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THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE RETURN TO DEMOCRACY
IN THE SOUTHERN CONE

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THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE RETURN TO DEMOCRACY
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Monday, September 9

Session 1: "Building Strong Political Party Systems: Lessons from History"
  Discussant: David Collier

Session 2: "Electoral Systems and Political Parties"

  "The Importance of Sound Electoral and Political Legislation"
  Discussant: Juan Linz

Session 3: Country Discussion--Chile
  Discussant: Arturo Valenzuela

Session 4: Country Discussion--Uruguay
  Discussant: Luis E. González

Tuesday, September 10

Session 5: "Empowering Civilians through Sound Civil-Military Relations"
  Discussant: Alfred Stepan

Session 6: "The Interplay of Economics and Politics"
  Discussant: Albert Fishlow

Session 7: Country Discussion--Argentina
  Discussant: Marcelo Cavarozzi

Session 8: Country Discussion--Brazil
  Discussant: Bolivar Lamounier

Major Political Parties in
Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay

ARGENTINA

PRE 1976 COUP*	LEGAL STATUS DURING INTERVENTION (1976-1983)	RETURN TO DEMOCRACY (1983)
Frente Justicialista de Liberación (FREJULI) was composed of a coalition of Juan D. Perón's party, the Movimiento Nacional Justialista (MNJ), and the Movimiento de Integración y Desarrollo (MID), the Frondizi wing of the Radical party (Intrasigentes). FREJULI also included the Popular Conservative and Popular Christian Parties.	On March 23, 1976, Isabel Peron was arrested and replaced by the commander-in-chief of the armed forces.	Unión Cívica Radical (UCR), founded in 1890. Traditionally middle class. Has suffered splits
Unión Cívica Radical (UCR) suffered serious splits in 1957. The UCR that emerged to compete in September 1973 elections was opposed to the Peronists and did not follow the lead of Frondizi.	On March 24, the national congress was dissolved, the Constitution of 1853 was suspended, provincial legislatures, municipal councils, all Supreme Court and provincial justices were dismissed. Political parties were outlawed and, on March 25, 1976, the Junta announced that it would continue as the Nation's supreme political organ to carry out a program of "National Reorganization."	Partido Justicialista (PJ), founded in 1945 by J. Perón. Principall based in labor. Split between "oficialistas" and "renovadores." Partido Intrasigentes (PI), splinter of UCR in 1957. Embodies leftism with a nationalist bent. The PI has maintained good relations with Peronism with sectors of the left and, most recently, with Humanism and Liberation movement within PDC.
Alianza Federal Popular, made up of several small conservatives and neoperonist parties.	After the defeat of the armed forces in the Malvinas conflict, political parties were allowed to organize for the elections of October 30, 1983.	Unión de Centro Democratíco (UCD) is the most important party of the right. UCD attempts to bridge civilians supporting neo-liberal economics and the military supporters. Partido Demócrata Cristiana (PDC), organized in 1954 following pattern of European Christian Democracy. Divided into two factions: Humanism & Liberation which seeks stronger ties to non-marxist left and concentrates on human rights, and the rest in opposition to this current. Movimiento de Integración y Desarrollo (MID), founded by Frondizi in 1964. Ideologically coherent and politically disciplined, MID MID emphasizes industrialization.

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*After the overthrow of Perón in 1955, at least 150 separate parties took part in the elections during the following decade. The competition was dominated by the Peronists and the Radicals.

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN BRAZIL, URUGUAY, ARGENTINA AND CHILE

BRAZIL

PRE 1964 COUP	STATUS DURING INTERVENTION (1964-1985)	RETURN TO DEMOCRACY* (1985)
All the major parties dated from 1945. There existed three major, national parties: Partido Social Democratico (PSD), inspired by Vargas prior to his resignation in 1945 as a clientelistic party. It was comprised of state and local political machines and leaders upon whom Vargas relied. Its main strength was in rural areas. Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro (PTB), originally organized by Vargas' minister of labor to appeal to working sectors. Uniao Democratica Nacional (UDN) was a coalition of anti-Vargas forces dominated by the liberal constitutionalists. The UDN was united principally by its opposition-stance. In addition to these three major parties, there were at least eleven minor parties of some significance. Most were regionally localized. Sao Paulo was the state most receptive to minor parties.	In 1964, the military abolished the 13 existing political parties and two political organizations were established, the pro-govt. national renewal alliance ARENA, and the opposition Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB) were formed. In 1979, an administration-sponsored bill approved by the congress abolished the two-party system and provided for a controlled multi-party system. Five parties established themselves under the party reorganization law. On November 15, 1984, elections were held for the National Chamber of Deputies, the Federal Senate and, on the State level, governorships and state legislatures. All five parties participated (PDS, PMDB, PTB, PDT, PT).	Democratic Social Party (PDS), an outgrowth of the old govt. party ARENA. Strength in rural areas. Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB), the continuation of the now-extinct official opposition party. Partido Popular (PP) merge with PMDB. Brazilian Workers Party (PTB), modeled after European Social Democratic Parties (though more socialist and nationalistic). Democratic Workers Party (PDT), led by Leonel Brizola, a splinter of the PTB Worker's Party (PT) competes with the PMDB, PTB and PDT for the support of industrial workers. Under the political leadership of Tancredo Neves, the PMDB, PTB, PDT, and PT joined forces in the electoral college to form an Alianza Democratica.

*Two communist parties do not yet have legal status, though an amendment being introduced in Congress would grant them legal status.

CHILE

PRE 1964 COUP*	STATUS DURING INTERVENTION (1973-)	CURRENT ALIGNMENTS** (1985)
Partido Nacional (PN) was created in 1966 by a fusion of the former Partido Conservador (PC) and the Partido Liberal (PL). Some PC strength remained in rural Chile, particularly in the central valley. The Liberal Party drew from wealthy commercial and industrial interests. Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC) was the largest single party in Chile. The party formed as a youth organization from the PC in the mid-1930's, committed to liberal Christian ideals expressed in the papal encyclicals Rerum Novarum and Quadragessimo Anno. The party suffered significant splinters to the left. *(Confederación Democrática)* Partido Radical (PR), formed in 1861 from Liberal Party followers attracting the growing middle- and lower-middle classes. Until 1965, the PR was the dominant party of the center. PR participated in the Unidad Popular from 1970. Partido Socialista (PS) grew rapidly in the 1930's in an effort to mobilize the non-Communist Left. During the Unidad Popular, the PS was a vital element of the Allende coalition. Partido Comunista (PCC) founded in 1921 using labor as its nucleus, particularly among the northern mining population. PCCh participated in the Unidad Popular government. *(Unidad Popular)*	On Sept. 21, 1973, Decree-Law 27 dissolved the National Congress and relieved the incumbent Senators and Deputies of their duties. On that day, Pinochet announced that all leftist parties were suspended. On Sept. 27, 1973, all political parties were dissolved.	Chile's fragmented political Right consists of the pre-coup Partido Nacional, as well as at least seven distinct factions with varying degrees of support: Social Christian Movement, National Union, National Action Movement, Socialist Democratic Workshops, Radical Democracy, Independent Democratic Union, National Democratic Party. Christian Democratic Party (PDC) occupies a broad space in the center of the political spectrum. Radical Party, one of the oldest social democratic parties in the world. Socialist Party, extremely fractionalized into six distinct tendencies. Five other party fragments of different tendencies: Liberal Party, Republican Right, Social Democratic Movement, MAPU-OC, Alianza Democrática. MAPU and the Christian Left (PC) form the Convergencia Socialista. *(Alianza Democrática)* Communist Party (PC), historically important in Chile, joined by part of the Socialist Party (Almeyda), MIR, MAPU "Sector Lautaro," and MAPU-OC (Tendencia Proletaria.) *(Movimiento Dem. Pop.)*

*Due to extreme political fractionalization, many more splinter groups existed than appear. The parties listed are the major ones.

**As of July 30, 1985, efforts were being made to unite Independientes, Der. Republicana, Mov. Social Demócrata, PC, Rad. "renovados," PS (Almeyda), PS (Mandejano), Iz. Cristiana, MAPU and PH in an alliance called the "Intrasigencia Democrática." At the same time, conversations were being held between the parties of the Alianza Democrática, the Partido Nacional and the MUN sponsored by the Archbishop of Santiago.

URUGUAY

PRE 1973 BREAK	DURING STATUS INTERVENTION (1973-1984)	RETURN TO DEMOCRACY (1984)
Uruguay's contemporary parties date from before independence in the 1830's. The Colorado's identified principally with Montevideo, attracted immigrants during the late 1800's. The Blancos found their strength in provincial areas. Modern Uruguayan politics begin with José Battle and Ordonez of the beginning of the 20th century. By the late 1950's both parties were seriously fraction- alized--encouraged by the electoral system. Nonetheless, the two traditional parties accounted for over 80% of the vote until the breakdown of democracy in 1973. Though never able to effectively challenge the traditional parties, minor parties had become increasing- ly important. In 1971, several parties of the left formed the Frente Amplio. The most important members of this coalition were the Frente Izquierda de Libertad (FIDEL), the Partido Demócrata Cristiana (PDC) and the Partido Socialista (PS).	On June 27, 1973, President Bordaberry abolished Congress stating that "...Social peace is incompatible with the free play of political parties..." Electoral Acts were suspended the same day. On June 12, 1976, institutional act No. 1 of the Armed Forces Regime decreed the "convocation of general elections" suspended indefinitely. On July 10, 1980, the Minister of the Interior authorized limited political activities on the part of some political parties, but not the two traditional parties. On June 7, 1982, the Organic Law on Political Parties was approved by the Council of State providing rather stringent rules for the organization of political parties, including the reactivation of the Partido Nacional (Blancos) and Colorados. On June 26, 1984, the Multipartidaria comprised of the Colorados and the Frente Amplio voted to empower Colorado leader Sanguinetti to meet the commanders-in-chief. The Multipartidaria negotiated the Naval Club Agreement which extended certain guarantees to the armed forces in exchange for a speedier return to democracy. (The Blancos dissented.)	The two traditional parties, the Colorados and the Blancos, both 150 years old, are multi-class, loosely structured catch-all parties. They remain the most important political parties in Uruguay. Both traditional parties, particularly the Blancos, are susceptible to serious fractionalization. The Frente Amplio maintains basically the same political constituency as before the military intervention. The Frente receives its main support from urban Montevideo. In recent elections, appears to be gaining some strength.

Summary

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AND DEMOCRACY:

THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN THE POLITY

by Alfred Stepan and Michael J. Fitzpatrick

This paper makes suggestions for the role of the military in democratic politics by focusing on the contemporary Brazilian military and placing it in comparative perspective, principally with respect to the armed forces of Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. The authors conclude that most aspects of the military's relation to the structure of Brazilian society will work against a reassumption of power by the military in the foreseeable future. They are therefore optimistic that democracy will not soon be ended in Brazil through military intervention.

The Brazilian Military in 1985

The authors discuss the implications for democracy of seven aspects of the status of the Brazilian military in 1985:

1.   Since the Brazilian military regime began under a <u>less intense crisis and engaged in less repression</u> than any of the Southern Cone military forces, flexibility in dealing with the polity was more possible for working a transition to democracy.

2.   These relatively good civil-military relations allowed the Brazilian military to leave power with their <u>internal structures largely reconstructed and intact</u>, albeit with less legitimacy than at any time since the declaration of the Republic in 1889. Such coherence of the military-as-institution makes civil-military communication easier and its loss of legitimacy enhances social acceptance of civilian rule.

3.   Since <u>Brazilian military expenses</u> have fallen in real terms since 1970 and are among the world's lowest in terms of percentage of gross domestic product, neither should one expect a confrontation resulting from civilian efforts to regain power due to a budgetary imperative.

4.   Since Brazil has a relatively large <u>military-industrial complex</u>, there is a strong constituency in civil society favoring arms production and little incentive for a military takeover to increase arms purchases.

5.   Since the first president of the military regime placed a maximum limit on the amount of time an officer could hold the rank of General, the <u>brokering capacity of high-ranking officers</u> has been reduced and, with it, their coup-making capacity.

6.   Since Brazilian officers have <u>roles available other than managers of the polity</u>, i.e., defenders against foreign powers (stimulated by the Argentine Malvinas experience) and advisors to arms customers, they will be less likely to see their mission as keeping the polity in order.

7. By allowing the military to maintain <u>control</u> <u>over</u> <u>the</u> <u>National</u> <u>Intelligence Service</u>, the civilian politicians avoided a severe conflict. They will, however, have to restructure and demilitarize its oversight in the medium-run if they are to create the complex system of monitoring found in all other democracies.

Democratic Control of Military and Intelligence Systems

In their concluding section, the authors offer "some preliminary thoughts" on civilian control of the military and the consolidation of democracy. They suggest the following:

1. <u>Civil</u> <u>society</u> <u>must</u> <u>consider</u> <u>how</u> <u>it</u> <u>can</u> <u>contribute</u> <u>to</u> <u>democratic</u> <u>control</u> <u>of the</u> <u>military</u> <u>and</u> <u>intelligence</u> <u>systems</u>. On this point, they urge the creation of civilian institutions in Latin America which seriously consider matters of international relations and security studies (like the United States' Brookings Institution and Britain's Institute for Strategic Studies) so that national security concerns are not exclusively considered seriously by military officers and so that civilian-military communication on these matters is facilitated.

2. Latin American legislatures should create permanent committees with large staffs and independent research capacities to carry out <u>military</u> <u>and</u> <u>intelligence</u> <u>oversight</u> in a routine democratic legislative fashion.

3. A <u>reduction</u> <u>in</u> <u>the</u> <u>number</u> <u>of</u> <u>politically</u> <u>appointed</u> <u>military</u> <u>ministers</u> combined with more systematic professional <u>incorporation</u> <u>of</u> <u>civilians</u> <u>and</u> <u>military</u> <u>officers</u> <u>into</u> <u>National</u> <u>Security</u> <u>Councils</u> might create a greater sense of information exchange and grievance redress, thus decreasing the probability of precipitous military intervention into politics and greater empowerment of civilian politicians.

II. The Parties in the 'Apertura'

The parties waited until 1980, when the military felt compelled to submit
their project to legitimation by plebiscite. To their surprise, it was
rejected. As a result, the military permitted a growing political role for
the traditional parties and attempted to change the electoral laws to favor
"their" candidates. These changes were absorbed by the traditional parties
and, to facilitate the transition, the parties granted minimal implicit
assurances to military power-holders.

III. Issues for the Future

Will the Uruguayan political system be able to regain the stability which
characterized it for so many decades? The country has been unable to find
even partial answers for problems which have eluded solution for thirty
years. While the short-term prospects for the restoration of democracy in
Uruguay are good, it is hard to make medium-range forecasts. Much will
depend on the economic and political policies of the new government.
Institutional engineering through new electoral legislation will likely
have an important medium-term effect on the prospects for democratic
consolidation. Such legislation should seek to promote a political system
with a small number of parties and to inhibit party fractionalization. To
avoid extreme multipartism, a plurality voting system should be continued,
perhaps modeled along the lines of the French second-ballot technique or
the German mixed system. To avoid party fractionalization, the DSV must be
abolished and parties should devise means to present unified lists of
candidates.

Summary

The Military in the Constitutions

of the Southern Cone Countries, Brazil and Spain

by Felipe Agüero

Success in the consolidation of the emergent democracies in South
America will be largely achieved if the new civilian leadership can set the
institutional basis for subordinating the military in the long run. The
handling of social demands and present economic difficulties, and the
legitimacy that political parties and governments can reach, are all factors
that will influence the leaders' standing before the military. However,
the military's expectations regarding its future role will also depend upon
the coherence and initiative that civilians show in their policies toward
the armed forces and national defense.

Constitutional definitions provide the legal-formal background of
opportunities and constraints in which military and civilian actors relate
to one another. As new institutional arrangements favoring democratic
consolidation are sought, current constitutional prescriptions highlight
those opportunities or constraints that have been inherited from the past,
or those that result from present compromise.

The purpose of this paper is to provide basic information about the
ways in which the relations between military and state authorities are
formalized in the Constitutions currently in force in the countries under
study. Brief references are made to previous constitutions in those cases
where the military regime issued the Constitution now in force.

In the first part, the Constitution of each country studied is briefly
compared along some relevant dimensions. In the second part, the relevant
sections of the Constitutions are presented country-by-country. The
concluding section states that while the Chilean 1980 Constitution is
broadly designed to prevent civilian control, Argentine and Brazilian leaders
should find no major legal obstacles in their Constitutions for exerting
control over the military. Likewise, the Spanish Constitution and later
legislation provide the basis for governmental control. The future of
civilian control in Uruguay will partly depend on the way in which the
constitutional reforms due in 1985 are faced.

ECONOMICS AND POLITICS:
PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS ON THE FEASIBILITY OF
STABILIZATION ATTEMPTS AND REDEMOCRATIZATION

By Albert Fishlow

The author argues that there is no "single formula for economic success"
for the difficult circumstances currently confronting the Southern Cone
countries and Brazil. Rather than advocating, as have the editors of The
Economist and others, wholesale adoption of models and policies used in
Asia and elsewhere, Fishlow stresses the difficulty of choosing among
multiple solutions and determining whether a given solution is valid.
Central to this paper is the recognition that applied economics is neces-
sarily political; that competitive political parties and open debate are
essential for setting economic policies appropriate to particular national
settings; that policy success is limited by polarizing forces opposed to
losses of any kind; and that the politics and economics of adjustment will
not be sustained by treating the international debt burden and domestic
stabilization as separate issues.

In addition, the following points are made, ad seriatim, in the paper:

1.   There is no "right" or universal model for a solution to the present
economic crisis of developing nations.

2.   In the Southern Cone alone, the motivations for indebtedness, the
consequences of indebtedness, and the mix of adverse external effects and
domestic policy errors after 1979 vary among countries.

3.   It is important to distinguish between policies which seem to have
worked in resource-poor, low-wage Asian nations and "resource-rich Latin
American countries where indiscriminate export promotion can crowd out non-
traditional exports and have adverse distribution effects."

4.   Politics is an integral part of the determination and implementation
of economic policy since economic behavioral relationships are not known
with certainty; because the policies themselves and their anticipation
affect subsequent behavior; because exogenous variables affect policy
outcomes; and because different groups have different abilities to voice
their concerns and defend themselves.

5.   Room for experimentation with non-orthodox economic policies is extremely
limited, especially in small open economies.

6.   Political reality makes impossible the easy construction of an overall
set of economic policies from a given model.

7.   Popular criticism of orthodox stabilization policies in the Southern
Cone is rooted in: (a) inflation-fed reactions of groups to defend their
distributional positions; and (b) recognition of the privileged position of
entrepreneurs due to their critical price-setting roles in downturns, and

investment roles in upswings. Strategies of "containment, social pact, and alternative policy package" have had only limited past success restraining critical opposition and maintaining competitive politics.

8.   The current situation is more hopeful because of the destruction of the legitimacy of authoritarian-technocratic policies, and because countries have already demonstrated impressive capacities for economic adjustment.

9.   Three components of "an alternative stabilization model" are: (a) "an attack on inflation that incorporates some kind of incomes policy... that recognizes the need for restraint on profits as well as wages;" (b) a "fiscal policy that trims the size of the public sector;" and (c) "reduction of net transfers abroad."

10. Recent Argentine and Peruvian initiatives go in the right direction because they attempt to correct "large imbalances that undermine the capacity to pursue a continuous and consistent policy" and they "contain significant political content" thus making politics part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

11. Achieving wider support for stabilization-adjustment measures requires greater openness by both international and domestic actors to burden-sharing and a realistic understanding of prospects for economic growth.

* * * * *

The author concludes with the statement that, "There is no deus ex machina...economic management is now a tightrope act: continuing rigid stabilization will arouse discontent just as surely as irresponsible and premature reflation."

PERONISM AND RADICALISM: ARGENTINA'S TRANSITIONS IN PERSPECTIVE

by Marcelo Cavarozzi

The author discusses 1) the cycle of instability in the Argentine political system after the dismantling of the 1945-55 Peronist state, and 2) the characteristics of the two main political parties, the Peronists and the Radicals. The post-1955 state is characterized by three periods, 1955-70, 1970-74 and 1974 to the the present. In each, attempts were made to create a political system based on political parties, but the mechanisms of the Peronist state have not yet been replaced by effective alternative arrangements.

An important consequence of the rise of military authoritarianism was the military's resistance to the return to civilian rule. In 1973 and 1983 collapsing military regimes made last minute attempts at determining their successors or at imposing restrictions. The confrontational characteristic of the transition periods was inevitable. In addition, military intransigence served as a catalyst for important changes in the relationship between the two major parties. In 1970, these parties signed a pact, La Hora del Pueblo, ending the traditional antagonism that had seperated them since the 1940's.

The author considers characteristics of the two parties in light of their involvement in the two recent transitions: the 1973 transition to power of the Peronists and the 1983 transition to power of the Radicals.

PERONISM

Before 1955, the hegemony of Peronism was based on the close identification of the party with the state, the development of a mass-based union movement and the creation of an egalitarian collective identity which questioned the oligarchy's cultural supremacy. Control of the state and Perón's dual role as leader of the masses and head of state were essential mechanisms in the political formula of Peronism. Statism gradually became an implicit ideology, associated with a political culture in which the state was conceived as the embodiment of the public good. Political pluralism was considered divisive.

The period 1955-70 is characterized by legal proscription from politics of the Peronist party. The goal was to restore the strength of the "democratic" parties. This resulted in a dual political system in which the legal parties and parliament operated on one side and the Peronists operated from outside the legal institutions. The ban on Peronist activities made it impossible for lasting formal party structures to develop.

The character of the Peronist party experienced important changes during this period:

1) Although Perón remained a strong leader, day-to-day affairs moved outside his sphere of influence. Peron retained the capacity to make final decisions on electoral choices at the national level.

2)   Union leadership became increasingly politicized. The military was
     unable to eradicate Peronism from the working class or to replace
     the Peronist union system with a new one of multiple affiliation and
     representation.

3)   Perón's earlier rejection of politics kept Peronist <u>políticos</u> from
     achieving political stature on the national level and on the local level
     in the large metropolitan areas.

     By 1969, Peronist unions had been subdued and Perón and the <u>políticos</u>
had lost the destabilizing threat that their votes posed to weak civilian
governments. Additionaly, the internal organization was in disarray.
But the mass riots of that year and the eventual collapse of military
rule worked for Peronism.

     With the collapse of military authoritarianism, Peronism was confronted
with two major challenges: how to force the military to refrain from
proscribing it, translating its electoral supremacy into a return to power;
and how to transform the party into an effective electoral instrument. Perón
successfully outmaneuvered the military and disciplined rebellious union
leaders, reunifying the party.

     Upon his return to power, Perón reemphasized some of the aspects
of his earlier regime and also introduced some major innovations:

1)   Opposition to the military regime, seen as the major obstacle to a return to
     past glories.

2)   An idealization of pre-1955 Argentina, based on the myth of the
     Argentine Golden Age.

3)   A reweaving of the hierarchically-controlled party organization and
     a reassertion of Peron's monopoly on the movement's ideology.

4)   Reconciliation with other parties and an agreement to support democratic
     institutions. This was a major turnaround from Peronism's earlier
     rejection of party politics.

5)   Attempts to incorporate class organizations into the institutional
     framework. The signing of the Social Pact, where the CGT and major
     business associations agreed to freezes of wages and prices and to
     submit proposed changes to government arbitration, was a major effort
     along these lines

     Despite the advances made by Perón, Peronism proved incapable of
providing the stable foundations for a democratic regime. The changes made
depended on the role played by Perón while the party lagged behind. Peronist
leaders were unwilling to make necessary concessions. During Isabel Perón's
tenure, Peronism suffered a return to fractionalism. The Montoneros
returned to their clandestine activity and there was a dispute between López
Rega and the union leadership. The breakdown of Peronism led to the decomposition
of the government itself. In the period between the 1976 coup d'etat and
the 1982 war with Britain, the Peronists remained largely inactive. The
image of Peronism had been damaged by its dismal performance in government.

In the second year of democracy in Argentina, 1985, Peronism remains in disarray. Two major issues remain to be decided: the control of the party organization and the distribution of power within the CGT.

THE RADICALS

After the fall of Perón in 1955 and subsequent banning of the Peronist party, the Unión Cívica Radical appeared ready to take on national leadership, but instead the party split in two, the UCRI and the UCRP. Although each of these two branches eventually acheived power in the period 1955-70, they were unable to overcome the stigma that they had won because the Peronists were proscribed. While the two branches developed different economic policies, neither effectively challenged the military's proscription of Peronism.

The UCRI later split into two factions, one led by Frondizi and the other by Alende. After the 1966 coup d'etat, the UCRP developed a dissident group led by Raúl Alfonsín, Renovation and Change (RyC). The UCRI's two branches attempted to work within the military regime while the UCRP maintained a militant opposition. In the early 1970's, the UCRP won the right to use the old name Unión Cívica Radical while the two UCRI factions became the Movimiento de Integración y Desarrollo (MID), led by Frondizi, and the Intransigent Party (PI), led by Alende.

With the second coming of Perón in 1973 and the signing of La Hora del Pueblo, the UCR (formerly the UCRP) became a permanent and subordinate party to the Peronists. The signing of this pact made explicit the UCR's acceptance of Peronism's dominance. By 1976, the UCR had become a helpless witness to the coup d'etat of that year.

During the succeeding military regime neither the UCR nor the Peronists had any influence on the political process and neither contributed to the eventual breakdown.

In 1983 the UCR remained the minority party. Alfonsín and his movement, the RyC, successfully captured party leadership and challenged the Peronists. He presented his party as the only alternative to authoritarianism and the only party capable of national leadership.

As opposed to the 1973 Peronist government, the 1983 Radical government has been characterized by negotiation and compromise. Disputes have centered around renovation of party leadership. But neither the Radicals nor the Peronists have been able to propose solutions to the economic crisis. They have been unwilling to confront the public with the possibility of shared losses. The Peronists lapse into obstructionism and accuse the government of "giving in" to the IMF. This reveals the tendency of these parties to lose sight of the real issues. The danger is that, with the possible rise of the minor parties on the left and the right, extremist views may emerge in the major parties and the necessary political practices of negotiation and compromise may be abandoned.

Summary

<u>ORIGINS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHILEAN PARTY SYSTEM:</u>

<u>A PROPOSAL FOR A PARLIAMENTARY FORM OF GOVERNMENT</u>

by Arturo Valenzuela

This essay traces the origins of the Chilean party system by examining the
cleavage structure of Chilean society. It argues that the uniqueness of
Chilean political parties in terms of their number, scope, and impersonalism,
is due to the political expression of deep social and cultural cleavages.
The electoral context of Chilean presidential politics seriously exacerbated
these cleavages as well as the confrontational nature of Chilean politics.
After analyzing the role of political parties in the breakdown of democracy,
the paper concludes arguing for a parliamentary form of government as a way
to induce greater stability in the nation's competitive and polarized party
system.

I.   Origins and Characteristics

     The Chilean party system owes its basic characteristics to <u>three</u>
<u>fundamental</u> <u>cleavages</u>: center-periphery, religion, and class. What was
determinative, however, was the timing of the development of these cleavages
and the nature of the institutional structures which both channelled and
were transformed by the way in which political forces emerged from these
social and cultural cleavages. The center-periphery cleavage was resolved
early in the 19th century. The imposition of a central state authority
forced early challengers to advance their interests through ballots.
Political adversaries stood to gain from suffrage expansion, a goal which
they jointly promoted. Significantly, the rules of political contestation,
with a central role for parliament, emerged before universal manhood suffrage.
Legislative and party politics also preceded the development of a strong
state bureaucracy. Parties created outside the legislative arena were
incorporated into the political process through political competition
centered on the parliament. As in Europe, the character of the party
system remained remarkably similar to the one which had become consolidated
at the time of early suffrage expansion, with the important exception of
the later emergence of the Christian Democrates.

     An analysis of electoral trends reveals that one of the most striking
characteristics of the Chilean party system was its high degree of <u>competi-</u>
<u>tiveness</u>. No single party or tendency held a clear majority. Though the
number of parties increased in times of crisis, five major parties have
always commanded the lion's share. Party competition and polarization were
uniformly high in elections at the national and local level and pervasive
throughout the country. <u>Polarization</u> was the other major characteristic of
the party system. Party fractionalization was aggravated by the ideological
distance separating the parties. Polarization, as well, was uniformly high
throughout Chile's regions.

The bases of party support have been highly heterogeneous and do not correspond strictly to class divisions. In past elections, working class occupational categories have not explained a substantial amount of the variance in vote for any party, except for the Communist Party which consistently performed better in areas with a high percentage of mining population. Distribution of left-right support from working class groups remained surprisingly stable through the election of Allende. This structure of party support was partly explained by clientelistic and personalistic appeals to voters, and to the continued vitality of the religious cleavage. Voters with strong religious identification were more likely to vote conservative, and later, Christian Democrat (PDC). The reformist appeal of the PDC also drew working class support on the left and rural support on the right.

In addition to the number of parties, their ideological distance, and their heterogeneous bases of support, the party system was also shaped by the institutional context in which it operated. Two levels can be distinguished: the electoral and the political bargaining process. At the electoral level, a multiparty, polarized system had no strong centripetal drive. The repeated surges of centrist movements at the expense of both right and left were short-lived and only minimally represented a viable centrist tendency.

At the level of political bargaining, the presidential system also encouraged party system instability. Since no single party was capable of winning the presidency on its own, preelection coalitions were constituted primarily for electoral reasons. Given the fact that (according to the 1925 Constitution) presidents could not be elected for two consecutive terms, party leaders realized they could best improve their electoral fortunes by dissociating themselves from the incumbent. This pattern led to the continuous erosion of preelection coalitions which, in turn, resulted in cabinet instability and the inability of presidents to carry out their programs. Exceptions to the rule were the Jorge Alessandri administration (1958-1964), which enjoyed majority support in the legislature, and the Eduardo Frei administration (1964-1970), which attempted to govern without coalition support due to its majority support in the Chamber of Deputies. In short, because of the competitiveness and polarization of the party system, the effort to return Chile to a presidential form of government with the 1925 Constitution failed. The system, however, was capable of structuring working arrangements and establishing a pattern of political give-and-take. This stemmed from the imperatives of electoral politics, the existence of a pragmatic center, and the viability of representative institutional arenas for decision making.

The prevailing view among Chilean official circles is that the breakdown of democracy resulted from structural characteristics of the party system. Their conclusion is that a stable system would result from the creation, through party and electoral rule engineering, of a two- or three-party system. This proposal, which runs against the grain of traditional party competition in Chile, presents two problems: (1) There is little, if any, direct relationship between the number of parties per se and the incidence of regime breakdown. (Uruguay experienced breakdown the same year of the Chilean coup, despite its non-ideological two-party system.) What matters is not the number of parties but the ideological distance between them.

Although non-ideological and catch-all parties have been the norm in most other Latin American countries, Chile proved to be more democratically stable than most of them. (2) Regardless of whether a relationship between the nature of the party system and the incidence of regime breakdown can be established, it is equally questionable whether changes in electoral and party laws would yield a different party system. Party system variables were only contributory to the breakdown, never sufficient conditions for it.

Several developments led to the progressive erosion of the system of accommodation which characterized Chile's party system. One was the electoral reform of 1958 which abolished joint lists, thereby eliminating an opportunity for cross-party bargaining. More important were reforms (like the constitutional reforms enacted by the PDC and the Right in 1970) aimed at curbing some of the power of Congress under the guise of strengthening executive authority to deal with the country's chronic economic troubles. Also important was the rise in the 1960s of a new center party, the Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC), with a political style which differed markedly from its predecessors by rejecting the traditional give-and-take pattern of Chilean politics. The Chilean breakdown was thus a complex dialectic process, one in which time-tested patterns of accommodation were eroded by the rise of a center unable to bridge the gap between extremes, accentuated by the decline of institutional arenas of accommodation.

Despite profound changes in Chile's institutional structure, the breakdown has not resulted in the destruction of the party system. Three factors account for the inability of the regime to destroy the party system:

(1) Despite the ephemeral economic growth experienced in the late 1970s, support for left parties is not fully explained by poverty or frustration. Identification of parties of the left remained the result of political socialization—the influence of organization and key reference groups such as trade unions.

(2) Parties managed to establish an important presence in a host of institutions of civil society.

(3) The enduring continuity of Chile's "political landscape" which the military regime "froze" into place.

The hyperfactionalism that can be observed since the short-lived political "opening" of August 1983 does not reflect a substantial change in party alignments. This situation is, in fact, the norm in an authoritarian context of partial opening.

II. A Proposal for a Parliamentary Form of Government

What if the electoral rules of the game are changed substantially? The following can be argued: (1) The attempt to exclude the Communist Party (PC), an inspiration from the West German constitution, will not work because of the inappropriateness of the comparison—especially the large continuing (15%-20%) Communist vote and support in Chile. (2) The attempt

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to create a two-party system through electoral engineering is also un-
realistic. For example, the adoption of a single member district is likely
to be strongly opposed by parties on the right, since it is a measure
fraught with uncertainties for them. "Moderate" politics cannot be forced
on a society with clearly defined partisan options. The outlawing of the
left will only reinforce current divisions and give center and left parties
no choice but to coalesce.

Redemocratization in Chile will not succeed if it is structured on the
premise that the party system needs to be destroyed or dramatically changed.
The key to redemocratization is the recognition that Chilean politics is
based in several important and polarized political currents with strong
party representation. The challenge, then, is the structuring of mechanisms
designed to bridge the centrifugal realities of Chilean politics and achieve
a minimum consensus on the rules of the game and the policies required to
govern the country. This can only be achieved by strengthening the insti-
tutional arenas of accommodation capable of providing channels for political
expression as well as compromise and effective government.

Chile's presidential system failed. The country's multiparty system
cannot generate majority support, except through the structuring of broad
pre-election coalitions, and experience shows there is little incentive in
a presidential system to maintain coalitions in the legislature. Presidents
were invariably elected by minorities or by coalitions which disintegrated
after each election. The fixed terms for both president and congress also
contributed to an atmosphere of stalemate and a feeling of permanent crisis.

The establishment of a parliamentary system in Chile would have three
distinct advantages:

(1) It would defuse the enormous pressures for structuring high-stake
coalitions around a winner-take-all presidential option, which by definition
encourages polarization in the Chilean context.

(2) It would eliminate the paralyzing stalemate and confrontation which has
characterized executive-legislative relations in twentieth century Chile.

(3) It would encourage a centripetal drive toward coalition and compromise,
rather than a centrifugal pattern of conflict in seach of maximalist solutions.

It is a myth that parliamentary systems are weaker. The strength of
any regime is measured by its ability to implement policies and programs.
Parliamentary systems function on the basis of majority support, and are
thus by definition stronger. It should be emphasized that with the exception
of Latin America, where constitutional governments have been notoriously
weak, presidential systems are by far the exception rather than the rule.
Spain's recent decision to install a parliamentary regime, and the experience
of Greece, reinforce the utility of a parliamentary system for Chile.

Summary

POLITICAL PARTIES AND REDEMOCRATIZATION IN URUGUAY

by Luis González

The paper discusses the Uruguayan party system before the 1973 coup, the
role of parties in the political 'apertura,' and concludes with suggestions
for strengthening democratic institutions.

I.   The Uruguayan Political System Before 1973

With a homogeneous population and no deep sociocultural cleavages, with its
high ranking on virtually every socioeconomic indicator, and with a highly
egalitarian income distribution, Uruguay is unique in Latin America. From
1918 through the 1960s, Uruguay's political system was far more democratic
than either Argentina's or Brazil's, and also compared favorably with Chile.
Until 1973, the Uruguayan military was effectively subordinated to civilian
rule; it achieved universal suffrage earlier than any other Southern Cone
country.

     Uruguay's traditional parties--the 150 year old Blancos and Colorados--
are older than the Uruguayan Republic itself and have often enjoyed more
loyalty. Both parties are multiclass and largely ideologically undifferentiated,
comprising virtually complete cross-sections of Uruguayan society. Until 1971
the two parties together had never received less than 90% of Uruguay's popular
vote. In 1971 a left-center coalition of the Socialist, Communist, and
Christian Democrat parties, called the Frente Amplio, received 18% of the
vote; in 1984, it received 21.2%.

     Although the Frente Amplio has made recent inroads, the Uruguayan
political system has been essentially bipartist for most of the twentieth
century, with the Blanco and Colorado parties functioning as loosely structured
catch-all parties. During the fifteen years preceding the breakdown, the
party system worked with a two-party logic, soft-pedaling cleavages and
exerting a moderating, centripetal effect on party competition, even under
extreme pressure. Party polarization did not reach the levels experienced
in Chile in the 1960s and 1970s. Bipartism in Uruguay probably contributed
to sparing the country from some of the harshest extremes its neighbors
experienced during their military government as well as facilitating the
transition preceding the democratic restoration. Uruguay, then, can be
seen as a two-party system, even though increasingly embattled, as the
1971 and 1984 elections demonstrate.

     The two traditional parties have been described in both positive and
negative terms. The positive and more commonly held view focuses on the
adaptability and responsiveness of the Blancos and Colorados to the middle-
class aspirations of the Uruguayan polity. The negative view sees the
traditional parties as corrupt, self-perpetuating political machines doling
out patronage and manipulating electoral legislation to consolidate their

joint hold on the political arena. Critics of the traditional parties accuse them of abdicating their leadership functions and allowing Uruguayan society to ignore the economic and political pressures which eventuated in the breakdown.

Both views contain elements of truth and both stress the clientelistic nature of the party system. However, clientelistic patronage alone was not sufficient to stabilize Uruguay's party system and win elections. Rather, the deliberate engineering of electoral legislation has influenced both the number of parties in the Uruguayan system and, to a lesser extent, their coherence and structure. Uruguayan electoral laws have had a significant long term effect on both bipartism and intra-party fractionalization. The joint effect of a closed-list system, and a simple plurality rule for presidential competition, has maintained and strengthened the two-party system. On the other hand, the peculiar "double simultaneous vote" (DSV) --where the voter chooses one party and a particular set of candidates within this party--encourages intra-party fractionalization permitting competing simultaneous candidates within the same party.

Such fractionalization was probably positive in the early stages of democratic consolidation as it stimulated the organization of minorities and strengthened internal party democracy. The DSV also contributed to the early elimination of fraud in the electoral system. Yet, the logic of the DSV system, in the long run, has encouraged the expansion of the number of candidacies through a series of trial and error tests. Fractionalization and party adaptation has now been slowed by the DSV and contributed to the paralysis of the political system in the early 1970s.

The two decades that preceded the 1973 coup were marked by economic stagnation and growing social unrest. A relatively strong union movement contributed to the unrest, though its power had no direct electoral expression. As a result, the political center of gravity in the traditional parties moved steadily to the right and their left fractions departed and formed a coalition with the loyal and disloyal opposition in the Frente Amplio. The result, however, did not approach the polarized pluralism of the Chilean experience, due to the two-party structure. The core of both traditional parties was located at the same place in the political spectrum-- at the right of center--and the comparatively strong sense of party identification among the Uruguayans prevented extreme centrifugal competition.

Despite the challenge of the Frente Amplio, the traditional parties were incapable of establishing any coherent set of policies. At the root of this problem was their fractionalization. Prior to 1973, the proliferation of party candidates reached a point where it appeared as though the parties themselves were denying the voters the possibility of a rational choice. Excessive party mediation confused the desires of the electorate. In addition, it became increasingly difficult for the government to obtain parliamentary support. The parties lost control, and in this way contributed to the breakdown of democracy. When the breakdown occurred, the parties abstained from any formal participation in the military regime. There was nothing to do but retreat and wait.

Summary

ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND PARTY POLITICS

by Tim Scully

Electoral systems and the ways in which they may or may not be related to political stability in Latin America is a subject of growing interest. It seems certain that the specific institutional arrangements present in each country play an important role in shaping the party system and defining the political process. The purpose of this document is to provide some minimum background information about the electoral systems of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay.

The document is divided into two parts. The first offers a brief comparative discussion of certain critical electoral mechanisms which define the representational system in each national context. The second, in greater detail and with reference to relevant legislation, outlines the methods by which these four countries elect national executives and legislatures. In all four cases, in varying degrees, these electoral processes are currently being reviewed. An attempt has been made to include the electoral legislation for the most recent national elections. In the case of Chile, the legislation prior to 1973 is put forth, as well as the electoral legislation proposed by the Constitution of 1980.

I. Electoral Systems and Political Parties

    A. Types of Electoral Systems
    B. Open- and Closed-List Ballots
    C. Methods of Allocating Seats
    D. Type of Republic
    E. Timing of Elections
    F. Type of Democratic System

II. Methods of Electing National Executives and Legislatures

    A. Argentina
        1. Method of Electing the President
        2. Description of the Legislature
        3. Method of Electing the National Legislature
        4. Results of the 1983 Elections

    B. Brazil
        1. Method of Electing the President
        2. Description of the Legislature
        3. Method of Electing the National Legislature
        4. Election of the President on 15 January 1985
        5. Results of the 1982 and 1985 Elections

    C. Chile
        1. Method of Electing the President
        2. Description of the Legislature
        3. Method of Electing the National Legislature
        4. Electoral Process in the Constitution of 1980
        5. Results of the 1973 Congressional and 1970 Presidential Elections

    D. Uruguay
        1. Method of Electing the President
        2. Description of the Legislature
        3. Method for Electing the National Legislature
        4. Results of the 1984 Elections

Summary

DEMOCRACY: PRESIDENTIAL OR PARLIAMENTARY
DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

by Juan Linz

This essay describes the implications of presidential and parliamentary institutional arrangements for the political process. Analyzing the nature of electoral competition and political behavior, Linz argues that parliamentarism encourages a kind of flexibility and awareness of the demands of different groups which is needed for the consolidation of democracy in Latin America.

I. Parliamentarism and Presidentialism

Parliamentary systems are distinguished by the fact that the only democratically legitimated institution is the parliament itself. The government derives its authority from the confidence of parliament, either from parliamentary majorities or parliamentary tolerance of minority government, and only for as long as parliament is willing to support it between elections, or for the time the legislature is unable to form an alternative government. Most presidents in parliamentary systems, like the constitutional monarchies, have only limited powers and functions. Potential conflict between the two democratically legitimated offices--the president and the prime minister--has been limited, as in Iceland, Austria and Ireland, by institutional mechanisms.

Presidential systems are based on the opposite principle. An executive, with considerable powers in the constitution and generally in full control of the administration, is elected directly by the people for a fixed period of time. The executive is not dependent on the continuing confidence of the parliament. Not only does the president hold executive power, s/he is the symbolic head of state and cannot be removed from office except by impeachment. The president, however, does share power with congress or parliament in that the president has executive powers and the congress holds legislative powers. This separation of powers, together with the interpretive power of a judiciary, while giving the president preeminent power within the system also places clear limitations on his power--e.g., the ability to override a presidential veto in the U.S. political system. (These systems can also be contrasted with a system described by Lowenstein as neo-presidential--and ascribed by Arriagada to the system promulgated in the Chilean 1980 Constitution. In a neo-presidential system political decision making and execution is monopolized by the president without effective limits despite the formal appearance of democratic legitimation and power balance.)

Two features stand out in presidential systems. The first is the full claim to democratic legitimacy of the president, very often with strong plebiscitarian components. The qualities of head of state representing the nation and the powers accruing to the executive create a very different aura and self-image together with very different popular expectations than those of a prime minister. In presidential systems, legislators also

enjoy full democratic legitimacy. This may create system instability since it is possible that a majority of the legislature might represent a party other than that of the president. Instability and conflict may be made worse when the legislators and president belong to well-organized and disciplined parties that are genuinely ideological and political opponents. Since both the president and the congress derive their power from a vote of the people, in a free competition among well-defined alternatives, conflict is always latent. Sometimes the conflict errupts and there exists no un-equivocal democratic principle to resolve it. Further, the institutional mechanisms to resolve such a conflict are generally complex, highly technical and legalistic, and therefore of doubtful democratic legitimacy for the voters. The military, in some of these situations, intervenes, viewing itself as <u>poder moderador</u>.

The second institutional characteristic of presidential systems is that presidents are elected for a fixed <u>period of time</u> which under normal circumstances cannot be modified. The political process becomes rigid and discontinuous, losing the capacity for readjustment as political and social events might require. The length of the mandate becomes an essential political factor with important consequences. One such consequence is that succession between elections makes the highest office accessible to someone whom the voters, the political leaders and the party elites would, under normal circumstances, never have entrusted to the office--witness the history of Brazil or the succession of Perón by Isabelita.

II. The Political Process in Presidentialism and Parliamentarism

The basic difference between presidential and parliamentary systems is the rigidity which presidentialism introduces into the political process and the much greater flexibility of the parliamentary systems. In addition to the formal and legal aspects, the institutional characteristics of presidential and parliamentary politics shape the whole political process: the way in which political competition is structured, the style and exercise of authority and power, the relation between a president, the political elite and society, and the way in which power is to be exercised in the resolution of conflict.

Presidentialism introduces a strong element of zero sum game into the political system with rules that encourage a "winner take all" outcome. This is reinforced by the fact that winners and losers are defined for a set period of time. The stakes are raised and the tendencies toward polarization are enhanced. In contrast, the parliamentary election normally gives representation to a number of parties, and perhaps one with a larger plurality than others requiring negotiations and power sharing. A prime minister by necessity must be aware of the demands of different groups, and be concerned about retaining their support. Unlike the president, the P.M., unless backed by an absolute majority, is aware from the outset of dependence on the support of parliament. The parliamentary system encourages consociational agreements of the type used to obviate the implications of giving to one party the authority associated with the presidency, such as in the reestablishment of democracy in both Venezuela (<u>el pacto de punto fijo</u>) and Colombia (<u>la concordancia</u>).

III. The Style of Presidential Politics

Some of the most important consequences for the style of politics are the result of the nature of the office itself: the powers associated with it and the limits imposed upon it, particularly those derived from the need for cooperation with a congress that might be of a different political composition than that of the presidential coalition and, above all, the sense of urgency that an election for a certain number of years imposes on a president.

The sense of identity between leader and people encourages a certain populism that can be a source of strength and power, but also can lead s/he to ignore the limited mandate that a majority, not to mention a simple plurality, gives. A prime minister, in contrast, is normally a member of parliament who, though sitting on the government benches, is still an equal with other politicians and the leaders of the other parties, particularly if s/he dependes upon their support as head of a coalition or minority government.

The absence, in a presidential system, of a King or a President of the Republic who can act symbolically (as representative of the whole nation and not, at the same time, representative of a partisan political option) as a mediating power deprives the system of flexibility and mechanisms to restrain the abuse of power. A figure that in some cases exercises a moderating influence in a crisis situation can maintain contact with forces ready to question the authority of the prime minister, particularly the armed forces.

IV. The Problem of Continuity and Discontinuity

While a presidential regime insures the stability of the executive, the provisions in a parliamentary system for the reshuffling of cabinets, the substitution of a prime minister who has lost control of the party, and the reconstitution of party coalitions, give the parliamentary system an even greater potential continuity than the presidential system. The rigidity introduced in presidentialism by a fixed term of office does not allow for the adjustments which come naturally to a parliamentary system. Compromises and deals have to be made in public and presumably are binding for the term of office, while those made in the day-to-day process of governing in a parliamentary system might be less public and always potentially reversible.

The agument is not that presidential systems cannot offer stability, nor that any type of parliamentary system will succeed. What is required is a discussion of the specific type of parliamentary regime and the institutional arrangements including electoral laws, best suited to facilitate the transtition to the consolidation of democracy. Finally, in organizing a nation's political system, the distinctive features and political tradition in each country must to be taken into account.

Summary

POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION: THE BRAZILIAN CASE

by Bolivar Lamounier and Rachel Meneguello

The authors raise the question of whether strong political parties are
necessary or inevitable for the strengthening of democratic political
systems. Party instability is a well established characteristic of the
Brazilian political system.   Therefore, it is not surprising that the
military regime which took power in 1964 successfully dissolved existing
party identifications and established rules for the formation of new parties.
This paper seeks to explain the fragility of the Brazilian party system since
World War II and attempts to provide answers to the following questions:

(1)   Were parties strengthened in any way during the period of military-
      authoritarian rule?

(2)   Are political parties currently being strengthened in Brazil?

(3)   Will it be useful in the future to undertake deliberate measures
      aimed at strengthening parties as protagonists of the democratic
      transition?

Rather than viewing political parties as "natural" or "necessary" for society,
this paper views them as organizations that form as social movements arising
from the mechanics of electoral representation. A succession of six dis-
connected party systems have appeared in Brazil between 1822 and 1984. The
lack of a viable system has been explained by the bureaucratic-patrimonial
character of the Brazilian state and by the impedence of wider forms of
association by the concentration of private power.

I.   Brazilian Political Parties Before the 1964-1985 Military Regime

The central-power opposition to party development in Imperial Brazil was
complemented with a strategy of state-building consisting in the de facto
federalization of political disputes. Opposition groups were forced into
accommodation within the dominant party in each state, without inter-state
links. The small governing elite devoted itself to preventing an articulation
of forces that could become competitive with the central power. The center
was not, in fact, challenged until the 1930s. Again, however, discontinuity
in the evolution of parties was imposed from the top down as a systematic
goal of the central power. The Estado Novo, established in the late 1930s,
was a demobilizing regime without parties which initiated a new and vigorous
centralization of power that would have a profound effect on the post-1945
party experience.

The disintegration of the party system has been explained as resulting
from national economic pressures which caused the polarization of conservative
and progressive interests and as a result of inadequacies of the party system

itself. In the early 1960s the decline of traditional parties and the growth of smaller urban parties resulted in a fracture within civilian elites regarding a resolution for the economic crisis. This, in turn, led to sharper political polarization and a sharpening of this polarization in Brazil's legislature.

This polarization took place despite the positive disposition of the 1946 Constitution and complementary legislation to the formation of a competetive party system. Factors which undermined the system included: (1) intolerance of parties clearly left-of-center (this was fueled by the Cold War); (2) the bureacratic centralization left over from the Estado Novo; (3) the depth of anti-party feeling in Brazil's political culture; and, (4) the low level of political mobilization (in 1948, only one-fifth of the population was urban, and only one-fifth was eligible to vote).

The major political party extension of the Estado Novo was the Social Democratic Party (PSD) which held a majority in Congress until 1964. The PSD had profited from the Estado Novo and defined itself as centrist, moderate and the equilibrator. The National democratic Union (UND), on the right, opposed Estado Novo from a classic liberal standpoint and engaged in con-spiratorial activities. On the left, the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB), a labor party created by Getulio Vargas, gradually adopted a progressive and reformist position. In the post-Estado Novo context, the logic of competi-tion made the system eminently centrifugal, and was exacerbated by the emergency of the progressive 'Ala Moca' within PSD. In short, the fragility of the Brazilian political party system from 1945 to 1964 is evidenced by the following: (1) parties were still largely creations of notables; (2) personal party identifications remained extremely weak; (3) the parties experienced growing internal fragmentation; (4) the parties were vulnerable to destabilizing processes such as urbanization; and, (5) party differences were often due to electoral alliances.

II. Brazilian Political Parties during the 1964-1985 Military Regime

The party system was officially dismantled in 1965 with the issuing of Institutional Act No. 2, by the military government of General Castello Branco. This established a new two-party system consisting of an official party, Alliance of National Reconstruction (ARENA), and a legal opposition, the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB). The military government sought to combine the advantages of a legal opposition (MDB) with the practical ex-clusion of this party. However, its attempt to deligitimize the MDB failed, and the structure of electoral competition in the second half of the 1960s became more favorable to urban opposition parties.

The success of MDB in the 1974 elections became a turning point. The election signaled an extraordinary deepening of new party identifications among the electorate and the viability of a peaceful opposition. The election results forced the government to systematically resort to casuistic manipulation of the legislation and, finally, in 1979, to reformulate the party structure itself, opening the way for a return to a multiparty system.

The party reforms introduced in 1979 represented another chapter in the strategy of controlled liberalization. By stipulating severe requirements for legislative representation, but allowing for pluralism, and by setting up requirements for party formation, the government sought to fragment the opposition. In fact, six parties were created: Democratic Social Party (PDS, ex-ARENA); PMDB (party of the MDB); Popular Party (PP, including Petronio Portella and Tancredo Neves); Workers Party (PT, including Lula and the new Sao Paulo unionism); Brazilian Labor Party (PTB, led by Ivete Vargas and government-inspired); and the Democratic Labor Party (PDT, led by Leonel Brizola, European-type socialism). This strategy was successful until 1981 as the political activity of the opposition was further segmented and each party concentrated on its own sphere of influence.

1981 was another turning point. The congressional opposition, with support of PDS dissidents, defeated the government in two votes of vital importance revealing the weakness of the government's 1982 electoral prospects. The government responded with the 'pacote de novembro,' which interrupted opposition coalition-building by prohibiting split-ballot voting. The aim was to reinforce the position of PDS by precluding inter-party alliances. However, PP became nonviable, forcing it to merge with PMDB, recreating a two-party confrontation in the 1982 elections.

In this election, the PMDB opposition gained in the House and State governments, quelling the government's strategy and unleashing a succession crisis. While the institutional arrangements for the presidential succession in 1982 virtually assured a government victory, the government was obliged to deal with at least one other party in the legislature and in the electoral college. As a result, the opposition was able to assume part of the political initiative and to pressure for direct presidential elections. Its success, plus the selection of Paulo Maluf as the PDS candidate, provoked an irreversible division among the government forces. The result was the election of Tancredo Neves as president, sealing the government failure to manage fully the transition to civilian rule.

It is a paradox of the Brazilian political opening that the two-party structure imposed in 1965 became the framework for changes that may result in significant advances in party development. The party experience under authoritarianism attenuated anti-party elements in the political culture, facilitated mobilization, politicization and party-ization of the political system, and made difficult the resurgence of 'caudilhismos.' The MDB--the main opposition--was the great beneficiary of the resulting political opening. The opposition profitted from electoral competition and the growing significance of the urban vote. It discovered that it could use government-created instruments such as the 'sublegenda' to maintain its own party's cohesion. With such devices, the opposition could handle its own factionalism and could further internal discipline. The consolidation of the peaceful opposition, centered on electoral contests, grew both from wide societal changes and from its creative use of legal instruments originally meant to strengthen the government party.

III. Brazilian Political Parties in 1985

Now that the transition to a civilian government has been accomplished, new measures for institutional engineering are being widely discussed. A hotly debated issue involves the pro's and con's of allowing greater latitude for expression of party preferences. Advocates of such deregulation praise the virtues of party pluralism and proportional representation. A concrete suggestion has been the proposal to reduce or eliminate the minimum requirement for legislative representation of 5% of the national vote and 3% in at least nine states. Critics argue that there is no evidence that more flexible regulation will allow for the blending of hard-to-combine objectives held by strong, cohesive, ideologically homogeneous, widely representative, highly differentiated, and nationally organized parties. On the other hand, some observers feel that if the PMDB maintains its momentum and can address both equity and development issues, it may establish itself as the predominant party within Brazil's political system for the forseeable future.

Finally, fears have been voiced that the permisiveness of the existing party scheme, implicitly inspired by the federative model and associational values, might conflict with the historic orientation of the state elites. The concern is that this might open a breach between federal and state powers which might be filled by an imperial presidency, bureacratic autonomy, interventionism, and, in the end, military tutelage itself.