

PATTERNS OF MINOR PARTY INCORPORATION BY THE PRI IN MEXICO

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**ELECTORAL "MANAGEMENT" OF OPPOSITION PARTIES BY MEXICO'S
PRI, 1970-1994: A PRELIMINARY MODEL OF DYNAMIC PREEMPTIVE AND
REACTIVE STRATEGIES**

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ELECTORAL "MANAGEMENT" OF OPPOSITION PARTIES BY MEXICO'S PRI, 1970-1994: A PRELIMINARY MODEL OF DYNAMIC PREEMPTIVE AND REACTIVE STRATEGIES

INTRODUCTION:

Recent changes in the electoral system in Mexico have presented new challenges to the hegemony of the one-party dominant state in that nation. No longer can the ruling *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) take its preeminent status in Mexico's electoral system for granted as it has in the recent past. Now, the PRI faces the seemingly insurmountable challenge of maintaining its hegemony in the face of increasingly successful opposition from both the left and the right, while at the same time preserving some semblance of legitimacy in the eyes of the Mexican public and the international community. How the PRI attempts to accomplish this through the use of alternating preemptive and reactive strategies after the electoral reforms of 1977 is the focus of this paper and the preliminary model it presents to gauge these dynamic post-1977 electoral strategies.

With the "Third Wave" of democratization that is rapidly blanketing the globe, Mexico provides an important test case for the long-term viability of opposition parties in one-party dominant semi-authoritarian regimes. Can opposition parties succeed electorally in a political climate where control of government spending and the distribution of "particularized benefits" (Mayhew 1974) is largely beyond their reach? What consequences does the failure of opposition parties to win elections have for incipient democracies in developing nations, if any? In what ways does a dominant party, such as Mexico's PRI, confront and manage challenges to its authority and legitimacy? Answering these questions

would provide insight into the mechanisms of the sometimes evolutionary process of democratic transitions from authoritarianism. Mexico illustrates that these transitions do not occur without resistance from institutional structures within a one-party dominant system, and that power elites in authoritarian regimes will often display marked intransigence to change.

Moreover, this study casts additional light on the process of party change. In opening up the electoral mechanisms to opposition parties, the PRI is responding to pressures from both inside and outside the party.¹ These demands for change have direct implications on the strategies employed by the PRI to sustain itself as a viable dominant political force within the Mexican party system. Indeed, scholars have already documented this process in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, where the previously dominant communist parties have struggled since 1989 to reestablish their credibility and electoral viability in the face of substantial public skepticism and cynicism toward their motives and their ideology. Mexico provides a less extreme illustration of the effects of democratization on a dominant party system.² In Mexico, the process of democratization is slow and incremental, and it has been hampered by ostensibly democratic processes which have allowed the regime, *vis-a-vis* the

¹ This pressure from within the PRI is evidenced by the significant number of defections that occurred from within the party between 1988 and 1990 (most notably, that of Cuauhtemoc Cardenas in 1988), and by the presence of dissident factions within the PRI such as the Democratic Current and the Critical Current, which have demanded internal democratization of the party, honest elections, and a separation of party and state (Cothran 1994, 215-16).

² As a case of a one-party dominant state attempting to democratize, it is more akin to Taiwan than to the former Soviet Union or Eastern Europe.

PRI, to maintain its image of a competitive, multiparty democracy. The former Soviet Union and Eastern European communist regimes did not have this safety valve of procedural democratic legitimacy to facilitate incremental democratization. Rather, the lack of this democratic facade made them more susceptible to radical, sudden change in party systems and regime type. Studying party and regime change in Mexico thus allows scholars the opportunity to view the process of democratization as an *evolutionary* phenomenon, rather than as a *revolutionary* phenomenon.

First, I will provide a broad overview of the electoral reforms of 1977, outlining the scope, implementation, and effectiveness of these reforms. Next, I will summarize briefly pre-1977 patterns of electoral opposition to the PRI and how the PRI managed this opposition through the use of inducements and constraints from 1968 through 1977. I will then follow up with a discussion of the post-1977 patterns of electoral opposition to the PRI, outlining the PRI's new tactics for maintaining dominance in a political atmosphere of increasing electoral competition. This aspect of the discussion will concentrate on the presidential election of 1982, as well as the subsequent congressional and presidential elections through 1994. 1982 is the beginning point of this preliminary study since this was the first election to experience the full impact of the 1977 reforms. Finally, I will propose a theory on the electoral "management" of opposition parties in one-party dominant Mexico which builds on Collier and Collier's (1979) theory of labor corporatism in Latin America, describing the process of incorporation in terms of inducements and constraints. The preliminary model to test the hypotheses derived from this theory includes both political

(congressional and presidential election results) and economic variables (federal government expenditures on social, rural, and regional development) with data from 1982 to 1994 for all thirty-two Mexican states, including the Federal District.

BACKGROUND OF THE 1977 ELECTORAL REFORMS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES:

The new difficulties faced by the PRI can be traced to the electoral reforms, incorporated as the Federal Law of Political Organizations and Electoral Processes (LOPPE), which were implemented in 1977 (Needler 1982; Story 1986; Camp 1993; Cothran 1994). Electoral reforms were initiated in response to growing discontent within the Mexican electorate regarding the regime's ability to handle the mounting economic difficulties. In addition, the PRI was concerned about growing political discontent in the form of voter apathy and abstention (Story 1986, 65-66). Both concerns which were crystallized in the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre. By themselves, these concerns would not have been sufficient to spur the PRI towards introducing the electoral reforms of 1977, but it was the additional threat of opposition parties withdrawing their participation, and therefore their support, from the Mexican political system that presented the most dangerous challenge to the PRI's legitimacy (Philip 1988, 103; Cothran 1994, 102-103).

These reforms led to broadly expanded opposition party access to the Chamber of Deputies in the following ways. First, the number of majority districts for federal deputies increased from two-hundred to four-hundred seats (Needler 1986, 86; Story 1986, 48; Camp 1993, 147). By increasing the number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies, the PRI gave

opposition parties more representation in the political process, while at the same time not giving these parties the chance to win control of the Chamber outright. Thus, the change was more cosmetic in nature than substantive. LOPPE further specified that an additional one-hundred seats were to be allocated to opposition parties in the Chamber of Deputies on the basis of proportional representation (which was based on the national vote totals for the opposition parties). This reform increased opposition seat totals in the Chamber from 17% prior to 1977 to approximately 26% after 1977 (Camp 1993, 147). The 1977 reforms also removed the registration obstacle to opposition representation in Congress by granting any party which attained 1.5% of the vote in a national election full legal status (Story 1986, 48). Previously, decisions regarding registration of opposition parties were made at the discretion of the Federal Electoral Commission. By setting formal guidelines for the registration process, the regime made opposition parties subject to more objective standards for gaining admittance to the political process. Additionally, unregistered parties were accorded "conditional" recognition to participate in the national election in order to gain full legal status (Story 1986, 48). Finally, media access was given to opposition parties in the form of free television time (Camp 1993, 148; Cothran 1994, 193).

Although the scope of these reforms is dramatic for post-revolutionary Mexican politics, their impact should not be overemphasized since they applied to only one chamber of the bicameral Mexican Congress, had minimal effect upon presidential elections, and did not apply to the state and local governments at all. Thus their implementation was easier to achieve and less costly politically for the ruling party because they effectively applied only

to one branch of government at the national level. The 1977 reforms did achieve some opening of the political process to opposition parties, but fraud by PRI was still the pervasive norm even after 1977. In sum, the efficacy of these reforms should not be given too much weight.

At this point, some discussion of the electoral history of Mexico between 1968 and 1977 is warranted. Until 1968 the PRI electoral machine was running smoothly, encountering only token opposition whose presence the PRI used as evidence supporting the regime's legitimacy. On the right, the PRI faced the *Partido de Accion Nacional* (PAN). The PAN's primary constituency was (and largely remains) small businessmen and pro-clerical elements in Mexican society. PAN served as the PRI's favorite whipping-boy, the latter of which successfully painted the former as a reactionary party driven by religious zealots. Still, the PAN stands out from other opposition parties in Mexico in that it was the only significant and independent opposition force against the PRI prior to 1968, although it never made significant gains electorally prior to 1977. On the left, the *Partido Comunista Mexicano* (PCM) was not a significant force since it did not obtain registration until 1979 (after the electoral reforms were implemented which liberalized registration requirements). The other major leftist party, the *Partido Popular Socialista* (PPS), often deferred to the leadership of the PRI and was thus perceived by many Mexicans as being a satellite of the PRI.

With such weak and ineffectual opposition on both the left and the right prior to 1968, the PRI's main concern was not to defeat this opposition but to keep it in the political game,

so in 1963 the PRI implemented a limited reform law which allowed opposition parties some representation in the Mexican Congress (Philip 1988, 103), whereas prior to 1963 opposition parties were not successful in gaining any representation in the Congress due to structural constraints operating against them. After the 1968 massacre of student demonstrators in Tlatelolco Plaza, however, this concession was no longer sufficient to stave off increasing opposition to PRI rule from the left (which was increasingly becoming an independent political force in Mexico). In the wake of this event, President Echeverria (1970-76) made more limited overtures to the left through the use of cooptation rather than through expanded pluralism (Philip 1988, 103). The result was an increase in public sector and educational expenditures. However, the scope, implementation and credibility of these reforms were severely undercut by both increasing economic difficulties in Mexico and by Echeverria's perceived incompetence (Needler 1982, 34-37; Philip 1988, 103-104). The Lopez Portillo government (1976-82) attempted to restore the lost credibility of the earlier reforms of the Echeverria government by implementing the electoral reforms of 1977 (Philip 1988, 104) in order to keep the left within the system while not returning to the oppression used by the Diaz Ordaz government (1964-70).

Davis and Coleman (1982) suggest that the PRI began losing credibility in the electoral arena significantly earlier than 1968. They go further to posit that the PRI's electoral strength had been steadily eroding since 1958 based on election patterns of the PAN in Mexico City. Some of this defection from the PRI to the PAN is true ideological attraction, whereas a substantial majority of it comprises protest voting against the PRI

(Davis and Coleman 1982, 525). The authors also suggest that the PAN attracted more nonaligned voters than the PRI in the period from 1958-1973, and they further note from their data analysis a trend of increasing partisanship in urban Mexico (Davis and Coleman 1982, 537). Increasing partisanship suggests that political parties become more relevant in the Mexican political system over the years, and they are thus an appropriate unit of analysis for studying the process of democratization in a one-party dominant state.

When discussing Mexican electoral history after 1977, it should not be implied that fraudulent electoral practices by the PRI were eradicated after the implementation of the 1977 reforms (Gomez Tagle 1993, 67). The reforms merely meant that the PRI had to devise new strategies for predetermining the outcome of elections which relied on more subtle forms of manipulating electoral outcomes. Nevertheless, the PRI had to make certain adjustments to both its electoral and vote-attracting strategies in light of the post-1977 changes in Mexican elections. According to Gomez Tagle:

There are two elements which show more clearly the changes in Mexican elections between 1979 and 1987. First, a constant and generalized increase in electoral contests [i.e., the increase of seats in the Chamber of Deputies from 200 to 400] of all types throughout the country endangered the PRI which appeared threatened by another party [i.e., the PAN] with a similar share of the vote; second, the changes in electoral law introduced by Miguel de la Madrid in 1986 and Salinas de Gortari in 1989-90 have tended to strengthen the security mechanisms of the system in order to maintain control of electoral results and guarantee the PRI the presidency of the republic and a majority in the Chamber of Deputies (Gomez Tagle 1993, 86).

Bezdek (1995) also gives an account of the blatant fraud which took place during the 1985 gubernatorial election in San Luis Potosi. This election demonstrated yet another example of the

electoral "alchemy" by which the PRI stole the victory from the PAN candidate (Bezdek 1995, 40-41). The practices described by both Gomez Tagle (1993) and Bezdek (1995) seem to indicate that the electoral reforms of 1977 had a limited impact on the PRI's behavior and constituted only cosmetic changes in Mexican politics. Though fraud was a tool still available and widely employed by the PRI, the party wanted to curtail the use of this tool whenever possible in order to enhance its image with the Mexican electorate as a party that respects democratic norms of electoral behavior. Thus, it sought other strategies for maintaining power.

Even though the PRI has indicated its intention of maintaining hegemony by fraud if necessary, the reforms of 1977 have afforded it the opportunity to appear more democratic in practice, while at the same time keeping the opposition parties, and more importantly their supporters, within the political system. After 1977, however, the PRI seems willing to allow opposition victories only in order to stave off short-term political crises and to ensure its long-term political survival without having to resort to blatant oppression. These opposition victories occurred first at the municipal levels (since 1946) where the stakes of losing were relatively low, and then much later at the gubernatorial level (since 1989) where the stakes of losing were much higher but the political cost of fraud was deemed to be too great (Antonio Crespo 1995, 17). As Antonio Crespo explains:

The recognition of such opposition victories, however slow, limited, and selective, has had the effect, on one hand, of keeping the opposition at the table, even though it cannot compete on an equal level against the official party, and on the other, it has opened important escape valves for the political tension generated in different parts of the country. In addition to giving a certain democratic legitimacy to the regime, this has contributed to lessening and isolating the citizenry's pressure for democratic change (Antonio Crespo 1995, 17).

THEORY:

After the electoral reforms of 1977, there has been a significant realignment in the Mexican electorate (Klesner 1993). In light of this realignment, the PRI has struggled to maintain its legitimacy by allowing real competition from various parties, while at the same time preserving its electoral hegemony. As increasing electoral competition from other parties (in particular, the PAN and the *Partido de la Revolucion Democratica* (PRD)) continues to encroach upon the dominance of the PRI, the PRI must find ways other than fraud, outspending opposition candidates in campaigns, or media saturation to manage this competition in order to maintain its base of support among the electorate. These strategies are directed at the opposition parties' constituencies by fostering an electoral environment that thwarts gains made by these parties. One way the PRI does this is by coopting the base of electoral support for parties such as the PRD through the use of economic inducements and constraints directed at particular localities.

Although the concept of inducements in this context is straightforward, constraints employed by the PRI imply the use of economic sanctions (in the form of funding cuts) against localities that elect or vote in large numbers for opposition parties.³ These constraints are intended to discourage voters from voting for either the PAN or the PRD. PRI officials

³ Story (1986) states: "Another form of harassment against opposition leaders has been to withhold crucial government services and funds from municipalities under the control of opposition politicians. These deprivations are intended as a form of punishment for any citizenry that dare reject the PRI and intimidation for others that might do so in the future" (Story 1986, 70).

would prefer, however, to use inducements (in the form of funding increases) first as a preemptive strategy against opposition party inroads, either before the election (as a bribe) or after the election (as a reward). As a final resort, constraints are wielded by the PRI as a reactive strategy against pro-PAN or pro-PRD localities to encourage these localities to vote for the PRI in a future election. Thus, both preemptive and reactive strategies are employed by the PRI to manipulate the voting behavior of the opposition parties' base constituencies through alternating use of inducements and constraints.

When describing post-1977 electoral strategies used by the PRI, one can group them into one of two categories: inducements (i.e., "carrots") or constraints (i.e., "sticks"). In their analysis, the Colliers focus on the distinction between inducements extended by the state to win the cooperation of groups and constraints through which the state directly controls groups (Collier and Collier 1979, 967). Although the Colliers use these terms in the context of labor corporatism in Latin America (Collier and Collier 1979, 967), their theory of inducements and constraints accurately describes the relationship between the PRI and opposition parties after 1977, particularly in regard to the strategies employed by the PRI to manage this opposition. Both terms, inducements and constraints, imply control by the dominant group (i.e., the PRI) over subordinate groups in society (i.e., supporters of opposition parties such as the PAN or the PRD) through the distribution of group benefits and the application of restrictions on the behavior of subordinate groups (Collier and Collier 1979, 969). As the theory is applied in the context of this paper, the PRI directs inducements and constraints at potential supporters of the PAN or the PRD through the use of either

reactive or preemptive (in some cases, possibly both) resource distribution strategies.

In Mexico, the primary inducement the PRI uses with opposition parties is to offer them official recognition. For both the PAN and the PRD, this inducement offers very little practical advantage to them, other than allowing them to participate, since they are well established opposition parties which have sufficient support among the electorate to the degree that they are not concerned with losing their official registration. Thus, the PRI's alternative strategy is to offer inducements to the supporters of these parties to encourage them to vote for the PRI. These inducements materialize as investments (*inversiones*) in each state, which may vary depending upon the percentage of votes received by the PRI in the previous election. Investments include expenditures by the federal government on social, rural, and regional development programs. Conversely, the PRI applies constraints to the supporters of these parties in the same way by decreasing expenditures by the federal government on the same programs. Since voters are aware of the intimate connection between the PRI and the government, they will make an inference that these decreasing expenditures are the result of their not voting the "correct" way.⁴ Thus, they will presumably give the PRI a larger share of their votes in the next election.

⁴ Evidence that voters are aware of which party affects policy-making (e.g., funding allocation) decisions and that politicians take the potential electoral consequences of this awareness into account when they rationally anticipate policy decisions is provided by the U.S. representation literature (Stimson et al. 1995). In the case of Mexico, however, voters are hypothesized to take cues from the PRI, rather than the reverse. In a one-party dominant state, the voters know that the flow of beneficent government resource allocation is contingent on their continued support for the regime in terms of votes. Thus, the PRI rationally calculates how voters in a particular state will respond to either increases or decreases in funding allocations to that state.

Although the notion that the PRI and the Mexican government are essentially the same entity is disputed by some scholars (most notably, by Rodriguez and Ward 1994), I argue that this is still largely a valid conception of Mexican politics (Camp 1993, 161). The PRI often influences the outcome of important national, state and municipal elections in its favor. Furthermore, any party which controls the central government also controls that government's pursestrings as well, thus giving that party the power to employ inducements and constraints.⁵ Given these assumptions, the questions this preliminary study will address are as follows: In instances where the PRI allows opposition parties to win (i.e., the PRI does not engage in fraud to prevent the opposition parties from winning), does the PRI punish localities (by decreasing funding for education, health care, and regional development programs) that elect these opposition parties to power (or vote for these parties in a significant magnitude to constitute a threat to the PRI) in order to discourage voters from voting for these parties in future elections? To what degree, if any, does the PRI provide economic benefits to localities that vote for the PRI, thereby using a strategy of inducement to maintain their loyalty? Alternatively, might the PRI target inducements at localities that voted against the PRI to win back their votes? Are these relationships linear or reciprocal?

As previously discussed, the main inducement offered by the PRI to opposition parties is official recognition, though this inducement gives the greatest benefit to small opposition parties rather than to the PAN or the PRD. Thus, it appears that the Collier's (1979) theory that

⁵ Although Rodriguez and Ward (1994, 169) would disagree with this statement, I found no other evidence in the literature which contradicts this assertion either directly or indirectly.

dominant groups restrict the activities of subordinate groups by incorporating them into the political system applies primarily to these smaller opposition parties. Depending upon the vote received in the previous election, this recognition of legal status can be either given or taken away by the Federal Electoral Commission (CFE). Because the smaller opposition parties are at the mercy of the PRI-controlled CFE, they are highly subject to being coopted by the PRI in order to maintain their legal status to participate in the electoral process.⁶ Both the PRD and the PAN, however, are at less risk from being coopted by the PRI in this manner due to their sizeable support and their high degree of visibility independent of PRI benevolence.

Therefore, the PRI must directly appeal to areas (i.e., congressional districts within states) it perceives as being sympathetic to the PAN or the PRD, as evidenced by vote totals. To garner electoral support the PRI attempts to coopt potential supporters of opposition parties by securing access to resources for geographic areas which support PRI candidates (Rodriguez and Ward 1994, 170-71). In the United States, this would simply be referred to as "pork barrel" politics, but in Mexico the PRI is the only party with control over disbursement of government funding for social projects and infrastructure. It therefore has the power to reward loyalty and to punish disloyalty. "Thus one finds *colonias populares* called "Colonia PRI" where the leaders strongly and openly support the party because this support serves as the channel for securing government monies and services (e.g.,

⁶ Examples of small opposition parties losing their registration status include the *Partido Autentico de la Revolucion Mexicana* (PARM) and the *Partido Social Democratica* (PSD) in 1982, although the PARM later regained its legal registration status in the 1985 election (Story 1986, 63; Levy and Szekely 1987; 66-67).

Solidaridad)" (Rodriguez and Ward 1994, 171).

To test whether or not and how the PRI manipulates the purse-strings of the Mexican government in order to undermine electoral support for or to entice electoral support from opposition parties, I present the following hypotheses:

HYPOTHESIS 1. As levels of electoral support for the PAN or the PRD *increase* from the levels of electoral support in the previous election (t_{-1}), the amount of federal funding allocated for social, rural, and regional development programs to a particular state or district will *increase* (carrot strategy). This increase in federal funding is designed to entice voters to support the PRI.

Hypothesis 1 represents a *preemptive* tactic used by the PRI prior to mid-term congressional elections in a state where the PRI received fewer votes in comparison to the leading opposition party (PRD or PAN) in the preceding presidential election (t_{-1}) as an inducement to bring them back into the PRI camp in time for the upcoming congressional election (t_0). Prior to a mid-term congressional election (t_0), the PRI makes a strategic calculation to target a particular state for an increase in funding for programs in that state based on the percentage of the popular vote the PRI received in the previous presidential election. This is done in the hopes of attracting voters who voted for the PAN or the PRD in the previous presidential election back to the PRI in the mid-term congressional election. Rejecting the null hypothesis does not require that opposition parties lose an election (though that is often the case), but merely that their vote share compared to that of the PRI has diminished substantially.

HYPOTHESIS 2: As the levels of electoral support for the PAN or the PRD *increase* from their levels of support in the previous election (t_{-1}), the amount of federal funding allocated for social, rural, and regional development programs to a particular state or

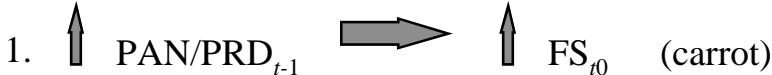
district will *decrease* (stick strategy). This decrease in federal funding is designed to punish voters for supporting either the PAN or the PRD.

HYPOTHESIS 3: As the levels of electoral support for the PAN or the PRD *decrease* from their levels of support in the previous election (t_{-1}), the amount of federal funding allocated for social, rural, and regional development programs to a particular state or district will *increase* (carrot strategy). This increase in federal funding is designed to reward voters for supporting the PRI.

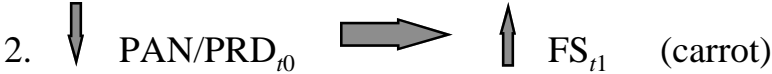
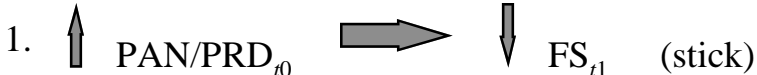
Hypothesis 2 represents a *reactive* tactic used by the PRI after mid-term congressional elections (t_0) in a state where the PRI received less votes than the leading opposition party (PRD or PAN) in the preceding presidential election (t_{-1}). After a mid-term congressional election in which the PRI receives less votes than it did in the previous presidential election (t_{-1}), the PRI may opt to decrease funding for programs for that particular state. This is done to discourage voters in that state from supporting either opposition party in the upcoming presidential election (t_1), and thus to encourage them to vote for the PRI. Hypothesis 3 illustrates the post-election reward distribution for a decrease in the vote share for the PAN or the PRD. As in the first hypothesis, it is not necessary that the PRI lose in order to reject the null hypotheses, only that the PRI lose votes to the advantage of either the PAN or the PRD. These reactive tactics are most likely to be employed *after* the preemptive strategies have been tried and failed. The PRI would prefer to use gentle persuasion first in order to woo voters back, but failing that it will resort to more coercive means to regain this support. Diagram 1 provides a graphic illustration of these three hypotheses. All three depict the potential preemptive and reactive strategies employed by the PRI in the face of declining vote shares.

DIAGRAM 1: HYPOTHESIZED POTENTIAL PREEMPTIVE AND REACTIVE STRATEGIES OF THE PRI, 1970-1994

PREEMPTIVE STRATEGIES:



REACTIVE STRATEGIES:



DATA AND METHODS:

The model to test these hypotheses includes electoral variables from both congressional and presidential races in all thirty-two states (including the Federal District), in addition to spending variables for social, rural, and regional development programs. Social development programs (*desarrollo social* or *bienestar social*) include funding for education, health care, and social security. Rural development programs (*desarrollo rural*) include programs designed to aid agricultural and fishing industries. Regional development programs (*desarrollo regional*) mainly encompass expenditures for PRONASOL, which is popularly known as *Solidaridad*. This is a program which provides government seed money for local projects, such as scholarship programs, loans for farmers, and renovation projects (Camp 1993, 169).

Data for Mexican elections is obtained from various secondary sources, including the *Statistical Abstract of Latin America* (1987 and 1995), Aguilar et al. (1994), De la Pena (1994), and from Gamboa Villafranca (1987). Federal spending data is acquired from *Informe de gobierno, Anexo* (1977-1994), and from *El ingreso y gasto publico en Mexico* (1985-1994). The former is an official Mexican government publication that publishes annual spending data for all government agencies and programs, both at the national and state levels, and the latter is a summary of this official information compiled by a non-governmental agency.⁷

⁷ Both sources are examined to validate the figures presented by the other, and to reconcile any ensuing discrepancies between the two.

A party that wins an election has received a plurality of the votes (with first-past-the-post electoral rules), but an opposition party does not necessarily need to win an election in order to be perceived as a threat by the PRI. Any increase in the opposition's electoral support may indicate to the PRI that measures need to be taken to control this upswing in popular support. For this reason, rejecting the null hypotheses does not require that opposition parties win, but merely that their levels of popular support reflected in the vote increase compared to the previous election. As a baseline measure for comparison, this increase in electoral support should reflect a vote swing of at least 10% from the previous election in order to be considered a threat by the PRI.

The election years to be included in this study are 1970, 1973, 1976, 1979, 1982, 1985, 1988, 1991, and 1994. Five of these years are presidential election years (1970, 1976, 1982, 1988, and 1994), and all of them are congressional election years. Since the presidential vote totals receive more attention in the literature, data for congressional elections in presidential years tend to be absent.⁸ Thus, the only available data for elections to the Chamber of Deputies are for the years 1985 and 1991. Although there may be lag effects of the spending variables from nonelection years on the election years, this preliminary study only considers these spending variables in election years since they have

⁸ Although these data certainly exist in the archives of the Federal Electoral Commission in Mexico City, it would necessitate field work to gather it. For now, I must be content with the substantial resources offered by the Benson Latin American Collection at the University of Texas at Austin. Moreover, I have so far acquired data only for the election years from 1982 to 1994.

the most immediate effects upon the dependent variable. Though there is substantial debate on this question in the U.S. and Western European retrospective voting literature, in deciding which party to vote for in an election, voters are more likely to take into account their present economic situation (e.g., their ability to obtain loans, their access to health care and educational opportunities) as it is affected by program expenditure decisions in Mexico City rather than the entire period between elections.⁹ Thus, considering only the seven or eight months prior to an election (which typically occur in July or August) in the model for economic variables is appropriate. A future study, however, should take into account the economic effects which occur during non-election years on party voting in Mexico.

The question of how to code for PRD electoral support is also problematic. The PRD did not exist as a bona fide party until after the 1988 presidential election. During the 1988 presidential campaign, the PRD was essentially a coalition of minor parties headed up by PRI defector Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, son of president Lazaro Cardenas (1934-40). This coalition served as a leftist alternative to the PRI and the PAN in 1988. For the purposes of a preliminary study, the party which took third place in national vote totals in elections prior to 1988 will serve as a "surrogate" for the PRD in the model, which in the 1982 and 1985 elections is the *Partido Socialista Unificada de Mexico* (PSUM). As more data from

⁹ I make this assertion on the basis of numerous studies in the literature on retrospective economic voting in both the United States (Fiorina 1978; Kinder and Kiewiet 1979; Hibbing and Alford 1981; Fiorina 1981; Norpoth and Yantek 1983; Allsop and Weisberg 1988; MacKuen et al. 1989) and Western Europe (Lewis-Beck 1980; Hibbs 1982; Lewis-Beck and Bellucci 1982; Powell 1987, 253-258).

previous elections in the 1970s become available, parties other than the PSUM may fall into the third place category. All data for social, rural, and regional development expenditures in the model are collected at the state level.¹⁰

The resulting preliminary model is as follows:

$$FS_t = \alpha + \Sigma\beta_1PAN/PRD_t + \Sigma\beta_2PAN/PRD_{t-3} + \beta_3PRI_t + \beta_4PRI_{t-3} + \beta_5\Delta VOTE_t + e_t$$

Where:

FS_t = federal spending in millions of pesos per year (a composite dependent variable of funding for social, rural, and regional development programs in an election year in a particular state);

α = the intercept;

$\Sigma\beta_1PAN/PRD_t$ = sum of the % of votes for both the PAN and the PRD in an election at time t ;

$\Sigma\beta_2PAN/PRD_{t-3}$ = sum of the % of votes for both the PAN and the PRD in a previous election at time $t-3$;

β_3PRI_t = % of votes received by the PRI in an election at time t ;

β_4PRI_{t-3} = % of votes received by the PRI in a previous election at time $t-3$;

$\beta_5\Delta VOTE_t$ = 10% or more swing in voter support for the PAN/PRD over the previous election (yes=1; no=0), and

e_t = the error term.

Testing the hypotheses with this model involves the use of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression on each state separately over the time period from 1970 to 1994. The dependent variable is a composite measure of the three different indicators of federal spending--expenditures for social, rural, and regional development programs in each state and the Federal District. β_1 through β_5 are parameter estimates measuring the effects of a one-unit change in each independent variable, holding all other variables constant, on the

¹⁰ A future study should disaggregate this data from the state level to the congressional district level in each state.

dependent variable. Using the example provided by Bond (1985) in his study of attention paid by members of the U.S. Congress to their districts over time, a composite measure of the dependent variable, federal spending (FS_t), provides a useful summarization of three equally important indicators. Like Bond, I intend to standardize the different scores of expenditures for social, rural, and regional development programs using z-scores. This assures that each variable is weighted equally in the composite measure (Bond 1985, 338).¹¹ Votes received by both the PAN and the PRD are summed to assess the combined effects of opposition party strength in an election, the conflicting ideologies of both parties notwithstanding.¹² Variables for the vote counts of both the PRI and the opposition in the previous election are included as well. The inclusion of these variables is necessary to explain decisions on funding allocations made by the Mexican government, since the hypotheses posit that these decisions are based on comparisons of voter behavior across elections.

¹¹ This may result in some misleading conclusions regarding the variance of the dependent variable for some states where rural development is more important than regional development, and vice versa. For this reason, a future study should run additional tests on each of these programs as separate dependent variables. However, I expect that Mexican voters are in relative agreement as to their specific preferences for certain federal resource allocations to their states, especially in regard to rural and social development programs.

¹² A revised model should take into account differences in the PRI's reaction to opposition party success by separating PAN votes from PRD votes and including them in the model as separate independent variables. Presumably, the PRI pursues different strategies in managing each of these opposition parties since the PAN is less of a threat ideologically than is the PRD (which seeks to usurp the PRI's claim to the legacy of the Revolution) (Rodriguez and Ward 1994, 178-79).

DISCUSSION:

Of course, employing the statistical methods to test the hypotheses I have outlined above presupposes that I obtain sufficient data from primary sources. Presently, I have acquired data only for the 1982 through 1994 elections. This small n of election data is insufficient to draw meaningful inferences from the resulting variance.¹³ A larger n of spending data is also necessary to discern spending patterns both immediately before and immediately after elections are held.¹⁴ This would illuminate whether a reactive or preemptive strategy is being employed by the PRI in each state over a sufficient time series. Initial examinations of correlations between federal spending and the percentage of PRI votes in a small non-random sample of states during the time period between 1982 and 1994 yielded only random patterns, making the acquisition of additional spending and electoral data a necessity in order to properly conduct this study. Drawing any conclusions from a statistical analysis of the data I presently have would be premature and methodologically unsound. Including the pre-1977 elections would also provide an additional test of the validity of the theory by either confirming or disproving the utilization of these electoral strategies by the PRI prior to 1977. Moreover, because the dependent variable is a measure

¹³ Ideally, an additional study would include municipal and state level election data as well to discern whether or not similar patterns occur in these elections. This would provide additional evidence to support or disprove a theory of reactive or preemptive electoral strategies in Mexican elections.

¹⁴ As previously suggested, spending data that are disaggregated from the state level to the congressional district level would be useful. Moreover, coding for rural versus urban districts and state capitals versus non-state capitals would add further to the predictive and explanatory power of the model.

of spending, various exogenous economic effects may influence how much federal money is allocated to each state from Mexico City. This model as it is presently specified does not contain control variables for exogenous influences such as inflation, unemployment, and expenditures for infrastructure. Along these same lines, including expenditures in non-election years and lagging these effects on elections years would likely increase the amount of variance explained by the model.

Despite the lack of data currently available, this preliminary model provides an effective instrument for determining the effects of voter choice on funding allocations by the central government in a one-party dominant state. From this model, it should become apparent which party's vote percentages, if any, have a statistically significant effect on federal funding levels in each state, and the direction of this significance. Inferring whether a reactive or preemptive strategy was employed by the PRI in a particular election will then be possible by graphing these relationships to determine when and where funding increases or decreases in which particular elections.

Hopefully, future findings on the basis of this model will shed light on the dynamics of electoral strategies over time in a one-party dominant state. As change becomes an increasingly real possibility for elites in a one-party dominant system, the strategies they use to cling to their democratic legitimacy and to their authority in the regime should alter as electoral circumstances dictate. Modelling these strategies allows scholars to predict how dominant party elites will react to shifts in voter moods and the resulting electoral gains of opposition parties. These reactions of elites manifest themselves in party change by altering

and adding to the factors involved in party decision-making in terms of government spending allocations and campaign tactics. Party change in the face of mounting opposition party challenges also determines the direction and speed at which a one-party dominant state becomes more open and competitive in the electoral arena. Thus, this model is applicable cross-nationally to a variety of one-party dominant nations (e.g., Taiwan and Serbia) that are in the "Third Wave" transition process from authoritarian or semi-authoritarian party systems to truly democratic party systems.

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