

The Elitelore of Mexico's Revolutionary Family

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An examination of elitelore involves a description of the beliefs and values of a particular group of individuals and an analysis of their rationale for those beliefs. Elitelore, in the case of political leaders, helps to explain what these leaders believe, their reason for believing the way they do, and the extent to which their beliefs are self-justifications or reflections of reality. A study of Mexican political elites, collectively known as the Revolutionary Family, is important in view of the lack of attention to elite culture or, more precisely, elitelore in analyses of the Mexican political system.¹ Furthermore, an analysis of Mexican elitelore may offer insight into a unique characteristic of Mexico's political leadership during the last several decades-the unity among and within generations of leaders.

The closed nature of the Mexican political system, which obscures many aspects of the political process, is not easily penetrated, even through careful, outside observation. An important means of increasing our understanding of the Mexican political milieu is through probing oral interviews with important political leaders, who, because of the secrecy that surrounds much of the decision making in the Mexican system, can provide insight essential to analyses of its development and

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¹ See James W. Wilkie, *Elitelore* (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, University of California, 1973), p.9, for an explanation of this concept.

operation. This essay interprets and analyzes the views of a selected group of prominent political leaders who were members of the generation largely responsible for Mexico's development from 1946 to 1970.

Much of the material found in the following pages is based on detailed oral interviews made over a period of years. (See the Appendix for details on the interviews.) This article examines the personal values and ideological beliefs of Mexican leaders and comments on the source of these values and beliefs. Further, an attempt is made to assess their views of the failures and achievements of the Mexican Revolution and to relate their interpretations to the problems facing Mexico in the 1970s. To begin, a general discussion of values and their relationship to ideological beliefs is appropriate.

Values can be described as highly generalized attitudes that define an individual's orientation to life in terms of the things deemed most important. Ideological beliefs consist of a person's preference for social, economic, and political philosophies. Both values and ideology are important because they have an effect on a politician's behavior. Although there has not been extensive research on the interrelationship between values and ideological beliefs, it is evident that personal values, under various conditions, do affect a person's views on political or economic issues. For example, in a survey taken in the late 1940s, Smith found that the value liberty played an evident part in his sample's views of the Soviet Union.² Furthermore, personal values not only have some effect on the ideological beliefs of individuals, but, as one prominent Mexicanist suggests, the patterns of political action are themselves a reflection of "deeply ingrained values and understandings which are part of the political culture. These patterns determine the functioning of the political structures and produce a distinctive political system with a clearly defined Mexican political style."³

Personal values seem to affect ideological preferences, and, in some cases, these preferences are influenced by other background variables. For example, Wellhofer, in his study of Argentine socialist leaders, found that the higher the level of education of the party member or his father, the more likely he was to be a dissenter.⁴ In this case, higher education might be an indicator of wealth, an important factor in determining whether an individual political leader could oppose the

system and survive without another occupation. Other background characteristics have also been shown to be important in the formulation of the beliefs of Latin American political leaders. In a recent analysis of Guatemalan congressmen, Joel Verner found that, in contrast to the leftist legislators, the typical rightist legislator "tended to live in the capital and outside his own district, was more likely born in the capital, and had more likely traveled outside of Latin America. The rightist legislator was more likely to have obtained his high school training in the capital, attended and completed college, and attended a foreign college."⁵ Other studies have revealed a direct relationship between level of education and the value placed on economic equality and participation in decision making. Not only do background variables and personal values affect ideological beliefs; there is further evidence of a strong relationship between political and economic ideological beliefs. Moskos and Bell, for example, found that those individuals with rightist economic views were more antidemocratic and authoritarian than leaders with leftist economic views.⁶

Although certain relationships exist among background variables, personal values, and ideological beliefs, it cannot be suggested that elite preferences will accurately predict behavior patterns or performance in office. One study of French political elite preferences showed that they coincided with French government policy only about half the time.⁷ There may be numerous reasons for the discrepancy between values and behavior. In the case of Mexico, the political culture inhibits the development of attachments to the substance of public policies among political leaders.⁸ Not only do Mexican political leaders fail to be identified with controversial policy positions, but they fail to be innovative in policy areas. Furthermore, the degree of personalism within the system and the centralization of policy formulation in the name of the president pressures top leaders to identify with the president and his policies. This explains why most North American and Mexican observers expected Luis Echeverría, Gustavo Díaz Ordaz's successor, to continue his right-of-center policies.⁹ Further, in addition to curbing their own ideological

⁵ "The Guatemalan National Congress: An Elite Analysis," in Weston H. Agor, ed., *Latin American Legislatures: Their Role, and Influence* (New York: Praeger, 1971), pp. 319-320.

⁶ Charles C. Moskos and Wendell Bell, "Altitudes toward Democracy among Leaders in Four Emerging Nations," *British Journal of Sociology* 15 (1964), 322-323.

⁷ See Robert D. Putnam, *The Comparative Study of Political Elites* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1976), p. 80, for comments on this point.

⁸ Richard Fagen and William Tuohy, *Politics and Privilege in a Mexican City* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), p. 2b, explains this characteristic in some detail.

⁹ Julio Labastida Martín del Campo, "El régimen de Echeverría: perspectivas de cambio en la estrategia de desarrollo y en la estructura de poder," *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 34 (July-

² M. Brewster Smith, "Personal Values as Determinants of a Political Attitude," *Journal of Psychology* 28 (1949), 481.

³ Robert E. Scott, "Mexico: The Established Revolution," in Lucian Pye and Sidney Verba, eds., *Political Culture and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 331.

⁴ E. Spencer Wellhofer, "Background Characteristics and Dissident Behavior: Tests with Argentine Party Elites," *Journal of Developing Areas* 9 (January 1975), 251.

impulses for long-range personal goals, politicians do so for the purpose of political compromise as well. Still, as Donald Searing argues, although political behavior is not always a reflection of values, there are "no convincing reasons to dismiss values *a priori* as symbolic flags with little relevance for behavior. They deserve serious investigation as significant components of political belief systems".¹⁰

By determining the personal values and Ideological beliefs of Mexican political leaders, the purpose here is to present the representative views of a generation. Although, most of these political leaders have been asked to describe the personal and ideological views at the end of their careers, in general, political elites hold such views more intensely and more stably over time than does the average citizen.¹¹ Still, the reader should expect the responses to be tempered by age and experience, even though many insisted that their ideas today accurately reflect their beliefs at the beginning of their careers. When one describes values and beliefs held by these various leaders, it is important to know whether or not the individuals see themselves as members of representative generations. Many who were members of the "Revolutionary generation" saw themselves as a special group drawn together by one experience, the Mexican Revolution.¹² But not all members of a generation have similar values or beliefs; rather, as Samuel Ramos says, "the unity which converts a group of individuals into a 'generation' comes from a mutual concept of life, even though life is expressed in many different forms and activities.... To deserve the name, a generation must be united by strong spiritual bonds, not simply by motives of expediency."¹³

For the members of the early Revolutionary generations, many of whom were mentors and professors to the political leaders discussed here, the guiding principle seemed to be best expressed as a vision of a new Mexican society that would be just, a principle which Cosío Villegas describes as akin to a religious faith.¹⁴ Two members of this early group, Martín, Luis Guzmán and Javier Gaxiola, believe that the universal values of their generation were reflected in the major intellectual, liter-

-December 1972), 811; also see Juan Felipe Leal, "The Mexican State: 1915-1973, A Historical Interpretation," *Latin American Perspectives* 2:2 (Summer 1975), 48-63, for an elucidation of how this centralization of power occurred.

¹⁰ Donald Searing, "Measuring Politicians' Values: Administration and Assessment of a Ranking Technique in the British House of Commons," paper presented to the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, 1976.

¹¹ *The Comparative Study of Political Elites*, p. 88.

¹² Daniel Cosío Villegas, *Memorias* (México: Joaquín Mortiz, 1976), p. 9.

¹³ Samuel Ramos, *Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962), p. 146.

¹⁴ Daniel Cosío Villegas, *Ensayos y notas*, Vol. I (México: Editorial Hermes, 1966), p. 15.

ary, and artistic works of their generation, but that their attitudes on the achievement of a just society were quite diverse.¹⁵

Observers of contemporary Mexican political development believe that among the immediate postrevolutionary "generations there was a 'common identity and a shared ideological perspective regarding the direction of future change and the goals to be pursued'.¹⁶ Members of the generation of the early 1920s saw the eclectic ideology of the Mexican Revolution as forming a significant part of the attitudes among students of this period.¹⁷ Although individual members believed that they held a set of beliefs in common, those beliefs became more diverse as time went by.¹⁸ One member of this generation summed up the beliefs that characterized the early postrevolutionary groups: (1) that the acts of public men should benefit the masses; (2) that much more emphasis should be placed on the human rather than the technical aspect of programs; (3) that there should be more concern for the poor; (4) that democracy was an extremely important value; and (5) that a well-prepared person should be able to improve his position in life.¹⁹ The views of the generation from 1920 to 1925 are of special importance because they were the first postrevolutionary generation to dominate the National University and to enter public careers. As Eduardo Bustamante suggests, "this was a group which poured its entire life into the most creative period of growth for Mexico, from 1925 to the present. For better or worse we participated very heavily in the development of governmental power."²⁰

The generations that followed were led by the Aleman generation of 1925-1929 and were responsible for the changes in political administration and government policy from 1946 until 1964.²¹ Their underlying goal changed, but it was related to that of the previous generation: the

¹⁵ Personal interviews with Martín Luis Guzmán, Mexico City, October 21, 1976; and Javier Gaxiola, Mexico City, October 22, 1976.

¹⁶ Susan K. Purcell, *The Mexican Profit-Sharing Decision, Politics and an Authoritarian Regime* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 16.

¹⁷ The impact of the political environment on individuals in other societies has been demonstrated in Samuel Barnes's study of Italy, where elites socialized during the late 1920s, who had high education and were most exposed to fascism, were those who most strongly identified with the right. See his "The Legacy of Fascism: Generational Differences in Italian Political Attitudes and Behavior," *Comparative Political Studies* 5 (April 1972), 55.

¹⁸ Personal interviews with Antonio Taracena, Mexico City, October 20, 1976; and Praxedis Balboa Gojón, October 29, 1976.

¹⁹ Personal interview with Daniel Pedro Martínez, Mexico City, October 20, 1976.

²⁰ Personal interview, Mexico City, October 28, 1976.

²¹ For a detailed description of this group and the positions they held, see the author's "Education and Political Recruitment in Mexico: The Aleman Generation," *Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs* 18 (August 1976), 295-321.

creation of a new state. What inspired this belief? Some members of these groups point to the social climate. For others, It was a personal initiative to develop Mexico economically and to benefit from that growth, or it was the desire to see Mexico accomplish great works for the benefit of all Mexicans. Still other political leaders saw the unity of these individuals as a sort of spiritual solidarity among families who were survivors of those who had fought in the Revolution and who had maintained liberal ideas from the 1850s and 1860s.²² Again, most of the members of this generation believed in similar goals and in identifying the same problems. But like earlier, groups, they differed largely in their views of the criteria for evaluating the achievement of these goals. For example, one respondent argued that Miguel Aleman, Antonio Ortiz Mena, and Antonio Carrillo Flores, all from the 1925-1929 generation and all participants to a great extent in the determination of Mexican financial policy from 1946 to 1970, had similar ideas concerning problems and goals, but different views regarding the procedures for solving the problems and achieving the goals.²³ Despite their differing views on procedure, this generation above all others saw itself as a collective group whose combined efforts were significant. Furthermore, the informal leader, Miguel Aleman, believes that the group initially experienced an intense unity and has retained that sense to a remarkable degree over the years.²⁴

Beginning with the group in the early 1930s and continuing through 1940, members of various generations continued to describe universal ethical values and similarities in goals during the interviews. Among the various responses as to the nature of the goals of these generations is an amorphous concept of the need for change, that is, to change everything. Again, however the solutions were different and followed clearly defined democratic or socialist ideological paths. Many believed that what distinguished their generation from subsequent ones was a precise concept of what they wanted to do, even if they disagreed on the method. Disparity between goals and the means for achieving them appears to be typical of political elites everywhere. In a perceptive analysis of Venezuelan leaders, Frank Bonilla found that while there was superficial agreement about needs and goals among this elite, there was considerable difference in the level of commitment to the pace of reforms, the volume of investment needed in redressing inequalities, the root beliefs about causes and responsibilities, and the capacity of people to change or continue to endure deprivation."²⁵

The 1930s generations, larger and more diverse than previous groups, did not form broad, unified, and cohesive friendships.²⁶ Although each generation sees itself as different to some degree than those who preceded or followed it, it is remarkable that the general views of political leaders from 1915 to 1945 are similar, and that change, whether referring to social injustice, the state, or the status quo, has been a key principle over time, in spite of the significant environmental changes taking place during the Revolution and the period immediately following. This continuous thread in the thinking of the political leadership in Mexico parallels a recent analysis of two North American generations spanning the dynamic late 1960s which concluded that "the net result of life space changes among the young and of historical forces operating on each generation is a smoothing out of intergenerational antagonism, a smoothing out accomplished even over the eight turbulent years covered by our observations."²⁷

Although we know that there are some broad universal principles underlying the unity of various generations of Mexican political leaders, what, specifically, are their personal and ideological beliefs? When asked to identify personal values most important to them and what they looked for in others, Mexican political leaders agreed on five points: individual freedom, service for others, hard work, knowledge, and honesty. In a comparative context, these personal values are not surprising. A study of local leaders in India, Poland, the United States, and Yugoslavia concluded that leaders valued most the following traits: honesty; selflessness and dedication to public service; intelligence, education, and professional knowledge; good relationships with people; and general leadership ability.²⁸ The personal value missing among Mexican responses is that referring to cooperation with others. Perhaps Mexicans automatically assume the importance of this, since personal relationships are an important part of the political culture and essential to career mobility. A value mentioned by many Mexicans not appearing among those cited by local leaders from other countries (owing to the difference in phrasing in our question) is the emphasis placed on personal liberty. Some Mexicans considered liberty to be their most important value. Most of them defined it in terms of respect for personal

²² Personal interview with Sealtiel Alatriste. Mexico City. June 24. 1975

²³ Manuel R. Palacios, Mexico City. October 22. 1976.

²⁴ Personal interview with the author, Mexico City. October 27. 1976.

²⁵ Frank Bonilla. *The Failure of Elites* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970), p. 280.

²⁶ Personal interviews with Manuel Hinojosa Ortiz, Mexico City, October 28, 1976; Luis de la Pena, October 27, 1976; Cesar Sepulveda. October 26, 1976; and Agustin Salvat, October 20. 1976.

²⁷ M. Kent Jennings and Richard G. Niemi, "Continuity and Change in Political Orientations: A longitudinal Study of Two Generations." *American Political Science Review* 69 (December 1975), 1335.

²⁸ International Studies of Values in Politics, *Values and the Active Community* (New York: Free Press, 1970. p. 69.

dignity, which, not surprisingly, is a conceptualization of the humanistic philosophy so important in the education of most of our respondents. As one leader suggested, liberty, like any other personal value, requires limits.²⁹ In some ways the high priority given to liberty and individual dignity among Mexican political leaders is surprising in view of the degree to which authoritarianism is present in the Mexican culture.³⁰ On the other hand, the emphasis on political liberty among political leaders themselves may explain the eclectic nature of and low degree to which authoritarian politics in Mexico actually infringe on individual liberties of speech and press.

Also important to Mexican political leaders (and politicians everywhere) is the emphasis given to social service. As one individual expressed this value, "man is morally obligated to serve others in whatever profession he may make for himself. After the revolution the majority of students had the idea of serving their country."³¹ Another prominent leader expressed this value in terms of personal satisfaction when he stated that "gratitude should be the greatest reward to a public man and that a public man should always be most interested in the good of the general population."³² Not all political leaders suggested a selfless motive for themselves or others, however. Julian Garza Tijerina, a party leader and senator under Cardenas, believed that among his generation of students at the Military Medical School in 1925 most wanted better economic conditions than their parents had experienced. He felt that service had come second to self-improvement.³³ As in interviews with all politicians, it may well be that the social service value is emphasized for the benefit of the interviewer. A good case could be made, however, for differences experienced by Garza Tijerina at the Military Medical School, which recruited from very humble families during the 1920s, and the National University, whose students generally came from better economic circumstances.

Another value frequently mentioned by Mexicans was the importance of hard work for personal success. For example, Jose Hernandez Terán, who spent more than thirty years in the field of irrigation, ultimately serving as Secretary of Hydraulic Resources, felt the value most important in his personal philosophy was to work diligently and accept responsibility. "When I first started to work for the National Irrigation

Commission they did not have hours, which meant that the person who wanted to improve himself had to be self-disciplined."³⁴ Another leader owed his personal philosophy of hard work to one of his professors, who expressed it as, "in work there is gold and the riches of nations."³⁵

A fourth personal value chosen as important by Mexicans was knowledge and experience. Some saw this in relation to preparation for a task. Others viewed it as important in carrying out a specific plan. Still others saw knowledge as an abstract equivalent of truth or the willingness to determine it. This conceptualization was best expressed by Antonio Armendariz:

The highest value for me as a young man was that man should choose truth, pure truth, but that truth is a very difficult tunic to wear. Each person is limited in what he can know. I remember that Antonio Caso once said that. "If you could choose, would you want to be able to know all the truths or always want to have the passion to attempt an answer to any question?" If I had to choose one or the other I would choose to have the passion to answer.³⁶

Like politicians elsewhere, Mexicans also admired honesty, morality, and frankness. Some, such as Angel Carvajal, saw personal morality as essential to defeating corruption in Mexican public life.³⁷ For others, it was a question of personal behavior and moral honor not to benefit from a public position.³⁸ And others saw personal sincerity, or saying what they really thought, as a prestigious value.³⁹

As suggested above, personal values have some relationship to ideological beliefs. Although these relationships are not constant, our interviews with Mexican political leaders concerning their ideological beliefs suggest that these values do indeed overlap one another, and, in fact, strongly held personal values become integral parts of political, economic, and social ideologies. Respondents were asked a series of open-ended questions in an effort to determine important political and economic beliefs.⁴⁰

²⁹ Personal interview, Mexico City, July 28, 1974.

³⁰ Personal interview with Sealtiel Alatríste, Mexico City, July 23, 1974.

³¹ Personal interview, Mexico City, July 29, 1974.

³² Personal interview, Mexico City, October 25, 1976.

³³ Personal interview with Salvador Azuela, Mexico City, June 26, 1975; and with Sealtiel Alatríste, June 24, 1975.

³⁴ Personal interview with Adolfo Zamora, Mexico City, July 24, 1974.

⁴⁰ We did not use a predetermined list from which the respondents could choose, nor did we ask that their choices be ranked in order of priority. It was believed this would be restrictive and would encourage the omission of possibly significant beliefs, such as antimilitarism, from the more traditional choices of politicians in other cultures. Searing encountered this problem in his interviews with British Members of Parliament (Searing, "Measuring Politicians' Values," p. 7.

²⁹ Personal interview with Raul Rangel Frias, Monterrey, July 18, 1974.

³⁰ For evidence of this see Robert Scott's statement that authoritarian values are deeply embedded in the culture ("Mexico," p. 358), and Rafael Segovia's more recent conclusion that authoritarian attitudes dominate among Mexican children (*La politización del niño mexicano* [Mexico: El Colegio de Mexico, 1975], p. 124).

³¹ Personal interview with Salvador Aceves Parra, México City, July 22, 1974.

³² Personal interview with Agustín Salvat, Mexico City, June 23, 1975.

³³ Personal interview with Julian "ana Tijerina. Mexico City. July 28. 1974.

The economic-political belief most commonly cited by Mexicans, and of then by other politicians is the significant role of the state in economic development. This is not a surprising response from these Mexican leaders because, first, statism was a theme strongly emphasized among their political mentors and, second, the 1917 Constitution made an early commitment to the state's involvement in the economy. Most Mexican leaders advocated a balance between the state and the private sector, a position characteristic of Mexican neoliberals. Ruben Vargas Austin describes this position, which is both moderate and pragmatic: The modern Mexican liberals [neoliberals in our terminology], typified by such economic policy statesmen as Secretary of Finance Antonio Carrillo Flores, characterize their philosophy as one that aims to promote political stability and economic growth by using all forces available, public or private, through the coordination of the State."⁴¹ This view, representing the philosophy of the majority of political leaders, has been best described by Eduardo Bustamante:

Private enterprise should not spend its time debating the role of the government in the economy; rather, once the government decides to follow a policy the private sector should encourage it to do an effective job. To save jobs, the government is not justified in intervening in an area in which private enterprise is failing, because it does not have the expertise to operate such failing industries. The basic error of the government is that it does not have a well-defined program. On the other hand, government intervention in some areas such as petroleum, electricity and railroads has probably achieved more success than the private sector.⁴²

It cannot be said, however, that professors were largely responsible for conveying the view that the state should intervene in the economy; one formulator of recent economic policy told the author that his professors did not advocate laissez-faire concepts, though they had not conceptualized a concrete substitute for that policy in the early 1920s.⁴³ Some politicians favored state intervention as a result of their own analyses and believed that the government should implement policies in favor of the masses rather than individual groups. Not only was their economic philosophy influenced by the number of people to benefit from economic growth, but others saw government, reflected in the changing emphasis in law texts during the period, as directly involved in dispensing social benefits to the people. By the 1930s the role of the state had become a highly controversial issue and was vigorously debated among

⁴¹ Ruben Vargas Austin, "The Development of Economic Policy in Mexico with Special Reference to Economic Doctrines," Ph.D. dissertation, Iowa State University, 1958, p. 115.

⁴² Personal interview, Mexico City, October 28, 1976.

⁴³ Personal interview with Antonio Carrillo Flores, Mexico City, June 2b, 1975.

various professors. In spite of this controversy, the 1917 Constitution, of considerable influence on political leaders, continued to provide definite support to the mixed economy.⁴⁴ Because of its legitimacy, it remains important in the formation of the views of political leaders today. Hugo Margáin, Secretary of Finance in the early 1970s, acknowledges this influence in his statement that "I am a man of the Constitution of 1917, a constitution which favors a mixed economy."⁴⁵ The view that the state should have control over large areas of the economy is a philosophy supported by young educated Mexicans. In a survey of Mexican university students in 1970, Rosalio Wences Reza found that the majority of students believed that the people and the state should control a large part or some part of the national wealth and that a large minority believed the government should have nearly complete control. Only five percent of the students believed the state should have almost no control.⁴⁶ This minority view is also represented to the same degree among Mexican political leaders. For example, one respondent suggested that "Mexico has developed in spite of the role of the government. Governmental administrations are too contrary and personal from one administration to the next."⁴⁷ A larger group of political leaders, like students, takes the completely opposing view that state intervention should be more substantial. Again, the differences within the political leadership in Mexico stem from the continuous debate over means, divided largely between a socialist and a mixed capitalist-socialist approach. One key to understanding the differing view is the argument about whether economic well-being promotes individual liberties, or whether individual freedoms offer an incentive for improving personal standards of living. This conflict has been described by one of our respondents:

I think that for all of my generation the main goal was to achieve a better standard of living and a higher level of education while at the same time improving the quality of political life through greater freedoms. I think my generation was unified in these aspirations. But there were two different means: one was through a socialized economy, the other was a combination of socialism and private enterprise to achieve these goals. My personal opinion is that socialism has played a very important role in Mexican development in such activities as

⁴⁴ Pan American Union, *Constitution of the United Mexican States 1917* (Washington, D.C.: OAS, 1964); for an enlightened comparison of the original 1917 Constitution (without amendments) with the 1857 document, see H. N. Branch, "The Mexican Constitution of 1917 Compared with the Constitution of 1857," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (supplement), May, 1917.

⁴⁵ Personal interview, Washington, D.C., March 14, 1977.

⁴⁶ *El movimiento estudiantil y los problemas nacionales* (México: Editorial Nuestro Tiempo, 1971), p. 127.

⁴⁷ Personal interview with Ezequiel Burguete, Mexico City, June 19, 1975.

energy and transportation. We need to control these types of activities, but other areas should remain in the hands of private enterprise.⁴⁸

Another theme pervading the process of professorial socialization of political leaders was pragmatism, a substantial element in the philosophy of Mexican political leaders. Ideological beliefs, as long as they are contained within the broad boundaries of the revolutionary ideology, have not been of primary significance to the careers of Mexican political leaders, unless the individuals have publicly espoused extreme nineteenth century liberal ideas or orthodox Marxist beliefs. Pragmatism has become an essential part of the belief structure of Mexican political leaders because of the dynamic changes in the postrevolutionary period and because of the nature of politics. As one respondent describes it, "politics is real life. A politician's ideology cannot be some theory borrowed from the United States or Europe. It has to be something which results from your practical life."⁴⁹ Pragmatism is a practice essential to all political activists. This attitude develops very early in the lives of Mexican and Latin American student leaders, many of whom enter national politics. In his description of student political activists, Kenneth Walker says that "political involvement presumably leads to a commitment to the rules of the political game, and to an awareness that what looks like corruption from the outside may often be the consequence of the necessary compromise, or give and take, which elected representatives must engage in...."⁵⁰ Pragmatism is not only an ideological tenet of Mexican leaders, but a professional value too. As Antonio Carrillo Flores told the author, his golden rule in politics is to open your eyes to reality before doing anything.⁵¹ That advice has served him well; few men alive today can claim public careers as successful as his.⁵² Last, pragmatism seems to have a special importance to the students who entered politics through their participation in, or on the fringes of, the Jose Vasconcelos presidential campaign of 1929. Many of the participants in this campaign, and in the earlier 1927 opposition campaign, adopted a pragmatic approach to take political control of the official apparatus from within, rather than becoming disillusioned or permanently participating

⁴⁸ Personal interview with Roberto Robles Martinez, Mexico City, October 2, 1976.

⁴⁹ Personal interview with Manuel Hinojosa Ortiz, Mexico City, October 28, 1976.

⁵⁰ Kenneth Walker, "Political Socialization in Universities," in Seymour Martin Upset and Aldo Solari, eds., *Elites in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1(76), p. 423.

⁵¹ Personal interview, Mexico City, June 26, 1975.

⁵² See Daniel Cosío Villegas' description attesting to this career with his comment to Miguel Aleman that Carrillo Flores will probably die in public office. Miguel Aleman, *Miguel Aleman Contesta* (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, 1975), p. 26.

in the ranks of the opposition. One of our respondents describes this phenomenon:

... what was important about this generation was their participation in the Vasconcelos campaign. They were the most brilliant members of our generation. After Vasconcelos was defeated and abandoned the country many were dispersed throughout Mexico. The impact on some was to emerge in local and state politics, for example, Miguel Aleman became a senator from Veracruz, and, of course, when the governor-elect was assassinated, this opened the door for him to become governor. He began forming a group, but inside the official party, not a group with an ideological emphasis or goal, but a group who would emerge in control of the political system.⁵³

Mexican politicians are also pragmatists because their personal ideological beliefs are eclectic, again following the pattern set by their mentors and professors. Several respondents made these comments:

I do not like to classify myself as having any label because my philosophy is one which centers on improving the welfare of my country regardless of the source of the idea. I want to remove the ignorance from my country, but at the same time, I recognize the difficulties which Mexico faces.⁵⁴

I do not have a fixed political ideology because I am in agreement with any policy which benefits Mexico and I disagree with those that do not benefit her.⁵⁵

I would describe myself as a populist, that is, I am interested in all ideas which promote human equality. I am more inclined to the methods of the left. I would describe my philosophy as a humanistic political ideology.⁵⁶

These views come from historical, personal, and literary sources. One prominent member of the 1928-1932 generation, an important transitional group among student generations and political leaders in the 1950s and 1960s, describes, in part, the eclectic combination of intellectual sources:

I do not believe I am much different from most of the other members of my generation. I am a democrat with a liberal strain from the nineteenth century. I .

⁵³ Personal interview with Victor Manuel Villasenor, Mexico City, October 27, 1976.

Aleman himself did not actively participate in the Vasconcelos campaign, but he was a prominent student campaigner among the 1927 opposition ranks, and his father, General Aleman, was killed opposing the reelection of Obregon in 1929. Many of his collaborators were Vasconcelistas. See the author's "La campaña presidencial de 1929 y el liderazgo politico en Mexico," *Historia Mexicana* 27 (Fall 1977), 231-259, for details about the participants and their political careers.

⁵⁴ Personal interview, Angel Carvajal, October 25, 1976.

⁵⁵ Personal interview, former cabinet secretary, 1976.

⁵⁶ Personal interview with Daniel Pedro Martinez. 1976.

also have influenced in my political views by the Spanish anarchists" and of course by the Flores Magón brothers, who, as you know, were also a bit anarchist. My political view were also influenced by the Russian Revolution, but not in the sense of the communist solutions; rather by the problems which were brought to the forefront in the Revolution.⁵⁷

Other political leaders, especially those who were educated before and immediately after 1920, often described themselves as Revolutionary liberals, which, by any definition, is a mixture of transitional beliefs from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The most striking universal belief among Mexican political leaders of these generations, one that refers to means rather than ends, is their almost universal emphasis on peace and order, a theme prominent in the pre-1910 era in Mexico.⁵⁸ Although the Mexican Revolution seems to have shared its influence with many other sources of socialization on the postrevolutionary generation, when we confine ourselves to peace and order, the environment created by the Revolution is preeminent. Furthermore, this belief, rationalized in only slightly varying terms, is expressed consistently from the oldest down to the youngest generations. The views of leaders from different age groups clearly illustrate the continuity of this belief:

My generation [1921] had a great desire for peace and order because of their experiences with the Revolution. My generation was one which emphasized organization, to create order out of the chaos. I believe that this desire was much greater than was true of other and later generations. Lawyers were very occupied with formulating new laws which the country needed for some semblance of order. Doctors were giving service to towns which had not had it for many years. Public accountants had to put order in the accounts of large firms and in government finances. Bank laws were reorganized. A very open environment allowing for great changes in the future prevailed at this time.⁵⁹

I believe my generation [class of 1925] had a very strong desire for order and peace because of the revolutionary experience, and that this belief was much stronger than in later generations.⁶⁰

I believe that all of my educational generation [1932] had a very strong desire for peace and stability because of their experience of proximity to the Revolution and because of the ideals of their parents, many of whom had fought in the Revolution itself. I recall numerous conversations among parents of my generation commenting on the suffering they had encountered, especially the farmers and workers.⁶¹

Furthermore, we were living within a political structure undergoing great renovation [1939], and there was a feeling among many of us that care needed to be taken to avoid another revolution.⁶²

The transfer of this value from one generation to another is not surprising, since North American scholars have suggested that dispositions toward either peaceful or non-peaceful means of political change can be passed on from one generation to the next.⁶³ This transition would be particularly easy among a political elite united by a continuous educational environment and a long-term teacher-mentor relationship; the value has even been transferred to Mexican youth of today in spite of their lack of contact with the social dynamics of the Revolution. In contrast to political leaders, the majority of students interviewed by Wences Reza believed that major changes in the political system were required, but 78 percent thought violence was not necessary to achieve these changes.⁶⁴ Students in Latin American countries that have not experienced a major social revolution in the twentieth century also support this nonviolent view. In his study of Panamanian and Costa Rican elite students, Daniel Goldrich concluded that "75 percent agreed with or strongly agreed that violence should never be used to resolve political questions."⁶⁵

An integral element in the political beliefs of our respondents, the desire for peace and order, encouraged the development of subsidiary ideas important to promoting tranquility. According to many of the political leaders interviewed, this stability required collaboration among the various political factions within the governing political elite. Antonio Carrillo Flores, often a spokesman for his generation, states this view pragmatically:

I believe that friendship and cooperation were very important qualities believed in by my generation, and that this kind of cooperation and friendship has made the Mexican system work. We have to look for things that unify Mexicans rather than things that divide us. Everything is possible in peace, and violence is not really necessary to achieve social justice and economic development.⁶⁶

Not only has collaboration become a means for achieving social peace, but it has encouraged the moderate ideological view espoused by the

⁶² Personal interview with Raul Cardiel Reyes. Mexico City, October 22, 1916.

⁶³ David Easton and Jack Dennis, *Ch*

⁵⁷ Personal interview with Antonio Armendariz. Mexico City, October 25, 1976.

⁵⁸ For evidence of this, see Justo Sierra, *The Political Evolution of the Mexican People* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969).

⁵⁹ Personal interview with Sealtiel Alariste, 1975.

⁶⁰ Personal interview with Antonio Taracena, 1975.

⁶¹ Personal interview with Antonio Armendariz, 1975.