THE PRI AND THE MEXICAN STUDENT MOVEMENT OF 1968:
A CASE STUDY OF REPRESSION

by

SALVADOR HERNANDEZ

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Arts

in the Department
of

Anthropology and Sociology

We accept this thesis as conforming to the
required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
June, 1970
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of Anthropology & Sociology

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver 8, Canada

Date June 20, 1970.
ABSTRACT

This report is a study of the development of strategies of political conflict surrounding the Mexican Student Movement of 1968. It analyzes strategies of the students' organization of the National Strike Committee and the Government Party of Revolutionary Institutions (P.R.I.), in order to understand why violent repression was applied by the government to suppress the student group.

The understanding of repression is undertaken in a review of the development of governmental structures and the history of conflict in Mexico beginning in 1910.

In looking through the history of Mexico and examining the student movement, the report weaves together three theories: 1) the conflict of different political groups in history; 2) the development of a one-party system of government; and 3) the routinized use of repression in political conflict since the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

In review of the historical development of the P.R.I., the study indicates that the early period in the 1930's contained an opportunity for a viable political democracy with a control and orderly conflict between interest group on the left and right. The push to a centralized government came from Cárdenas who was sympathetic to the needs of the peasants and workers and whose administration worked on their behalf. But following the leadership of Cárdenas, the presidential successors, Avila Camacho and Alemán, used the Central Party, and by strengthening its control, suppressed labor and peasant movements.

It is at this time that the legacy of violence in policy matters is introduced -- a strategy of repression in modern Mexican politics.
Evidence on the composition of the P.R.I. points to a structure in which control of the government flows, from the top down in a unidirectional manner with little or no influence from the workers, peasants or small businessmen. Representation in the party does not bring with it the ability to participate in the decision making, nor does the populist ideology of the party mean that the masses are able to influence the leadership of the government. This being the case, the problem for the government becomes one of persuasion and control.

A chronological account of the events of 1968 reveal that the strategy of the student movement, was that of calling for a public debate with the government in order to provide a means of restoring the influence of the masses of the people upon public officials, and the strategy of the government was to applied physical force through the police and the army in order to avoid a public debate and to quickly eliminate the student movement.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Charts</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I: The Mexican Revolution and the Origins of the Official Party</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II: The P.R.I. Political Machine</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III: The Students' Principle: We Must Have Public Dialogue</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter IV: The Government Principle: We Must Preserve the &quot;Principle of Authority&quot;</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter V: Conclusions</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF CHARTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chart 1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart 2</td>
<td>33-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart 3</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To the students who fell in 1968.

Year of Tlatelolco Massacre.
INTRODUCTION

On October 2nd, 1968 in the Plaza of the Three Cultures in Tlatelolco 15,000 students, professors, workers, residents, including women and children met for a rally called by the National Strike Committee (CNH) of the 1968 student movement. This was the sixth protest demonstration mobilized by students against the Government over a period of three months. It was called in support of six demands (which I will outline in a later chapter) that had been presented to the Government.

Unknown to the participants 5,000 soldiers and police surrounded the square. Upon orders and without warning or provocation of civil disorder they fired into the masses of people, killing and wounding, and pursuing those who attempted to flee.

This is now known as the "Tlatelolco Massacre." The "Massacre" is but one point in the 1968 Mexican student movement and it is for us a painfully symbolic point of departure in looking into the movement and the political activities of the Mexican government. The October 2nd incident was one of the more glaring and overt acts of political violence carried out by the Government and it rang down the curtain on a decade of increasing repression of popular movements which began with the peasants and workers and ended with the student movement of 1968.

The purpose of this report is to study the development of strategies of political conflict surrounding the student movement from both the sides of the student and the Government, and with respect to the latter to concentrate on the major tactic of political repression.
Repression is a form of political conflict. It is not a type of power activity in which parties attempt to negotiate, persuade others, or rationally advance their interest through dialogue. Rather repression is an extreme use of power in which a government or a party in control of governmental departments exercises physical force to eliminate opposing groups. This, in fact, is the reverse of political groups who use physical violence to bring down an institutionalized form of government. In the case of violent revolution and in the case of repression physical power is used as a device to destroy the opponent.

Unlike the revolutionary perspective of removing the government, repression may be regarded as legal and justified. There are the cases, such as treason, or sedition, where political leaders are granted the right to destroy political groups and to remove persons labeled as political criminals from the politics of the country through physical force. These circumstances are carefully spelled out in the laws of a country, such as article 89, section 6 of the Mexican constitution which states, "To make use of the entire permanent armed forces whether of the Army, the Navy or the Air Force for the internal security and external defense of the Federation."

Now if there are no attempts to undermine the internal security and external defense of a country, and if a government tries to eliminate an opposing political group or mass movement, then we have a case of "illegal repression."

It is the purpose of this report to reveal how the Mexican Government, namely Party of Revolutionary Institutions (PRI) applied illegal repression in attempting to suppress the student movement of 1968, and how that party strategically maneuvered to use physical force
as a measure to what they called a "real threat" to the social order of Mexico, in order to persuade the Mexican population that they were justified in the massacre of Tlatelolco.

But the sociological problem of repression goes beyond the question of techniques to the issue of why a government, especially one principled on democratic lines, uses physical violence as a recourse to remove its opposition in a modern conflict? To answer a question concerning why political repression is used as a device takes us into the area of the development of governmental structures and into the history of conflict in Mexico. For that reason the first half of this report concentrates on the history of the politics and economic conditions of Mexico in order to provide an understanding for the detailed documentation of the rise and suppression of the student movement of 1968.

In looking through the history of Mexico and in examining the student movement I will attempt to weave together three themes: 1) the conflict of different political groups in history; 2) the development of a one-party system of government; and 3) the routinized use of repression in political conflict since the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

The remainder of this introduction will trace the major contribution of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 to the rise of the modern government of the country. Chapter I is a brief description of the founders of the official one-party system. In Chapter II we look at the structure of the PRI and its operation. Chapters III and IV deal with the conflict surrounding the student movement, with the former concentrating on the period July 22 to August 29 and the strategies of the students, and the latter on the period September 1 to October and the tactics of the Government.
Finally in this introductory part, it must be emphasized that this is not a study of the political ideology of the Mexican student movement of 1968, nor of the ideals, the goals and beliefs of that movement; rather, it is a case study of the political conflict between the National Strike Committee (the representative organization of the students during the events of 1968) and the Government, and of the repression applied by the latter.

Since we are emphasizing strategies of political conflict rather than the content of ideologies a comparative framework, utilizing data from student movements in other countries, is not particularly fruitful. Ideologies appear highly transferable but the immediate historical contexts of the various movements are so variable as to shed little light on this case study.

The significance of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 in modern political affairs may be seen in the title of the official government party, "The Party of Revolutionary Institutions" (PRI). In order to understand the significance of the use of the word "Revolutionary" in the title and later to understand the changes that have taken place in its meaning we begin our analysis with an account of the period of the 1910 Revolution.

Theoretically, the Mexican Revolution of 1910 was supposed to become the first "socialistic" Revolution, of the present century. Later in 1917 a new Constitution was enacted, which was also among the most advanced of its time. Examples of it are the Articles 27 and 123, both closely related since the former proclaims the expropriation of private land in order to be distributed among the peasants,
and the latter had established a labor code which gave to the Mexican worker the right to strike.

So advanced were Articles 27 and 123 of the "Carta Magna", that Mexican commentators proudly pointed out the international effects of the articles. They claim to have influenced the Treaty of Versailles (1918), and on the Constitution of the Spanish Republic, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Rumania, the Weimar Republic of Germany, and among the Latin American nations of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Hence, we have been talking about what happened at the theoretical level but we may ask: how was that theory carried out in practice?

The answer to the question, is a very obvious one: the so-called "Socialistic" Revolution, turned out to be a bourgeois Revolution, and the Constitution an instrument of the newly born bourgeoisie. Once the field was clear after the assassination of Emiliano Zapata in 1919, and Pancho Villa in 1923, both of them genuine popular leaders, the new Mexican ruling class took full command of the "revolution", but also at the same time, they foresaw the necessity of creating a political party in order to maintain themselves in power, and to use the party as a concrete and immediate tool: to "centralize" all dissenting groups, and attracting them to "participate" and to

---

"share" responsibility in the country's political life, all this obtained simply, but only by becoming members of the "Official Party" and at the same time of the "Revolutionary Family".

Nowadays, the party is known as P.R.I. -- the Party of Revolutionary Institutions -- and has become an extremely effective political machine in centralizing power, to the extent that no one can seriously deny that Mexico is a society of a One-Party System. In regard to this a Mexican observer writes:

"It is a fact that in Mexico a predominant one-party system has existed since 1929. Parties do not alternate in the exercise of power, and there is no special party for the labouring masses."

Thus, we can clearly see that within the Mexican context, an effective political opposition does not exist. Consequently this situation has created through the years a climate of political asphyxiation, since the official party had been also transformed into an instrument of repression of any relevant and independent mass-movement.

Countless times peasant and workers' movements and their leaders have been repressed. The most striking examples in the last ten years have been the assassination of Ruben M. Jaramillo, a peasant leader from the state of Morelos, and in 1959, the imprisonment of Demetrio Vallejo, a railroad leader.

Describing Jaramillo's movement aims and his eventual assassination an observer writes:

‘Jaramillo was born with this century in the hills of the state of Morelos. Still young, he joined Zapata for the Tierra y Libertad (Land and Liberty) crusade against oppression. When armed fighting stopped, Jaramillo returned to Morelos, where he became a peasant leader, constantly threatening rebellion if agrarian reforms were not carried out. Often he led his men onto undistributed land, and stayed there until it was parcelled out or until federal troops forced him off ....

During Cárdenas' presidency, Jaramillo had no reason to fight. But after Cárdenas, he became vocal. As long as some agrarian reforms were enacted, he kept his activities peaceful. When Ruiz Cortines halted reforms completely, Jaramillo took his men to the hills. He was pursued by tanks, cavalry, artillery, and the air force, but, aided by Morelos' peasants and familiar with Morelos' terrain, he was never caught.

When López Mateos became President, and offered him an amnesty, Jaramillo went home. He met López Mateos, told him what he had fought for, and that he would continue to fight if land reforms were not renewed. López Mateos promised to bring the revolution back to Morelos, and the two men hugged each other in a Latin style abrazo. The scene, photographed by witnesses, became known throughout Mexico. Jaramillo proudly decorated his walls with it.

But López Mateos forgot about Morelos. Jaramillo waited and waited. Then, in 1961, he decided to wait no longer. With five thousand landless peasants, he occupied a series of latifundios and unused plots in Michapa and El Guarin, especially the vast untitled tracts owned by a wealthy landowner named Ramón Espin, the protégé and friend of Morelos PRI Governor Norberto López Avelar. The case went to the Department of Agrarian Matters and
Colonization (DAAC), which found that the land was indeed unused and should be distributed. Jaramillo, his aims accomplished, left his men on their new land. Then, a few weeks later, DAAC reversed itself, and declared Jaramillo an outlaw for trespassing on private property.

Early in 1962, the Secretariat of Hydroelectric Resources announced that the Alto Amacuzac and San Jeronimo rivers were to be tapped for a dam, electric power and irrigation project which would transform Michapa and El Guarin's 40,000 hectares into the breadbasket of Morelos. DAAC had not known about the project when it announced its first decision. Said Professor Roberto Barrios, DAAC's boss: "I did not know. We were going to give a gold mine to those people! And great political power." Thus on February 13, 1962, General Pascual Cornejo Brum, chief of Morelos' military zone, was ordered to clear the occupied lands. Jaramillo again sought a peaceful solution. On March 18th he tried to see López Mateos, but was refused an audience, and returned to his home in Tlaquiltenango, Morelos, a modest single-floor, poured-concrete house where he lived with his pregnant wife, Epifania Zúñiga, and his three adolescent sons.

They were all there on May 23, 1962, at 2:30 P.M. when sixty soldiers and civilians suddenly arrived in two army trucks and two jeeps, surrounded the house, leveled submachine guns at its two entrances, and ordered Jaramillo to come out. When he did, besiegers rushed into the house, brought out Epifania and the three sons, pushed all five into the vehicles, and drove away. Up to this point, there are scores of witnesses -- the neighbors and passers-by.

Two hours later, near the Xochicalco archaeological ruins, peasants found the whole Jaramillo family dead. Each of the five heads had a coup de grâce .45 bullet in it; in each of the five bodies was a handful of Thompson submachine-gun slugs.*

Witnesses, slugs, history, and facts notwithstanding, Mexico's press -- and, naturally, Time magazine -- tried to make the murders sound like "a private affair" of "revenge". But there can be no doubt that the Jaramillos were killed, on orders from the PRI top, because they represented the Mexican peasants' unfulfilled demands from the revolution.

* The cartridges, found all around the bodies, were stamped Fábrica Nacional de Municiones (1953 and 1954), a supplier that distributes only to the army. Morelos Police Chief
Captain Gustavo Ortega Rojas told reporters a few hours after the assassination that the Federal Judicial Police had called him the night before to ask for arms and a jeep, but that when the Federales never showed up and he called them, he was told: "It is no longer necessary; everything has been taken care of." The time: 1 hour 30 minutes after Jaramillo's death. (Ortega later denied this conversation when questioned by official "investigators."

The case of the labor leader Demetrio Vallejo and his movement took place in 1958 when a powerful movement in favor of union independence grew in the 9th Section of S.N.T.E. (Public School Teacher's Union of Mexico City). Its main leader, Othón Salazar, was arrested and jailed that same year.

With the growth of this movement in favor of independent unions and against "charrismo" (the corruption of establishment unions) the Railroad Workers Union enforced the majority choice in favor of the ticket headed by Demetrio Vallejo. All in all, in 1958 the outlook for the labor and the peasant movement was very promising, because also by that time López Mateos had taken office and as we already pointed out, he offered amnesty to Rubén Jaramillo.

But, once again the presidential promises were only promises. The railroad strike of March 1959 and the repression of the union headed by Vallejo created a climate of social tension. An attempt was made to place the political responsibility for the railroad strike on the Mexican Communist Party which fell victim to a wave of persecution. Close to 5,000 persons were arrested, the majority of whom were railroad workers. The strikers were forced to return to work and searching without a warrant became an everyday occurrence. According to Attorney General Fernando López Arias the repressive measures employed against the

railroad workers were for the purpose of preventing "ideologies and interests foreign to those of Mexico from attempting to subvert public order." The leaders Demetrio Vallejo and Valentin Campa were accused of being "traitors to their country." Two members of the diplomatic corps of the Soviet Union, apparently linked with the railroad conflicts, were deported. Several of the Mexican newspapers called for breaking off diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R., and "McCarthyism" reached its heights when López Arias stated that "in Mexico it was intolerable for a Communist to hold a union position." In the prevailing anti-Communist climate of opinion hundreds of people were accused of a variety of crimes in connection with the strike. The leaders were accused of "social dissolution".

As a result of this repression a Committee to Defend Political Prisoners was formed, which in turn was savagely suppressed. On August 4, 1960, an estimated number of 1,500 uniformed police and plainclothesmen attacked a demonstration in support of the teachers of Section 9 of the S.N.T.E. Several people were wounded, some of them seriously. On the 9th of August, the well-known painter of murals, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and newspaperman Filomeno Mata were arrested and jailed. As members and sponsors of the Defense Committee, they were to be accused of "social dissolution".

The day before the 50th anniversary of the Mexican Revolution, 21 of the 35 political prisoners being held in Mexico City's Lecumberri jail went on a hunger strike. They were protesting against the delay in the consideration of their appeals and the hearing of their cases. The majority of them had been in jail for over 18 months.
Two of the political prisoners, David Alfaro Siqueiros and Filomeno Mata, the last to be arrested, were sentenced to 8 years in prison on March 10, 1962, more than 20 months after trial proceedings against them were initiated. On the 10th of August 1963, sentence was passed on the majority of the railroad and political leaders who were still in jail. The sentences varied from three years to 16 in the case of Demetrio Vallejo. At the present moment only two of the 1959 prisoners are still in jail: Demetrio Vallejo and Valentín Campa, both of whom are eligible for parole because they have served more than two-thirds of their sentences. Both have requested their release but, up to now, it has been denied them.

In 1964, when the current president of Mexico: Gustavo Díaz Ordaz took office one of his campaign slogans, "Order and Progress" resembled those of the years of General Porfirio Díaz whose dictatorial regime of almost thirty years was overthrown by the Mexican Revolution of 1910.

But with the election of Díaz Ordaz, hopes this time were not so high, since the candidate was well known for his rightist political leanings. Left political observers were pessimistic about Díaz Ordaz's election for the presidential term of 1964-1970. Soon, their pessimism proved to be right, because if the policies of the former president López Mateos were those of political repression, with Díaz Ordaz they were expanded and perfected. Repression was no longer ex post facto; it was now preventive as well. Left radical groups were especially victimized but they were not the only ones. Within the P.R.I., repression took the form of forced resig-
nations by those cabinet members who were not partisans of the administration. A clear example of what we have just said, was the case of Carlos A. Madrazo, who was appointed as president of P.R.I. on December 7, 1964 and was forced to resign on November 22, 1965; Madrazo tried during this short period to clear up and democratize the party at all levels, but soon his task was interrupted.

How the PRI operates and how much internal repression is applied leads us to ask about the historical origins of the official party, its early formation in 1929, and its development up to the administration of 1964. These questions are dealt with in the next chapter.
CHAPTER I

The Mexican Revolution and the Origins of the "Official Party"

In 1910 the Mexican Revolution emerged as a reaction to almost thirty years of General Diaz's dictatorial regime. During those years, despite a century of political independence, the economy of the country was typically "colonial". Railroads, textile mills, and oil wells were built by foreign capital and directed by foreign managers and all the profits from those industries flowed abroad. The rulers of the country were absentee landlords, politicians, and military men, all of them in close collaboration with foreign capitalists. About 80 percent of the people were peasants laboring for mere subsistence, and living as semi-serfs on large plantations or haciendas.

Then Diaz's feudal order collapsed in revolution. The years between 1910 to 1920 were a period of turbulence during which the population fell by almost half a million from a total of 15 million, as a result of civil war many foreigners were driven out and local landlords were forced from their haciendas. Also the political power of the Church was broken.

In regard to this stage of Mexican history, an observer writes:

"The Mexican Revolution was a product of alliance between the bourgeoisie, represented by Madero, and the peasants, led by Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa. They faced a common enemy, the feudal order and its supporting pillars of Church, army, and foreign capital. But their goals inevitably differed. Freedom from domestic and foreign bonds and loosening of the economic structure for the bourgeoisie; land for the peasants. Although Zapata continued to press the interests of the peasants until his murder in 1919, the real leadership of the revolution was never out of the hands of the bourgeoisie, except insofar as it was challenged by
Huerta reaction and American intervention. The elimination of feudal social relations was of course in the interest of the emerging bourgeoisie as well as of the peasants. Education became secularized, Church and State more widely separated. But accession to power by the peasantry was never really in the cards.\footnote{A. Gunder Frank, Mexico: The Janus Faces of 20th Century Bourgeois Revolution. op. cit., p. 76. Whither Latin America? M.R. Press, N.Y. 1963.}

As a result of this revolutionary decade 1910-1920, a newly formed Northern dynasty headed by General Obregón de la Huerta and Calles, emerged in the political arena.

Obregón ruled during the early twenties and Plutarco Elias Calles who succeeded him, in the middle 1920's.

In order to retain the power within the Northern dynasty, Obregón sought presidential re-election at the end of Calles' administration in 1928.

By an amendment to the Constitution of 1917, which in principle says that no president can be re-elected for a second term in office, Obregón was re-elected, but just before taking office was assassinated by a religious fanatic. With Obregón's death, General Plutarco E. Calles was remaned "Jefe Máximo." But he no longer, as Obregón, sought re-election in order to maintain power; instead he created a political party, through which he retained power until 1934.

In regard to Obregón's death and the creation of the political party, Howard F. Clines writes:

"Obregón's death by assassination in 1928 left a dangerous vacuum which the Oligarchy filled by an ingenious device, the creation of a single political party. Within its walls, the revolutionary family feuds and conflicts could be recon-

\footnote{Country's Big Boss.}
ciled and quietly accommodated without creating perilous breaches through which counter-revolutionary elements could pour in to capture power and reverse the gains achieved."³

The above Cline quotation, not only confirms Gunder Frank's assumption that really, "the Revolution was never out of the hands of the bourgeoisie...", but also shows clearly with the foundation of the "official party", the beginning of the "integrationist" era.

It is almost a general belief, that it was Calles, who first had the idea of creating a political party, but rather he was the executor of Obregón ideas. General Obregón was about to be re-elected when on July 1, 1928 he had a long conversation about his future plans for Mexico with Luis L. León, Minister of Agriculture and Development. In regard to this conversation, Professor John W. Dulles writes:

"Obregón said with emphasis that it was necessary to create a political or social organization with a definite program and permanent action, 'to guarantee the survival of the Revolutionary principles by means of democratic paths.'

'We must,' he said, 'take advantage of the six years of my government in order to create this organization, this political party that should be an expression of our desires and sentiments.' "⁴

The Formation of the "Official" Party

On December 1, 1928, the nation learned about the organization of the P.N.R. (National Revolutionary Party) from a manifesto signed by General Calles and other prominent political figures of that time. It mentioned the need for the "organization and foundations of permanent political parties of definite principles." But it was not

⁵. Ibid., p. 410.
until March 3, 1929, in a National Convention held in the city of Querétaro that the presiding officer of the Convention declared that Partido Nacional Revolucionario was now official. Consequently, with the foundation of the "Official Party P.N.R.", General Calles retained power through his "puppet" presidents: Emilio Portes Gil, Pascual Ortiz Rubio and Abelardo Rodríguez.

An observer writes:

"So long as Calles remained the Jefe Máximo down to 1935, political decisions were made almost exclusively by the Party, guided by his hold on its key executive committee. Presidents from 1928 through 1934 had responsibility without power. Calles had power without responsibility."6

Cárdenas and the Possibilities of a Democracy and the Development of the Left

But an important shift in Mexican politics took place when on December 1, 1934, General Lázaro Cárdenas became president, breaking the power of the Northern dynasty -- it is interesting to note that Cárdenas was the first president who did not come from the north. Later, on June 19, 1935, Cárdenas sent Calles into exile because of serious disagreements in policy matters. Having delivered a fatal blow to the Northern dynasty, Lázaro Cárdenas became sole head of the Revolutionary Family, initiating with this blow, the replacement of the "máximo" Obregón and Calles era, by a new era which came to known as the era of "Cardenismo".

Referring back to the early days of 1933, it was clear that the election of a president in 1934 would be an important event in Mexico. Consequently political agitation, centered on interfactional manoeuvering between the Left wing who wanted the revolution to forge ahead in violent fashion and the Right wing who wanted a continuation of the

direction established since 1920 under the Northern dynasty. The issue was further confused by an important speech by Calles, on May 30, 1933, in which he pointed out that the Mexican Revolution had failed in most of its important objectives. Through corruption, circumstance, and ignorance, the men charged with providing a better life for Mexicans had seen their proposals deferred and defeated. Thus in December 1933 the P.N.R. met to endorse the preordained candidate, Lázaro Cárdenas.

Cárdenas' basic idea was to preserve certain destructive tendencies of the Mexican Revolution to clear the way for new institutions. He was eager to rid the nation of individual and corporative exploitation and to replace them by self-run groups of farmers and workers. Exploitation by the state as an employer, or the substitution of foreign capitalism by a native version, fell outside his mass-oriented program. New cooperative ventures would replace the historical institutions. The national state would back organized groups in the destructive phase and also would help their plans for reconstruction. That was the message which Lázaro Cárdenas carried to most of Mexico in 1934 before he was inaugurated as president. While campaigning in the name of the party, he was also building a powerful new personal political machine, based on mass support. He visited every state, almost every town and village. On election day, July 1, 1934, official counting gave him the expected overwhelming majority. Throughout his political campaign Cárdenas repeated again and again the slogan, "Workers of Mexico, unite." Then, on December 1, 1934, Cárdenas became president. Among his first official acts, Cárdenas gave up the gaudy presidential residence in Chapultepec Castle. He also began closing down the gambling casinos
and brothels in which prominent Callistas had invested their profits from bribery and industrial activities. Already some tension within political circles began to appear, but the tension reached its peak, when in a wave of strikes early in 1935, President Cárdenas supported the workers. It became clear that a test of power between Calles and the new president was in the making. It was also clear that Cárdenas was to be no "puppet" president. Then during the first days of June 1935, Calles delivered a national speech attacking Cárdenas' "marathon of radicalism." Calles also emphasized that by "going too far on those grounds a president can be forced to resign." After Calles' speech some of the members of the Congress openly supported former President Calles.

But Cárdenas in a very fast and astute manoeuvre, dismissed the Calles-dominated cabinet, appointed a new cabinet, began to concentrate his own army contingents in Mexico City, talked with prominent Church figures, turning Calles' long time anticlericalism against him. With the Army, much of the Church, Congress, and new labor organization behind Cárdenas, he isolated Calles sending him as has already been stated into exile on June 19, 1935.

Centralizing the Party Under the Cárdenas Regime

With the initiation of Cárdenas Era there began also a real centralization of power, something that Calles through all his years as a Jefe Maximo had never really achieved: the complete centralization of the Agrarian and Labor Sector under "the official" Party. Cárdenas created the Confederación Nacional Campesina (National Peasant Confederation) and the Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos (Mexican Workers' Confederation). With the creation of CNC and CTM Cárdenas not only
initiated the complete centralization of forces under the party structure but also under the direct control of the president. And in March 1938, Cárdenas created the P.R.M., the Mexican Revolutionary Party, which took the place of Calles' P.N.R. With the creation of P.R.M., Mexican Revolutionary Party, Cárdenas divided the power elements of Mexico into four sectors: Military, Labor, Agrarian and Popular (unorganized little urban groups). Each electoral district in the Republic contained all of them, so the basis of the new party was functional and geographical. An individual belonged to a revolutionary organization which in turn was affiliated with one of the three main organizations -- the Army, the C.T.M. or the C.N.C. Delegates to party conventions, to choose the platforms and formulate the programs were selected by and represented a geographical unit of the sector. Each sector held its own convention before they met as a body and party.

When each sector had prepared its platform, a run-off primary was held; the candidates of each sector campaigned vigorously, then after the party primary election, the successful aspirant became the "official" candidate; then the two other sectors agreed to support him. The "Popular" sector role was vague.

In this way Cárdenas had tried to create a functional democracy; also a party theme was created: "For a Democracy of Workers".

In short, it seems that during Cárdenas' Administration, the centralization of the power elements of Mexico, was based on the idea of creating a national economic independence controlled in part by the State. Cárdenas projects on land distribution, on labor, on socialistic programs of education, and internationally on oil expropriation, give, if not a complete, a clear idea of Cárdenas governmental policies.
Professor Brandenburg writes: "He (Cárdenas) exercised his power on behalf of and in the name of the worker and the peasant."

Another observer writes:

"Abroad, the Cárdenas administration (1934-1940) may be best known for its expropriation of Mexico's privately owned petroleum, a step which was also provided for by the constitution of 1917. But still more important domestically, the administration of President Cárdenas expropriated and redistributed more land than all other administrations before and since, put together. Pursuant to the Constitution and the laws of Calles' administration, these lands were taken from the territories surrounding particular villages and were ceded to them communally as ejidos to be worked in some cases collectively but in most cases individually. An ejido bank was established to provide the new owners with agricultural credit. Irrigation and other capital investment in agriculture was not however, expanded at the same time. In fact, in retrospect it is clear that although he undoubtedly had his heart in the right place, Cárdenas, as a head of a bourgeois government, did not provide Mexican peasant agriculture with nearly enough resources to get it over the hump into self-sustained development."

Although it is true that some of the Cárdenas policies in economic matters did not succeed, it is also true that the power of the "official" party was not used to suppress popular demands; on the contrary, they were backed by the party.

Changing the Direction of Political and Economic Affairs Under Avila Camacho and Alemán Administrations

Cárdenas' successors in office, Manuel Avila Camacho and later Miguel Aleman, brought a shift in political as well as economic matters.

During Manuel Avila Camacho's administration, 1940-1946, two major changes altered the P.R.M. Revolutionary Mexican Party structure.

First, the military sector was dropped from the official party in order to weld the powers of the Mexican Army to the presidential office, without the intermediary of the official party. This political device does not mean, as Professor Scott comments, that the army divorced itself from politics. On the contrary, having returned to its old position behind the throne, the military's role in Mexican politics has remained strong and partisan. Although in recent years its activities have been somewhat less obvious than formerly, the military continues to wield a very important influence in policy making.

The second major change was the replacement of Vicente Lombardo Toledano as the leader of the powerful Mexican Worker Confederation and the replacement of the workers' administration of the nationalized railways by a government controlled bureaucracy, the National Railways Administration, under a single director appointed by the president. Consequently while Cárdenas' administration gave wide support to the labor movement, Avila Camacho tempered their demands.

During Miguel Alemán's administration, 1946-1952, the P.R.M. became the P.R.I., Party of Revolutionary Institutions and in a jocular manner Professor Brandenburg comments, "How can revolution remain revolution if institutionalized?"

Also in regard to Alemán epoch, Professor Brandenburg writes:

"Alemán's philosophy of labor contained overtones of Díaz and Carranza, and his philosophy of politics elements of callismo."

Governmental defense of strikes was nonsense: the courts would settle labor disputes peacefully and in accord with the promotion of constructive relations with management. Company unions were protected, promoted, and given immunity from mandatory membership in a big central. Rapid industrialization, an Alemán fetish, required low wages and the sacrifice of the labor force to capital accumulation.\textsuperscript{11}

Also it is important to recall that Alemán was the first president who used troops, in order to break an oil strike.

In regard to economic policies of Avila Camacho and Alemán's administration it is interesting to note what Raymond Vernon writes about it:

"The shift from Avila Camacho to Alemán was not dramatic, the policies of the two administrations bore more signs of continuity than of change. Alemán had no more hesitation in using the economic powers of government than did his predecessor. His arrival therefore did not bring a reduction of the Mexican government's economic powers and activities. Rather, it brought a somewhat greater willingness to use those powers in tandem with the rising business class."\textsuperscript{13}

In other words with Avila Camacho and mainly with Alemán, a new era of political and economical activity starts with the gradual suppression of labor movements and the growth of a strong Mexican private capitalist clan, which in turn permitted the almost unrestricted influx of foreign investment into the country. (Later in this study we will analyze briefly some aspects of the last twenty-five years of internal as well as the external situation of Mexican economy.)

Briefly, when Adolfo Ruiz Cortines, took office for the presidential term of 1952-1953, he inherited from Alemán's administration,
among other problems, those of inflation, corruption, an empty government treasury, unfinished public works, balance-of-payments problems, and an amorphous family leadership. In short Ruiz Cortines' regime is known as a paying-off cautious administration.

Uncertain Era of López Mateos Administration and Early Student Unrest

Adolfo López Mateos' Administration, 1958-1964, tends to evoke such adjectives as vacillating and compromising. Policy had to be made in a complicated sort of context: after twenty years of being sacrificed to capital accumulation, organized labor and agrarian groups wanted higher real wages and agrarian reforms, in other words a better share of national increase, but the only answer they got to their demands was repression, a clear example of which we have already pointed out in the cases of Rubén Jaramillo and Demetrio Vallego.

Turning again to Alemán's regime, Professor Brandenburg writes that for the former, "the sacrifice of a generation of workers and peasants was small price for making his nation maternally strong, industrialized, modernized, advanced." Therefore why after twenty years of capital accumulation, the demands of those who had paid for it cannot be even partially fulfilled?

To obtain a complete answer to the above question, one perhaps needs a complete analysis of the Mexican economy, and since this is not the main concern of our study, nevertheless, in order to clarify partially our doubts, it will be necessary to know what have been in the last twenty-five years the two main goals of Mexico's political economy: 1) to increase the standard of living of the population; 2) to achieve national economic independence.

A Mexican economist, Fernando Carmona, deals with the problem of Mexico's political economy in a very accurate form when he writes:

"The income levels of the great majority indicate only poverty and even destitution. According to data from a survey by the Bank of Mexico, fifty-four percent of peasant families had, in 1963, a monthly income of less than 530 pesos, and fifty percent of those occupied in industry, of less than 950 pesos. A similar conclusion is reached when one analyzes the condition of housing, health, clothing and food, not forgetting that it has been estimated that, on the average, 65 percent of the average expenditure of the urban population and 84 percent of the outlay of the peasants in 1958 was spent which is very revealing, on food alone. With regard to the level of literacy, it is estimated that still in 1964-65, 28.9 percent of the population over six years of age had never been to school and that another 44.9 percent had only studied as far as the fourth primary grade. That is to say, great numbers of peasants with or without land, but poverty-stricken; and the urban population in the slums and 'misery belts' of the cities, have not achieved prosperity in this quarter of a century, and they are less and less content to remain in their 'vielle malaise.' With respect to the other great historical objective of political development, national economic independence, can one share this opinion expressed by the Programme Policy of the official party: '...in 1910 direct foreign investment accounted for 69 percent of the gross national product at that time, whereas in 1962 the proportion was only seven percent. With regard to the total national investment in this last year, it can be said that our economic independence was nine times greater, thanks to our nationalist revolution....'

Apart from the childish ploy attempted in this statement and the obvious fact that, with regard to the regime of Díaz, the size and extent of economic dependence may perhaps have been less and were certainly different, who has not observed the growing depth and spread of foreign -- imperialist -- penetration, above all from North America, especially since 1941? What else, if not an increase in our economic dependence, and indeed, the dependence of our economic system, can be meant by the fact that still about 70 percent of our total volume of foreign trade is carried on with the United States, very much more than the proportion previous to 1940: that we continue to be basically exporters of raw materials and products of low economic density, and importers of finished and half-finished goods: that the deficit in the balance of trade is growing, even without counting the large and growing contraband trade in imports, basically coming from the United States, and that we continue to be threatened by the deterioration of the exchange rate?
What else can be meant by the endless and growing national debt, through which the capital balance of Mexico's debts abroad has grown from 101.4 million dollars in 1940 to 1803.3 million by the 30 of June 1966? By the unlimited and continual increase in direct investment by the great international monopolies from a total of 411.2 million dollars in 1940 to some 1800 to 1900 million dollars in 1965? It is for this reason that these monopolies are exercising more and more influence on the economy and the politics of many branches of industry, on trade at home and abroad and on other services, and that they are besides linked in a thousand ways with indirect investment?

We must not fail to mention other facts. What can we say of the growing technological dependence? Of the pressures of inflation and the ever greater pressures on our balance of payments? Of the subjection to external (or foreign) economy of regions, sectors and whole branches of the national economy? We must consider also that the sum of the real trade deficit, the remittance of dividends, perquisites and interest by foreign firms who have set up business in Mexico, the payment of interest on the national debt abroad and of freight charges, in 1965 went up to some 1,100 million dollars, that is to say, about a third of the gross national product and almost 55 percent of the total export in goods and services in account current. This great national expenditure, to which it would be necessary to add the figures resulting from the deterioration of the rate of exchange which have not been taken into account in the previous data, the 'leakage' of Mexican capital, the payments made by Mexican firms for patents, manufacturing licences and insurance together with other items in international accounts, is really nothing other than the formidable and ever-greater tribute to the 'developed' countries -- with the United States at their head -- that we pay as the price of our increasing subordination. Far from advancing towards economic independence, in reality the country has regressed in the last quarter of a century. 15

Returning to our analysis of López Mateos' Administration, we observe that student politics became a major problem. Students supported the Cuban Revolution and there were countless anti-American demonstrations, but during those days students were dealing merely with

international issues and severe measures against them were not taken. Then when the current administration of Gustavo Diaz Ordaz came to power (1964-1970), students started to deal with national issues --- (that we shall analyze later) and the circle of repression was closed with the student movement of 1968.

Finally in this chapter it is important to note what an observer wrote in 1963:

"Cárdenas' successors -- Avila Camacho (1940-1946), Miguel Alemán (1946-1952), Adolfo Ruiz Cortinez (1952-1958), and the current President Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964). The next one, Gustavo Diaz Ordaz, nominated and therefore sure of election at the time of this writing, is not expected to change the pattern. These presidents have pushed Mexico to the Right, creating a climate for high-level corruption, and have twisted the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) into a Tammany-like machine."16

Summary

From our account of the political history of modern Mexico, we find that the early period in the 1930's contained an opportunity for a viable political democracy with a controlled and orderly conflict between interest groups on the left and right. Strangely, the push to a centralized government came from Cárdenas, who was sympathetic to the needs of the peasants and workers, and whose administration worked on their behalf. But following the leadership of Cárdenas, the Presidential successors, Camacho and Alemán, used the Central Party, and by strengthening its control, suppressed labor and peasant movements.

It is at this time that we begin to see that legacy of violence in policy matters is introduced as strategy of repression in modern Mexican politics. The push toward modernization took on the character of foreign investments and with it foreign control. And it is the latter, the foreign domination of the Mexican economy, that plays an important role in the application of repression.
CHAPTER II
The P.R.I. Political Machine

To understand better how the "official" political machine works and controls the whole social and economic structure in Mexico, first we shall attempt to describe how that social and economic structure works.

Mexico, like many other countries, is composed of a social and economic pyramid with a political pyramid inside it. An observer describes the Mexican pyramid in the following manner:

"At the bottom are the indigenous Indians, remaining where they always were. In the next layer are the landless rural people and the unemployed or only occasionally employed urban ones. The latter are a veritable lumpen proletariat dispossessed by the rural and unabsorbed by the urban economy, living on the margin of society, isolated and alienated from it, from each other, and often from themselves. Next come the ejidatarios and such private small holders as are poor enough to work their land by themselves. Although economically more secure, they stand socially some times even below the marginal urban people, perhaps because the chances for social mobility are greater for the latter. Above them are the workers in the narrower sense of the word, particularly the unionized ones, who in Mexico and in many parts of Latin America, Asia, and Africa today comprise a sort of 'aristocracy of the proletariat.' The next layer may be termed the middle class or petty bourgeois. It comprises a large variety of economic walks of life -- small landowner, professional merchant, clergy, government and white-collar worker, small politician-- but it affords considerable lateral mobility within it, from one occupation to another. Their badge in Mexico is dark glasses as it is a briefcase in Western Europe, however dark it may be outside or however few papers there may be to carry. And that badge is a counterweight to the sometimes higher income of the workers below them. The bourgeois upper class, the principal manipulators and the beneficiaries of the system, includes the large landholders, the effective directors of the financial commercial, industrial, professional, governmental, and military apparatuses and by 'noblesse oblige' some intellectuals. The viable economic base of the more aristocratic upper class was destroyed by the revolution. But many of its members and
their wealth survived. Their money was invested in finance, commerce, industry, and later again agriculture; and the ex-aristocrats became the nucleus of the new bourgeoisie.  

A vast majority of this new Mexican bourgeoisie forms inside of PRI's political pyramid a hierarchical family known as the "Revolutionary Family" which enjoys political prestige and political mobility.

The Party of Revolutionary Institutions (PRI) is the political pyramid. The structure of this political pyramid is very complex, we might almost say cumbersome, consequently we should describe it in a brief but precise manner.

Today, as Professor Brandenburg writes, the "Official Party" is composed of three sectors: Agrarian, Labor, and Popular elements -- which theoretically nominate candidates to public offices through a functional, proportional-representation, intraparty process structured from local to national levels. Unions, federations, and associations formally affiliated with the official party purportedly take over the sectors and appoint party officialdom. A number of local "ward" committees are subject to district committees, which in turn fall under the jurisdiction of state executive committees that answer to national organs of the official party. At all levels, party-affiliated interest groups are to assume control of the party's three sectors. Theoretically, the sectors then decide among themselves which elective offices are to

be apportioned to each sector, each sector selects the candidates for its designated offices, and all three sectors collectively support the nominations in the name of the official party. National organs presumably take direct charge of nominating a candidate for the office of President of Mexico, while state-level party organs select governors and senators, district organs select federal and state deputees, and local organs select municipal presidents and council men.

### The Organization of the PRI

#### CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
- **President**: Elected by National Assembly.
- **Secretary-General**: Elected by National Assembly.
- **Secretaries of:**
  - **Agrarian Activities**: Designated by national sector organ.
  - **Labor Activities**: Designated by state sector organization.
  - **Popular Activities**: Designated by caucus.
  - **Political Activities**: Designated by caucus.

#### GRAN COMISIÓN
- 30 members selected by each sector at National Assembly.

#### NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
- As provided in convocation.
- **Delegates**: Usually about a thousand, representing each sector equally.

#### 32 REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES
- One Committee per state, territory, and the Federal District.
- **President**: Elected at regional convention.
- **Secretary-General**: Elected at regional convention.
- **Secretaries of:**
  - **Agrarian Activities**: Designated by state sector organization.
  - **Labor Activities**: Designated by caucus.
  - **Popular Activities**: Designated by caucus.
  - **Political Activities**: Designated by caucus.

#### MUNICIPAL COMMITTEES
- One Committee for each municipio in state.
- **5 members**: Appointed by Central Executive Committee on advice of Regional Executive Committee Representative of social and economic activities of area.

#### DISTRICT COMMITTEES
- One Committee for each election district in Federal District.
- **5 members**: Members of Municipal Committees.

---

The Agrarian, Labor and Popular, which are the three basic sectors upon which first the Mexican Revolutionary Party -- P.R.M. and then the Party of Revolutionary Institutions -- P.R.I. -- were built, have remained the major units for "interest representation" in the revolutionary party since 1940. Consequently it will be important for our study to know what the group composition of these three basic sectors is, but since there are very few sources of information about it, we will use Professor Scott's diagram on the Sectors' Organization. Although it is statistically outdated (1958), it might serve us as a guide to have an idea of the Party's scope in his "centralization task."
THE SECTOR ORGANIZATION OF THE PRI

Farm Sector
1. Confederación Nacional Campesina
   A. 2,332,914 ejido families on 18,564 ejidos (1958 agricultural census) 2,500,000
   B. Sindicatos Campesinos (organization of wage-laborers on private lands, affiliated with the CNC) 150,000
2. Sociedad Agronomica Mexicana
   Total in Farm Sector 10,000 2,660,000

Labor Sector
1. Affiliated with BUO
   A. Confederacion de Trabajadores Mexicanos (CTM) 1,500,000
   B. Confederacion Regional de Obreros Mexicanos (CROM) 35,000
   C. Confederacion General de Trabajadores (CGT) 25,000* 102,000*
   D. Railroad Workers Union (STFRM) 25,000* 102,000*
   E. Mining and Metal Workers Union (STMSRM) 90,000
   F. Petroleum Workers Union (STPRM) 85,000*
   G. Telephone Workers Union (STRM) 10,000
   H. Motion Picture Workers Union (STPCRM) 6,000
   I. Other independent unions (FNRT, FTDF, FNUT, FAO, ANDA, ATA, etc.) 20,000
   Total in Labor Sector 1,873,000

2. Anti-BUO Affiliates
   A. Confederacion Revolucionaria de Obreros y Campesinos (CROC) 150,000
   B. Confederacion Revolucionaria de Trabajadores (CRT) 25,000
   C. Electrical Workers Unions (3 unions) 50,000*
   D. Other independent unions 15,000
   E. Sindicato de Trabajadores Agricolas (in formation)
   Total in Labor Sector 240,000 2,113,000

Popular Sector—CNOP
1. Civil Servants
   A. Bureaucrats Unions (FSTSE) 300,000
   B. Teachers (SNTE) 55,000*
2. Cooperatives
   A. National Federation of Cooperatives 275,000
   B. National Cooperative League 3,000

Continued . . . .
3. Small Farm Proprietors
   A. Confederación Nacional de la Pequeña Propiedad Agrícola 850,000
   B. Asociación Nacional de Cosecheros 15,000

4. Small Merchants
   These overlap 40,000

5. Small Industrialists

6. Professionals--Intellectuals 55,000

7. Youth Groups
   A. Confederación de Jóvenes Mexicanos 75,000

8. Artisans (nonsalaried service employees) 70,000

9. Women's Organizations
   A. Sociedad de Técnicas y Profesionales 25,000
   B. Others (Mujeres Revolucionarias, Mujeres en Marcha, etc.) 10,000

10. Diversified Persons (a catchall for all kinds of otherwise unaffiliated Mexicans)
    Total in Popular Sector 75,000
    Grand Total in Three PRI Sectors 1,848,000

*The mere fact that a union or labor confederation is listed as affiliated with the BUO or against it does not always mean that it collectively or all of its locals or individual members support the position irrevocably. The railroad workers and the petroleum workers in the Labor sector, and the Federal District's primary-school teachers in the Popular sector, nominally support the BUO, but in actuality, until the government's crackdown precipitated by the railroad strike of March-April 1959, they cooperated with the anti-BUO forces. At the same time, the electrical workers, who belong to the anti-BUO faction, broke off their cooperation with the leftist railroad leaders after the same strike. Similarly, although the CGT nominally is part of the BUO, the Secretary-General of the federation instructed his followers not to support the candidates for congressional office put up by the CTM during the 1958 political campaign. On the other hand, although the bureaucrats union (FSTSE) operates out of the Popular sector, it considers itself a part of and works with the BUO.

If we look at these sectors more closely, we immediately find that evidence about party membership and that of sectors is contradictory, incomplete and generally unreliable. As we have already said, Professor Scott has presented a documented general picture for about 1958. Also Scott warns that: "Because of the rapidly changing factors of sectors membership, coupled with the beginnings of overlapping individual interest and consequent multiple membership in functional interest associations belonging to one or more sectors of the PRI, it is almost impossible to estimate accurately the relative influence of the sectors on their component parts in the decision-making process." In short what Scott says is that, "efforts to measure the relative political influence of each sector, are not likely to be very fruitful."

We find that Scott's assumptions about the relative political influence of PRI sectors, are accurate when we compare them with Professor González Casanova's observations on government control of labor forces. The latter writes:

"Two-thirds of the unionized workers belong to the Mexican Workers' Confederation, which is closely linked to the official party through the official jobs of its leaders. Other unions, not linked to the central one, maintain equally close relations with the official party and the government."

González Casanova adds:

"An index of the dependence of the Mexican unions upon the government and in particular upon its presidential-type policy, is that of strikes. If one observes the strikes which break out on a large scale in varying presidential regimes, one can establish the fact that it is when the Presidents are known for their propulist and pro-worker policies that the greatest number of strikes occur, as if the union leaders and the workers felt themselves protected or even en-

5. Ibid., op. cit., p. 171.
encouraged by the presidential power. Precisely the opposite effect is produced when the Presidents follow a less radical policy, or a more open alliance with the property-owning national and foreign sectors. Then we can see that during President Obregon's stay in power (1920-24), who counted among his followers the 'Red Battallions' and the working-class leaders, the national average of strikes rose to 197; during the conservative period of Calles and the so-called "Maximato" (1925-34), the average went down to 41; it rose again to 470 with Lázaro Cárdenas' pro-agrarian and working-class government (1934-40). Later, the average was 387 in Avila Camacho's moderate government; 108 with Alemán (under the regime in which the trend in income distribution was unfavorable to the working-class sector and 240 with Ruiz Cortines whose policy was above all reformist."

In short, we see that the party sector as a group does not have any political influence, that those who have it, and who are also in control of it, are the leaders of these organizations, and the social roles that these leaders have are ambiguous and not clearly defined, because rather than represent the sector interests, they are mediators between the latter and the authorities. As a result of this, it is difficult to know if these leaders support the interest of the power structure rather than those of the sector members. Thus in Mexico the party masses, far from having political influence, are manipulated, controlled and mobilized by leaders and party politicians. In regard to this political control González Casanova writes:

"In the political life of Mexico there exist, then, two types of control: the control by the popular organizations, and the control of the non-organized population by the governmental and para-governmental organs and organizations...."

González Casanova adds:

"It can be said, with no room for doubt, that the parties are not organized, subsidized or controlled by the citizens. The usual thing is for the groups in power -- with politicians and administrators -- to organize, subsidize and control the parties,

and for the parties to be their legal-political tool, constitutionally sanctioned for the civic contest of the electrons.\textsuperscript{7}

In such a complex context where organization and political control come from the top, the few "opposition" parties, in order to obtain their "official registration" as political parties, must fulfill some ambiguous requirements established by the Ministry of the Interior. This Ministry has the last word in granting registration on the grounds that those political groups must not "interfere" with the "revolutionary" line of the official party, otherwise as Robert Scott comments: "Several times since 1950 the government has refused to grant recognition to political groups seeking registration."\textsuperscript{8}

In such a context, once these political groups obtain the official registration as parties they start to play their "part" in the political arena. One of the latest examples of their "effective" opposition as a political party, has been the presidential election of 1958, where -- of the five parties registered, four, the PRI, P.N.M., PARN, and PPS -- supported the PRI's presidential candidate, Adolfo López Mateos. Only the PAN, which has always been known as a conservative party, representing the interest of the Church, some big-business as well as some upper- and middle-class professional people, nominated an opposition candidate for the presidency, Luis H. Alvarez. This candidate, being himself of the Party which represented extreme right-wing forces of the Mexican society, throughout his presidential campaign and being sure that he could not win, had made such demagogic promises that his victory would have placed

\textsuperscript{8} Scott: Mexican Government, op. cit., p. 151.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., p. 181.
an untenable burden on both the governmental and social structures of the country. In return for the contribution of all these parties to the "staged elections", they get their perquisites: some seats in the Congress.

Furthermore, these opposition parties lately, have been "encouraged" by the new election law of December, 1962, which provides that any political party winning 2.5 per cent of the national vote, whether five of its candidates actually win or not, will automatically obtain at least five deputy seats. Any party will acquire another seat for each additional one-half of 7 per cent of the total national vote.

As has already been mentioned before, in this sort of highly manipulated political context, where everything is controlled from the top, how does this political machine named PRI manipulate and mobilize the population during the election period?

As we have already pointed out in the introductory part of this study, 1958, the year that the "Official" party became an extremely powerful instrument of repression, was also the year when the election demonstrated the further perfecting of the election control machinery of the PRI.

A political observer writes:

"Beginning in September, 1957, the party's communications channels were employed for the 'auscultación', the canvassing of preferences in the state and local party machines and in the interest group sectors of the party. Gossip about "el tapado" (the veiled one), who ultimately would be the candidate of the PRI, had been going on for well over a year, although it would be hard to contend truthfully that electioneering (futurismo) is ever suspended. Ultimately, on November 4th, the PRI's headquarters announced that the majority had shown itself for Labor Secretary López. Those organizations which contribute to the strength of the PRI then swung heavily to the indicated 'pre-candidate', and the nominating convention of the party, held in a motion picture theater on November 15 and 16, became anticlimatic and quite perfunctory. 'Tapadismo' served its purpose, however; those leaders indiscreet enough..."
to commit themselves to others than López were brought out into the open. Their political futures may well hang on this."

It is interesting to observe how a Mexican weekly magazine, "Revista de Revistas", in August, 1957, referred ironically to the men who could make the choice among the various "pre-candidates". The magazine's cover bore photographs of outgoing President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines, the late former President Manuel Avila Camacho, former President Miguel Alemán, and Cárdenas. Its comment was, "One plus one plus one plus one equal one, for these are the four great electors. What of the other 30,000,000 faces? What point in identifying them?"

To sum up, if the vast majority of the population cannot rely on their organizations as effective channels through which they can express themselves politically, they cannot have effective electoral participation. However, the "political apparatus" has created several devices in order to make them believe that their participation is effective. A clear example of these was the enormous display of propaganda made before the elections with the slogan: "Every Mexican of age has the moral obligation to register for vote." With this and some other political devices the "Party" keeps the "Myth of solidarity", and is able to mobilize the population in those huge demonstrations of "popular support" of the "official" candidate.

In regard to these party political devices Frantz Fanon writes:

12. Revista de Revistas (Mexico City), August 18, 1957, cover, pp. 1 and 3.
"The mass 'party', becomes either simply a nostalgic purveyor of mythical solidarity and purely symbolic glory, increasingly focused on the heroic past (in the case of Mexico, the Revolution of 1910), its only relationship to the people that of turning them out on mass 'spontaneous' street demonstrations and rallies and of ensuring that they toe the party line, whilst the 'state' becomes an instrument of repression and for the multiplication of offices, privileges, and pelf for the elite. The critical, democratic, participatory life of the party branch ceases: the traffic is now one-way-from the top downward." \(^\text{13}\)

Another device that the Party has created in order to sustain its political pyramids, is that of social mobility, but only for individuals on an individual basis, and for those to whom it is permitted; this individual social mobility has to be within the system.

As a result of this, the social structure and its mythology have given to the lower middle class and even to some people in the lower class, the feeling that it is possible for them to better themselves but within the system and according to its rules.

The fact remains that, although individual mobility by individuals is permitted, mobility as a group is not, because such mobility in Mexico would radically alter the shape of the political pyramid.

Consequently, if any group pressure begins to build up anywhere in the politico-economic system, sharp measures are taken in order to counteract those trends.

The first measure will be to co-opt the group leadership. The second one may be to grant small concessions in order to lessen the pressure of the movement. If these measures are not successful, the government finally resorts to open repression. The intensity of this

---

repression will depend on the scope of the movement demands. About the reasons for these repressive measures against mass movements Professor Rodolfo Stavenhagen writes:

"When massive movements for the restitution of their rights by the trades unions or syndicates arise (like the railway-men's strike in 1959, the recent movements of school teachers, doctors, students, etc.) which through their own dynamism exceed the narrow limits of an organization controlled like those we are considering, then the first concern of the corresponding authorities is to break the movement as such, in the name of the 'principle of authority', even if later they concede in a large measure the demands formulated by the movement. In these cases, appearances are the most important thing: the fact that it should not be apparent that a spontaneous mass movement can succeed outside of the system. The bargaining should be neither open nor public."  

Summary

In the pages of this chapter we have tried to describe the political structure of the PRI, as well as the representative nature of the government. Our documentation has led us to conclude that the sectors and leadership of the party is one in which control of the government flows from the top down in a unidirectional manner, with little or no influence from the workers, peasants or small businessmen. Representation in the party does not bring with it the ability to participate in the decision making, nor does the populist ideology of the party mean that the masses are able to influence the leadership of the government. This being the case, the problem for the government becomes one of persuasion and control. The nature of that control is varied

depending on the immediate problems. For example it may simply be that the government prohibits strikes. At other times the demands for control may be much more extreme.

We have already pointed out in Chapter I how the element of violence is embedded in the origins of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 and how it was carried into the origins of the modern Mexican government. Thus the structural character of the government presented in this chapter, and the historical legacy noted earlier, are two conditions that set the stage for the use of violence. But it is specific conditions in the history of the country that have brought about the application of repression. We have briefly mentioned a few examples of political repression in the Introduction and in these two chapters. In the remaining part of our report we shall describe in detail the case of the student movement of 1968, noting how the structure of the government and the tradition of violence was brought to bear in its suppression.
CHAPTER III

The Students' Principle: We Must Have Public Dialogue

As we have emphasized in the introductory part of this thesis our study will focus not on the analysis of the different groups or forces that had participated in the Mexican Conflict of 1968, but as we have also already said; on repression as a case study. Therefore, we will attempt to concentrate our analysis in this chapter and the following one on the grounds of principles and the methods employed, first of all by the students to expose them through a Public Dialogue, and secondly by the government to repress them in order to preserve the so-called "principle of authority".

Also, it is important to emphasize that 1968 was not the first time that the Mexican Army was used against the students. For instance between 1966-1968 and this is the most recent example, there has been army intervention in student conflicts in the state cities of Morelia, Hermosillo and Villahermosa, but as a Mexican observer writes: "Before 1968, national problems were not among the main motivations of the students' protest."

As has also been mentioned in the introductory part of the present study, this chapter will be devoted to the first stage of the 1968 Mexican student Movement -- July 22 to August 29, and the next and final chapter the second one, September 1 to October.

Thus, in order to have an idea of the development of the two stages above mentioned, a brief but precise chronology of the July-October events, will serve us as an introductory guide:

**Chronology**

_July 22 - October 12_

_July 22 (Monday)_

Streetfight between Vocational Schools Nos. 2 and 5 (Vocas Nos. 2 and 5) and their traditional rivals, Preparatory School Isaac Ochoterena.

_July 23 (Tuesday)_

Renewed street fighting between _Voca_ No. 5 and _Prepa_ Ochoterena students. "Granaderos" (Anti-Riot squad police), invade _Voca_ No. 5 striking students and teachers indiscriminately. One student presumed dead.

_July 23 (Friday)_

FNET (Federación Nacional de Estudiantes Técnicos), the official student organization for IPN (Instituto Politécnico Nacional) organizes demonstration protesting against _granaderos_ invasion of _Voca_ No. 5 on the 23rd.

Left organizations, organize separate rally to celebrate anniversary of Castro's 1953 attack on Moncada Barracks.

Militants from both rallies are ambushed and beaten by _riot_ police on route to National Palace at the _Zócalo_. Students disperse and regroup, they barricade themselves inside UNAM _prepa_ schools. Students subsequently repel police by commandeering and setting fire to buses.

Three day siege of student-controlled _prepas_ commences. By the end of the 3rd day some students dead, several injured and arrested.
The Plaza of Three Cultures: The name comes from the Aztec (pyramid ruins), Colonial (Church of Apostol Santiago) and modern (Tlatelolco housing project) cultures bordering the plaza. Also nearby are the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Vocational School No. 7. The plaza was the scene of several major student-led demonstrations and clashes with police and army units. It was also the site of the October 2nd Massacre.

The Zócalo (also called the Plaza of the Constitution): The capital's central plaza, site of the National Cathedral, the Presidential Palace and other government buildings, the Zócalo has been the traditional focal point for pro-government rallies. Since July it has been the site of several of the largest student-led demonstrations against the government.

In separate action, police invade and sack Communist Party office in Mexico City; arrest 76, charging that they instigated riots.

July 27 (Saturday) - July 28 (Sunday)

The Communist Party denies charges of instigating of the riots, and denounce the illegal invasion by the police of the party headquarters. IPN and UNAM students unite forces for the first time and present initial demands. They demand amnesty, indemnity, dismissal of the chief and assistant chief of police, and abolition of riot squad police.

July 29 (Monday) - July 30 (Tuesday)

Police claim that students are getting arms out of gun shops behind the barricades.

Late Monday and early Tuesday the army moves in. Light tanks and armored cars surround the prepas and vocas. Without resistance infantry, paratroopers, riflemen, and military police secure the streets and seize the schools. To open Preparatory 1, where the last students are hiding, paratroopers use a bazooka to blast down the 200-year-old door and the guards behind it. The police haul away the prisoners. Other troops occupy four more schools and take up positions around the University and the Polytechnic Institute. Eight batallions are in action.

Later on Tuesday, the Mexico City Mayor agrees to release arrested students, cancel their police records, and evacuate federal forces from the schools. This, he implies, will close the case. But in fact it has just opened. Arrests are continued. Students insist that over 30 of their comrades are missing without trace, and demand that officials reveal their fate. Students-and-teacher strikes engulf schools in Mexico City and spread to important cities in various states.
August 1 (Thursday)

UNAM Rector Barros Sierra declares that the school's constitutional autonomy, its academic independence and freedom established almost 40 years ago, is in grave danger.

In the afternoon UNAM Rector Barros Sierra leads 50,000 students and professors, the first great protest. The demonstration proceeds solemnly out of the University, silently up the main southern boulevard of Mexico City, and peacefully back onto campus.

August 5 (Monday)

IPN students organize demonstration (with participation of UNAM, Chapirgo and Normales students) numbering approximately 125,000. Government-backed FNET tries but fails to take over student movement.

August 8 (Thursday)

Students form National Strike Council, Consejo Nacional de Huelga (C.N.H.), and professors a Teachers' Coalition for Democratic Liberties. In a composed manner they insisted on the four original demands: amnesty, indemnity, dismissal of the police chiefs, and the abolition of the riot squads. And they presented as well two other political demands: freedom for political prisoners serving time for infractions of Penal Code Articles 145 and 145A (Mexico's Alien and Sedition Laws), and the repeal of those articles.

August 13 (Tuesday)

The Teachers' Coalition for Democratic Liberties lead the third great protest -- 150,000 students chanting caustic slogans against the "hireling" press, the police and (until then a taboo in Mexico) the President himself, but marching in good order up the southern boulevard,
along the downtown avenues and into the Zócalo (the Central Square).
There they ratified the six demands and denounced official attempts at
a "false" settlement.

August 17 (Saturday)

CNH Press Conference at the Voca No. 5 Auditorium. CNH take
the decision to continue with the strike, until authorities find a
solution to the six demands.

Also CNH declares that in order to negotiate with the auth­
orities, one condition has to be fulfilled; that all negotiations need
to be public. No private dialogue. No mediators commission.

August 22 (Thursday)

The Minister of the Interior declares that the Federal Gov­
ernment is to have a "frank and calm dialogue" in order to reach a
"definitive" solution of "this lamentable problem". But the CNH and the
Teachers' Coalition insist that all negotiations be public, so that no
intimidation or co-option can occur. And officials make no direct answer.

Meanwhile, students political-brigades start spontaneous
meetings in the streets throughout Mexico City and in some states, ex­
pounding the six demands, arguing that the cause is not simply academic
but popular and democratic, announcing plans, and collecting money.
Other brigades distribute leaflets around factories.

August 27 (Tuesday)

CNH led the fourth great demonstration -- 300,000 students
and teachers, and now parents, workers, street peddlers and clerks,
marching loudly but again in good order to the Zócalo (Central Square).

Once in the Central Square, CNH leaders and professors address
the crowd. By the end of the rally a CNH leader Sócrates Campos Lemus
(we shall return later in this chapter to analyze this incident) propose that the public dialogue with the government authorities, will take place in the Zócalo, September 1 at 10:00 a.m. (September 1, at 10:00 a.m. is precisely the day and the time when the President delivers his annual report to the nation).

Also in the same rally at the Zócalo some "students" paint insults to the government authorities on the walls of the National Palace and "others" fly a red-and-black strike flag on the National flagpole in the very center of the square.

Late Monday night a group of students station themselves in front of the National Palace in an around-the-clock picket.

August 28 (Wednesday)

At one in the morning, armored cars and fire trucks drive the student pickets out of the square. A paratroop battalion, two infantry battalions, and some 500 police chase them back through the downtown avenues. The troops and police then occupy the square.

At midday, officials assemble a crowd of bureaucrats in the square, to burn the strike flag and to "pay homage to the National flag." Groups of students arrive at the square, but the troops and police drive them out.

August 29 (Thursday)

In a Press Conference, the CNH declares in regard to the acts which have taken place on August 27 at the square; that first of all CNH has not planned or authorized the painting of the walls of the National Palace; secondly that the red-and-black strike flag was run up against CNH will; thirdly that CNH and Teachers' Coalition wish to ex-
press again their willingness to initiate the dialogue with the authorities.

August 30 (Friday)

Protected by 22 truckloads of troops, President Diaz Ordaz addresses CTM (Mexican Workers Confederation). CTM leader Arturo Gutierrez assures Diaz of workers "support". CNH delivers the following agreements:

a) On September 1, day of the Presidential annual report to the nation, there will be no demonstrations in the central square.

b) CNH is very disposed to initiate the dialogue with the authorities, under the conditions that the dialogue be public and that there be no police nor army repression.

c) That the students commissions that will negotiate with the authorities have been already established.

d) There will be an intensification of student political action among popular sectors, but any confrontation with the repressive forces will be avoided.

e) The Student movement has no desire to obstruct the Olympic games.

August 31 (Saturday)

Right-wing terrorist attacks on Vocational Schools No. 7 and 4. Several students wounded.

Once again, CNH reiterates its desire to initiate a dialogue with the authorities. CNH has also declared: we accept an immediate technical discussion to establish how the dialogue will be accomplished in order to put an end to the conflict; the dialogue will be set up in a way that will guarantee the integrity of the leaders as well as that of the movement. CNH also asked for an end to the virtual city état de siege.
September 1 (Sunday)

President Diaz Ordaz defends the government's position in his fourth annual report to the nation. In regard to the student conflict he says: "Different interests... inside and outside the country... of different political tendencies and ideologies, had planned to take advantage of a trivial incident to create major trouble. The aim was to disrupt the Olympics and to discredit the country". The President said that he could not and would not allow it. President Diaz Ordaz, justified the use of the army in the streets as a suitable measure to maintain "internal security". He promised due protection of the University's autonomy, which he denied had been violated. In regard to the Students six demands he discussed the two "basically political" demands: Liberty to political prisoners; Abolition of Articles 145 and 145A.

President Diaz Ordaz denied that there were political prisoners. With respect to Articles 145 and 145A he said that he had no authority to change them, but he asked Congress "to hold public hearings to decide whether it should repeal or reform the laws." He ignored the other four demands (we shall return to the discussion of the President's fourth annual report in the next chapter).

September 2 (Monday)

In a Press Conference CNH states that the President's Annual Report has not proposed the political solutions that the student movement has been seeking.

CNH adds: We have been insisting that our movement does not intend to act in any form against the Olympic Games. If our movement
interferes with the Olympic Games, it will be the responsibility of the Federal Government, whose obligation it is to find proper solutions to the deep social problems that are affecting our country.

September 4 (Wednesday)

CNH states that it will propose to Federal Government to initiate negotiations on Monday, September 9. CNH conditions for the initiation of negotiations:

-- to halt repression;
-- to have a public dialogue.

CNH suggest the National Medical Center as a place to initiate the public dialogue.

September 6 (Friday)

The Ministry of the Interior, the City Mayor, the Attorney-General of the Republic and City Attorney, after passing from one to the other the CNH petition, and using extremely ambiguous legal terminology, finally answer that "In accordance with Article 8 of the Constitution all petitions need to be presented in a written form."

September 9 (Monday)

CNH states that a demonstration will take place on September 13, and that ceremonies to celebrate the Mexican Independence of 1810 will be held on September 15 at UNAM and IPN on campus.

September 10 (Tuesday)

The Congress gives "full support" to the President to use the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, in order "to maintain the internal and external security of Mexico."
September 13 (Friday)

CNH stages the fifth massive, orderly and silent demonstration of approximately 100,000 people in the square.

September 15 (Sunday)

Celebrations in commemoration of the 1810 Mexican Independence take place in UNAM and IPN.

September 17 (Tuesday)

In a Press Conference, CNH leaders make public their September 15, declarations: a) with the celebration of 1810 Mexican Independence, the student movement takes on a national character; b) The CNH will accept the dialogue in a written form with the condition that all the documents must be widely published.

September 18 (Wednesday)

UNAM autonomy violated for the first time in forty years, 10,000 army troops invade and seal off campus, taking several hundred prisoners including staff and parents of the students, all of them taken away from university campus in 15 army trucks.

In a public statement the Minister of Interior emphasizes that the UNAM occupation by the Army was a necessary measure in order to stop "openly anti-social and possibly criminal acts." He added: the government has "the obligation to maintain order in the territory of the nation, of which the University also forms a part."

September 19 (Thursday)

Protests in regard to the Army occupation on University Campus.

UNAM Rector Barros Sierra in a public statement, says: The UNAM military occupation has been an act of excessive force, that our university does not deserve....
We must remember that the student conflict was not executed by the university...

The examination and solutions of the youth problems, require comprehension rather than violence. Surely, some other measures could be taken....Mexican institutions, our laws and traditions provide more suitable instruments than the use of public force....

We will hope that the deplorable acts we are confronting will not affect in an irreparable way, democracy in this country. But, to the government, the Rector's objections were futile.

September 20 (Friday)

The PRI three sectors express their "solidarity" with and confidence in the President.

At night, terrorists machine-gun the Colegio de Mexico, a small private university near the centre of the city. The Colegio de Mexico asked the police for protection, but the police refused.

From official sources, there are in Mexico City jail, 334 persons arrested.

September 21 (Saturday)

Students hold meetings in Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Tlatelolco; granaderos attack with bayonets. Tlatelolco residents give students refuge and medical aid.

In a debate on the Student Movement at the Congress' Chamber of Deputies, Octavio A. Hernández, makes some charges against University authorities, claiming that the latter are responsible for the student conflict. In a press conference, deputy Luis H. Farias attacks in a very insulting way the UNAM Rector Barros Sierra.
September 22 (Sunday)

According to mass media information, several persons arrested during the UNAM army occupation, have been already released. But, many others have been arrested, among them, the well-known university professor Eli de Gorosti, the painter Rina Lazo, and the former director of the weekly magazine *Política*, Manuel Marcue.

In the editorial pages of some Mexican daily newspapers, severe criticisms are made against the verbal attacks of Deputies Hernández and Farias against the UNAM Rector.

An increase of Army-Student confrontations, takes place.

September 23 (Monday)

Rector Barros Sierra presents his resignation to UNAM Board of Governors.

September 24 (Tuesday)

The Army invades IPN campus. Several hours of violent clashes; students fight the police and the Army.

Students capture busses and blockade adjacent streets.

September 26 (Thursday)

UNAM Board of Governors do not accept Barros Sierra’s resignation and ask him to remain as University Rector.

September 27 (Friday)

Barros Sierra agrees to remain at his post as UNAM Rector.

Arrests increase.

September 28 (Saturday)

CNH leaders promise to UNAM Rector, that they will not promote violence.
The Minister of Interior emphasizes that the Army troops occupying the University campus, will be withdrawn as soon as UNAM authorities require them to do so.

September 29 (Sunday)

In a Press Conference, CNH declares that: a) they will look for pacific solutions; b) there can be no compromises with UNAM authorities.

September 30 (Monday)

The Army leaves University campus.

October 1 (Tuesday)

Thousands of UNAM staff return to university campus.

Student committees initiate meetings in order to discuss the possibility of resuming classes.

In two rallies held at UNAM campus, one at midday and the other at 5:30 p.m. the CNH refuses to resume classes.

CNH convokes a mass rally at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Tlatelolco on Wednesday, October 2, at 5:00 p.m.

October 2 (Wednesday)

CNH rally is initiated at 5:00 p.m. at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas, approximately 15,000 persons were gathered at the Plaza.

Around 5:30 p.m. CNH spokesmen address the crowd composed of students, workers, Tlatelolco residents, men, women, and children, cameramen and foreign reporters.

Suddenly after four flares, presumably used as a signal at 6:10 p.m., soldiers coordinated by plainclothesmen open fire without provocation and charge peaceful student rally at the Plaza. Students
and bystanders flee to Tlatelolco buildings but they are pursued, shot at, beaten and arrested. From 6:10 to 8:30 p.m. the firing is continuous.

Presumably 5,000 soldiers had participated in what in the annals of Mexican History would be known as Tlatelolco Massacre.

October 12

Olympics open, scheduled to close on October 27.

Henceforth, after describing the composition of the National Strike Committee and the six political demands presented by them, our study will be concerned with the analysis of the several attempts made by the National Strike Committee during the different stages of development of the student conflict, to negotiate with the Mexican Government. The Committee insisted on one basic condition: that all negotiations be public or what we have called the students' principle: We must have Public Dialogue.

Composition of the National Strike Committee

The following scheme explains the CHH composition from the top to the bottom.

At the top CHH is composed of 150 members, who in their turn are supported by the C.C. (Central Committee) composed of 600 members. The Central Committee includes several institutions of higher education in Mexico: the National University, the National Polytechnic Institute, the National School of Agriculture, the National Normal Schools, the National Conservatory of Music, the National Institute of Fine Arts, the National School of Anthropology and History, affiliated secondary schools and some private universities, each of these institutions having
a delegate in the CNH, who at the same time leads the movement in his own school.

At the bottom comes the "Comités de Lucha" (Struggle Committees) of each institution that compose the Comité Central (Central Committee).

We have to emphasize that the capacity for organization that the National Strike Committee had demonstrated during the development of the student movement, was highly sophisticated, if we take into consideration the traditional political apathy of the vast majority of the student population.

As a concrete example of the National Strike Committee organizational capacity, we have the effective mobilization of people during the great mass demonstrations, and their clarity in expressing in a very articulate form their six political demands.

The Six Demands

1. Repeal of Articles 145 and 145A of the Penal Code.

These articles were passed during World War II to provide a means of dealing with the rise of fifth column in Mexico, and they define the crime of "social dissolution". Articles 145 and 145A (Mexico's Alien and Sedition Laws), provide sentences of two to twelve years for any Mexican or foreigner who disseminates ideas or programs of any foreign government that disturb public order or affect Mexico's sovereignty. These articles also provide sentences of ten to twenty years for any Mexican or foreigner who carries out acts "which prepare materially or morally for the invasion of national territory or the submission of the country to any foreign government."
2. Freedom for political prisoners.

This demand is concerned not only with the persons arrested during the July-October 1968 events, but also with those arrested before those events, who are also considered as political prisoners. An example of the latter would be the case of Demetrio Vallejo.

3. Dismissal of the police chiefs, Generals Luis Cueto Ramírez and Raul Mendiola.

The aim of this demand was to oblige the Government to accept its responsibility for the development of the student movement.

4. To establish the responsibility of the authorities for the acts of repression due to the actions of the granaderos (riot squad) and the Army.

5. The abolition of the granaderos and dismissal of their chief General Frias.

The Mexican Constitution allows only the existence of the Police under the Justice Department's jurisdiction; consequently the existence of the granaderos corps is unconstitutional.

This riot squad was created in 1944 and since then they have been notorious for their repressive tactics.

6. Indemnity for wounded students and families of students who were killed.

There were several students killed and hundreds wounded.

It is important to emphasize as Professor Womack does, that "when the students did adopt political demands, they acted not to overthrow the government but only to insist on constitutional guarantees."

The government regression started with an invasion by the police riot squad against Vocational School No. 5 on July 23, 1968. Later, as student conflict developed the repression increased with the participation of the Army.

The students, once they succeeded in organizing themselves, first with the creation as we have already mentioned, of their representative body, the National Strike Committee, and with the presentation of their six demands, for the first time in the history of mass-movements, adopted the very antithesis of the traditional mass-movement policy -- that of having one leader -- which the government had traditionally dealt with by co-opting, buying off or imprisoning the said leader, thus effectively breaking the movement. To this traditional government policy of dialogue "behind the scenes", which Professor Stavenhagen has described, the students opposed their own principle -- that of public dialogue.

Thus, a basic question arises in our study; had the National Strike Committee a concrete aim, when over and over again they emphasized the need to hold a public dialogue with the government?

The answer to our question is given by one of the National Strike Committee leaders, when interviewed by a weekly Mexican magazine, he said:

"We uphold the principle that any exchange of opinions must be public. All sectors concerned in the dialogue should be

5. See Chronology.
7. See p. 41.
informed about the discussions. This is a matter of principle and it is the reason for the Movement. We want to finish with the corrupt practice of "dialogues behind closed doors", or of small committees, where the practice of blowing hot and cold keeps the ordinary people from any participation at all. From the beginning of the Mexican Revolution, and even during it, the leaders of any movement have been imprisoned or killed or bought off. We realize that our demands will not mean a basic change in society. But the Movement that makes them has an honest and popular aim: to give back to the people confidence in their own strength. We do not want so much to convince people that things are in a bad way, as that their correction depends on the participation of the people. We want to convince them that there are leaders who cannot be bought. We are not going to let the government shift the struggle to their own terrain by propitiating the movement with petty concessions."8

Thus we see from this statement that the major issue for the CNH's demand for a public dialogue is the attempt to remove the elitism that insulated the masses from the government and further the attempt to renew confidence in the public's ability to influence the decisions of political officials. To accomplish this would mean the undoing of the unidirectional flow of power inherent in the structure of the PRI that we outlined in Chapter II.

If we analyze the several attempts made by the National Strike Committee to initiate public talks with the government, we see that through the July-October 1968 events, the first time that CNH had established the condition of public dialogue was on August 17, but from the beginning of the student conflict until August 17, 1968, four acts of police and army repression against students, had taken place already, on the 23rd, 26th, 29th and 30th of July.

Then came the first mass demonstrations on the 1st, 5th and 13th of August. During these three demonstrations no direct police-army-students confrontation occurred.

Between the 5th and 13th of August, on the 8th, students formed the National Strike Committee, and professors the Teacher's Coalition for Democratic Liberties. Both formulate the six demands, which were ratified at the Zócalo on August 13th. Consequently when on August 17th the CNH, insisted on public talks in order to negotiate with the government, the latter was fully aware of the students' demands and of the scope of their movement, which had emerged as a response to the July repression applied to the students by the police and the Army.

Then on August 22, through the Minister of the Interior, the government made a move with the following statement: "The authorities are very willing to initiate negotiations in order to come to a 'definitive' 9 solution of this 'lamentable problem'.'"

No doubt the Mexican Government felt that the need to make such a move was imperative since "the lamentable problem" was its own creation.

Consequently, the government's "willingness" to initiate negotiations was another political device in order to regain what Professor Stavenhagen calls the "appearances", and by doing so to establish what we might call delaying tactics, whereby later, with "popular" support the government could "legally" increase repression.

The day after, August 23rd, the government went further with its plans to carry on repression, when in a display of "good will", it designated four representative (all cabinet members) to initiate negotiations.

The CNH and the Teacher's Coalition accepted the government proposition, but the former insited that the dialogue must be transmitted simultaneously by television and radio networks and published in all Mexican newspapers.

10. See p. 41.
At the same time, the CNH also announced that another demonstration would take place on Tuesday, August 27th.

Then on Saturday, August 24th, in two public manifestoes directed at public opinion and at the people of Mexico, the CNH and the Teacher's Coalition declared: That later on August 23rd, they received a telephone call from the Ministry of the Interior, saying that the government would accept the public dialogue.

The day after on Sunday, August 25, in a Press Conference, the CNH declared that on Monday, August 26th, it would establish through a telephone call, contact with the authorities in order to set up with the latter a definitive place and date for negotiations. CNH also declared that from ten to twenty students, assisted by several professors, would attend the public dialogue.

On Monday, August 26, a very important declaration was made by the Mexico City authorities, a declaration that later in this chapter will throw light on our assumption about the "delaying tactics" employed by the Mexican government to increase repression "legally".

The Mexico City authorities declaration: (Monday 26th)

"The D.D.F. announced that although the requisite permit had not been applied for, it will allow the demonstration announced for tomorrow to take place, setting off from the National Museum of Anthropology towards the Zoéalo (square). The said decision has been made in accordance with the intention of the authorities not to impede any manifestation of ideas, even when the latter are directed against them themselves and in spite of great inconvenience to all the inhabitants of the city, but keeping in mind that article 9 of the Constitution states that no assembly or reunion can be considered illegal or dissolved if it has as its aim to present a petition or to make a protest some act by an auth-

ority, unless the latter is insulted or unless use is made of violence or threats to intimidate the authority or to oblige it to cede to the demands made."

Then on August 27, the fourth great demonstration, which we consider to be the key date of the July-October 1968 events, (the manifestants which we have already mentioned in the chronology), marching loudly, but in good order reached the Zócalo.

Once in the Central square, CNH leaders and professors spoke at the rally. At the end, a CNH leader, Socrates Campos Lemus took the microphone and proposed that public dialogue with the authorities, would take place at the Zócalo on September 1st at 10:00 a.m.

A group of "students" painted the walls of the presidential palace, with insults to the President.

Other groups of "students" flew a red-and-black strike flag on the national flagpole in the very center of the square.

Other students set up a round-the-clock picket in front of the National Palace, until the six demands could be granted by the authorities, but at one in the morning, August 28, Army troops drove the students pickets out of the square. At midday, the government assembled a crowd of bureaucrats at the Zócalo, to burn the strike flag and "pay homage to the national flag."

In a Press Conference, August 29, CNH declares that: when the demonstration of August 27 was planned, the CNH never discussed, still less approved the painting of the walls of the palace or the flying of the strike flag.

On August 30, the CNH agreed not to hold any kind of demonstration at the Zócalo on September 1, and reiterated its willingness

---

to hold discussions with the government, in order to find a solution to the conflict.

Returning to the key events which took place in the evening of August 27 at the Zócalo we will analyze first of all: the proposal of one of the CNH leaders, Sócrates Campos Lemus, to hold a public dialogue with the government on September 1, 10:00 a.m. at the Zócalo, exactly on the day and hour when the President delivers his annual report to the nation, in the Congress, at which all cabinet members have to be present.

Consequently, Sócrates Campos Lemus' proposal sounds rather than a proposal of one of the CNH spokesmen, like a deliberative proposition made by an agent provocateur.

Then, let us consider the painted walls of the National Palace with insults to the President, and the flying of a red-and-black strike flag on the national flagpole in the center of the square, both acts committed by a group of "students". These acts later on in a Press Conference, the CNH denied as being planned or authorized by the latter for the August 27 demonstration. Thus the so-called group of "students" seems more like a group of agents provocateurs.

Finally, the vigils of some students in a round-the-clock picket in front of the National Palace, seems also an act encouraged by the group above mentioned, in order to produce confrontation with

---

14. The said CNH leader Sócrates Campos Lemus, once he was arrested on October 2nd 1968, turned state's evidence and gave the police a list of names of leftist politicians and students. The group of students who committed the criticized acts were directly under Lemus' control. Following his statement to the police, the other CNH leaders and students denounced him as a CIA agent. See: Texto del acta en que consta la declaración de S. Campos Lemus. Sol de México. 68.10.06, pp. 1,2. See also: Revista de la Universidad-de-Mexico. pp. 30-32, Septiembre, 1968.
the Army, giving the government the opportunity to "justify the Army legal intervention", since the students' vigil square was violating one section of Article 9 of the Constitution which says that:

"No assembly or reunion will be considered illegal nor dissolved if it has as its aim to present a petition or to protest against some act to an authority, as long as no insults are offered to the latter and no use is made of violence or threats to intimidate the authority or to oblige it to cede to the demands made." 15

It was based on this Article 9 of the Constitution that at 0.55 hours of August 28, a warning through loudspeakers installed at the top of Mexico City Hall building, was delivered to the group of students remaining at the square, giving the latter five minutes to clear out the Zócalo. After exactly five minutes army troops drove the students pickets out of the square.

If we compare the government display of force in the early hours of August 23, claiming a violation of Article 9 of the Constitution, with the declaration made on August 26, by the Mexico City authorities, both events have a common denominator; Article 9 of the Mexican Constitution.

On one hand the government "approved" the August 27 student demonstration, since the Article 9 of the Constitution allows it, but at the same time it announced the "possible" consequences "in case" the requirements of the Constitutional Article were not observed.

On the other hand 48 hours later the government stated that there was "legal justification" for the Army intervention, since the Article requirements were violated by the "students".

17. See: Chronology.
After we have analyzed the development of the events that took place between August 22 and the evening of August 27 at the Zócalo, and their final outcome, it seems evident that the political devices we have called the Government's "delaying tactics", were well planned and executed by a powerful faction -- we might call extreme right wing -- within the government, in order to "legally" increase repression. (We shall return to this point in the next chapter). This faction in order to carry out those political devices, used agents provocateurs; disguised the latter under the banner of "extreme left" elements. Because we have to emphasize again that on August 29, in a Press Conference, the National Strike Committee, denied having planned or carried out the August 27th late-evening events at the Zócalo.

This points to another basic question in our study. If the Mexican Government had accepted public dialogue and had given a solution to the CNH six demands, what large transformations might have caused in the Mexican political structure?

In regard to our question, Professor Pablo González Casanova wrote in one of his essays on the student conflict:

19. It should be noted that current Republic-type of governments which are founded upon Populist policies, as in the case of Mexico, usually present, when encountering a mass movement, political devices which include a façade of legalism that enables the government to attract sufficient general support so as to suppress the movement. See: Pablo González Casanova, Aritmética Contra-Revolucionaria, pp. 2-4. La Cultura en México. Siempre! 21.8.68.
"If it accepts the dialogue the government will have to inaugurate a new political style, and change the forms of government that have ruled the country since the time of Calles. All this supposes for the government itself a series of risks with regard to the control of the governmental organizations and of the power structure: The PRI, CTM, CNC etc. The power structure will have to readjust very seriously for a political struggle in which other parties and organizations, both popular and unionized, would play an increasingly important part. On the other hand, accepting the dialogue and ceding the demands of the petition would imply encouragement of other movements and popular demands, not only for democratic progress but for social justice, which would be opposed by the more conservative sectors inside and outside the government, and all those forces who plan on a South-Americanization of Mexico, that is to say, by those for whom the number one objective is the immediate concentration and accumulation of capital, and who regard as a very secondary objective the growth of national commerce of the supply and the demand of goods and services, of employment and eventually a much more stable development and a certain accumulation of capital over a relatively long period of time."20

CHAPTER IV

The Government Principle: We Must Preserve the "Principle of Authority"

Due to the events of late August, the Mexican people, were anxiously awaiting the Presidential annual report, about those events. Professor Womack writes: "Military helicopters buzzed constantly over the city....Mexico seemed just another Latin American republic. Everyone was waiting for the President's words on September 1..."

On September 1, the President delivered his annual Report to the Nation. From this report we will extract some key paragraphs, which will help us to analyze the Government's "official" position vis-a-vis the student conflict.

The President started his report with the following statement:

"The Olympics Games will take place for the first time in a Latin American nation....

During the recent conflicts that have been taking place in Mexico City, different interests inside and outside the country...of different political tendencies and ideologies, had planned to take advantage of a trivial incident in order to create major trouble the aim of which was to disrupt the Olympics and to discredit the country....

We are confident that they will not disrupt the sport events as they have planned...."

3. I consider it important to emphasize the fact as Professor Womack did, that: "Students did not picket Olympic installations, much less try to sabotage them. Before the President's report, the Strike Committee even promised that once negotiations began, students would help beautify the city and would volunteer services to visitors during the Games." Ibid., op. cit., p. 29.
In regard to the violation of the University's autonomy at the Preparatory School No. 1, by the Army, on July 30th, the President denied it had been violated, and he promised "due protection of the University's autonomy", when he said: "We not only respect University liberty and autonomy, but we even defend it."

In regard to the students' six demands, he said:

"I believe it is my duty to make clear the Government position in regard to some political demands. So far we have not received any "written petition" from any university authority or any other group organization of professors or students 'presenting concrete petitions'."

With the above statement, we clearly see the deceitful and ambiguous position taken by the President in his annual report, in regard to the CNH six demands.

As we have already said in previous chapters, the Government was fully aware of the six political demands and of the scope of the student movement, and it was precisely for this reason, that the Government made a move on August 22nd, in order to halt the first stage of Army repression carried out on the 23rd, 26th, 29th and 30th of July, and the mass-demonstrations of August 1st, 5th and 13th, events because of which, as we have already pointed out, the Mexican Government decided to "approach" the National Strike Committee, in order to get a "definitive" solution of the lamentable problem. Consequently, the President's statement: "So far we have not received any written petition", was just an extension of the "delaying tactics" taken by the government on August 22nd.

4. See: Chronology.
But the ambiguous position of the President in regard to the six demands, led him to contradict his own statement, when a few lines later in his annual report the President said: "I do not admit the existence of political prisoners". But he asked the General and the Federal District Attorney's to review pending cases to "make sure" their charges were for "crimes not for ideas". He added:

"In regard to Articles 145 and 145A of the Penal Code... I have to emphasize that the abolition of them does not fall under my Executive jurisdiction."

The President's contradiction about the six demands is evident; while on the one hand, he claims he is not aware of those demands since "no written petition has been received", on the other hand he speaks about two of the six demands even if he denies the first one and declares he has no authority to change the second one.

The President justified the Army intervention in the student conflict as "adequate measure to maintain internal security."

And he added: "The entire Mexican population knows that when Army intervention takes place, it is in order to protect peace, not to oppress the population."

Then, the government principle: the "Principle of Authority" came to the surface when the President said:

"The judicial system is not simply a theory, nor is it arbitrary; it is vital collective necessity; without it no organized society can exist....

In the same context, when those means, which are dictated by good judgment and experience fail, I will invoke, only when it is strictly necessary, the power referred in Articles 89, Section VI of the General Constitution of the Republic which states, and I quote: "Article 89, the powers and responsibilities of the President are the following: VI To make use of the entire permanent arm forces whether of
the Army, the Navy or the Air Force for the internal security and external defence of the Federation."

Consequently, after the CNH had analyzed the presidential annual report, for them, the President's words -- as Professor Womack points out -- sounded both short and threatening.

Nevertheless, in a Press Conference that took place in the university campus, the National Strike Committee declared:

"We took the decision to carry on the struggle, using all the legal means necessary to achieve a solution to our demands....

We deplore the fact that the presidential report does not offer the political solutions that we have been looking for, rather it denotes a hardening of repressive measures against the student movement....

We also have been insisting that our movement does not intend to disrupt the Olympic Games...."

Therefore, with the Presidential annual report on September 1st, the government initiates a second stage of Repression against the Student Movement.

The difference between the first stage of repression -- July 22nd -August 27th -- and the new one, was that in the latter, the government this time, in order to use its repressive force, took care of the "legal appearances".

Henceforth, our analysis will focus on those "legal appearances", taken by the Mexican Government in order to increase repression.

On September 5th, there appeared in "Excelsior", a national daily newspaper, a manifesto, signed by the National Strike Committee and addressed to the people of Mexico.

5. John Womack, Jr.: Unfreedom in Mexico, p. 29.
6. See: Chronology.
In this manifesto, the CNH, besides explaining the different occasions, on which the latter had attempted unsuccessfully to initiate negotiations with the government, also explained what they understood by public dialogue, and proposed to the government, the National Medical Center as a place to initiate negotiations on Monday, September 9, at 5:00 p.m.

The CNH manifesto reads:

"In case, this proposal, may be considered by the government as inconvenient, the CNH is very willing to discuss other proposals for the negotiations, with the only condition that these negotiations be public and that repression be halted in advance."

At the bottom of the manifesto a note reads:

"This declaration has been also officially addressed to the President, the Ministry of the Interior, the Attorney General and of Federal District, the Congress and the Federal District Department.

September 4, 1968
National Strike Committee"

The answer from the authorities to the CNH manifesto, came on September 6th. The Government's reply was far from an answer to the concrete CNH demands.

The different Government Departments to whom the CNH manifesto was addressed, were "handing on" the petition, most of them alleging that the six demands were "out of their legal jurisdiction", and that in accordance with the Article 8 of the Constitution, "all petitions must be presented in a written form".

In other words, to a concrete and written petition presented by the CNH, the Government objected with a "facade of legalism".

Then on September 10th, there appeared in "El Dia", another national daily newspaper, a manifesto addressed to the people of Mexico, and signed by the National Strike Committees.

In the manifesto the CNH states that:

"Since in answer to the CNH manifesto of September 4th, addressed to different Departments of Government, the latter had replied in a very vague form claiming that in accordance with Article 8 of the Constitution all "petitions must be presented in a written form, and on the other hand they completely ignored our request for public dialogue. The CNH is sending to the President of the Republic, another official note, in which we (CNH) reiterate our petition for public dialogue. Consequently, we expect an explicit answer to our proposal....

We (CNH) affirm that our proposal to carry out public negotiations, is not due to an exhibitionist desire for publicity, and on the other hand our proposal does not contradict the terms of Article 8 of the Constitution, since the exposition of those terms can be done in oral and written form....

We reiterate that our popular movement will continue until the achievement of the political solutions, we have been demanding....

We call the people of Mexico to the silent demonstration that will take place on Friday, September 13th. This silent demonstration will leave at 4:00 p.m., from the National Museum of Anthropology to the Zócalo....

In this demonstration we will show our general repudiation of injustice and of the lack of democratic liberties...."9

Meanwhile on September 10th, the Congress gave "full support" to the President, in order to dispose of the Army, the Air Force and the Navy, "to protect the internal and external security of Mexico".

The announced CNH silent demonstration took place on September 13th. During the course of the demonstration, from the National Museum of Anthropology to the Zócalo, different groups of the population joined the silent demonstration, in which no incident took place.

The CNH declared on Tuesday, September 17th, that they might accept the dialogue in a written form provided all documents would be widely published.

So far, as we have seen, since the Presidential annual report on September 1st, the Mexican Government took care of the "legal appearances" in order to increase his repressive force. Consequently, the government attitude toward a positive solution of the student conflict, had been rather evasive, presenting a "facade of legalism" to each CNH effort to negotiate.

Therefore, it will be important to ask, what viable prospect from the government side, did the CNH foresee for the settlement of the conflict?

In a press interview a CNH spokesman declared:

"The solution of, or the failure to solve the conflict is at this moment determent by the correlation of internal forces in the Government. To us it is obvious at this time that there is a sector of the government which claims to be able to solve the student conflict, and at the same time to promote certain politicians with a view to a possible future presidential campaign; it is also clear that on the other hand there exist a faction in the government, which is opposed to solving the conflict, because at this time a satisfactory solution is not in their interest. The struggle between these two governmental groups is what will in the final analysis determine the solution by means of the supremacy of one group or the other. That is what will determin

11. See: Chronology.
whether this movement will continue for a relatively long time, or whether it is already solved.\textsuperscript{12}

The above press interview with the CNH, took place on September 18th, around midday at the university campus. A few hours later in the evening, Army troops occupied the university.

At the same time, the Army arrested 500 persons, among them, university staff, students and some of their parents who were present, at the university campus, attending mainly their sons' graduations. All arrested people were taken away from the university campus in army trucks. It is important to note that during the whole Army "clear out" operation, no students or arrested persons offered any kind of resistance.

To justify such an act, the government declared that: UNAM occupation by the Army was a necessary measure in order to stop "openly anti-social and possibly criminal acts".

And added: "The Government has "the moral obligation to maintain order in the territory of the nation of which the university also forms part."\textsuperscript{13}

In regard to the university take-over by the army, the well-known liberal historian Daniel Cosio Villegas, wrote:

"The military occupation of the university takes place when ...the students had abandoned the vandalism, and display the discipline in two orderly demonstrations; that is to say when they had announced and repeated that they will not try to spoil the Olympic games."\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13} See: Chronology.
With the university occupation by the army, the last steps to complete the cycle of repression had already been taken by the government.

Besides, the defamatory campaign undertaken by the government against the university Rector in order to get his resignation. Another sequence of "well prepared" repressive measures having also specific targets, was underway: the attack committed against El Colegio de México, by a group of armed terrorists, the refusal of the city police, when the former asked for protection, on September 20 (see chronology), the increase of police arrests, the violent Army-Students confrontations on September 21st and 22nd, the UNAM Rector's resignation and finally on September 24th the National Polytechnic Institute campus occupation by the Army, all those events were the penultimate step of the Government "legal" increase of repression.

Then, on September 27th, due to the UNAM Board of Governors refusal to accept Rector's resignation, the latter agreed to remain at his post as UNAM Rector.

Therefore, the government was forced to give a momentum to its escalation of repression. The Minister of the Interior declared that the withdrawal of army troops from university campus would take place as soon as UNAM authorities would require them to do so.

The army left the university campus, and on October 1st, UNAM staff returned to campus.

The National Strike Committee refused to resume classes, and convoked a mass-rally at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Tlatelolco on Wednesday, 15 See: Chronology.
October 2nd. And, as it has been already mentioned in the Chronology, on Wednesday, October 2nd, the National Strike Committee rally was initiated at 5:00 p.m. at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Tlateloco. Around 5:30 p.m. approximately 15,000 persons were gathered at the Plaza, CNH spokesmen addressed the crowd composed of students, workers, Tlatelolco residents: men, women and children; cameramen and foreign reporters.

Suddenly after four flares presumably used as a signal, at 6:00 p.m., soldiers coordinated by plainclothesmen opened fire without provocation and charged the peaceful student rally at the Plaza. Students and bystanders fled to Tlatelolco buildings, but they were pursued, shot, beaten and arrested. From 6:00 to 8:30 p.m., the firing was continuous.

Presumably, 5,000 soldiers had participated in what in the annals of Mexican History would be known as Tlatelolco Massacre. Therefore, another important question arises in the present study. What will be the possible repercussions of the government's repression applied to the student movement of 1968 in the Mexican political life?

The exact answer to our question is found in one of Professor González Casanova's essays on the student conflict, when he wrote:

"...To opt for the alternative of employing public force by means of massive failings, military control of academic institutions, etc., is something which we are all conscious of as a real possibility, which has been repeated inexorably in the dictatorships of Latin America. The implications of this
decision are obvious. Given the magnitude of the popular student movement and the fairly large support that it has in wide sectors of the middle and upper classes -- it is necessary to recall that the students did not appear suddenly in the Mexican context -- such a repression would have to go lengths unprecedented in the contemporary history of Mexico ....

The measures would have to be taken during the national festivities or in the Olympics, since it is obvious that if the demands were not granted, there would be no agreement between the government and the students and the restlessness would continue in a manner inadmissible to the government. Under such conditions it would have recourse to a policy in which the army and the police would necessarily exert more and more power.18

Then, on October 3rd, during a press interview with the Minister of Defence, the reporter asked the former:

Reporter: "Who is the Commander responsible for the army intervention in Tlatelolco?"

The Minister of Defence: "The Commander responsible is me."

Reporter: "Will an état de siège be decreed?"

The Minister of Defence: "No état de siège will be decreed, Mexico is a country where liberty exists and will continue to exist."19

17. In Mexico, the 15th and 16th of September are dates of national festivities which commemorate the 1810 Mexican Independence.
Conclusions

In this report we have attempted to look at the consequences of the formation of the one-party system in modern Mexico in 1929, and how the violence of its origins in the Revolution of 1910 have influenced the way in which political conflict was resolved in the student movement of 1968. The problem is one of the possibility of a democracy for Mexico and we can only conclude from our analysis that the one-party system, as the political structure of Mexican society, precluded the possibility of a working democracy. As an idea, the democratic form of government requires the institutionalized right from opposition groups who have different interests and who can influence the course of public policies. Such divergent interests are not present in the Party and in fact the nature of the government, of influence and power, in the control of the masses through leaders in intermediate structures. Given the lack of a viable democracy the problem of the PRI is one of persuasion and control. This we faced in the governments of Avila Camacho, Alemán, Ruiz Cortines, López Mateos and most closely in the presidential period of Díaz Ordaz, where the problem of a large and vocal opposition of students led to the use of physical violence by the Government.

We have tried to show that this violence was neither accidental nor unique, but in the history of the PRI a traditional strategy in dealing with conflict when the government perceived the opposition to be a threat to its power.

We have pointed to the use of repression in the cases of Jaramillo's peasant movement in 1962, and the railroad strike headed
by Demetrio Vallejo in 1959. And we have used the student movement of 1968 as a case study of how the government used repression, namely the tactics of official physical violence in political conflict.

It is telling indeed that the government resorted to repression when its control was threatened by a demand for a public dialogue with members of the movement. For, the nature of public dialogue opens the channels of influence from the unofficial quarters of the government, and in so doing actually restructures the nature of the one-party system. The PRI, unwilling to make such a change resorted to the use of police and armed forces.

No doubt, the Mexican Student Movement of 1968, has been the most important event in the last thirty years of Mexican political life.

The historical consequences of the government's repression of students, have been already pointed out. The immediate ones are also already present within the Mexican context, from the very beginning of the student movement; these are:

1) The government's increasing dependency on its repressive force when dealing with internal political problems.

2) Due to the scope of the student movement of 1968, government repressive force has been fully exposed for the first time not only internally but abroad as well.

3) When government's repressive forces are exposed in that way, two main consequences are likely to result: a) Although the government's enormous display of force, had left a frightened population, b) on the other hand a vast majority of that population became more politically aware, more sensitive; in other words this sudden political awareness of
the Mexican population, has removed once and for all, the whole myth of "Democracy in Mexico".

In regard to the government repressive methods used against the student movement and their political consequences, Professor Tulio Halperin Donghi writes:

"It has thus been possible to put down the movement successfully, but it has left Mexico very different from the way it found it. A presentiment of possible, if not certain, doom has been felt by the political machine that governs the country, even more serious since the whole affair has shown up its inertia and at the same time its internal strife."¹

And Professor Halperin adds:

"If the regime cannot be modernised, liberalised and made more advanced in technology through peaceful means, or if the latter are rejected in favour of solutions implying a greater emphasis on authoritarian measures, then it seems inevitable that there will arise in the political drama of Mexico a protagonist who until now has remained silent although not totally absent: the army."²

If we compare Professor Halperin's assumption about the increasing possibility of an active role of the Mexican army in the political life of the country, with that of Professor González Casanova, we find that these assumptions overlap each other, when the latter writes:

"The police and the army solve the problems of education, of railways, of doctors and of peasants. But the solution is not that claimed by the publicity men of 'Civic Action', who depict soldiers carrying little children, building schools or roads, helping young people, peasants and workers. The police and the army solve public problems by occupying schools, hospitals, railways, that is to say, by fulfilling the military function for which they are trained in a war which is 'domestic'.

The cycle of mutual recrimination goes on: the oligarchy permit themselves the luxury of criticising the political administrators for their inept government, their weakness, their corruption and their use of violence. And with good cause the middle

². Ibid., op. cit., pp. 534-535.
class sectors, the liberal and revolutionary progressive forces also indict the political administrators, although they stress the crisis in the political system itself. The political administrator feels particularly frustrated, and hopes that the world will not change, that stability will be maintained and that the oligarchy, the imperialists and the people will lessen their demands and be understanding about his difficulties and shortcomings: to some he wishes to prove that he is forceful and knows how to exert -- which he confuses with using the police and the army: to others that he is open-minded and tolerant, that he makes those concessions to foreign capital which are his to concede: and to the people and to the progressive groups that he is the representative of the spirit of the Republic, of the law and of a regime where it is difficult to reconcile civil liberties with national defense. But when faced with the real dilemma, between revolutionary reforms and the use of repressive forces, he unwillingly chooses the latter to an ever greater extent; until the army solves in practice almost all the problems of government without governing. The problem thus presented to the military is universal and simple: why not resolve all these problems of government by taking over the government? The foundations for a coup d'état, legal or illegal, are established already, and can be 'justified' to the public: the insurgents can count on the oligarchies, on the support of the imperialists, and even on the discontent of the people, who to some degree subscribe to Fascist and authoritarian ideologies."

Bibliography

Books


Periodicals


Newspapers

1. **Correo del Sur** (Cuernavaca, Mexico).
2. **El Dia** (Mexico City).
3. **Excélsior**, (Mexico City).
4. **Excélsior Ultimas Noticias de Excelsior** 1 Ed. 2 Ed. (Mexico City).
5. **El Heraldo** (Mexico City).
6. **El Nacional** (Mexico City).
7. **El Universal** (Mexico City).
8. **El Universal Grafico** (Mexico City).
9. **El Sol de Mexico** (Mexico City).
10. **La Prensa** (Mexico City).
11. **Le Monde** (Paris).
12. **La Voz de Mexico** (Mexico City).
13. **Novedades** (Mexico City).
14. **Ovaciones** (Mexico City).
15. **Presente** (Cuernavaca, Mexico)
17. **Voz Obreta** (Mexico City).