

PREEMPTIVE REFORM AND THE MEXICAN WORKING CLASS*

Kenneth M. Coleman, University of Kentucky, Lexington
Charles L. Davis, University of Kentucky Center at Fort Knox

This study offers a definition of preemptive reform, applies the concept to Mexico in the 1970s, describes the reaction of one target group of the Mexican reform effort, and develops a preliminary explanatory model of reactions to preemptive reform. Because preemptive reform has been an important element in Mexican politics, it is especially appropriate to examine the concept as it applies to the Mexican case. However, preemptive reform has been attempted elsewhere and these results may interest others who would seek to understand the phenomenon in a variety of settings.¹

PREEMPTIVE REFORM

Preemptive reform can be defined as a co-optative response by political elites to their fears of uncontrolled political mobilization by the less advantaged elements of society. The co-optative response may be substantive, organizational, or both. A substantive response would occur when public policy is reoriented toward providing more public or private goods to potentially disruptive social sectors. An organizational response would be one in which new opportunities for participation in decision-making are created, but in such a way that new participants will not affect decisional outcomes substantially. As such, an organizational response is essentially a symbolic device to increase solidarity between rulers and the ruled.

Most historical instances of preemptive reform probably have included both substantive and organizational dimensions. Indeed, the greater the fear of uncontrolled political mobilization, the stronger the

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motivation should be for a response encompassing both substantive and organizational dimensions of preemption.

The fear of uncontrolled mobilization implies a corollary perception that an existing institutional order, or features thereof important in defending the interests of major power contenders, needs a modicum of relegitimation. Groups may be known to exist who hold the prevailing order in disdain, or there may be fear that the emergence of such groups will stem from contemporary socioeconomic conditions. Preemptive reform efforts, therefore, reflect an intention to institute that degree of change, apparent or real, necessary to preserve essential features of the existing institutional order. The concept of preemptive reform, however, need not be taken to imply the existence of an internally coherent oligarchy (or bourgeoisie) that acts rationally in defense of commonly perceived and objectively shared interests.² At most, it implies the existence of a group of decision-makers who share the belief that to do nothing may be to do too little.

Some elite proponents of preemptive reform may be motivated by panic, sensing that a crisis is nearly at hand. Others may perceive the need for reform in a more analytical fashion, judging that now is the time to invest in short-term concessions so that beneficial arrangements may survive over the long term. Still others may be motivated by the belief that doing "simple justice" is in the best interests of those who profit from the existing institutional framework. Whatever the psychological orientation of various factions of a political elite pursuing preemptive reform, efforts are undertaken either to ameliorate the conditions that threaten to generate uncontrolled mobilization or to relegitimize the existing institutional order by adding new channels for political demand-making that will permit "established elites . . . to maintain many of their political and socioeconomic perquisites intact" (Anderson 1967, p. 107).

Of course, preemptive reform is not the only possible elite response to the perception of a threat from below. Systemic closure is another alternative (O'Donnell 1973). However, as Anderson (1967) has argued, preemptive response to threats from below may be just as effective as coercion in producing the "politics of immobility." Policy modifications are made in a fashion that guarantees that the existing allocations of costs and benefits will not change dramatically.

RECENT CRISES IN MEXICO: POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS

In the 1960s, Mexico attained not only rapid economic growth, but also a degree of price stability rivaled by few other Latin American economies (Hansen 1974, pp. 65–69).³ These years were later described as the era of *desarrollo estabilizador* (Reynolds 1977, pp. 45–59), and in the enthusi-

astic vocabulary of the 1960s, many talked about the “Mexican miracle.” There was ample reason to insist, as do some Mexican analysts, that this growth was not necessarily developmental (Villarreal 1977, pp. 74–81). However, the best available evidence (Bortz 1977, p. 158) does suggest that urban industrial workers experienced steady improvements in real wages in that decade, at last regaining and surpassing the previous high point that was attained in 1939 under the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas. The economic growth of this era was fueled by a high rate of domestic capital-formation, by an extraordinarily low rate of taxation, and by an ingenious system of manipulating bank reserve requirements so as to capture private savings and divert them to government investments in infrastructure (Fitzgerald 1979, p. 34). The creation of an “attractive investment climate” was manifested in the high degree to which foreign and Mexican private capital participated in the state-subsidized process of economic growth.

According to one theoretical perspective that holds that economic growth ought to contribute to the emergence of stable democracies, Mexico’s economic trajectory between 1955 and 1968 should have posed no serious threat to the presumed course of evolution toward democratic stability.⁴ However, political convulsions in 1968 proved so dramatic that even leaders of the dominant Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) realized that sustained economic growth would not necessarily produce manageable politics. Citizens and scholars, for their part, came to question the notion that democratic politics necessarily would arrive in Mexico. When mass-protest groups were mobilized in 1968 for autonomous action critical of the existing political order, it suddenly became clear that the ground rules of the Mexican political process did not command universal allegiance. In addition, this situation reflected declining faith in the belief that economic growth would yield benefits to all. Middlebrook (1981a, p. 5) has recently suggested that “. . . although the Tlatelolco crisis did not in itself directly challenge the underlying political economic pact between the state and the private sector, the events of 1968 did seriously undermine assumptions of the progressive achievement of socioeconomic and political justice associated with Mexico’s past development model.”

All political leaders may fear the uncontrolled mobilization of citizens who question the legitimacy of existing institutions, but Mexican leaders have special reasons to be attentive to such concerns. Perhaps the most profound historical legacy of the destructive Mexican Revolution of 1910–17 is the fear of disorder. This preoccupation is crucial to the adherence of various factions of Mexico’s elite to the reigning political contract.⁵ Indeed, if any ideological glue holds the dominant political machine together, it is the belief that uncontrolled mobilization of conflicting social forces represents a fundamental danger (Purcell and Pur-

cell 1980, pp. 198–204). Therefore, when elites perceive such a danger, a threefold response is often deemed appropriate: first, attempted co-optation of leaders of mobilized groups; second, repression of the uncontrolled mobilization should co-optation fail; and third, a subsequent delayed response to the substantive grievances that fueled the uncontrolled mobilization (Anderson and Cockcroft 1966; Purcell 1975, p. 136 ff.). The stability of Mexico's authoritarian polity is not solely a function of the concentration of coercive capacity in the hands of political elites. Rather, the elites themselves recognize that coercion must be balanced, in due time, with at least a modest response to the grievances of those who might act against the *institucionalidad vigente*.

Therefore, as Mexico entered the 1970s, the time was ripe for efforts at preemptive reform. The system had been shaken by the political challenge of 1968. Order had been restored only at a heavy political cost. After the use of extensive force to repress protesting students and middle-class intellectuals, the assumption of political progress became more difficult to sustain.

Economic shocks followed closely the political trauma of 1968. During the 1960s, the average growth rate was nearly 6.5 percent per annum, but in 1971, the rate of economic growth dropped to 3.5 percent. The Echeverría administration responded by stimulating the economy, and public spending expanded dramatically from 1972 to 1975. Growth rates of 7.3 and 7.6 percent in the gross national product were attained in 1972 and 1973 (Zazueta and Vega 1981, p. 83), but at the cost of a tremendous surge in Mexico's international indebtedness (Green 1979, p. 461 ff.). After 1973, the Mexican economy began to appear much less manageable. The much lauded price stability proved impossible to sustain, given the openness of the Mexican economy to inflationary pressures imported from the United States and elsewhere, as well as the efforts of the Echeverría government to expand public services in education and health care. Inflation rates jumped from roughly 5 percent per annum in 1971–72 to 12 percent in 1973 and to 24 percent in 1976. A petroleum-led economic recovery in the López Portillo years restored the dramatic growth rates of the era of *desarrollo estabilizador*, but the inflationary problem proved less tractable. Official governmental estimates of inflation were 28.9 percent in 1977, 17.5 percent in 1978, 18.2 percent in 1979, and approximately 28 percent in 1980. The potential for political disruption inherent in such persisting economic problems was apparent to leaders of the PRI.

In sum, both the economy and the polity appeared less manageable as Mexican political elites entered the 1970s. Elite policy responses reflected a belief that preemptive reform was in order, lest the mobilizational example of 1968 and the economic distress of the 1970s lead to an explosion of the kind so feared by those who have profited from the

existing system in Mexico. The response was multifaceted, encompassing both political and economic dimensions.

This study focuses on popular reactions to the economic dimension of the PRI response. Specifically, we examine how workers in a variety of industrial settings assessed the redistributive content of economic policy in recent presidencies of Luis Echeverría Alvarez and José López Portillo.⁶

PREEMPTIVE ECONOMIC REFORMS IN MEXICO: 1970–1980

The fundamental standing decision that long has committed Mexico to a capital-intensive, output-maximization development strategy did not waver under either Luis Echeverría or José López Portillo. Job creation received a lower priority than other economic goals. Huerta C. (1977, p. 33 ff.) points out the net effect of the Echeverría years, arguing that apparent employment gains in large industry were offset by the loss of employment in small shops that were driven out of existence by expanding large enterprises. Cornelius (1981, p. 124) makes a similar point in describing the priorities of the López Portillo government, arguing that if “growth and job creation come into conflict . . . the government will opt for maximizing economic growth.” Despite this basic commitment to a long-term strategy of capital-intensive development, both political and economic logic suggested making certain adjustments in that strategy. What were the key features of public policy in each *sexenio* that might have led to an improvement in the position of laborers?

The Echeverría Sexenio, 1970–1976.

After the 1971 recession, economic advisers to President Echeverría argued that the economy needed the stimulation of added purchasing power for the working classes. Moreover, they argued on principle that certain long-term benefits would accrue from increased investment in public education and health care, namely a healthy and skilled work force that would be more productive. The PRI obviously also hoped that these reorientations of public policy would yield short-term political support.

Under Echeverría, some workers did benefit as public sector employment was increased by 60 percent (Whitehead 1980, p. 497). The government also dramatically increased public expenditures on health and education. Medical coverage via social security was extended from 24 percent of the population to 36 percent (Whitehead 1980, p. 498). In addition, the president decreed three exceptional wage increases: the first two came in 1973 (18 percent) and 1974 (17 percent), and the last was a 25 percent increase granted after the devaluations of 1976 (Za-

zueta and Vega 1981, pp. 103–4). With these emergency salary adjustments and a presidential decree authorizing midterm salary negotiations on two-year labor contracts, Echeverría made major policy concessions toward labor. He also promoted elaborate programs to subsidize purchase of consumer durables (FONACOT) by workers and to provide staples at a subsidized price (CONASUPO) (Looney 1978, p. 106). All in all, the thrust of Echeverría's policy was to provide more benefits for organized urban workers and, after 1973, to protect their purchasing power.

Echeverría's policies toward labor also contained negative features. His early tolerance of the growth of union autonomy suggested that he might be sympathetic to improvements in the bargaining power of organized urban labor. By the end of his term, however, Echeverría's tolerance of union autonomy proved to have real limits (Camacho 1980, pp. 64–76). Moreover, as previously noted, the net rate of job creation in manufacturing under Echeverría was modest. Finally, nonunionized workers may well have been hurt severely by the inflationary processes of the Echeverría years because they had no organizational means for demanding compliance with the emergency salary increments granted by presidential decree (Reyna 1979).

The López Portillo Sexenio, 1976–1982

In contrast to Echeverría, José López Portillo attempted to mollify business interests in order to restore investor confidence, particularly during the first three years of his presidency. He toned down the populist rhetoric of the Echeverría years and, by initiating the "Alliance for Production," quickly signaled the business community that production would have high priority. This move may have indirectly aided job creation in the private sector by providing the political cues necessary for private investment to occur once again in Mexico.

Despite his overtures to business and the change in rhetoric, López Portillo nonetheless continued to pursue some important economic reforms. This commitment was particularly evident from 1979 through 1981, when the new oil revenues began to restore an expansionist dynamic to the economy, thereby permitting certain populist expenditures to increase. Take, for example, the issue of job creation. The Global Development Plan for 1980–82, prepared under the supervision of Miguel de la Madrid, envisioned the creation of more than two million jobs for that *trienio* (Cornelius 1981). In addition to the expansion of public sector employment, the plan called for industrial decentralization by designating eleven geographically dispersed development zones. Various incentives, ranging from tax credits to discounts for public utility payments to outright tax rebates of up to 20 percent, were to be offered

according to the number of jobs created by locating new establishments in one of the designated development zones (Street 1981, pp. 374–78, 388–91). While Cornelius (1981, p. 124) correctly suggests that commitment to job creation under López Portillo was limited, more jobs probably were created under his presidency than under his predecessor, if only because Echeverría stimulated so much capital flight.

The López Portillo administration also instituted fiscal reforms, a portion of which the Echeverría administration had tried to enact. Some of these had negative effects on workers. For example, new revenues were generated in 1980 by imposing a 10 percent ad valorem tax, which initially was administered in a highly regressive manner, although it eventually was modified. At the same time, the income-tax structure became more progressive.

In terms of wage policy, the López Portillo administration promulgated a substantial rise in minimum wages in January of 1981 that eliminated the differential between rural and urban minimum wages. According to one observer, the average increase was 32 percent, “slightly ahead of the 1980 inflation rate” (Bizzaro 1981, p. 372). These gains, however, were severely threatened when the peso was devalued in February and again in August of 1982.

Spending on social welfare programs continued to increase under López Portillo and the organizational legacies of the Echeverría years such as INFONAVIT (the housing agency) and FONACOT (the state-subsidized consumer–durables purchasing program for workers) were retained. In sum, the López Portillo years were less populist, but for workers, they did not represent a full-scale retreat from the distributive patterns of the Echeverría years. Indeed, in some respects, workers consolidated gains (such as access to CONASUPO and FONACOT) under López Portillo that were first granted under Echeverría.

SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL BASES FOR WORKER REACTIONS TO THE REFORM CONTENT OF RECENT ECONOMIC POLICY

Mexican workers assessed the reform content of recent presidential policies negatively, but some reacted more negatively than others, and a few reacted positively. Three social-psychological perspectives offer a basis for understanding these varying reactions.

The first theoretical approach, derived from functionalist theories of attitude formation (Katz 1960), emphasizes the utilitarian features of certain attitudes. According to this theoretical outlook, one might expect reactions to governmental policies to be determined by the personal economic situation of individuals, that is, attitudes would reflect material interests. A second theoretical orientation suggests that individuals may hold certain less salient opinions mainly because they are consistent

with deeply rooted attitudes or orientations that long have been part of the individual's belief structure. This theoretical focus on cognitive balance (Festinger 1957; Bem 1970) has recently been applied to discussions of "symbolic political issues" in which the "ongoing flow of information about public events presents symbols which evoke habitual emotional response from the citizen" (Sears, Hensler, and Speer 1979, p. 381). A third approach, derived from reference-group theory, suggests that individuals adopt the attitudes characteristic of reference groups to which they belong. Each of these theoretical outlooks points to a different set of possible empirical relationships.

Socioeconomic Status and Social Mobility: The Utilitarian Function

One possibility suggested by the functionalist perspective is that those who have experienced the greatest benefits from government policy will be most appreciative of it. But what does that mean in specific terms? Does it mean that the poorer workers will be most positive about the reformist content of government policy, seeing in that policy the possibility of improvements for people like themselves? Such might be the logical application of the theory, if the content of recent economic policy was in fact strongly redistributive and perceived as such. However, if the content of economic policy was only mildly reformist and not necessarily aimed at the poorest segments of the industrial working class, then the utilitarian thesis might suggest that the richer workers generally have benefited most and should be most inclined to attribute reformist content to recent economic policy. Of the two empirical assumptions about the nature of public policy, the second would seem most accurate.

The utilitarian perspective might also be applied to the question of personal social mobility. Perhaps those who report that their lives have improved in the recent past (that is, in the last five years) will be most inclined to attribute reformist content to recent economic policy. Alternatively, those whose lives have improved over a slightly longer haul might be most supportive of recent government policy. Because the implications of the theoretical perspective are suggestive, but not fully clear, three plausible applications will be tested, listed as hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 below.

1. Workers of higher socioeconomic status (greater education, more-skilled jobs, higher salaries) will be more likely than lower-status workers to attribute reform content to recent economic policy.
2. Workers who report the most social mobility in the last five

years will be those most likely to attribute reform content to recent economic policy.

3. Workers who report the greatest personal social mobility throughout their lifetimes will be those most likely to attribute reformist content to recent economic policy.

*Critical Consciousness, External Efficacy, and Diffuse Support:
Cognitive Balance in Assessing Governmental Performance*

Certain attitude syndromes are likely to be central to the belief systems of workers, providing a cognitive anchor for other beliefs and attitudes. These basic orientations are *central* in the sense of being resistant to change in the face of new information (Converse 1964). As such, they would help structure other, more transient reactions to attitude objects that are themselves transient. We propose to examine three basic orientations that may orient workers toward their socioeconomic and political environment. These orientations are: critical consciousness, a set of views about relations between social classes; external political efficacy, a set of expectations about the responsiveness of government to influence attempts; and diffuse system support, an orientation toward the institutions and procedures through which political decisions are made.

Critical consciousness / Many analysts, from Marx up through contemporary sociologists of labor (Jelin 1979, pp. 238, 242–43 and *passim*), have suggested that the presence or absence of a class-based comprehension of social life will determine how workers think and behave. The identification of this syndrome varies from author to author, but the essential attributes of this outlook could be labeled critical consciousness or *concientización*.

Critical consciousness is a multifaceted orientation to the social order, but one rooted in an interpretation of the obvious social differences that exist in capitalist societies. Some workers may see the existing order as an “organic, cooperative whole” in which various social classes have their roles to fulfill, but in which all classes contribute to the functioning of the greater social whole. By contrast, other workers may see the existing order as a “system of domination” in which certain social interests prevail in imposing costs on other social groups. Individuals who perceive a system of domination are exhibiting what is herein called *critical consciousness*.⁷

Three empirically independent dimensions of critical consciousness can be demonstrated to exist with this data set. These three dimensions are first, the sense of working-class consciousness; second, the sense of working-class solidarity; and third, the propensity to blame

social structures. Briefly, class consciousness is here defined as a sense that the interests of workers are contradictory to those of owners and managers. Class solidarity is here defined as the willingness to undertake personal sacrifice on behalf of other workers outside of the immediate workplace. Structure-blaming is here defined, following Portes (1971, p. 260 ff.), as the propensity to attribute perceived social injustices to man-made social structures that can be changed. To simplify the presentation of results, however, a combined scale of critical consciousness that encompasses all three constituent dimensions will be used (see appendix).

Cognitive–balance theory suggests that workers who see the existing sociopolitical order as a system of domination are likely to be suspicious of “reform efforts” that attempt to integrate workers into existing structural arrangements. The more negative the assessment of the economic system, the less likely that the worker will believe reform of the system possible. Consequently, critically conscious workers are less likely to consider recent economic policy to have been “reformist.”

4. The greater the critical consciousness of the worker, the more negative the evaluation of the reformist content of recent economic policy.

External Political Efficacy / This belief holds that “our government can be influenced by people like me.” The concept dates back to Almond and Verba’s work on “the sense of civic competence” (1963), but the variant here utilized resulted from conceptual fission in the 1970s, although subsequent empirical work demonstrated the existence of two different dimensions. Internal political efficacy implies that “I have the attributes necessary to produce a governmental response,” while external political efficacy treats the government as the attitude object, as in the belief that “these governmental institutions are subject to influence by people like me.” External efficacy is a long-term orientation to governmental structures that is unlikely to be acquired or shed quickly. As such, one would expect it to influence the way in which individuals evaluate the efforts of specific administrations to achieve long-standing policy goals, such as a more–equal distribution of income or full employment. The externally efficacious individual is likely to believe that recent economic policy was reformist because of the prior belief that Mexican governments are, in general, responsive to citizen inputs.

5. The greater the external political efficacy, the more positive the assessment of the reform content of recent economic policy.

Diffuse Regime Support / Finally, some degree of affective consistency

ought to be expected between orientations toward the polity itself and assessments of recent economic policy. The concept of diffuse regime support, which has received much attention from political scientists since first introduced by Easton (1971), suggests that positive affect can be directed toward decision-making procedures and institutions, independent of one's degree of satisfaction with short-term policy outputs or with incumbent authorities. This kind of affective orientation is the one all political leaders would like to generate because it allows them to ride out momentarily unpopular decisions. Consequently, the greater the pool of diffuse support, the more likely any given polity can survive in the short run. For purposes of this study, the important theoretical implication is that the level of diffuse support exhibited by any given individual implies a corresponding degree of receptivity to or suspicion toward governmental policy initiatives.

6. The greater the degree of diffuse support, the greater the positive affect toward recent economic "reform" initiatives.

Type of Organizational Involvement: Reference-Group Theory

Exposure to variant organizational settings has been shown to affect policy attitudes (Krauss and Fendrich 1980, p. 15). The type of organizations to which workers belong or express "voluntary" allegiance should influence the views they have on recent economic policy. In particular, members of autonomous unions that are unaffiliated with the PRI should exhibit more negative attitudes toward the reform content of recent economic policy than would those in "incorporated unions" that have an official link to the labor sector of the dominant party. Similarly, workers in whatever setting who explicitly identify with a leftist party will be less likely to evaluate the reform content of recent policy favorably than will those who identify with the PRI itself. Therefore, we propose two additional hypotheses.

7. Members of incorporated unions will be more likely than members of autonomous unions to evaluate the reform content of recent economic policy favorably.
8. Identifiers with leftist parties will be less likely than identifiers with the PRI or other parties to evaluate the reform content of public policy favorably.

A Possible Causal Ordering of Independent Variables

While it is conceivable that each hypothesis would be supported by the

data, it seems unlikely that all independent variables will be equally proximate causes of variation in the dependent variable. Indeed, three variables seem likely to function as intervening variables through which the other independent variables might have an impact on evaluations of recent economic policy. Those variables are critical consciousness, external political efficacy, and diffuse support. The first of the three is a basic orientation toward workers and their place in society, which either produces workers who accept social stratification as normatively defensible (non-critically-conscious workers) or who reject it as normatively indefensible (critically-conscious workers). The degree to which one has a critical or a positive orientation toward social-class relations will probably determine the extent to which one perceives governmental institutions as "responsive" or not, and therefore will also determine one's degree of support for those institutions. In short, one might expect critical consciousness to exhibit a causal effect on both external political efficacy and on diffuse support.⁸

These three variables, along with partisanship, another general orientation, might be expected to be causally most proximate to the dependent variable. This would be so because they are general orientations, either toward society or toward the polity, that will define the psychological context within which individuals will react to conjunctural events.

Other variables such as socioeconomic status are expected to operate through the three intervening or more proximate variables and exhibit their strongest links with critical consciousness. Therefore, our final hypothesis is:

9. The variables exhibiting the greatest direct causal effect on the dependent variable will be those that represent general attitudinal dispositions toward social relations or toward politics, while variables representing reference group exposure or the utilitarian functions of attitudes will either operate indirectly on the dependent variable or will have a modest impact.

Hypothesis 9 implies that in this case, the cognitive–balance explanations are more useful than utilitarian or reference–group perspectives.

THE SAMPLE

The data for this study come from interviews conducted among industrial workers between November of 1979 and January of 1980 in five locations in Mexico: the cities of León and Salamanca in the state of Guanajuato, the city of Cuernavaca in the state of Morelos, the small village of Ayotla located a few kilometers outside Mexico City, and the

capital city itself. In each locale, one hundred workers were interviewed, for a total of five hundred cases.

Workers selected were assumed to have been "exposed" to variant combinations of structural "stimuli." Consequently, samples were taken among five groups of workers: first, nonunionized workers in small shops in Mexico City; second, workers in a traditional nonstrategic industry (a textile factory in Ayotla) who were organized into a union affiliated with the PRI-linked Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos or CTM; third, workers in another traditional, nonstrategic industry (a shoe factory in León) who were organized into an independent union affiliated with the Frente Auténtico de Trabajo, a confederation that rejects any affiliation with the PRI-CTM labor machine; fourth, workers in the economically strategic petroleum industry who are organized into the PRI- and CTM-affiliated Sindicato de Trabajadores Petroleros de la República Mexicana (those working at Mexico's largest refining complex in Salamanca); and fifth, workers in another modern and strategic industry, the automobile industry, who have thrown off CTM control since 1972 and have established an independent union affiliated with the Unidad Obrera Independiente confederation (workers at the Nissan Motors factory in Cuernavaca).

The workplace settings range from small shops of five to fifteen workers in the Mexico City sample, to a firm employing two hundred workers in León, to factories employing nearly two thousand workers (Ayotla and Nissan), to the gigantic refinery at Salamanca with seven thousand workers. The income range of workers in the five settings varies considerably; at the low end come workers in the small shops in Mexico City and in the shoe factory in León, while at the high end come the petroleum workers, who not only enjoy relatively high salaries ranging from two hundred and fifty to one thousand dollars per month, but also benefit from a wide array of *prestaciones sociales* (fringe benefits). Consequently, the sampling procedure guarantees variation along crucial structural dimensions that make the workplace reality different for substrata of the Mexican working class.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the raw frequency distributions for questions in which respondents were asked to evaluate the success of Luis Echeverría and José López Portillo in providing jobs for those who need them and in leveling incomes between the rich and the poor. The raw response rates show a high level of dissatisfaction with the performance of the government in both areas. More than 75 percent of the respondents evaluated the performance of both presidents negatively in these two policy areas. Workers were somewhat more harsh toward Echeverría than toward

López Portillo, but the main point is that they were overwhelmingly negative in assessing the reformist policy content of both regimes (cf. Cornelius 1975, p. 60).⁹

To examine bivariate relationships in a comprehensible fashion, the data from both presidencies have been aggregated in table 2. Here, mean scores are calculated for various subgroups on an unstandardized, summative scale of the evaluation of economic reforms.¹⁰ Scores can range from zero, the score that a person would receive who rates the performance of both administrations on the two policy dimensions as poor, to twelve, the score assigned to an individual who indicates that both administrations did very well on both policy dimensions. Thus, the hypothetical midpoint on the scale would be six. Respondents who indicated that either income leveling or job provision was not a government responsibility have been eliminated from the analysis.

Table 2 confirms that workers evaluated recent economic reforms negatively by demonstrating that the finding holds for all subgroups. No observed mean score for any subgroup examined in table 2 surpasses the hypothetical midpoint of six on the index. Even the observed mean scores for those who identify with the PRI or who are members of PRI-linked labor unions are below the midpoint on the scale, indicating disapproval of the extent of reformism apparent in recent presidencies. The most negative scores are registered by workers who identify with leftist parties, rank low on diffuse support or external efficacy, display high levels of critical consciousness, or belong to the FAT union in León.

The bivariate data analysis presented in table 2 also reveals that the data are consistent with hypotheses 2 through 6 and 8. Personal social mobility, both within the last five years and intergenerationally, is weakly related to evaluations of the reform content of recent economic

TABLE 1 *Evaluations of the Reform Content of Economic Policy in the Administrations of Luis Echeverría and José López Portillo*

<i>Evaluative Category</i>	<i>Echeverría</i>	<i>López Portillo</i>
Policy Area: Jobs for Unemployed		
Very Well	1.1%	1.7%
Rather Well	10.8%	18.5%
Not Very Well	27.1%	45.0%
Poorly	60.9%	34.9%
Policy Area: Income Leveling		
Very Well	0.9%	1.0%
Rather Well	9.3%	11.6%
Not Very Well	30.5%	38.4%
Poorly	59.3%	49.0%

policy (.13 and .12). Critical consciousness is more strongly related to the dependent variable ($-.24$), but in a negative direction. The direction of partisanship, coded so that left-wing affiliation is a high score, is also related in a moderately strong negative fashion to the dependent variable ($-.30$). But most strongly related of all are external political efficacy (.35) and diffuse regime support (.40). The other bivariate relationships are not statistically significant.

A more sophisticated analysis of the impact of the independent variable on worker dissatisfaction with economic reforms can be obtained through path analysis (Asher 1976), which makes possible the testing of assumptions about possible causal relationships, as spelled out in the figure.¹² Summing direct- and indirect-effect coefficients permits an estimation of the total causal effect of each independent variable on worker evaluations of economic reform.¹³ In the case of any variable that is presumed to be a proximate intervening variable, the total causal effect ought to come heavily from the direct-effect coefficient, and only marginally from indirect- or spurious-effect coefficients.¹⁴ This approach allows the testing of hypothesis 9, which has yet to be considered.

The causal analysis (table 3) reveals that diffuse support has the largest direct effect on assessments of the extent to which recent presidents pursued economic reforms seriously. The second-best direct predictor of attitudes toward recent economic reforms is external political efficacy, which also has a strong indirect effect via diffuse support. The total causal effect of both variables is similar (.36) but the paths are different (see the figure).

Critical consciousness, which appeared to be directly related to the dependent variable in bivariate analysis, now is revealed to be related only indirectly, via the negative impact that it has on both external efficacy and diffuse support, as well as via the positive impact that it has in producing partisans of left-wing parties. The total causal effect of critical consciousness is $-.28$, the third greatest of any of the seven independent variables. Both leftist partisanship ($-.15$) and intergenerational mobility (.11) have modest direct impacts on evaluations of reformism, but in opposite directions. Hypothesis 9 is confirmed, then, because the generalized orientations toward social relations and politics (critical consciousness, external efficacy, diffuse support) prove to be the strongest determinants of variation in evaluations of recent economic policy.

Recent social mobility has a variety of effects on endogenous variables in the model (.12 on both external efficacy and diffuse support; $-.16$ on critical consciousness), and is related in a noncausal manner (due to modest multicollinearity) with intergenerational social mobility ($r = .33$). As a correlation between exogenous variables, the latter coefficient remains unanalyzed. Finally, it may be noted that there is a

T A B L E 2 *Analysis of Mean Scores on Summative Scale of Economic Reform Evaluations by Subgroups of Total Sample*

Subgroup	Evaluation of Recent Economic Reforms	
	Mean*	Standard Deviation
Socioeconomic Status		
High status	2.96	2.54
Low status	2.98	2.42
	eta = .00	
Mobility in Past Five Years		
High	3.27	2.49
Low	2.65	2.40
	eta = .13**	
Intergenerational Mobility		
High	3.20	2.44
Low	2.57	2.46
	eta = .12**	
Critical Consciousness		
High	2.19	2.06
Low	3.43	2.57
	eta = -.24**	
External Political Efficacy		
High	3.78	2.50
Low	2.09	2.09
	eta = .35**	
Diffuse Regime Support		
High	3.93	2.53
Low	1.97	1.94
	eta = .40**	
Type Union ¹¹		
Nonunionized workers	3.17	2.72
CTM union, nonstrategic industry	3.16	2.42

Table 2 (con't.)

CTM union, strategic industry	3.06	2.64
FAT union, nonstrategic industry	2.15	1.78
UOI union, strategic industry	3.12	2.44
	eta = .14***	
Political Party Identification		
Left	1.14	1.50
Center/right	2.36	1.94
PRI	3.37****	2.34
No party identity	3.38****	2.70
	eta = -.30**	

*Range = 0–12, summative scale of evaluations of reformist content (job creation and income leveling) of public policy under the recent presidencies of Luis Echeverría and José López Portillo.

**Analysis of variance significant at .05 level or beyond.

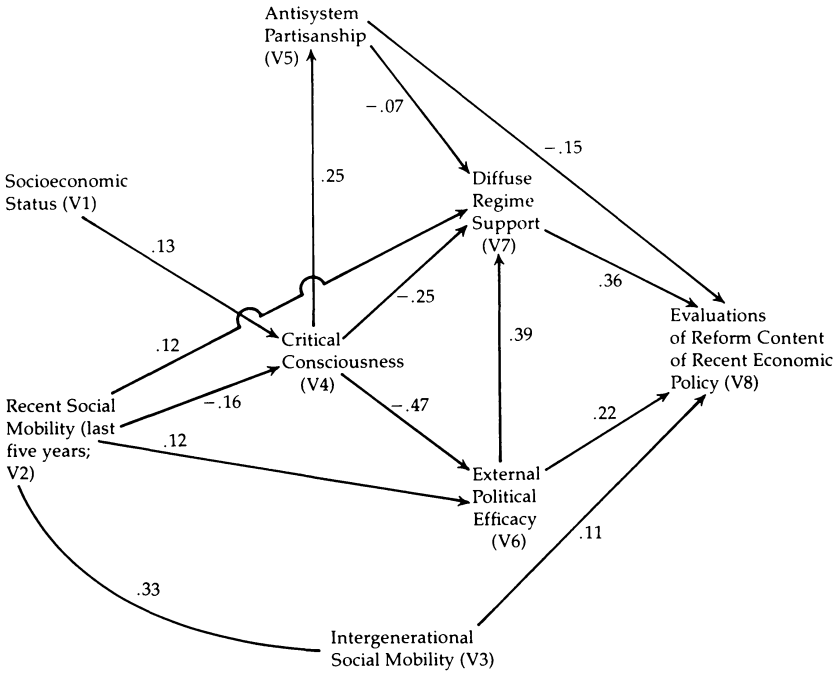
***It ought to be noted that, for this sample size, etas in the range of .12 to .14 will be significant when the independent variable is dichotomized, but will not be significant when three or more categories are employed.

****Combined in subsequent multivariate analyses.

direct-effect coefficient of .25 between critical consciousness and anti-system partisanship.

To summarize these results, relatively high levels of dissatisfaction with the recent economic policy of Echeverría and López Portillo were found among all segments of the Mexican working class. Mexican workers do not believe that serious economic reform was undertaken in either the Echeverría or López Portillo years. Causal analysis suggests that two syndromes of general attitudes toward the polity had strong impacts on evaluations of the extent to which recent economic policy was reformist. Those syndromes were diffuse support and external political efficacy. Additionally, critical consciousness indirectly affected evaluations of the reform content of recent economic policy via external political efficacy and diffuse support as intervening variables. Belonging to a left-wing political party had a modest negative impact on the dependent variable, and those who had experienced personal social mobility, either recently or intergenerationally, were slightly more likely to

Path Model of Determinants of Worker Evaluations of Reform Content of Recent Economic Policy



react to recent economic policy favorably. The effect of the latter three variables on evaluations of recent economic reforms were, however, weaker and sometimes expressed only indirectly.

INTERPRETATION

This study has tested eight bivariate hypotheses and produced a causal model of determinants of variation in worker evaluations of the reform content of recent Mexican economic policy. A general pattern of cognitive balance seems to exist between critical consciousness, external efficacy, diffuse support, and evaluations of specific governmental performance. For example, an inverse relationship exists between the perception of class relations as representing a system of domination (concientización) and system-supportive attitudes. The implication of cognitive balance is that those who identify most strongly as "workers

TABLE 3 *Causal Effects of Socioeconomic Status, Social Mobility, Critical Consciousness, Antisystem Partisanship, External Efficacy, and Diffuse Support on Evaluations of Economic Reforms*

<i>Independent Variable</i>		<i>Total Association (r)</i>	<i>Direct Effect</i>	<i>Indirect Effects</i>	<i>Spurious Effects</i>	<i>Total Causal Effects***</i>
Diffuse regime support	(V7)	.45	.36*	—	.04	.36
External efficacy	(V6)	.45	.22*	.14	.08	.36
Antisystem partisanship**	(V5)	-.28	-.15*	-.03	.05	-.18
Critical consciousness	(V4)	-.33	-.04	-.24	-.01	-.28
Intergenerational mobility	(V3)	.16	.11*	.03	—	.14
Recent social mobility	(V2)	.13	-.06	.13	—	.07
Socioeconomic status	(V1)	.00	.01	-.02	—	-.01

*Statistically significant at .05 level.

**Coded as left parties (PCM, PPS, PST, PMT) = 3; center-right parties (PAN, PARM, PDM) = 2; PRI and no party = 1.

***Multiple R for regression equation with seven independent variables regressed on Evaluations of Economic Reformism = .59; with four direct paths regressed on dependent variable, Multiple R remains at .59.

located in a system of domination" will evaluate both the polity and the policy outputs of the political authorities less positively than will workers who are more inclined to see existing social relations as benign. Given the importance attributed to the concept of *concientización* by Latin American social scientists, perhaps this causal model will be useful in confirming that this attitude syndrome plays a central role in structuring the attitudes of Mexican workers. The effect of *concientización* on the dependent variable is indirect, but nonetheless important.

The causal model also indicates that variables emphasized by North American analysts are as important as *concientización* in "structuring evaluations of the performance of incumbents" (Muller and Williams 1980, p. 34). In particular, diffuse support for the political system (Easton 1971, pp. 247–340) and external political efficacy (derived from

Almond and Verba 1963) both serve along with critical consciousness to establish a framework of general assumptions within which specific evaluations of performance are made. The attitudes of Mexican workers toward general features of their polity are relatively negative, as is their assessment of governmental responsiveness to citizen inputs; not surprisingly, assessments of the reform content of recent policy are also negative.¹⁵ Insights derived from Marxist perspectives and from conventional North American social science are thus not necessarily incompatible. Divested of normative and teleological content, both approaches can direct attention to important empirical realities about the attitudes and behavior of workers in a variety of settings. Serious efforts to comprehend working-class behavior probably will lead social scientists toward greater theoretical eclecticism. At a minimum, we believe that the theoretical link between critical consciousness, external political efficacy, diffuse support, and the evaluation of specific policy performance is a causal sequence that deserves examination in other settings.¹⁶

For the analysis of preemptive reform, the primary lesson may be that not all reforms are equal. The extent of support that reforms generate amongst the intended beneficiaries will depend on how far the reforms go. If those reforms are preemptive in nature, designed to do what seems necessary to avert the threat of uncontrolled mobilization, they will probably stop short of producing sufficient change to induce gratitude among intended beneficiaries. Had the Mexican reforms been more dramatic, the workers might have experienced greater social mobility, and the effects of this variable upon evaluations of government policy might have been correspondingly higher. As it was, general predispositions toward social relations and government were the predominant elements in structuring attitudes toward government policy.

A second lesson about preemptive reform is that the same reform may be perceived very differently by those seeking improvements in their lives and by those seeking to avert the possibility of more drastic change. To the question of "Is this enough?" the Mexican workers responded with a resounding "No!" The more privileged groups in Mexican society, however, would have answered that question in various ways. All that the political and economic elites share in undertaking preemptive reform is a belief that a threat from below exists and that some action ought to be undertaken to avert the threat presented. Agreement does not necessarily exist, nor is it easily created, on precisely what should be done to address the threat from below.

Disagreements also may exist amongst political and economic elites as to whether a given policy response is an inadequate, appropriate, or excessive response to the threat, i.e., how much action is necessary to co-opt dissenters effectively and how far beyond this minimum criterion should society go in ameliorating the distress of *los humildes*?

Preemptive reformers may undertake reform only to find that certain power-contenders believe in preemption “in principle,” but happen not to believe in this particular preemptive attempt, while the presumed beneficiaries may not believe that this specific package of policy measures is a true reform because they see no immediate impact.

Preemptive reformers must steer between the Scylla of subversion by those whose commitment to reform is evanescent and the Charybdis of cynicism from those who look for structural change. The more likely source of failure in the Latin American context is the former. The fear of autonomous mobilization that gives rise to preemptive reform also can be assuaged in the short run by resorting to force. Other actors wait in the wings who could apply other solutions to the threat from below.¹⁷

For students of Mexico, there is also another lesson to be learned. The economic reforms of the 1970s were “event-driven” because they were reactions to largely unexpected occurrences, rather than choices deliberately made as a part of a conscious development strategy. Luis Echeverría came to the presidency with a negative political legacy to overcome just at the historical moment when the limitations of *desarrollo estabilizador* first became apparent. Echeverría, as a new president who proclaimed himself a populist, wished to strengthen political ties with the mainstays of the traditional revolutionary coalition—the organized labor and peasant sectors of the party—but events precluded his delivering dramatic benefits to organized labor. The economic slowdowns of 1971 and 1974–76 led to layoffs and slow progress in the creation of new jobs. These employment problems may have been old hat to Mexican workers, but inflation was not. The cost of living accelerated at a rate to which few Mexicans were accustomed and to which workers were especially sensitive. Of the workers in the 1979 sample, 90.2 percent claimed that prices had risen faster than their salaries had increased. Echeverría attempted to cope with these economic dislocations by means of emergency salary increases that he decreed in 1973, 1974, and 1976, via amendments to the labor law to provide for annual contract revisions after 1975, and by the expansion of the state-run staple-food distribution chain (CONASUPO). These attempts were simply not enough to convince workers that their lives had been improved by his presidency. Workers were more likely to believe that prices began to soar uncontrollably in the Echeverría years.

Similarly, workers found little about which to be enthusiastic in the economic policy of López Portillo. Although no more serious a reformer than Echeverría, López Portillo was at least less of a rhetorical populist. The apparent contrast between promise and performance consequently was less striking under López Portillo than under Echeverría. The fact is, nonetheless, that workers were disinclined to believe that

much job creation or income leveling had occurred under either president. Job creation is critical as an indicator of meaningful economic change in a context where underemployment has been estimated to range from 26 to 50 percent (Gregory 1980, pp. 1,4; Cornelius 1981, p. 108; Rout 1982, p. 24). Moreover, Mexico's income distribution is clearly unequal, with recent Gini estimates running in the range of .52 to .61 (Jain 1975, p. 77). For economic reforms to be meaningful, workers would have to perceive change in their lives and in those of the less fortunate. Either remunerative jobs would have to become plentiful, income distribution would have to change, or access to public goods would have to improve for industrial workers (and those less privileged) to believe that the quality of their lives had improved. This study's data suggests that Mexico's industrial workers did not observe such changes in the 1970s.

The Mexican polity is distinguished by the fact that preemptive reform has worked well enough and often enough to allow a blend of force and co-optation that is considerably less onerous than in other hemispheric cases. However, industrial workers have paid real costs for the "past successes" of preemptive reform, and in late 1979, they were unenthusiastic observers of recent reform efforts. In order to produce the intended political effects among industrial workers, future efforts at preemptive reform will have to involve more profound structural transformations of national economic life. A legacy of mistrust of the political system exists, leading workers to look beyond rhetorical labels toward long-term realities. Yet if reforms undertaken were profound enough to produce the intended attitudinal effect among workers, they would also threaten the interests of some of those for whom preemption is undertaken. This fundamental contradiction of Mexico's political economy will continue to produce political stress on the system in the future.

NOTES

1. A particularly stimulating treatment of preemptive reform is that of Stepan (1978, pp. 46–113) on the Peruvian regime of General Velasco Alvarado. Stepan finds, as we do in Mexico, that fundamental contradictions were inherent in the Peruvian attempt at preemptive reform. Efforts at reform came into conflict with the social-control motivations of preemption.
2. Our definition of preemptive reform need not be taken to suggest that political elites are an internally coherent group who share exactly the same interests, are motivated by the same values, or assess the prospects of uncontrolled mobilization equally. As Hirschman (1963, pp. 276–97) has suggested, those who assemble a political coalition in support of any given "reform package" may be forced to suppress evidence of conflicting interests amongst parties to the decision-making process, issue tailor-made appeals to the differing values of distinct decision-makers in a sequential, isolated fashion, and offer distinct projections of future outcomes to various decision-makers who exhibit different preference orderings amongst available policy options.
3. We use the term economic growth advisedly, referring to an expansion in the sum of goods and services produced, preferring to refer to economic development as growth

- that maximizes at least one, and preferably more, of three additional values: equity in income distribution, national economic integration, and national economic autonomy. On this point see Anderson (1967, pp. 47–48).
4. Robert Scott's classic study of Mexican politics (1964) reflects these assumptions. Scott's views have changed since 1964, as have the views of most other North American students of Mexican politics. For an exposition of Scott's current interpretation, one that stresses the authoritarian features of the Mexican polity and makes no assumptions about the direction of political change, see Scott (1980, pp. 435–80).
 5. Evelyn Stevens (1974, p. 277) notes "the regime's success in limiting, discouraging, and manipulating demand input" as an essential feature of the existing political contract among elites, a treatment that runs parallel to the insightful sociological treatment by Reyna (1974, pp. 12–25). The reigning political contract is one in which demand input is to be mediated via elite brokers, or, to be circumscribed to decision-making arenas presumed to be under the control of elites. Middlebrook (1981a) analyzes recent attempts to introduce political reforms that do not threaten existing patterns of control, as well as the possibility that political elites may have miscalculated the long-term consequences of such reforms for the political system.
 6. Various authors have analyzed other dimensions of the recent impulse toward preemptive reform: Middlebrook (1981a, 1981b) assessed the formal political reforms of the 1970s, while Shapira (1977) examined the political motivations for reforms. Sanderson (1979, 1980, 1981), Grindle (1977), Redclift (1980), and others have assessed the recent, somewhat contradictory, movements toward renewed emphasis on agricultural production.
 7. The concept has intellectual roots in Marxist analysis and, therefore, was intended to apply only to awareness of the contradictions of capitalist society. However, as recent events in Poland might suggest, when structures of privilege are perceived by workers to exist in nominally socialist societies, a similar attitude-syndrome can develop.
 8. Similarly, we hypothesize that critical consciousness will make one more likely to identify with a leftist party than with one of the center/right parties or the PRI. While it would be possible for identification with party to come first and critical consciousness to flow from a party identification, we see leftist party identification as an act of voluntary self-selection in the Mexican context.
 9. We note that our 1979 survey yielded much more negative assessments than did identical survey items used by Cornelius among urban migrants to Mexico City with regard to the performance of President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz. We make note of the contrast between our results and those of Cornelius in order to counter the alternative interpretation that "Mexicans are always this negative." Our 1979 study reveals the general mood of Mexican labor to be highly negative, more negative than the mood of migrants studied earlier by Cornelius. This finding applies to all six items for policy evaluation on which we have data comparable to those collected by Cornelius. In sum, the attitudes of Mexicans are not invariant over time, nor are they invariant across strata within the working classes.
 10. Other analytical approaches could have been used, such as the use of standard correlational techniques; this procedure was chosen because it affords an easily interpretable visual display of the data.
 11. We shall not include the union-membership variable in the subsequent analyses because its relationship to the dependent variable is not monotonic. That is, only one of the autonomous unions exhibits an especially low mean-value on the dependent variable.
 12. To perform this analysis we use the factor-scaling procedure described in part 1 of the appendix, so that we can treat our dependent variable as an interval level variable. Factor-scaling forces ordinal-level variables into normally distributed variables that can take on non-integer values.
 13. The direct-effect coefficients reported in table 3 are standardized-regression coefficients (betas) in which the relationship reported between any two variables is that obtaining after the effects of other variables have been controlled. The indirect-path coefficient is calculated by multiplying the direct-path coefficient between the independent and intervening variable by the direct-path coefficient between the intervening and dependent variable. For example, to calculate the indirect effect of

socioeconomic status on evaluations of the reform content of recent economic policy (dependent variable), we multiplied the path coefficient between socioeconomic status and critical consciousness by that between critical consciousness and external efficacy by that between external efficacy and evaluations of the reform content of recent economic policy. On this method see Asher (1976, pp. 32–40), as illustrated in Cingranelli (1981, p. 679 ff.).

14. A spurious-effect coefficient is an indirect-effect coefficient that goes against the theoretical assumptions of the causal model. Such coefficients may indicate the existence of reciprocal causation. Two-stage-least-squares regression analysis is a method that can be used to assess causal models where reciprocal causation is a problem. We have not used such procedures in this study because we believe that the primary direction of causality is, in each case, as we have diagrammed it, and because we would find it difficult to locate the exogenous variables that would be required to make two-stage-least-squares procedures work with this model. Because the spurious-effects coefficients reported in table 3 are generally not large, we are not preoccupied by the minor distortions that our simplifying assumptions about unidirectional causality might have produced.
15. The level of diffuse support amongst Mexican workers is not high by absolute standards (it is lower than that of Venezuelan workers, for example), but it is somewhat higher than the level of support for recent governmental policy. Our data suggest that Mexican workers continue to be moderately allegiant to the system (57.7 percent say that citizens ought to support their government “always” or “generally”), but they are not fully impressed with the system to which they are allegiant (only 32.4 percent say that “our government protects the interests of workers well enough” or “to the fullest extent”; only 24.8 percent say that political leaders are “honest” or “very honest”). Compare these results with the data in table 1 above.
16. We know from unpublished observations on a companion study of Venezuelan workers that the relationships between critical consciousness, external efficacy, and diffuse support are essentially similar to those observed in Mexico. Because the policy evaluation items yielded conceptually dissimilar scales, no analyses have as yet been undertaken in Venezuela of a variable that would be comparable to the dependent variable of this article. However, early results from the Venezuelan data set lead us to expect few surprises in the roles of critical consciousness, external efficacy, and diffuse support.
17. For an assessment of the possibility of military intervention in Mexican politics, see Purcell (1977, p. 187 ff.).

APPENDIX

1. MEASUREMENT AND SCALING PROCEDURES: DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The dependent variable—evaluations of the reformist content of recent presidential policy—emerged from factor analyses of six policy evaluation questions that were applied to the presidencies of both Luis Echeverría and José López Portillo. Each respondent was asked to evaluate how both presidents had done in six policy areas. The policy areas were: (1) provision of public transportation, (2) provision of police protection, (3) provision of education, (4) provision of housing for the poor, (5) provision of jobs for the unemployed, and (6) reducing the differences between the rich and the poor. Respondents were asked, in a forced-choice format similar to that employed by Cornelius (1975, p. 60), to evaluate presidential performance from poor, through not very good and well enough, up to very well. Respondents were also invited to indicate whether a given goal was inappropriate for government action. In the extreme case of income leveling, about 30 percent of the respondents indicated that the goal was

inappropriate. These respondents have been excluded from our analysis in this paper.

A principal-components factoring procedure, employing orthogonal rotation with iteration (Kim 1975, p. 480), was employed in determining the cognitive structures that underpin worker views of presidential policies. It would have been possible empirically, for example, for Mexican workers to evaluate presidencies primarily and policy areas only secondarily. If such had been the case, as happened in a comparable sample of Venezuelan workers, the factor loadings would have been similar for every policy item under a given president, but different across presidencies. Instead, factor analysis revealed that Mexican workers principally seemed to be evaluating policy areas, not presidencies. This inference flows from the fact that items (5) and (6) for each presidency loaded highly on a single factor, which might be interpreted as the degree to which workers assess the reformist content of recent presidential policy as adequate or inadequate. The loadings were: item (5) Echeverría: .54; item (6) Echeverría: .70; item (5) López Portillo: .65; item (6) López Portillo: .79. Conventional factor-scaling procedures were used thereafter with these four items to construct a factor scale with the appropriate weights for each item.

Some measure of discriminant validity is afforded by the fact that other policy-area scales emerge as separate factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. These factors were dominated, respectively, by items (1) public transportation, and (3) education, and in the case of the third factor, by items (1) transportation, and (2) police protection. The fact that the reform items emerge on the first factor, and that the first factor emerges distinctly as opposed to the second and third factors for which orthogonality is more difficult to achieve, indicates that Mexican workers are oriented primarily and most distinctly toward the reform content of public policy. The structure of cognition is most clear on this dimension of public policy.

It might also be suggested that there is considerable face validity to the emergence of these two items on a single factor. The distribution of income in Mexico is among the world's most unequal, with recent estimates of the Gini Index ranging from .52 to .61; any profound reform of the Mexican economy would necessarily imply a visible change in the distribution of income. Short of dramatic change of income distribution, the second most consequential type of economic reform would be that of job creation in an economy with a large service sector and a high degree of underemployment. It makes sense that Mexican workers would treat these items in a similar fashion. Each item goes to the heart of policy debate in Mexico and represents a criterion by which to judge "how different" policy has been from the pattern of the post-1940 era.

2. MEASUREMENT AND SCALING PROCEDURES: INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Socioeconomic Status: A factor scale consisting of three items, weighted as indicated in parentheses: weekly income in pesos (.61), number of years of formal education (.14), and skill level, coded as unskilled, semiskilled, skilled (.22).

Perceived Mobility in Past Five Years: A Cantril self-anchoring scale from 1 to 10, with respondent's current position contrasted with that existing five years ago.

Perceived Intergenerational Mobility: A Cantril self-anchoring scale from 1 to 10, with respondent's current position contrasted with that of respondent's father.

Critical Consciousness: Three separate subscales were combined into a common scale, weighted as follows: (1) class consciousness (.24), (2) class solidarity (.19), and (3) structure-blaming (.52), in accord with standard factor-scaling procedures. Further information on the composition of the component subscales can be found in Davis, Johnston, and Coleman (1981, pp. 19–20).

Membership in an Antisystem Party: A standardized index coded, prior to normalization, as left-wing party member = 3; center-right party member = 2; PRI member, member of no party = 1. Left-wing parties include the Partido Comunista de México, the Partido Popular Socialista, the Partido Socialista de Trabajadores, and the Partido Mexicano de Trabajadores. Center-right parties include the Partido Acción Nacional, the Partido Auténtico de la Revolución Mexicana, and the Partido Democrático Mexicano.

Diffuse Regime Support: This is a six-item factor scale, following certain items of the widely used Muller-Jukam model, with the following weights attached to specific items: the courts (.60); pride in country (.51); government system best for Mexico (.72); government concern for interests of workers (.75); honesty of political leaders (.64); extent to which citizen ought to support government (.72).

External Political Efficacy: A five-item factor scale with the following weights attached to items that measure the extent to which workers believe that: government pays attention to workers (.20); government responds to electoral mandates (.25); politicians carry out election promises (.11); probability is high/low of government officials responding to citizen requests seriously (.34); PRI leaders pay attention to workers (.36).

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