This set of hypotheses is tested through a comparative case study of the most similar cases and a contrasting case in which there was no exit from the regime.

When speaking of ambitious politicians exiting the regime, it is important to recognize that they exited both the PRI (that is, the party) and the governing coalition. Exiting the regime means that dissenters leave the confines of the group in power and run against the official party's presidential candidate. The PRI was the electoral vehicle that brought members of the revolutionary coalition to government power and kept them there. To unseat this coalition without resorting to armed rebellion, challengers had to defeat the PRI's presidential candidate at the ballot box.

The creation of some of the most important Mexican political institutions can be placed in the context of the comparative literature on institutional creation and change (Bates 1987; Knight and Sened 1995; Jones-Luong 2000; Moe 1988; Shepsle and Weingast 1981), thereby removing Mexico from its scholarly "exceptionalism." The two most important bodies of academic literature on this topic, historical institutionalism and rational choice institutionalism, have often been at loggerheads over the question of whether individual actors can change and modify the rules of the game in a contractual manner, or whether the weight of historical legacy and the relation among economic and social classes better explains political outcomes. Two authors, writing on transitions to

democracy in Latin America (Karl 1990) and institutional choice in Eastern Europe (Jones-Luong 2000), have explicitly attempted to narrow the gap between the two approaches. Extending that bridge, this study will attempt to illuminate how Mexican political institutions evolved.

The lens of Hirschman's book allows for an examination of the problem of dissidence. Through it we can explore when and under what conditions distinct strategies are used to influence the behavior of an organization (in this case, the official regime), especially during the succession process. Despite the PRI regime's overwhelming advantages, which it could bring to bear in destroying cooperation among dissenters, the lack of benefits for members of certain groups within the coalition made organizing against regime leaders far easier at certain historical points.

Hirschman contends that there are two basic strategies for changing how an organization behaves: an individual can either exit and find other possibilities outside (such as switching political parties) or can voice discontent within the organization in an attempt to improve service. Both courses of action can be combined by voicing grievances to the point that it seems to do no good and then exiting (Hirschman 1970). Exit will be used in situations in which the costs of switching to an alternative are low or the price of voicing one's opinion is high.[2]

In this paper, voice is defined as both complaints against and negotiations with regime leaders. Exit is defined as leaving the revolutionary coalition to run against its official presidential candidate. A politician could leave the political elite and return to private life, but if he did not challenge the party at election time, then his exit was unimportant. The possibility of managers changing the organization's practices or policies in response to members' complaints increases if organized exit is possible, especially if the organization needs those dissenters to function correctly. If actors have no hope of exiting or no alternative once they do exit, however, it is far easier to ignore even the voice of dissatisfied members.

If the costs of exit are high, then voice will be more heavily utilized. When exit is possible, voice is used if members believe that they, together with others, will be able to influence the organization's future actions and decisions (Hirschman 1970, 77). Hirschman, however, assumes that managers will wish to respond to the demands of their members, which is not likely if exit is not a feasible option. Voice without an exit option is a difficult project. Complaining becomes the only option for changing organization practices, yet it loses its effectiveness if dissidents have no other alternatives. "Since the high price of exit does away with the threat of exit as an effective instrument of voice, these [totalitarian] organizations will often be able to repress both voice and exit" (Hirschman 1970, 97). If the regime's leaders can drive up the costs

of exit while destabilizing the organizing efforts of dissatisfied members, voice is no longer a viable instrument for changing the regime.

THE HEGEMONIC REGIME

According to the general consensus in the literature, the political story of Mexico from the 1930s to the late 1980s is one of an exceptionally stable regime based on a broad-based, inclusive, hegemonic party headed by a strong president (Brandenburg 1964; Scott 1964; Weldon 1997). The stability of Mexico's regime is explained by two interrelated and complementary factors: the inclusive nature of the party and the vertical control exercised by the president (Molinar 1996; Serrano 1994; Weldon 1997).[3]

The system maintained its legitimacy by coopting dissenters into its ranks while allowing different factions to vie for power and share spoils within the confines of the regime (Camp 1985; Centeno 1994). Large numbers of disadvantaged Mexicans, most significantly peasants and workers but also members of the middle classes, were organized into the party via peak-level associations called sectors. By controlling the sectoral leaders' access to power, the regime's top brass could contain their members' demands (Hamilton 1982; Hellman 1983). Autonomously formed societal groups (those created outside the boundaries of the peasant, worker, or popular sectors) the PRI either captured, often by giving in to immediate demands in exchange for future quiescence, or repressed by selective violence (Cornelius 1996). The regime did not have to meet the social demands of entire classes, but instead delivered needed services on a discretionary, and thus easier to manage, basis (Cornelius 1996, 52).

The power of the presidency, Weldon argues, was based on four factors: constitutional provisions, the PRI's ability to win both houses of Congress, discipline within the ruling party, and presidential leadership over the party (Weldon 1997, 22). By controlling the electoral arena—both the electoral rules and the monitoring of election returns—the PRI could win overwhelming margins in district-level plurality races and thus enjoy majority control over Congress (Molinar 1996). Opposition parties therefore had little hope of affecting policy-making and few selective benefits to offer their members. To rise in politics, a hopeful had to join the PRI, make alliances with other groups in the regime, and follow orders.

The theoretical approaches of historical institutionalism and rational choice institutionalism can be used fruitfully to understand the creation of Mexican political institutions. The first explains institutions as an outcome of the interaction among structural forces, especially social classes (Steinmo et al. 1992). Historical institutionalism allows for little human

agency in the form that institutions take; but by explicating the relations of power among groups, this approach does help explain why certain groups of actors hold one set of preferences and strategies over another.

Rational choice institutionalism explains institutions as outcomes of strategic interaction among rational actors attempting to maximize their preferences under conditions of uncertainty and limited information (Jones-Luong 2000, 564). It does not explain, however, why these actors hold these preferences and not others (Steinmo et al. 1992, 8). The preferences are generally fixed, and most authors do not endogenize preferences or preference change.

The political institutions of the Mexican one-party hegemonic regime were not molded "in a fit of absentmindedness" (Rustow 1970, 355) but created and transformed in the context of stupendous economic change and development. The goals of political actors can reasonably be seen as the desire to further their political careers, and their individual strategies as how best to achieve these goals. Elite ruptures were, without a doubt, the aggregate result of individual-level strategies; and both the exits and the regime's reaction to them caused evolutionary institutional change, which in turn brought about long-term political stability in the form of a one-party hegemonic state. Thus, political institutions in Mexico, such as restrictive party registration rules, candidate selection procedures, a subservient party, and a controlled cabinet, can be seen as the result of strategic bargaining and exits in a context of structural realities that influenced the strategies (exit, voice, or loyalty) of relevant actors.

The ruptures of 1940, 1952, and especially 1988 represented the greatest threat to the continued dominance of the revolutionary coalition and, in this way, to political stability. From the creation of the PRI in 1929 until the 1997 legislative elections, the sharpest challenges to the regime came from internal splits, not opposition party electoral victories.[4] In the period of undisputed PRI hegemony, from the 1950s until 1988, not only did no organized exit attempts occur, but even regime members' use of voice was minimized. Instead of seriously working to reform the presidential nomination methods, the political elite waged most of its disputes over economic policy. Attempts by reformist leaders to organize autonomous peasant and worker groups were easily coopted. Reforms to the PRI's statutory rules were overturned.

Instead of arguing that democratic consolidation is based on an elite consensus over institutional forms (Burton and Higley 1987, 302–3), this study holds that in the early stages of the development and strengthening of the regime, from 1940 to 1952, dissident elite exits produced a reaction from the leaders that made future organizing efforts close to impossible. In the second stage, 1986–88, the elite rupture actually helped strengthen democratization in Mexico by demonstrating at least the possibility of a PRI defeat and the formation of a serious leftist electoral option.

In all three cases, the regime attempted to use its superior resources to drive up the costs of organizing attempts by dissidents. It failed, however, because of the overwhelming potential gains from exit. Striking changes in the economic development model formed the structure of these ruptures. In response to the ruptures of 1940 and 1952, the regime's leaders changed the institutional environment to drive up the costs of registering new parties, and therefore the costs of exit, which in turn forced the members of the coalition to change their strategies from exit to loyalty.

General Almazán's Exit Attempt, 1940

The exit from the revolutionary coalition of General Juan Andrew Almazán in 1940 can be seen as a reaction to the policies of President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–40). Cárdenas's policies increased state involvement in the economy, especially in primary inputs such as oil (Cárdenas expropriated petroleum in 1938), electricity, and steel. He pushed the *ejido* (land held by the community that could not be sold by individual members) as the central agrarian unit of production while instituting a sweeping land redistribution (Benítez 1983). Cárdenas also reorganized the workers' unions under the banner of the Mexican Workers' Confederation (CTM) and peasant groups under the National Peasant Confederation (CNC). These groups were formed into peak-level associations and constituted the party's sectoral organizations (Lerner de Sheinbaum and Ralsky de Cimet 1976, 148; Meyer 1985).

The reforms embodied a shift away from the politics of Mexico's previous leader and strongman, Plutarco Eliás Calles, and threatened the interests of several powerful groups in society, primarily the northern businessmen, Catholic groups (Garrido 1982, 264; Meyer 1985), and worker and peasant groups, whose independence was shattered as their organizations were taken over by government-imposed and -controlled leaders. The shift in the development model and its consequences for these different groups thereby lowered the costs of organizing an exit attempt because alliances were available outside the party.

A basic readjustment was also taking place within the revolutionary elite. The hopes of the Calles faction were being shut down by Cárdenas's successful move to exclude Calles himself from the political game (Reyna 1985, 140). Lerner and Ralsky observe,

> The displacement of the Calles group from political leadership constituted a powerful motive to create difficulties for the regime in the moment of the presidential succession. They were interested in recovering the force they had lost and integrating themselves once again in future politics. (1976, 148)

During his term in office, Cárdenas had removed Calles's senators and deputies from their positions and ejected others tied to the caudillo from their posts in public administration. Calles's supporters had little hope of advancing within the revolutionary coalition, and their future upward mobility was considered marginal.

General Almazán was in a unique position to take advantage of the discontent both inside and outside the governing elite. He had begun his military career during the revolution by aligning himself with Calles, and later had spent many years as military zone commander of the region that included Nuevo León (Medina 1981). Almazán began his run for power as a legitimate precandidate to the party's nomination for president to succeed Cárdenas in 1940. Calles's faction chose Almazán to lead them, while at the same time Almazán's own followers in the party were forming groups to support his candidacy (Garrido 1982, 94). The general from Guerrero became the candidate of those who had suffered the most under Cárdenas. The combination of a blocked political faction and numerous, infuriated societal groups available for alliance-making drove down the risks of a regime rupture, as did the ease with which Almazán could form a new party.

Almazán's candidacy had been discarded early by the sectoral leadership of the party because he was considered too far to the right and too likely to dismantle, instead of consolidate, the reforms of the past *sexenio* (Contreras 1985). When it became obvious at the end of 1938 that President Cárdenas had chosen Manuel Avila Camacho as his successor, Almazán had to decide whether he would stay in the party, exercise his voice to change nomination procedures and economic policy, and resign himself to a dwindling career, or leave to challenge the system. There was no hope of a serious, open nomination vote among the mass sectors for the party's presidential candidate because the National Assembly members were controlled by the president (Paoli Bolio 1985, 144; Garrido 1982, 274).

Almazán also formed alliances with other anti-Cárdenas factions (Contreras 1985, 91–92, 131–33). His ability to organize internal support was another important element in his final decision. Furthermore, although the leadership of the CNC, the CTM, and the army was firmly behind the official candidate, Avila Camacho, their membership was certainly not convinced, and dissenters in each organization either openly or privately favored Almazán. Contreras comments, "the presence of all these factions would have had to influence Almazán's decision to postulate himself as an independent candidate" (1985, 133).

These dissident groups were joined by senators, deputies, and ex–public officials, especially those active during the Calles era, who split off from the Avila Camacho movement to support Almazán (Correa 1946; Garrido 1982, 279, 287). Thus, in every segment of the party, at every level,

defections became more commonplace.[5] The regime, however, could threaten the lives of Almazán's followers while offering positive incentives to those who stayed loyal. Almazán, moreover, failed the important task of building a serious party organization, and his short-lived, personalistic party did not survive beyond the exit attempt. Avila Camacho defeated Almazán with 99 percent of the vote to Almazán's 0.6 percent, a result that was considered an egregious fraud (Medina 1981, 410).

After his victory, Avila Camacho took steps to centralize authority under the presidency, continuing a trend begun under Cárdenas. In the short term, Avila Camacho took back as many of the ex-*Almancistas* as wanted to rejoin the party, thereby coopting dissidents back into the system, where they could do less harm. The new president also took several long-term institutional measures. His first step was to form the Federal Electoral Commission (CFE), which was placed under the aegis of the Ministry of the Interior (*Gobernación*, which can be seen as a fusion of electoral commission and internal political control agency). Now the federal bureaucracy, not the municipalities or the party, would organize elections and monitor their results.

Avila Camacho also reformed the party's statutes. In these reforms of 1942 and 1946, the PRI began to lose its ability to select candidates. This authority shifted to *Gobernación*, with the president, of course, overseeing operations. The Minister of *Gobernación* became a central participant along with the president in choosing federal deputies and senators (González Avelar 1996; Moreno Collado 1996; Ojeda Paullada 1996). The Minister of *Gobernación* depended on the goodwill of the president to keep his position, a situation that shifted more control to the executive.

In addition, President Avila Camacho dissolved the military sector of the party and strengthened the then-diffuse "popular" sector by combining disparate organizations into a single confederation known as the CNOP (National Confederation of Popular Organizations).[6] The labor and military sectors, which had been important for choosing candidates for lower-level government positions, lost power during the following two *sexenios* of Avila Camacho and Miguel Alemán. The PRI, never a political party in the traditional sense, was now becoming a "political control secretariat" within the governing bureaucracy (Centeno 1994, 51) and an electoral agency responsible for mobilizing voters (Garrido 1993). The bureaucracy controlled the party, not the reverse, as in the former Soviet Union or China (Centeno 1994, 52).

These developments brought great changes to the overall opportunity structure for regime ruptures. Internal group dynamics had been postulated on a relatively low-cost exit option: that of leaving the PRI, forming a new party, and running against the official candidate, a strategy that was predicated on the legal ability to form and register a polit-

ical party. Not only did Avila Camacho weaken the party while strengthening *Gobernación*; he reformed the federal election laws, making it more difficult for opposition parties to gain legal status. The 1946 Electoral Law made registration of new political parties by *Gobernación* a legal necessity for the first time (Molinar 1991). A new party had to have at least 30,000 adherents, with two-thirds of the states having party organizations of at least 1,000 members. The party also had to be registered for one year to participate in elections (see Molinar 1991). The Ministry of *Gobernación* would be responsible for both granting and revoking registrations. These new rules made it difficult for elite breakaway factions to form parties to challenge their former colleagues, and easier to control them when they did break off through *Gobernación*'s registration rights (Paoli Bolio 1985, 146–47).

Thus Almazán's exit instigated changes in the party, the government, and the electoral process that became part of what was later considered "normal" Mexican politics. Institutional change was therefore a product of regime ruptures; that is, of individual strategies of maximizing preferences. These strategies were predicated on structural conditions—principally a changing economic model that threatened the interests of powerful economic and social groups and raised the possibilities of success, making exit more viable.

General Henríquez Guzmán's Attempt: 1952

The *sexenio* of Miguel Alemán (1946–52), at the end of which the exit of General Miguel Henríquez Guzmán took place, was characterized by two basic changes that led to the rupture. First, Alemán radically sharpened and deepened the shift toward capitalist development begun by his predecessor, Avila Camacho. Second, Lázaro Cárdenas's former faction lost a good deal of ground to new groups with distinct professional backgrounds. Again, it was the combination of a blocked faction and new losers created by a changing economic model that created optimal conditions for both voice and exit.

Alemán instituted a true change in the development model, encouraging foreign investment. Development now meant industrialization, encouraged through the state's protection of critical sectors of the economy and the substitution of many imports with domestically produced goods. As part of this strategy, land redistribution dropped sharply, and the threat of expropriation lessened as foreign money in Mexican firms was encouraged. Union activity was controlled, often violently, through the state's power over wage increases in the large urban unions and the CTM (Rodríguez Araujo 1974, 114). Alemán was determined to strengthen the role of private business in the overall development

model while weakening labor's political voice. The state began to invest heavily in infrastructure programs, which allowed for an enormous rise in corruption as businesspeople tied to the government won contracts worth millions of pesos (Rodríguez Araujo 1974, 114).

Added to these economic changes were major shifts in where and how public functionaries were recruited and how they advanced within the system. Alemán, the first postrevolutionary civilian president, initiated the rise of the university-trained, nonmilitary political bureaucrat. As the generation of generals with revolutionary experience faded, lawyers trained at Mexico's Universidad Nacional Autónoma (UNAM) began to replace them in powerful positions in public administration.

Roderic Ai Camp argues that Alemán established the political recruitment model that remained in force from the 1940s until the 1990s: the elimination of revolutionary credentials to win high posts, the introduction of university-trained bureaucrats, and the formation of political *camarillas* (party factions) around bureaucratic experience (Camp 1990). The military as an institution lost influence; no longer a source to fill leadership positions, its ability to mediate on the succession issue began to disappear. Centeno argues that after Alemán's *sexenio*, a military background was considered an "automatic disqualification" for presidential precandidates (1994, 49; Camp 1990 and Ronfeldt 1984 agree with this interpretation). At the same time, the faction once led by Cárdenas, along with other groups and individuals tied to the old regime, saw its ability to continue to advance in the governing coalition decline dramatically (Pellicer 1977, 33).

These leaders and members of their groups would later act on their frustration by threatening to follow or actually following Henríquez Guzmán out of the party. What brought many in the revolutionary coalition to the brink of open rebellion was the possibility of Alemán or someone just like him continuing in power for another *sexenio*. Alemán, for example, floated rumors that he would force through Congress a change in the Constitution allowing for the reelection of the president. He then realized that reelection was impossible, so he attempted to impose Francisco Casas Alemán (no relation), the appointed mayor of Mexico City, on the party leadership. Casas Alemán was so unpopular because of his ties to corruption and his heavyhandedness in the capital that not even President Alemán's own people supported his candidacy.

Into this whirl of discord, dissatisfaction, and rumor stepped General Henríquez Guzmán, a revolutionary leader who had enjoyed the confidence of Cárdenas for many years and thus belonged to his once-powerful faction. Henríquez Guzmán was perfectly placed to head the Cárdenas coalition and save his own career at the same time. Reyna writes that at first the *Henriquista* movement was an internal fight over the future of the Cárdenas faction, and it chose the succession as the

best moment to save the faction (Reyna 1985, 105). Henríquez Guzmán garnered support from all areas of the regime, with the army, for the reasons outlined, an especially strong base. The list of ex–public officials, both elected and administrative, who supported Henríquez Guzmán is also impressive: former governors, senate leaders, deputies, directors of public utilities, even the founder of the CNC, Graciano Sánchez (Lozoya 1989, 122).

Henríquez also took advantage of the widespread societal discontent brought about by Alemán's change in development programs. In the rural areas especially, Henríquez's *Cardenista* policies fell on receptive ears, because Alemán's policies had benefited large landholders at the expense of the mass of peasants and smallholders.

Perhaps because of what had happened to Almazán, the *Henriquistas* were determined to win the presidential chair within the framework of the official rules (Reyna 1985, 106). They therefore attempted to use voice rather than exit to win their case. When it became clear to some of Henríquez's supporters that he would not win the official nod, many were persuaded to stay in the ruling coalition the same way the Almazán quasi-dissenters had been persuaded—through a mixture of job incentives and threats. Once Casas Alemán was dropped, Henríquez lost the support of those potential dissidents (Pellicer 1977, 35).

The regime leaders offered the dissidents important positions in the next administration in exchange for maintaining internal discipline (Pellicer 1977, 36), and some potential dissidents accepted (Rodríguez Arajuo 1974, 114).[7] Once again, the coalition leaders could weaken the dissidents' organization, especially when they attempted to exit. Because the government was by now responsible for elections, furthermore, the leaders found it easy to manipulate electoral returns to their advantage. The personalistic political party Henríquez Guzmán formed won less than 16 percent of the vote, an electoral outcome the general and his supporters rejected as fraudulent. Yet in February 1954, when Henríquez Guzmán's party lost its registration, there was very little protest from any major societal group (Lozaya 1989, 120).

On an institutional level, the next president, Adolfo Ruíz Cortines, continued the drive to centralize political and policy authority under the executive branch rather than the party, thereby weakening the possibilities for ruptures within the coalition. The party's role during his term became the model for subsequent *sexenios*: to receive and transmit executive decisions to the organized masses, to contain the possibilities of mass mobilization, to organize popular participation in elections, and to give out benefits and favors to political supporters. The days of independent political maneuvering by factions within the party were over. The electoral law was once again changed to make exits less likely. In

1954, the prerequisites for party registration went from 30,000 affiliates to 65,000 overall, with 1,000 to 1,500 members distributed in two-thirds of the states. These institutional changes drove up the costs of an exit to a prohibitive level and changed actors' preferences from exit to loyalty.

No Exits: 1952–1987

In the 35 years between Henríquez Guzmán's attempt and the rupture of 1986–87, no other powerful losing presidential precandidate or faction leader left the party with the intention of winning an election. Powerful, dissatisfied losers in the nomination battles obviously still existed, yet they did not choose to risk a rupture.

This is not to deny that social upheavals occurred during this period. The regime's leaders handled these demonstrations and strikes with relative ease, however. Not till the rupture of 1986–88 did these conditions for stability finally break down and create the opportunity for another system-threatening internal split.

Four central factors explain why the regime managed to maintain internal stability and cohesion for so long. The first stems from changes following the earlier exit attempts. The president could now control the succession process: both the formation of groups and the ability of the PRI sectors independently to promote a candidate were repressed.

Following the rupture of 1952, no single presidential hopeful openly declared ambitions, nor did any of the possible precandidates mobilize all the instruments available to their counterparts only six years earlier. Now, all precandidates were chosen from the sitting cabinet. This served to restrict the pool of precandidates to a minimum, because the president controlled nominations to the cabinet. Because of the moratorium on aspiring openly to the post, Mexican presidents now could keep the political elite guessing as to their preferred successor.

The possible gains from voicing displeasure over the closed nature of the presidential succession also fell. Voicing complaints over other important issues, such as the demands of unions and the general direction of economic policy, did not stop, but no complaints were heard about the president's right to impose his successor on both the regime's political class and the nation at large.

The second factor is the passing of the revolutionary generation. The period when the army was a decisionmaking center had ended. Generals with military experience (an independent force, in the form of almost-private armies) began to die off or retire. The younger military officers who rose to take their place had not led independent armies during the revolution, which left them no claim to rule (Camp 1990; Ronfeldt 1984). Most of them quickly realized that their best possibilities now lay in the strictly military arena, inside the regime, especially

because there they were well taken care of (Lozaya 1989, 128–29; Meyer 1985, 98; Reyna 1985, 102).

Related to this was the destruction of the Calles faction and the tightened control over Cárdenas's group, the two strongest political groups of the immediate postrevolutionary period. These two factions had comprised politicians with revolutionary experience and independent power bases in the peasant groups and workers' unions. Those now rising in the official ranks had no independent bases; their power resided in the temporary posts the presidents offered them (Reyna 1985, 104).

As part of the overall explanation, furthermore, one would have to add the importance of experience and learning by the party members in any of the political groups. After three successive failures to win the presidential election (1940, 1946 with Ezequiel Padilla, and 1952), most could see the futility of such an attempt. As the risks rose and the chance of success declined, the negative incentives grew to outweigh any possible future (and uncertain) payoff. With the constant circulation of elites, moreover, the possibilities for upcoming bureaucrats to join them, and the opportunities for advancement and wealth, the potential gains from staying in the regime were high.

The third factor is the continued growth of the state in both size and role, and the lack of any major changes in the economic development model that would create new "losers," or organized groups that had previously enjoyed benefits now denied them. Because there were no real alternatives outside the regime, the threat to exit the party was no longer credible. The weaker threat subdued the "voice" of internal political leaders and their ability to press for more open nomination methods. The successful import substitution development model, with its large, active state, successful growth, and protection for private capital, kept the business classes loyal while subsidizing the urban middle and lower classes. Thus, dissatisfied public officials would find it difficult to unite distinct social sectors in a campaign against the state's official candidate.

The revised electoral rules that made party formation and registration so difficult are the fourth factor that drove up the costs of a rupture. The changes made to the electoral rules during the eight years leading up to 1952 made it extremely difficult to construct a party outside the coalition that could lead a dissident to electoral victory. Not only would challengers find it difficult to attract outside allies to their cause, but it was next to impossible to run a presidential campaign with a new party under the recently redesigned electoral system.

The interplay between structural and strategic factors is clear: the economic development of Mexico and changing development models had created outside alliances for disgruntled regime politicians. Group leaders managed to organize inside the coalition by promising to restart stalled careers and outside by aligning with threatened economic groups.

Because of these exits, regime leaders reacted by creating a system of negative incentives in the political class that made organization difficult while offering an economic model that gave something to everyone.

THE RUPTURE OF 1986–88

By 1986, however, the conditions for a rupture were present once again. A profound economic crisis had rocked the nation for four years, driving down living standards for millions of Mexicans. President Miguel de la Madrid (1982–88) and his closest advisers dealt with the crisis in a startling fashion: they opened the economy to foreign competition and reduced the state's role as a prime economic actor. To impose this new economic model on a very reluctant party and bureaucracy, de la Madrid closed off the highest ranks of his administration to all but his closest personal colleagues, denying positions to other well-trained, powerful politicians in the coalition (Centeno 1994; Hernández Rodríguez 1992, 261).

These developments opened the door for a disgruntled "out" faction, the Democratic Current (*Corriente Democrático*, or CD), to exploit enormous societal and party discontent. This faction first used its collective voice to push for an opening in the presidential nomination process. Failing this, the group's leaders left the regime, used the registration of a satellite party, ran against the PRI candidate in 1988, and nearly defeated him. The institutional consequences of this exit would be profound, including yet another electoral reform and a new leftist party option.

The Mexican debt crisis was brought on by heavy short-term loans at high rates of interest taken on by the government of José Lopéz Portillo (1976–82), which expected to repay the loans with profits from petroleum sales. When oil prices dropped, the loans could not be repaid (Lustig 1998, 24–25). From 1982 on, the economic crisis crippled real growth, forcing the government to devalue the peso, cut social services, and lower public sector wages.

At first, President de la Madrid was extremely reluctant to overhaul the economy to resolve what was believed to be a short-term liquidity crisis. Instead, government spending was cut sharply and wages were controlled. In the second stage, brought on by the Mexican economy's dismal performance in 1985 and 1986, de la Madrid and his secretary of planning and budget, Carlos Salinas, implemented a profound economic liberalization (Bruhn 1997, 72–74; Lustig 1998, 36–37).

The economic pain inflicted by the short- and long-term reforms was felt by more than just the middle classes and the poor. Government workers and the sectors tied to the state saw their benefits retract and their wages fall. Agricultural subsidies were slashed, and an array of

state-owned enterprises were closed or sent to the auction block. Thus, the debt crisis and fiscal austerity measures seriously curtailed the regime's ability to coopt its members.

Most of de la Madrid's allies in the now-exclusive ruling elite came from the financial sector of the bureaucracy (the Central Bank, the Treasury, planning and budget agencies). He left out many well-trained PRI politicians who did not share his career background or his economic beliefs. The president placed his allies throughout the bureaucracy and excluded a generation of other regime members from important posts (Hernández Rodríguez 1992). Depending on who won the presidency in the next *sexenio* (1988–94), their future career possibilities could well be closed off permanently (Centeno 1994).

Scholars of Mexican politics during the 1980s and 1990s claimed to detect an important change in the make-up of the governing elite: the growing power of the more technically trained functionaries—the *técnicos*—against the more politically based *políticos*, who were responsible for mobilization and electoral domination (Camp 1985, 97–118; Zaid 1988). Centeno (1994, chap. 5), by contrast, argues that this understanding of elite power was mistaken; that instead, four categories of regime elite existed at that time. The first group was the *políticos*, or party "ward bosses"; the second, the *políticos burócratas*. The third group, the *técnicos*, or professional economists and engineers, could be seen as civil servants without great political influence, while the *tecnócratas* "were able to transfer their control over technical areas to overall command of the state through access to dominant positions in the hierarchy" (Centeno 1994, 106). It was de la Madrid's apparent policy to allow a far greater influx of the *tecnócratas*, which shut off spaces for left-leaning politicians in the governing coalition (Hernández Rodríguez 1992).

Even as de la Madrid's small group monopolized the decisionmaking centers of the regime, other factions began to plan ways to regain the political ground they had lost in the 1982–88 *sexenio*. Former president Luis Echeverría's faction, which represented the left, was especially active.[8]

In 1986, with the succession approaching, the best opportunity arose to place a candidate who would both open up the elite ranks and repeal the neoliberal economic reforms (Carreño Carlón 1988, 334; Rodríguez Hernández 1992, 262). That summer, the national press got wind of meetings among Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, Carlos Tello, Ifigenia Martínez, and Rodolfo González Guevara, all members of the left wing of the party (Garrido 1993; Lugo Chávez 1989, 2). These five, along with several other PRI members, formed a *corriente*, or political group within the ruling coalition. The CD's two most vocal leaders were Cárdenas, former governor of Michoacán, and Muñoz

Ledo, former PRI leader and former secretary of labor. Both politicians were considered politically dead if another "technocratic" member of the regime won the succession nod from de la Madrid.

The CD's central argument was that the internal decisionmaking procedures, most important the presidential nomination, had to be democratized so as to allow party members who disagreed with de la Madrid's new policies to debate, modify, and even reverse the economic reforms. If a close ally of de la Madrid won the presidential nomination for the 1988 elections, there would be little hope of turning back the dominant economic model, which at that time did not show great advances in terms of annual growth (Lustig 1998, chap. 3).

As the months passed, it became clear that many members of the PRI regime were similarly dissatisfied, and the CD's numbers grew, although it never claimed a large membership within the regime. Hernández Rodríguez notes that regime officials worried about "the intent of the new politicians to take over the government's leadership positions, ignoring old traditions and marginalizing many men with experience" (1992, 253). The CD did not propose to destroy the dominant one-party system Mexico had enjoyed for more than 50 years (CD 1986).[9] If the party's militant base, which was becoming more pro-CD, got involved in the nomination process through a party primary, however, a counterweight to both the technocrats and the president would be established and might displace the faction in power.

Evidence shows that regime leaders did not at first believe that the CD members would eventually leave the coalition, nor did CD leaders believe that they could challenge the PRI at the ballot box (Bruhn 1997; Garrido 1993). The CD quickly realized that it had support in both the regime and society because of the past seven years of crisis and their effects on the Mexican people. Furthermore, although sectoral leaders did not support the opening within the party, knowing they would lose their prerogatives, a great number of other party and coalition members were against the imposition of another *tecnócrata.*

At each step of the organization process, the CD's leaders used the press to get out the message and amplify their "voice." Both Cárdenas and Muñoz Ledo traveled the country widely, preaching the gospel of a more populist economic strategy together with the need to open up nomination practices in the party. This had enormous impact, because the CD grew popular with the general population even as the regime leadership attacked its leaders and members. The CD leaders were careful to deny that their motivations were based on the need to restart their stalled careers; but the regime's supporters openly criticized them for their hypocritical call for democratic practices when they were interested only in improving their political standing (*Acción* 1986a; Carreño Carlón 1988, 334).

Once the CD began publicly to challenge the informal rules of the succession, party members chose not to continue supporting the reformers, judging the risks of leaving the party not worth the possible gains (Lugo Chávez 1989, 6–7). Many of the CD's original members left at different stages of the slow process of rupture, including well-known economists Carlos Tello and Armando Labra, and Janitzio Mújica, a close friend of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (Garrido 1993, 195–97). The slow trickle of deserters demonstrates the regime's enormous ability to offer selective incentives to destroy organizational efforts. The CD leaders' efforts, however, and the print media's interest in their activities spread the message to the public, which became an important support base for future projects.

Those who stayed in the regime but refused to support the eventual PRI candidate, Salinas, would have a serious impact on the electoral results. Although many of those who operated the electoral machinery probably stayed in the party, many in Michoacán, the Federal District, and states dependent on the petroleum industry left with the dissidents (Hernández Rodríguez 1992, 263). Thus, for many, voice was used until it became too dangerous; that is, until it grew into the threat to exit.

The PRI and the president's supporters relied on a mixture of threats, accusations, and selective payoffs to stifle support for the CD within the party. The regime's strongest threat was to expel the dissident faction from the party, which would force the dissenters to organize themselves into a proper political party, a daunting prospect considering the difficulty of winning registration and public recognition. The PRI also attempted to negotiate with the CD leadership and to pick off interested members by offering them future positions in the administration (*Acción* 1986b).[10]

The CD responded both by attacking the closed nature of the presidential nomination and by negotiating with the party leadership. Once they realized how well other party members and society in general received their statist economic program, the dissidents pushed their attacks further. Thus the economic crisis and its effects provided structural strength for the exit effort. The CD's publicity and strategy succeeded for two reasons: they forced the PRI to answer the antidemocratic charges publicly, and they laid the groundwork for an electoral challenge should the CD's demands not be met.

A second external factor that influenced the CD's exit was the new rules that facilitated coalitions among parties. In 1977, an electoral reform instituted a mixed proportional representation and single-district simple majority system in the lower house of the Congress, as well as in the state legislatures. This allowed smaller parties to win congressional seats for the first time.

The electoral reforms of 1986 had important unexpected consequences for the dissidents. These reforms gave the PRI a majority on the

Federal Electoral Commission (CFE), so that the PRI no longer needed the votes of the smaller parties on the commission to win electoral disputes. The PRI had been signaling that it would no longer give benefits to these satellite parties in exchange for their support; the parties therefore were willing to "punish" the PRI and sponsor Cárdenas as their candidate. Smaller independent leftist parties that had sprung up after the 1977 electoral reforms also supported the dissidents.

President de la Madrid, despite the pressures from the CD, chose Carlos Salinas, the candidate least likely to conciliate with the dissidents. Ten days after Salinas was tapped, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas accepted nomination as the candidate of the heretofore satellite Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution (PARM). Three smaller leftist parties soon also nominated Cárdenas. By late January 1988, the ex-PRI members had formed the National Democratic Front (FDN), which was backed by ten leftist organizations, not including the Mexican Socialist Party (PMS). This, the largest independent left party, did not accept Cárdenas as a joint candidate until a month before the 1988 election, though CD and PMS leaders had negotiated such a candidacy in the fall of 1987.[11]

The Cárdenas-led FDN won 31 percent of the vote, the highest share for the opposition in a presidential election up to that time.[12] Many observers questioned the official count as the federal electoral computer "went down" the day of the election and came back up days later to show Salinas the winner with just over 50 percent of the votes. When the new president took office, he reacted to the party split much as had Avila Camacho in 1940 and Ruíz Cortines in 1952: he used the presidential office to make future ruptures less likely. Salinas brought leaders from different PRI factions into the cabinet, reopening avenues to advancement. Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios, head of the internal security agency for many years, became secretary of *Gobernación*; Jorge de la Vega Domínguez was placed in charge of agriculture; Manuel Bartlett, head of *Gobernación* under de la Madrid, became secretary of education. None of these politicians was considered a close ally of the president, but they and others were brought in to shore up political alliances within the coalition.

Those CD members who had remained in the regime were also rewarded with posts. Politician Gonzalo Martínez Corbalá became a federal deputy before being appointed interim governor of San Luís Potosí. Carlos Tello became ambassador to Portugal and the Soviet Union; Armando Labra went on to work for the governor of Oaxaca; Silvia Hernández, a rising star from Querétaro, became head of the CNOP and a senator (Garrido 1993, 195–97). The president then strengthened his hold on the party by appointing one of his closest allies, Luis Donaldo Colosio, to run the National Executive Committee (CEN) and, through him, instituting a profound reform that would weaken the sectors' power over nominations in favor of the party's territorial organization.

Finally, Salinas designed and instituted a new social spending agency (SEDESOL) that would decrease societal discontent while weakening the party's hold over its mass membership.[13]

The president used his considerable powers to attack the new united left party (the Party of the Democratic Revolution, PRD) that had formed out of the FDN. He used the center-right National Action Party (PAN) as a coalition partner during the first congressional term of his tenure (1988–91) to gain the votes to pass constitutional reforms. In exchange, Salinas "respected" the PAN's electoral victories at the state and municipal levels but did not extend this agreement to PRD candidates; and he hounded the PRD for the rest of his *sexenio.* As part of the bargain with the PAN, he also instituted another set of electoral reforms that introduced a fair electoral registration card and voters' list, both important steps to fairer elections.

A Noncase, 1999: Why Madrazo Stayed

Roberto Madrazo, another powerful loser in the PRI's presidential nomination process, ultimately chose not to leave the official party and compete against its candidate. One could argue that many of the causal factors identified in this article were present in 1999, the year Madrazo considered his exit. Examining why Madrazo chose to remain will provide the opportunity of testing this study's hypotheses more fully and avoid problems of sampling on the dependent variable.

Madrazo, governor of Tabasco from 1994 to 2000, asserted anew that the presidential nomination procedures were unfair. He enjoyed popularity both in the party and among voters. The Mexican economy, furthermore, had undergone a massive recession only four years before. It should have been far easier for Madrazo to leave the PRI, given the new electoral climate and the options outside.

As in the other three cases, the presidential succession was chosen as the best moment to undermine the president's authority. At the party's 17th National Reform Assembly, in 1996, groups moved against President Ernesto Zedillo by instituting prerequisites for presidential and gubernatorial candidates. These "locks" effectively removed the president's favorites because those figures did not meet the requirement of having held an elective position. Meanwhile, disgruntled losers in the selection process, especially in state elections, posed the threat of a party-regime rupture.[14]

Zedillo reacted to the complaints by enacting a striking change in nomination procedures. At the beginning of 1999, he decided that the presidential nomination, like the gubernatorial nominations since 1998, would take the form of an open primary. Although the president had

his favored candidate, Francisco Labastida, he allowed other powerful and popular politicians in the party (such as Bartlett, Madrazo, and former congressional whip and CEN leader Humberto Roque Villanueva) to compete for the nomination.

The primaries would also present to a more demanding electorate a new and democratic face of the PRI, while generating media interest in the PRI candidate long before the campaign began.[15] Many people inside and outside the party, however, argued that the historic primary was simply a disguised *dedazo* (presidential imposition of successor) because of the advantages Labastida enjoyed (*El Universal* 1999b).

The actual rules and logistics of the primary campaign turned out to be problematic for the three precandidates not tied to Zedillo, but thereby opened a space for their complaints. The Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) did not regulate party primaries, and the PRI was largely incapable of monitoring or enforcing the monetary limits it placed on the campaign, a situation that favored the semiofficial candidate, Labastida. This allowed the other precandidates to complain about the unfairness of the process; that is, to exercise voice (*El Universal* 1999d). Madrazo, moreover, became the candidate of those who were unhappy with Zedillo and his personal choice; many financially important groups in the PRI gave Madrazo enough monetary support to allow him to compete on a more equal footing with Labastida. When the primary campaign went into full swing in the summer and fall of 1999, the three precandidates began to complain in earnest about Labastida's advantages (*El Universal* 1999e).

Various factors mitigated against the possible rupture, however. Despite the changes the Mexican political system had undergone between 1988 and 1999, most PRI politicians still were not willing openly to support a presidential hopeful not favored by the sitting president. Even with the dramatic changes represented by the PRI's presidential primary, the pressure to support the president's choice weakened support for alternative candidates (Granados Chapa 1999).

Another important difference between 1999 and the other exits was that despite the severe economic crisis of 1994–95, President Zedillo had held the economic course steady between 1995 and 1999. Madrazo, meanwhile, could not offer a credible new economic strategy because he had never voiced serious objections to the economic model during the previous *sexenios*. Indeed, Madrazo could not take political advantage of the economic crisis of 1994 because he had never stated a serious ideological position on economic matters. Furthermore, in 1999 there were few chances of overturning the neoliberal economic reforms, in contrast to 1940, 1952, and 1988.

Because of the lack of monitoring and enforcement and therefore the possibility that the vote could simply be stolen at the ballot box,

Madrazo began to threaten to leave the party at least two months before the November 2 primary vote. Madrazo and Labastida hurled such severe attacks at each other that rumors surfaced that the primary would be called off and the National Political Council of the PRI would decide on the candidate (*El Universal* 1999c). This problem looked like an opening for Madrazo: if he could prove fraud on a large enough scale, he could argue that the process was unfair, cause a political scandal, and prove the PRI incapable of promoting democracy in its own ranks (*El Universal* 1999a). In contrast to 1988, in 1999 the PRI did not have a lock on voters' preferences or on the electoral authorities for the 2000 general elections. Madrazo could conceivably exit the party and run against Labastida in the general election or, more likely, threaten to cause such a scandal that the PRI would be hobbled in the general election.

The 1999 primary results, however, weighed heavily against Madrazo, who won only 30 percent of the popular vote and very few districts. This made it difficult for him to argue that fraud had overturned his victory. On election night, the PRI leadership claimed that the primary had drawn ten million votes, and of these, Labastida had won seven million. Once the official results were announced, Madrazo appeared on television, stating that he would remain in the revolutionary coalition and work for Labastida's campaign.

Some observers believe that he was coerced into making that announcement. Madrazo apparently had little room to maneuver outside the coalition. While the governor could certainly complain about the antiparticipatory nomination practices, his reputation for stealing his own gubernatorial election (and others) made it impossible to take advantage of the prodemocratic wave that now was hitting Mexico (Eisenstadt 1999). Because of that same reputation, few other important registered political parties were willing to accept him into their ranks. The leader of the PRD, Amalia García, had stated in October that Madrazo would not be welcomed into the PRD because of his history of corruption and antidemocratic practices (*La Jornada* 1999).

The story of Madrazo's attempt to win the PRI's presidential nomination via open primaries demonstrates that the major causal factors present in the other three exits were not present after all in the 1999 case. The rise in electoral competition and the relative openness of the party system lowered the costs of exit and therefore made voice a far more fruitful enterprise. Madrazo and other PRI members first used voice to obligate the president to open up the nomination process; the threat of a rupture was great enough to warrant a radical change. Madrazo then organized groups within the regime around his candidacy, much as Almazán, Henríquez, and Cárdenas had done. As he became the most serious threat to Zedillo's favorite, some of the groups and individuals dissatisfied with Zedillo threw their support behind

Madrazo. Unlike the other cases, however, this time the dissident could not win much support in society because anti-PRI, prodemocratic candidates and parties already existed and because, given his history, he was not seen as a democratic alternative.

Members of Madrazo's group, furthermore, would not be permanently shut out if Labastida won. The regime's leaders took Madrazo's threats to exit the coalition nonetheless seriously. They were able to use many of the same threats and inducements to persuade Madrazo and his people to remain with the regime, such as promising to reopen the electoral fraud case while giving some of Madrazo's political operators candidacies to elected positions.

Finally, although the electoral reforms had made parties far easier to form in 1999 than in 1988, the political field had been filled up by three large organizations that dominated the ideological spectrum from left (the PRD) to right (the PAN). Given this structure of the party system, Madrazo would not have had a strong enough electoral vehicle to pose a real threat to the PRI.

Ruptures and Political Stability

This paper has discussed how the exits of 1940, 1952, and 1988 were fundamentally similar both in their causes and in many of their effects on the political institutions of Mexico. Actors in political institutions, working to maximize their individual self-interest, both compete and cooperate under the formal and informal rules. While these conventions bind the actors' behavior, rules can be transformed by new external circumstances that change strategies so that powerful political figures agree to alter institutional arrangements. These changes then lead to others as actors respond to new opportunities. Many important Mexican political institutions were formed and changed in a structural context that provided actors with their strategies: exit, voice, or loyalty.

Without taking this structure into account, one cannot understand why actors held these beliefs or why the beliefs changed over time. Yet without taking into account the strategic interaction among the dissenters and regime leaders, one cannot understand why and how specific institutions were created and changed. Each executive who took power after a challenge altered the rules of the game to weaken incentives for future challenges. The most important of these reforms were the rule that made it extremely difficult to form new parties and the economic model that provided both growth and graft opportunities. Regime leaders modified the system marginally, which made it more difficult for dissidents to change it fundamentally.

The 1988 rupture, however, proved to be a turning point in Mexican political history. The leaders of the CD managed to form a united left-of-

center party that offered voters a serious alternative. The elections of 1988 also demonstrated the vulnerability of the PRI's dominance over elected positions. The lack of credibility in the final results forced the Salinas administration to reform the electoral laws, which eventually struck down several PRI advantages and culminated in removing the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) from the purview of the Secretary of *Gobernación.*

While socioeconomic variables had much to do with the general electorate's willingness to vote against the PRI, one cannot understand why it did so without fully taking account of 1986–87 rupture. The 1999 "noncase" strengthens this argument. Many of the same factors were present, such as a serious economic crisis, which created new losers in society, and a brash politician capable of uniting and organizing dissatisfied elements within the coalition.

In 2000, however, the Mexican party system was far more developed that it had been in 1988 or earlier. Stable party options, such as the PRD and the PAN, now offered a democratic alternative to voters, who no longer had to turn to PRI dissenters to punish the hegemonic party. Finally, it was difficult for Madrazo to argue that he constituted a true democratic alternative, given his questionable political past.

Notes

1. This work will not examine in detail the 1946 exit of Ezequel Padilla because it did not constitute a serious problem for the regime. Adding in the two armed rebellions in 1924 and 1929 and José Vasconcelos's electoral challenge in 1929, nevertheless, the regime suffered continuously from internal fissures from the end of the revolution until 1952. The period from 1929 to 1940 saw no electoral ruptures as the party was being formed and organized.

2. Hirschman's thesis has been applied to another case of intraparty rupture, the LDP in Japan. Kato (1998) criticizes Hirschman's approach for not taking into account the difference between voice exercised before and after exit and for not distinguishing between public and private goods being distributed by the organization.

3. Molinar (1996) argues that stability is a result of the hegemonic party system constructed over time by various PRI political leaders; as a consequence of early splits, the regime constructed an electoral formula that would make future ruptures far more difficult. Other authors hold that a variety of factors explain stability, including the inclusionary nature of the PRI, the party's dominance over public policy and the electoral arena, its ability to construct the rules of electoral competition to its advantage, and its hold over the Federal Electoral Commission, responsible for monitoring and regulating elections. See Serrano 1994 and Weldon 1997 for more on these issues.

4. The dominant party has changed names three times. It began in 1929 as the National Revolutionary Party (PNR), changed in 1938 to the Party of the Mexican Revolution (PRM), and finally became the PRI in 1946. For stylistic clarity, this article will refer to the hegemonic party as the PRI.

5. A notorious example is the 1940 gubernatorial election in Aguascalientes, in which the outgoing governor, an Almazán supporter, imposed his ally as the candidate, against the party leadership's wishes. When the *Almancista* candidate won, the state party leader wrote frantic letters to the Secretary of *Gobernación* demanding that the governor be ousted and a new local congress installed. See Jara 1940.

6. He followed up by cutting the number of federal deputies and senators "awarded" to leaders of the labor and peasant sectors and shifting these seats to the CNOP. More important, those legislators who were attempting to make a career in government shifted their activities to the CNOP—working and organizing in the new sector—thus supplying the coalition with its new political stars from a different source.

7. In a press release of mid-1950 that represented the party dissidents' opening salvo, 25 *Henriquistas* pledged their support for the general and his program. By December of that year, 12 of these public officials had recanted and agreed to support openly the official candidate and thus maintain political discipline. See Rodríguez Araujo 1974.

8. Echeverría had opposed de la Madrid's nomination and had tried, with little success, to influence the cabinet selections in 1982–83 (*Acción* 1986a). Many of the party dissidents in the 1986–88 period came from his faction, having been poised to inherit high-level positions during the 1980s before de la Madrid's closed off the political elite.

9. The Documento Número Uno, the first published expression of the CD's proposed reforms, states, "The party must implement an open process of struggle for the PRI candidacy for the Presidency of the Republic." See CD 1986.

10. The leader of the PRI, Jorge de la Vega, met with the CD leaders several times during 1986 and 1987 and agreed to respect the procedures fixed in the party statutes (*Acción* 1986b). When the president named six PRI politicians as the official precandidates, furthermore, he included several who could be termed closer to the CD economic line than Salinas was.

11. The delay was caused largely by strategic mistakes. Cárdenas waited to leave the PRI until Salinas had been nominated; but by then the PMS had already held a party primary to select its presidential candidate, a move designed to reaffirm its prodemocratic leanings and distance itself from the PRI's closed nomination methods. The PMS could not simply throw off the winner of its primary, Heberto Castillo. Cárdenas, furthermore, had accepted the first available coalition partner, the PARM, even though that party was tainted by its paraestatal past. Distrusting the Cárdenas-PARM alliance, the PMS and Castillo waited several months before ceding its candidacy to Cárdenas.

12. Not all those unhappy with the regime were pro-FDN. The economically liberal, politically conservative, pro-Catholic National Action Party (PAN) was led by Manuel Clothier, a popular figure who rallied businesspeople and conservative voters to his cause, thus splitting the anti-PRI vote, although Cárdenas won more of the popular vote.

13. The Programa Nacional de Solidaridad, or PRONASOL, was designed to bring government money for infrastructural improvements and social welfare programs directly to poor communities. Much of PRONASOL's money went to local committees formed specifically for this purpose and bypassed many party welfare agencies.

14. The most famous case of this was in 1998, in the state of Zacatecas, where another powerful politician, Ricardo Monreal, lost the gubernatorial nomination, subsequently left the PRI, ran for the PRD (which had almost no electoral strength or party organization in the state), and defeated his PRI opponent. After the Monreal incident, almost all gubernatorial nominations were transformed from top-down impositions, which had taken the form of state nominating conventions, to open primaries of all registered voters. As a result, it became far more difficult for the national leadership to impose its favorites on the PRI's state party organizations.

15. The rules of the primary stipulated that each of the three hundred federal congressional districts would comprise a primary district and that the competitor with more "first past the post" plurality victories in the districts would win the campaign. This procedure was enacted to lower the possibility of huge frauds in certain regions, which might have changed the overall outcome in terms of a plurality winner in a single national district. It would also force the primary hopefuls to cover a larger area of the nation to win more districts, and would initiate the general campaign by reinvigorating the territorial base of the party for the 2000 general election.

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