SPECIAL REPORT SERIES

THE
CARTER CENTER

OBSERVING THE 2000 MEXICO ELECTIONS

BY MARCELA SZYMANSKI

WAGING PEACE ◆ FIGHTING DISEASE ◆ BUILDING HOPE

The Carter Center strives to relieve suffering by advancing peace and health worldwide; it seeks to prevent and resolve conflicts, enhance freedom and democracy, and protect and promote human rights worldwide.

Observing the 2000 Mexico Elections

Final Report

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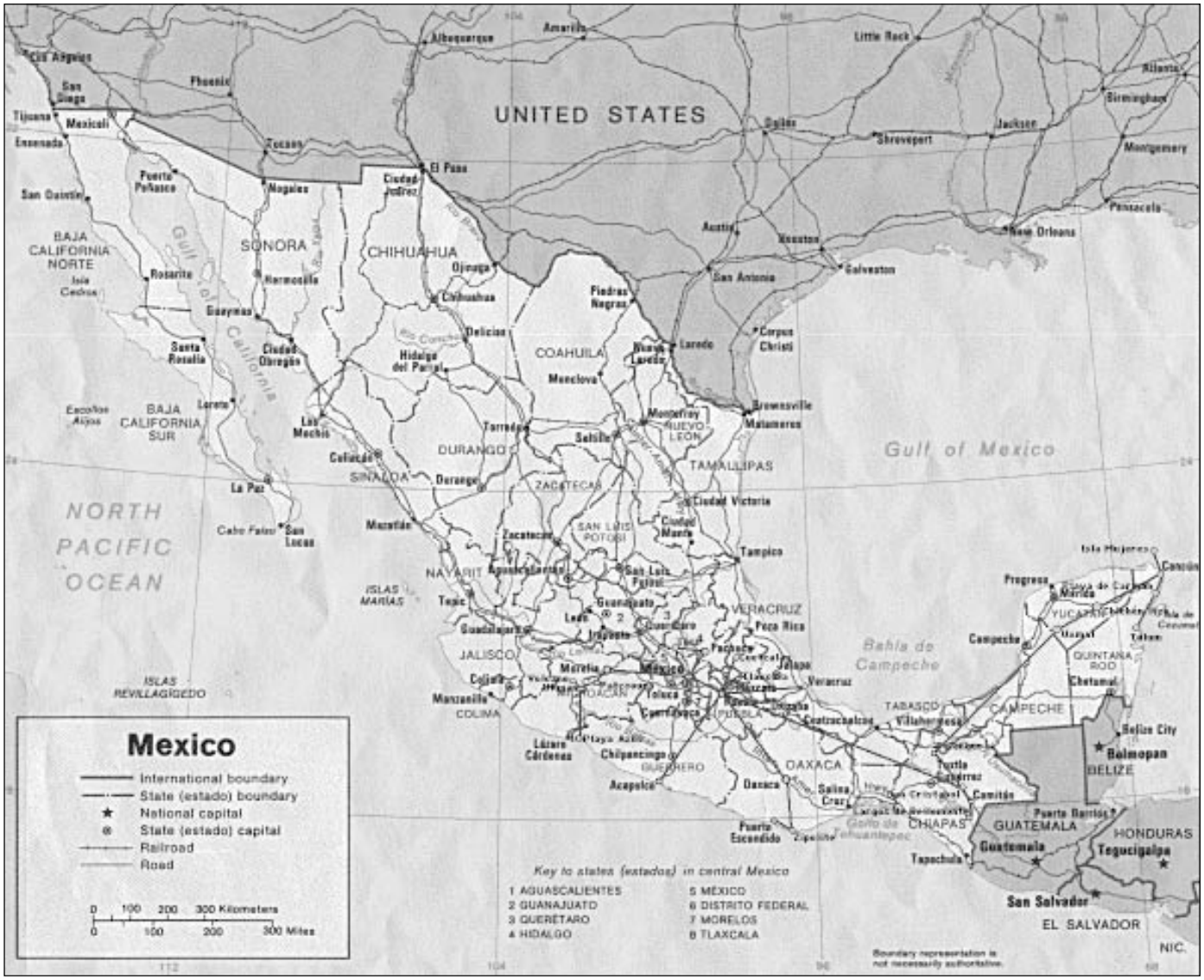
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Key to states (estados) in central Mexico
1 AGUASCALIENTES
2 GUANAJUATO
3 QUERÉTARO
4 HIDALGO
5 MÉXICO
6 DISTRITO FEDERAL
7 MORELOS
8 TLAXCALA
Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.

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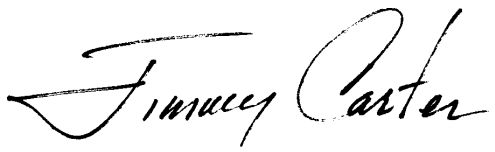
FOREWORD

Since 1988, Mexico has undergone a slow but steady democratization process, which culminated in the July 2, 2000, presidential elections won by opposition candidate Vicente Fox. Those elections brought about the first turnover in power to an opposition party since the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) first came to power 71 years ago. They mark Mexico as a democratic nation that is a valued partner for the United States and a leading force in the Western Hemisphere.

It came as no surprise that The Carter Center was present at this turning point in Mexican political history. The Center's Latin American and Caribbean Program (LACP) had tracked Mexican elections informally since 1986 and sent five election monitoring missions to Mexico since 1992. On each of these visits, The Carter Center monitored election preparations and the implementation of the law, making suggestions to electoral authorities for improvements. Mexico's openness to The Carter Center's comments signaled it was making a good faith effort to overcome past problems and fundamentally transform Mexican politics. In 1998, The Carter Center published Todd Eisenstadt's excellent analysis of the evolution of the electoral justice system in Mexico.

With these years of experience in hand and at the urging of Mexican opposition and government representatives, The Carter Center formed a team of "international visitors" to observe the July 2000 national elections. Dr. Robert Pastor, former director of the Center's LACP, now a faculty member at Emory University, agreed to advise the mission. Together with Dr. Shelley McConnell, LACP associate director, Dr. Pastor led a small delegation to Mexico in June to consult with the Federal Electoral Institute about electoral preparations and negotiate access for Carter Center observers within each of the political party headquarters. Returning in July, the Center assembled an expert team of observers from the United States, Chile, Peru, Austria, and India, some of whom had studied the Mexican political system for decades. Former Bolivia President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada joined me in leading the observation mission, which used a new model of election observation to maintain a dialogue with the parties concerning developments on election day and help confirm that problems were handled appropriately. After the polls closed and the results were tallied, President Ernesto Zedillo handled his party's electoral loss with grace, lending his support to the electoral authorities and ushering in a new era of Mexican politics.

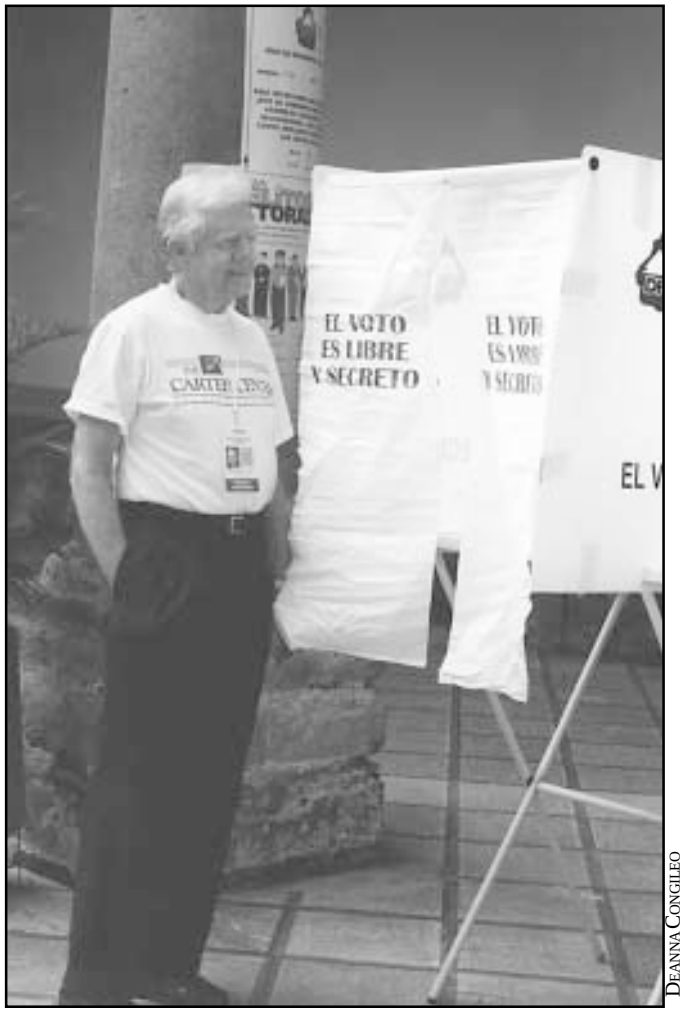
In just a dozen years, Mexico's leaders, encouraged by citizens and civil society organizations, deliberately transformed the country's electoral politics to secure a democratic future for their people. With the publication of this report, I salute that historic endeavor. ■



President Jimmy Carter
Chairman
The Carter Center

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In 1990, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States reviewed the electoral fraud in Chihuahua and Durango and criticized the Mexican government for failing to "comply exactly with the obligation to guarantee the free and full exercise of political rights." The Mexican government rejected the criticism and any international observation of its elections as interference in its internal affairs. Just a decade later, displaying a marked change in attitude, the Mexican government and the principal political parties all invited The Carter Center and other international groups to monitor the electoral process that culminated in the July 2, 2000, election of Vicente Fox to the presidency.



DEANNA CONGILEO

President Carter witnessed the opening of voting "casillas" in Mexico City. On the curtain of the polling booth is written, "The vote is free and secret."

Mexico has traveled a considerable distance in the last decade in opening its politics to genuine competition and inviting the international community to watch. The Carter Center has reinforced this positive trend through election observation of state and national elections. The progressive democratic opening in Mexico has enabled that country to become a full partner for the United States and Canada in the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) trade regime. Mexico's successful transition to democracy is made all the more poignant by recent events such as the failed elections in Peru and coup in Ecuador, which suggest democracy is deeply troubled in some Latin American countries.

The 2000 elections were no minor undertaking. A total of 58,789,209 registered voters had an opportunity to cast their ballots at 113,703 polling sites to elect 1,247 officials, including the president of the republic. To monitor these massive elections, The Carter Center asked its Latin American and Caribbean Program (LACP) to organize a pre-electoral assessment mission that would design a monitoring model suitable to the scope of the elections, and to implement that model by observing the July 2, 2000, elections.

The result of The Carter Center's pre-electoral and election day monitoring missions is explained in this report, which also provides political analysis of the vote outcome. The mission's success resulted from a strong team effort by a handful of deeply knowledgeable observers. President Carter and former Bolivia President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada provided leadership from The Carter Center's Council of Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas. Dr. Robert Pastor from Emory University directed the mission with my support. Todd Eisenstadt, the foremost specialist on Mexico's Federal Electoral Tribunal, took up the key post of monitoring within Mexico's election authority, the Federal Elections Institute (IFE). Vikram Chand, whose book on the PAN (*Partido Acción Nacional*) party was printed recently, came all the way from India to lend his expertise as our field representative and liaison to the PAN. Charles Krause stood watch in the headquarters of the PRI (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*), and George Grayson brought decades of experience to his monitoring of the PRD (*Partido de la Revolución Democratica*). Andreas Schedler, a Mexico resident who has written on democratic development and the electoral system, joined us to accompany the United Nations in visiting Mexico's domestic observer organizations throughout election day to learn from their networks. Chilean Edgardo Mimica analyzed the several quick counts undertaken. Mary Anne Chalker, John Hamilton, Andrea Hamilton, Morgan Neil, and Giselle Grayson observed voting in Mexico City and accompanied the IFE's quick response units as they went about remedying problems that occurred throughout the day.

The Carter Center's strong reputation in election monitoring owes a great deal to the hard work and high standards of its staff. LACP Program Assistant Faith Corneille accompanied the team to Mexico where she coordinated our logistics. Deanna Congileo managed our press relations, and intern Marcela Szymanski provided invaluable assistance in our Mexico City office. She would go on to write this report. Other staff and interns were not able to come to Mexico but provided crucial administrative support from our headquarters in Atlanta, notably Senior Program Associate Laura Neuman and the LACP's incomparable Director Dr. Jennifer McCoy. I would like to thank each of these individuals for their efforts and also thank the Ford Foundation, Kansas City Southern Industries, and Mary Anne Chalker for their generous support of The Carter Center's observation of the 2000 elections in Mexico. ■

Dr. Shelley McConnell
Associate Director, Latin American and Caribbean Program
The Carter Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 The Carter Center has a long history of engagement with Mexico with the shared goal of improving the electoral system in that country. In the early 1990s, the Center helped national observer groups to form and sent international observers to assist in domestic election monitoring. It also invited Mexicans to observe the U.S. elections in 1992. In 1994, the Center was among the first international observers to monitor elections in Mexico, and its observations helped shape electoral reforms that framed those and the 1997 elections, which the Center also observed.

2 Given this history, it came as no surprise that Mexico sought The Carter Center's participation in observing the July 2000 general elections. Via those elections, Mexicans would select a new president, mayor of Mexico City, governors for the states of Morelos and Guanajuato, 500 federal deputies, 128 federal senators, as well as state deputies and members of municipal governments.

3 Five elements of Mexico's institutional development favored fully democratic elections in 2000. These were the independence of the election authorities and tribunals, the presence of international monitors reflecting Mexico's acceptance of international public opinion, the growing independence of the Mexican media, the improved organization of citizens' groups, and the maturity of the political parties.

4 The Carter Center sent an exploratory mission to Mexico in June 2000 which concluded that the conditions for free and fair elections had improved considerably, and that the campaign provided sufficient political space and access to the media for major parties to get their messages to the people. The delegation also took note of concerns about alleged vote-buying and misuse of public funds. It urged that authorities aggressively pursue election-related crimes. The Center established a field representative in Mexico to continue following events.

5 Several days before the July 2 election, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and former Bolivia President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada arrived in Mexico City where they met with the election authorities, President Ernesto Zedillo, the three presidential candidates, international agencies and election observers, as well as local citizens groups involved in the elections. Each of the presidential candidates pledged to them that if the campaign was sufficiently good, he would accept the result of a free and fair vote and honest count, and seek remedy for any complaints through legal channels.

6 On election day, the Center fielded an observation team employing a new model of election observation designed to reflect Mexico's size and electoral development. The Center negotiated with each of the three main political parties and received permission to post an observer at the heart of their organizations, throughout election day to monitor any complaints they received through their networks of party poll watchers. In addition, the Center sent personnel to visit domestic observer organizations and the United Nations as they monitored the process. The Center posted another deeply experienced observer at the headquarters of the Mexican election authorities to learn of any problems reported to them. The Center also sent observers to ride along with the quick response units in Mexico City to see how they resolved such problems. Thus by monitoring the communications networks used to report problems, the Center could cross-reference concerns and keep

its leadership team apprised of developments without mounting a massive monitoring effort through this territorially vast country.

7 Overall, The Carter Center did not observe a pattern of irregularities on election day and was satisfied that the elections were free and fair. Isolated incidents were reported by Mexican observer groups, including late opening of the polls, missing voting site officials, nonindelible ink used to mark voters' fingers, and pressure on voters to favor certain parties. The only consistent difficulty was that there were long lines and insufficient ballots at the special voting booths where transient voters could cast a ballot for president outside their home district. The Center noted that many minor problems were resolved on the spot by the quick response teams set up by election authorities.

8 Vicente Fox, presidential candidate for the PAN-PVEM *Alianza para el Cambio*, won the presidential race with nearly 16 million votes, or 42.6 percent of the total of 37.6 million votes. The PRI's Francisco Labastida finished second with 13.6 million votes, or 36.1 percent of the total. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas came in third with 6.3 million votes, or 16.6 percent of the vote. This marked the first time in 71 years that an opposition candidate had won the presidency. President Ernesto Zedillo, whose government had implemented many of the electoral reforms that built Mexican and international confidence in the electoral system, played a key role in reassuring Mexicans that the alternation in power would be respected as the will of the people.

9 Post-election analyses offered various explanations for the PRI loss. The results showed that alleged efforts to buy votes had not been effective. Some analysts also suggested that the PRI had transformed the country toward an urban, service-oriented economy and, thereby, lost support among its traditional constituency of peasants and blue-collar workers. Pre-election pollsters did not predict Vicente Fox's victory, but alleged pressure on media outlets may have prevented true poll results from being made public before the elections.

10 The Electoral Tribunal received two complaints affecting the presidential election. One was declared unfounded, and the other was resolved by annulling the ballot box. Vicente Fox was officially named president-elect ahead of schedule on Aug. 2, 2000. The pluralistic composition of the chambers dealing with complaints concerning the election of federal deputies and senators helped demonstrate the impartiality of the electoral justice system, and most cases were resolved locally without need for referral to higher courts. Vicente Fox took office in December 2000 at an inauguration witnessed by the director and senior program associate of the Center's Latin American and Caribbean Program. ■

THE CARTER CENTER'S PAST INVOLVEMENT IN MEXICO

The Carter Center engaged Mexico's electoral opening very early and consistently supported Mexicans' efforts to deepen their democracy over the past decade. The Center encouraged opening the door for international observation of elections and then sent monitoring missions to watch important races and recommend improvement in Mexico's electoral administration. These missions included the July 13, 1992, state elections in Michoacán and Chihuahua, two pre-election trips before the 1994 national elections, a joint delegation with the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) to observe the Aug. 21, 1994, national elections, and a study mission to observe the July 6, 1997, midterm elections. By accompanying Mexico in each step along the path toward competitive and honest elections, the Center was able to lend international visibility to Mexico's changes and help Mexico reach its national goals for self-expression through the electoral system.

The PRI came to power via the Mexican Revolution and dominated every election thereafter, holding the presidency, the legislature, and state governorships in a regime that scholars often labeled semi-democratic. Dr. Robert Pastor, then-director of The Carter Center's Latin American and Caribbean Program (LACP), witnessed the fraudulent elections in Chihuahua in 1986, which suggested the PRI's dominance of politics was maintained in part via electoral manipulation. The national elections in 1988 underscored growing concerns about electoral malpractice, leading The Carter Center to undertake a long-term commitment to supporting electoral reform in Mexico.

The Center began by inviting leaders from Mexico's human rights community to participate in Carter Center election observation missions in other countries. In 1990, Sergio Aguayo, the president of Mexico's nongovernmental Academy of Human Rights, joined a delegation of The Carter Center's Council of Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas and the NDI in observing the Haiti elections. In Haiti, Aguayo was partnered with Gregorio Atienza, the former secretary-general of NAMFREL, the election-monitoring group in the Philippines that detected and denounced the attempt by Ferdinand Marcos to commit electoral fraud in 1986. Aguayo returned to Mexico and completed his project of organizing eight different grassroots groups to become domestic election observers.

The Carter Center undertook a long-term commitment to supporting electoral reform in Mexico.

Those domestic observers then invited The Carter Center and its Council of Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas to observe state elections in Michoacán and Chihuahua on July 13, 1992. Dr. Pastor, then-executive secretary of the Council, negotiated an arrangement with the Office of the President of Mexico, which permitted the group to be recognized by the government as the first international group to work with Mexicans in observing a Mexican election. The five delegates

focused on assessing the work of newly formed Mexican observer groups and issued a report at a conference in Mexico City.

As a gesture of reciprocity, The Carter Center invited all the major political parties and civic organizations to observe the U.S. presidential election in November 1992. The group delivered a statement on its observation and recommended ways to improve the electoral process in the United States, which were published in a report. Also in 1992, two other Mexican leaders, Julio Faesler of the Council for Democracy and Miguel Basáñez of the National Accord for Democracy (ACUDE), joined the Center's observation of elections in Guyana. They used this experience to help build national election observer groups in Mexico.

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Dr. Robert Pastor (left) *and President Sánchez de Lozada exchange views with a* "casilla" *president* (right) *in Mexico City.*

Encouraged by these exchanges, Mexican President Salinas de Gortari permitted "international visitors" to monitor the 1994 Mexican presidential elections. In advance of the Aug. 21, 1994, vote, The Carter Center fielded two pre-electoral delegations in September 1993 and June 1994 and published four reports. The delegations first analyzed the electoral reforms passed in September 1993. These addressed concerns related to the voter registration list, voting process, IFE's (*Instituto Federal Electoral*) independence, campaign spending, access to the media, and the observers' role. The September 1993 trip report concluded: "Although the electoral reforms [of September 1993] represent positive steps, as a whole, they fall short of establishing a foundation that would give all parties and the people of Mexico confidence that a genuinely free and fair election will occur in August 1994."

The June 1994 mission sought to assess the major actors' perceptions of electoral rules two months before the elections. This delegation's report acknowledged that further progress had been made in implementing the September 1993 reforms and offered 10 recommendations to build confidence in the process before election day.

Since the decision to invite international observers was made so close to the election, The Carter Center pooled its resources with the NDI and the IRI, and collaborated to field an 80-member delegation. This delegation found that election day proceedings generally were peaceful, voter turnout was high at 77 percent, and 88,000 Mexicans

participated as domestic observers. Despite the improvements, the delegation noted there still were concerns about media access, observer registration, campaign finance, and the autonomy of election authorities.

In November 1996, the Mexican legislature passed several electoral reforms addressing some of the international and domestic observers' concerns during the 1994 presidential elections. The reforms included:

✓ Changes in IFE's structure so it would function autonomously, separate from the Ministry of Interior, and be comprised of independent "*consejeros electorales*" (citizen counselors).

✓ Improvements to the process of refining the Federal Registry.

✓ Reforms in campaign spending, including increasing the percentage of government contributions and establishing a formula for distributing the funds among political parties.

✓ Establishing guidelines for political parties' purchase of media time.

The reforms were acknowledged nationally and internationally as a step toward a more democratic electoral process.

In response to a public invitation from President Zedillo at a conference in Atlanta,[1] an invitation from the IFE, and requests from the major political parties, The Carter Center sent a study mission to the July 6, 1997, election. This election represented a significant advance toward democracy. All the major political parties accepted both the process and the results of the elections, with a few significant exceptions involving incidents in the state elections of Campeche, Colima, and certain federal districts in Chiapas. The government promptly recognized victories by the opposition parties, the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) in the governor's race in Mexico City, and the National Action Party (PAN) in the governor's race for Querétaro and Nuevo León. Mexico's electoral institutions, particularly IFE, showed considerable maturity and objectivity in conducting the elections. Also, Mexicans themselves turned out in record numbers, demonstrating a high degree of civic enthusiasm. In Mexico City, participation rates approached 75 percent; nationally, they hovered around 60 percent. High participation rates indicated that citizens believed their votes would count, although pre-election surveys had revealed that 35 percent to 46 percent of the electorate still had doubts about the integrity of the process.

In 1998, The Carter Center/Council published a study of the reforms of the Electoral Courts titled *Electoral Justice in Mexico: From Oxymoron to Legal Norm in Less Than a Decade*, by Todd Eisenstadt. The report analyzed the cases reviewed by Mexico's federal electoral courts from 1988 to 1997. It found that the autonomy of Mexico's electoral dispute-adjudicating institutions increased dramatically during this period. "With Mexico's Congress in October 1996 granting the Supreme Court jurisdiction over local and state election outcomes," Eisenstadt wrote, "the era of extra-legal bargaining over electoral outcomes may finally be over." Over time, Eisenstadt found that the political parties' complaints became more sophisticated and the

[1] At the conference "Agenda for the Americas for the 21st Century," The Carter Center, May 1997.

judicial decisions more serious. He concluded that the 2000 elections would provide a crucial test of the reformed electoral justice system.

Thus, The Carter Center came to the July 2, 2000, elections with substantial experience in election monitoring in Mexico and a network of connections with political leaders and election authorities that were confident of the Center's professionalism and neutrality. By then, Mexico had already changed a great deal. For the first time, Mexican authorities were eager to have President Carter personally observe the process, a significant indicator of the degree to which Mexico had embraced a more positive relationship with the United States and the global community of democratic nation states.

MEXICO'S CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

In 1989 an opposition party, the PAN, won the governorship of one of Mexico's 32 states, a border state, for the first time. By 2000, PAN members had been elected governors of seven states, while the PRD and its coalition partners were governing four states. In the two houses of Congress, the PRI had held an absolute majority (50 percent plus one) between 1929 and 1994. Until 1988, the PRI had counted on no less than 66 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies, the proportion necessary to amend the constitution, and the Senate was a one-party monopoly. But over a decade of election watching by The Carter Center, Mexican observers, and others, the PRI's hegemony in the legislature had given way to pluralism, and indeed to an opposition majority in the lower house. As Mexicans went to the polls in 2000, they crossed the final bridge to a competitive political system. For the first time, there was uncertainty about which party would win the presidency, and that uncertainty attested to the fact that free choice had been established in Mexican elections, regardless of what the outcome might be.

The results of the 2000 elections would change Mexico's political landscape even further. The PAN won the presidency, ending 71 years of PRI leadership of the executive branch. The PRI faction of Congress, both at federal and local levels, used to vote according to the dictate of the president, in what politicians called "*línea*." But a clear separation of powers came on July 2. The victory of the opposition candidate brings a clear end to the *línea* and forces the PRI to negotiate in earnest with the other parties.

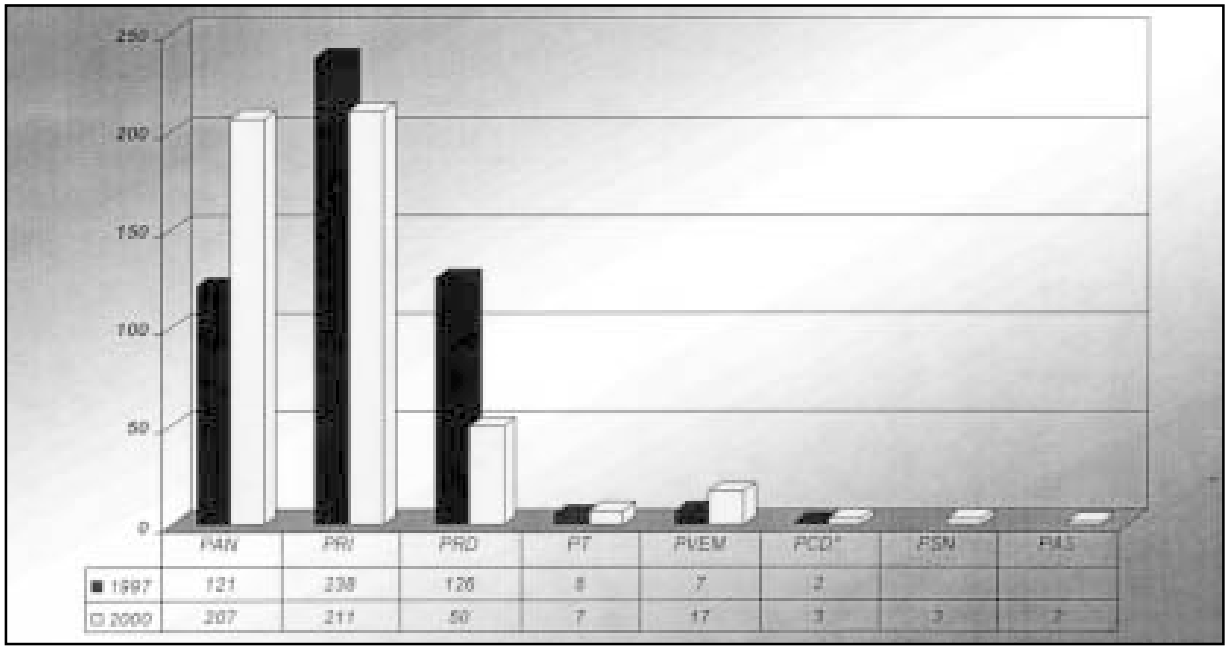
After the vote,[2] the lower chamber was divided into two large sectors and a smaller third group of parties — PRI 41.8 percent, PAN 41.6 percent, PRD 10.4 percent, PVEM 3 percent, and PT 1.6 percent. The Senate showed also a plural composition — PRI 46.8 percent, PAN 37.5 percent, PRD 10.9 percent, PVEM 3.9 percent, PT and CD 0.14 percent. Although no party had held an absolute majority in the federal Congress since 1997, the progress of the PAN in the 2000 elections was remarkable — to 208 deputies in 2000, up from 121 in 1997.

Despite these opposition gains, the main feature remains that no party holds the absolute majority. Furthermore, a great deal of legislative work needs

[2] According to preliminary results released by IFE, quoted by Banamex-Accival, *Review of the Economic Situation of Mexico* 76, no. 895 (July 2000): 269.

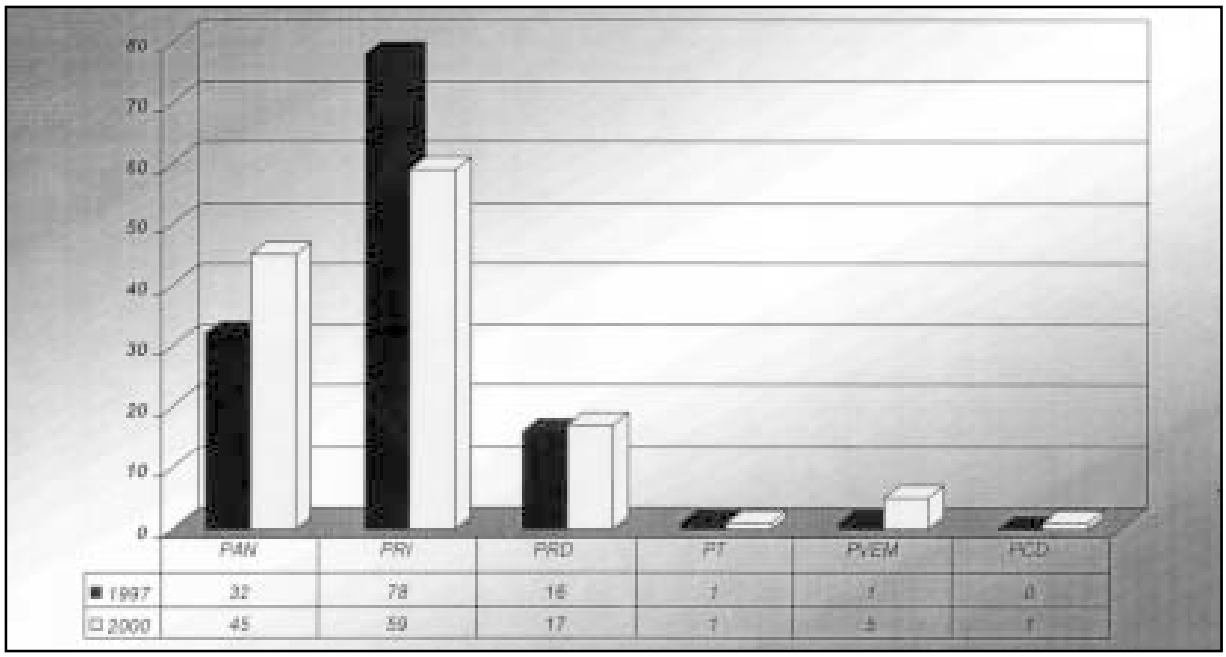
MEXICO'S CHANGING DEMOCRATIC LANDSCAPE

COMPOSITION OF CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, 1997 AND 2000



** The PCD 1997 tally includes two "independent" deputies. PCD, PSN, and PAS gained registry in 2000.*

COMPOSITION OF SENATE, 1997 AND 2000



to be done. The outgoing legislature had left 64 percent of draft legislation "pending" as of June 27.[3] The legislation set aside included freedom of information, financial accountability for public servants, and the re-election of members of Congress. Negotiation and coalitions will be the defining components of Mexican politics in the coming years.

WHAT WAS AT STAKE?

Within the context of this maturing democracy, Mexicans prepared to vote July 2 for:

- ✓ President of the republic.
- ✓ Mayor of Mexico City.
- ✓ Governors for the states of Morelos and Guanajuato.
- ✓ 500 federal deputies.
- ✓ 128 federal senators.
- ✓ 195 state deputies.
- ✓ 420 members of municipal governments.

To the voters, electing a candidate of the opposition meant much more than a change of leaders. Well-structured pyramids of power, both legal and illegal, had been built over the decades during which the elite divided the pie. Patronage, corporatism, even health and minimum subsistence services[4] conditional upon party membership, were everyday life for many Mexicans. As President Carter noted, "In many people's minds, the PRI and the government were one and the same."[5]

An initial step down the road toward the July 2, 2000, elections was the selection of presidential candidates. In past presidential elections, the incumbent president, always a PRI member, had named his party's candidate and that person inevitably succeeded him in elections that many scholars and citizens believed to be fraudulent. Now for the first time, Mexican voters faced a genuine choice among:

- ✓ Francisco Labastida, a well-known PRI politician, once governor of Sinaloa and Minister of the Interior, who had been elected in the first-ever national primaries in the country.

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A voting site in the suburbs of the city of Cuernavaca, State of Morelos.

[3] Quoted by Federico Reyes Heroles, "Gobernar," *Reforma*, 1 August 2000.

[4] The PROGRESA (*Programa de Educación, Salud y Alimentación*) and PROCAMPO are the Zedillo administration's programs against extreme poverty, aimed at families earning less than $1 a day. PROGRESA pays a monthly amount to mothers if they send their children to school and bring them to medical care. Approximately 2.6 million families are beneficiaries. PROCAMPO subsidizes approximately 2.9 million farmers.

[5] Final press conference, Hotel Maria Isabel Sheraton, Mexico City, 3 July 2000.

✓ Vicente Fox, a charismatic governor-rancher-businessman, who began campaigning for the presidency in 1997, affiliated to the PAN.

✓ Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, a former PRI member and former governor of the state of Michoacán, who later founded the PRD and became mayor of the capital. He was running for the presidency for the third time in a row.

The opposition parties designated their candidates according to their statutes, while the PRI conducted primary elections. The PRI's main contenders were Francisco Labastida (still the Minister of the Interior), Roberto Madrazo (governor of Tabasco), and Manuel Bartlett (former governor of Puebla). Labastida won by a large margin. President Zedillo resisted severe pressure from his own party to reveal his favorite, breaking the Mexican tradition wherein the Mexican president would name his successor.

As for the PRI, it was a leap of faith to conduct, for the first time, a primary election for its candidate. Millions of PRI members had built their careers around the possibility of getting a government-related job. For the first time, young "*priístas*" were betting all their chips on a not-so-certain winner. Knowing the odds and agreeing to take part displayed a high degree of maturity within the party, and the readiness of its leaders to compete in a clean, transparent presidential race.

Within the PAN, only Fox registered for the candidacy. Nevertheless, there was a vote open to party members in part over the Internet. Fox had been campaigning every weekend since July 1997, with his expenses paid by a registered, nonprofit association called *Amigos de Fox*. The lengthy effort, which the press had predicted would run out of steam by 2000, helped Fox overcome the lack of media attention afforded anyone outside the party in power.

The PRD suffered a deep division from the moment it had to decide how to choose a candidate. Not all party members agreed on Cárdenas, then mayor of Mexico City. Another prominent politician and founding member of the PRD, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, believed he had a chance to compete internally with Cárdenas. However, Cárdenas decided to accept the offer by the *Partido del Trabajo* (PT) to be its presidential candidate, even though the PRD had not decided how to designate its own. This decision, made unilaterally by Cárdenas, was taken badly by Muñoz Ledo. Muñoz Ledo then became the candidate of the *Partido Auténtico de la Revolución Mexicana* (PARM) and left the PRD. Cárdenas became the sole contender for the PRD's presidential candidacy. Muñoz Ledo decided June 14, 2000, to leave the PARM and join Fox. The internal dispute and consequent disarray spread over the major left-of-center party of Mexico and grew as election day approached.

Though some voters were concerned that the PRI might somehow manufacture a victory for its candidate, there was palpable uncertainty in the month leading up to the election about who would govern Mexico. Certainty about the rules of the game and uncertainty about who will win by those rules is a hallmark of democratic elections.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS A BASIS FOR DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS

Five elements of Mexico's institutional development since 1986 favored fully democratic elections in 2000. These were:

✓ The independence, since 1996, of the electoral authorities and tribunals.

✓ The acceptance of international public opinion through the presence of international election monitors.

✓ The growing independence of the media.

✓ The improved organization of citizens' groups.

✓ The maturity of the political parties, which had won more state and local government offices, and had been a part of a pluralistic Congress since 1997.

An Independent Electoral Authority

The Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) had undergone a complex transformation from a temporary organ within the Ministry of the Interior to a permanent, independent body. The IFE began in 1988 with a relatively modest operations budget of 4,897,800 pesos,[6] or approximately $515,557 in U.S. dollars. It soon became a federal entity with 32 decentralized offices called *Institutos Electorales Estatales*[7] and endeavored to win voters' confidence.

By May 2000, the National Voters Registry (*Registro Federal de Electores*) had been completely renewed, after six years of work. The IFE first built a list of all Mexicans older than 18 ("*catálogo general*"), using door-to-door, census-like methods. According to the Mexican Population Council (*Consejo Nacional de Poblacion*), in July 2000 there were roughly 61 million Mexicans older than 18. All *catálogo* members were invited to get voting credentials bearing their photographs and fingerprints. Those who requested the voting credentials were placed on a voter list, the "*padrón*." *Catálogo* members who obtained voting credentials were then placed in corresponding

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Voters' names on voting credentials had to match exactly those printed on voluminous lists.

[6] IFE data. In contrast, the total budget to organize the elections was 8,453,654,000 pesos, or US$899.3 million.

[7] The IFE is responsible for the organization of elections of presidents, federal deputies, and senators. The Carter Center has been mostly observing the evolution at the federal level.

voting districts, or "*listas nominales*." Of 59,666,514[8] Mexicans registered in the *padrón*, 58,862,287, or 99 percent, appeared in the *listas nominales*. That is 96.5 percent of the voting-age population. In contrast, registered voters account for 89.9 percent of Canada's voting-age population and 55.5 percent in the United States.[9] Since 1997, these *listas nominales* have been published with photographs of the members.

On July 2, 2000, 37,633,923[10] Mexicans voted, or 63.9 percent of those whose names appeared in the *listas nominales*. Between 1994 and 2000, the *padrón* was audited 36 times and updated regularly. IFE offices countrywide function on a permanent basis, not only during election time, to process new requests for voting credentials. It is worth noting that approximately 70 percent of registered voters live in urban areas, 20 percent in rural areas, and 10 percent in "mixed" areas, i.e., living in the suburbs while working in the city or vice versa. This coincides with census data.

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Principal advisor to the delegation Dr. Robert Pastor meets with Jorge Castañeda (right) *and Senator Adolfo Aguilar Zínser* (left), *foreign policy advisors to Vicente Fox.*

In its third report about Mexican presidential elections in 1994, The Carter Center had concluded that the most pressing problem was raising confidence in the electoral process. But in his first year in office, President Zedillo confronted a severe economic crisis in 1995. Despite this, to his credit, the electoral law reforms that gave autonomy to the Federal Electoral Institute and Tribunal were made ready and voted upon in October and November 1996. The numerous reforms introduced during his mandate separated the organization of elections from both the executive and the legislative powers, while fully incorporating the Electoral Tribunal to the federal justice system. Gaining the confidence of the voters, however, turned out to be a task neither easy nor cheap.

In addition to the IFE campaigns, the Mexican voters witnessed, through an increasingly

[8] *El Régimen Electoral Mexicano y las Elecciones Federales 2000*, *Instituto Federal Electoral*, June 2000. The report uses data as of April 2000.

[9] José Woldenberg, president counselor of IFE, press release issued by *Instituto Federal Electoral*, 31 May 2000.

[10] *Instituto Federal Electoral*, <www.ife.org.mx> (16 July 2000). This was not the highest participation rate, but it was the highest number of actual voters. According to IFE, the highest participation rate was in 1994 when 34.8 million voters, or 76 percent of the 45.8 million included in the *listas nominales*, elected Zedillo.

independent press, the monumental task of electing the Electoral Council in 1996. The Electoral Council is the highest authority within the IFE. Nine *consejeros electorales* had to be chosen for periods of seven years, and they were to be selected from lists proposed to the Chamber of Deputies by the political groups. Since a two-thirds majority was required, this procedure took considerable time and negotiation among parties, a novelty for the young, multiparty Mexican political system. The result was an Electoral Council no one could accuse of political favoritism.

Once the council was installed, a number of disputes arose about the organization of IFE and the reputation of the *consejeros*. All the disputes were aired by the media. Since the IFE eventually resolved the matters under the full light of public scrutiny, it became evident the electoral authority was not receiving "orders from a higher instance," or *línea*, as had usually been the case between the president of the republic and the electoral authority. There was a degree of transparency in the operations to which the press was not accustomed. By showing its imperfections, the IFE transmitted an important message of impartiality to voters.

IFE's work came at a high cost. For the elections of 2000, IFE had a budget of 8,453,654,000 pesos, about $899.3 million in U.S. dollars. This was slightly more than half a percentage point (.6 percent) of Mexico's federal budget, however, this figure has been popularly called "the price of distrust."[11] The IFE not only financed most of the electoral campaigns but also bought and allocated airtime and space in the media for all political parties. At the same time, the IFE tried to monitor additional party expenditures by tracking their privately paid time in the media.

There was an expenditure ceiling, including public and private contributions, of US$51 million for the presidential candidates apiece; US$77,000 for federal deputies, and a varying ceiling for senators, according to the state they represented, that allowed between US$314,000 and US$3.14 million. The electoral reform of 1996 ruled that private financing of political parties could not exceed public financing. The new maximum for individual donations per donor was US$79,000. That remains a high amount for a country with a gross domestic product per capita of US$3,840.[12] But when there was no limit, Mexico witnessed cases like the legendary fund-raising dinner organized by then-President Salinas de Gortari in February 1993, where 30 (very) select guests paid an eye-popping US$25 million a plate.[13] Not surprisingly, the presidential race of 1994 was qualified as "unequal" even by the victor, President Zedillo.

Public funding for all campaigns for 2000 was estimated at US$315 million,[14] 30 percent of which was divided equally among registered parties. The remaining 70 percent was distributed as follows: 30.3 percent to the PRI, 30.2 percent to the *Alianza para el Cambio* (PAN-PVEM), and 34.1 percent for the *Alianza por México* (PRD, PT, CD, PSN, PAS). The remaining 5.4 percent went to the PCD, PARM, and PDS. A final report about IFE's expenditures, including estimates of private funding, for the July 2 elections is expected by 2001.

During the years since it became autonomous,

[11] Washington Office on Latin America, *Mexico Election Monitor 2000*, no. 2, February 2000.

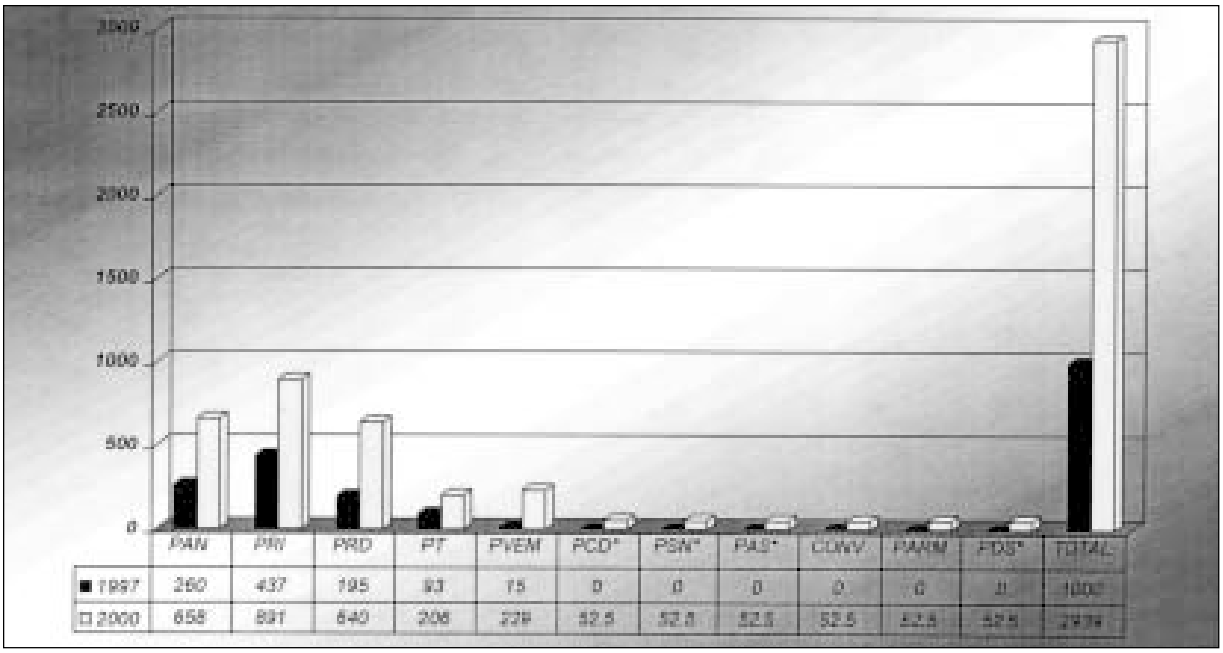
[12] *World Economic Indicators*, The World Bank, 2000.

[13] Andrés Oppenheimer, *Bordering on Chaos*, (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1996): 87. Some of the guests paid up to $50 million for a total of $750 million gathered that evening.

[14] Alonso Lujambio, IFE Electoral Councilor, "Mexico Toward the Federal Elections in 2000" (paper presented in Paris, May 2000), 16.

THE PRICE OF DISTRUST: PUBLIC FINANCING FOR POLITICAL PARTIES

(IN MILLION PESOS. SOURCE: BANAMEX-ACCIVAL, BASED ON DATA FROM IFE)



** PCD, PSN, PAS, and PDS gained registry in 2000.*

the IFE has campaigned to get its message to voters: "Your vote counts; your vote is secret." The success of the campaign could be measured in the relatively high turnout on July 2 and a never-seen-before outcome.

The Presence of International Monitors

Observing the Mexican elections is the province of Mexican citizens; however, duly registered foreigners have been able to observe since 1994. In Mexico, the legal term to designate international monitors became "foreign visitors." This sign of openness was very important for regaining public trust in Mexico's electoral process, both at home and abroad. The confidence of the international community, investors included, is reflected in the number of monitors present on election day. The Carter Center was the first group to be admitted to "visit" during a Mexican election in 1992. The first large contingent of international delegations came in 1994 with 943 registered "visitors" from 34 countries. In 1997's midterm congressional elections, there were 398 visitors from 33 countries. In 2000, there were 860 people from 58 countries. Most of those who came in 2000 came on their own, rather than as representatives of organizations. To make their work more effective, they could count on logistical support from the United Nations. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) had a budget of $28 million[15] to fulfill its tasks, which included supporting selected observation and civic education projects — some led by Mexican citizens, others by visitors.

[15] *La Jornada*, 29 March 2000.

At the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) headquarters, President and Mrs. Carter and a young guest get a demonstration of the institution's monitoring capabilities, accompanied by the IFE's Víctor Guerra.

THE CARTER CENTER

For the 2000 elections, international observers had considerable support. The Carter Center's pre-electoral mission concluded that the combination of an effective IFE, its roving officials (*asistentes*), party representatives, and domestic and international observers was likely to make election fraud much easier to detect and thus more costly to undertake than in previous elections.

The Growing Independence of the Media

Freedom of the press in Mexico has a bloody history. According to the 1997-1998 report of the *Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Francisco de Vitoria*, between 1994 and 1998, 11 journalists had been murdered, 125 suffered physical aggression, and nine were kidnapped while doing their job;[16] all the crimes remain unpunished. Being "independent" in Mexico for many years simply meant daring to criticize the PRI and/or the government or uncovering a corrupt operation.

For decades, the media had been repressed. This was fated to end. As a supplement to the policy of international economic openness pursued by the Mexican government since the presidency of Miguel de la Madrid (1982-88), and to provide reliable information to potential investors, a relaxation of the pressure on the media slowly began. This breathing space grew when there was national news of international interest, most notably the Zapatista uprising in the state of Chiapas on Jan. 1, 1994. The fact that the leader of the rebels, known as the *Subcomandante Marcos*, chose only one local and three national newspapers to disseminate his demands confirmed the perception

[16] <www.derechos.org/nizkor/mexico/cdhfvitoria/anual97.html>.

of a budding independent press in Mexico.[17]

The IFE issued 14,000 media credentials for coverage of election day. Foreign media accounted for 2,000 of those, a bright international spotlight. But if the quantity of coverage was high, the quality was not necessarily so, and there were concerns about imbalances in media coverage during the campaign period. Before the presidential election in 1994, a study by the *Academia Mexicana de Derechos Humanos*[18] found that between January and April 1994, the PRI enjoyed a 3:1 advantage over the two strongest opposition parties, the PAN and the PRD, in total airtime on the two prime-time television news programs, "24 Horas" and "Hechos."

In 2000, the influence of electoral reform was clear in the balanced number of paid spaces per party. According to media monitors in IFE, there was an improvement in proportion of time and spaces allotted to the different parties and candidates, though the PRI continued to enjoy some advantages, especially in the electronic media. As reported by the IFE on Aug. 24, in the period between Jan. 19 and June 29, the proportion of airtime for those parties was: PRI, 39.85 percent; PAN, 27.43 percent; and PRD, 20.18 percent. A larger proportion of the coverage of Fox was negative, as compared to Labastida or Cárdenas. From March 12 to April 8, Fox received negative coverage 10.8 percent of the time, compared to 4.2 percent for Labastida and 5.4 percent for Cárdenas.

Self-censorship by the media — demonstrated primarily as limited negative coverage of the party in power — persisted because of the fear of losing precious broadcasting licenses. These are issued through the Ministry of the Interior. Media also feared losing major advertisers, a problem common to developed countries. However, for the 2000 presidential elections, some Mexican media became more independent. In an atmosphere of increasing political plurality, they exposed the conflicts between elites. This helped end the myth of the "governing class," bringing government closer to the governed. By letting the leaders and candidates appear warts and all before the public, the media gained credibility and the voters were able to make a more informed choice.

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Alianza por México*'s candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas shares impressions with President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada* (right).

In 2000, some international organizations and chambers of commerce relied on opinion polls experts for information about Mexico's political atmosphere. In 1994, The Carter Center had recommended[19] that exit polls not be used for two reasons. First, and most important, voters needed to

[17] The newspapers were *La Jornada*, *El Financiero* and *Proceso*, plus the local *El Tiempo*, published in San Cristóbal de la Casas. Raimundo Rivapalacio, "Partidos Políticos, Medios de Comunicación y el Proceso Democrático," Instituto Federal Electoral, <www.ife.org.mx/wwwcai/privapa.htm>.

[18] The Carter Center, "Elections in Mexico: Third Report," *Working Paper Series* (1 August 1994): 23.

[19] The Carter Center, "Elections in Mexico: Third Report," *Working Paper Series* (1 August 1994): 38.

learn that their votes were secret. If it became known that people were asking how they voted, that would compromise their vote. Secondly, we felt exit polls would be unreliable precisely because of voter mistrust, and, therefore, would be misleading. For the 2000 elections, the IFE ruled that all exit-poll takers and quick-count firms had to register with it before June 23. Electoral law forbade the firms to publish results in any form between midnight June 25 and 8 p.m. July 2. In addition, the firms had to let the IFE know the methodology they were going to employ, as well as who had commissioned their work.

Citizens Groups

Citizens' organizations had already gained experience observing elections and assessing the actions of the different parties as election day approached. For the 2000 elections, groups such as *Alianza Cívica*, *Movimiento Ciudadano por la Democracia* (MCD), the *Academia Mexicana de Derechos Humanos* and *FUNDAR* took on new roles, examining incidents of vote buying and coercion, as well as campaign use of public resources. This time, reports of physical violence against opposition party members were scarce, although no less shocking.[20] Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) also assumed a more active role in civic education campaigns, some funded by foreign NGOs and the United Nations. Their presence, resourcefulness, and access to the media had a decisive impact on voters and political parties.

The responsibility of monitoring the elections passed gradually from the independent citizen affiliated with an NGO to a growing number of party delegates in the polling sites, which were already familiar figures in previous elections. The number of accredited Mexican election observers decreased sharply. This reflected their growing confidence in the political parties, with which many of the former observers now were affiliated. In 1994, there were 81,620 Mexican observers, belonging to 251 organizations. For the midterm 1997 elections, there were 24,391 observers from 143 groups. By 2000, the number dwindled to 10,657 observers, affiliated with 293 organizations. At the same time, leaders of the main political parties confirmed to President Carter that they could post members or sympathizers as poll watchers at 97 percent of the 113,000 polling sites, and the main political parties counted on sophisticated technology to assist their own monitoring activities.

The IFE also contributed to the public education of the citizenry. Besides conducting media campaigns to promote the secrecy of the vote, the IFE randomly selected and thoroughly trained 3.5 million Mexicans as polling site officials — one million more than in 1994.[21]

Mature Opposition Parties

The most notable changes in Mexico's democratic opening were achieved in just 11 years. While the opposition parties had been gaining ground at the local level, a turning point came in 1989 when the PAN won the governorship of Baja California Norte. Electoral reforms between 1989 and 1996 gradually opened local and national congresses. Every opposition victory came with high expectations from the populace. Local congresses became accustomed to negotiation and temporary alliances. Newly installed opposition governments spent a long period, at the beginning of their terms,

[20] The arbitrary detention and homicide of Artemio Antonio Pérez, from Mixistlán de la Reforma Zacatepec, in the state of Oaxaca. As formally denounced by MCD representatives at the *Procuraduría General del Estado* on 21 June 2000.

[21] All figures in this paragraph reported by IFE's *Dirección de Capacitación Electoral y Educación Cívica*, 27 April 2000.

dismantling long-entrenched power structures and corporatist interests, all without violence. The degree of political maturity that the parties achieved, in a relatively short period, is remarkable. ■

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Children in Cuernavaca listen to instructions to participate in the "children's vote," part of the IFE's civic education program.

PRE-ELECTORAL ASSESSMENT AND CONCERNS

At the invitation of the major political parties and the government of Mexico, and with the welcome of the IFE, the Latin American and the Caribbean Program (LACP) of The Carter Center, representing the Council of Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas, dispatched an exploratory mission to Mexico June 12-14, 2000. The four-member team was to assess the electoral process and propose a strategy to monitor the elections of July 2. Led by Dr. Robert Pastor, Mexico expert and Emory University professor, and Dr. Shelley McConnell, associate director of the LACP, the team met with senior party officials, members of the government, IFE, the Electoral Tribunal, and diplomats. Mexican officials were persuaded that an election-monitoring team led by distinguished council leaders could make a significant contribution to deterring electoral fraud or denouncing it if it occurred. This would give the Mexican people more confidence that their votes would count. Dr. Vikram Chand and Dr. Todd Eisenstadt, deeply experienced Mexicanists who joined the team, remained in Mexico for follow-up meetings and to prepare for the arrival of an election day delegation.

The question to be addressed by the exploratory mission was whether the election campaign was sufficiently free and fair to provide voters with the information and environment to make an informed and free decision on election day.

Based on its experience assessing electoral conditions in Mexico for more than a decade, the exploratory mission concluded that the conditions for free and fair elections had improved significantly. A series of reforms had established a professional and autonomous IFE, a state-of-the-art election identification card, a public financing system that provided significant resources and access to the media, and an Electoral Court to adjudicate disputes and certify the results. These changes had provided sufficient political space to allow the opposition to win nearly one-third of the state governorships, the mayorship in the capital, and a majority in Congress. Most significantly, there was an even chance that an opposition candidate could win the presidency. The campaign had been fierce, but all sides had the opportunity to get their message and party program to the people.

During the campaign, concerns had been raised about the misuse of public funds, the unfairness of media reporting, and the lack of vigor by the special prosecutor against electoral crimes (*Fiscalía Especial para la Atencion de Delitos Electorales* - FEPADE). Also, suspicion was high that the election, if close, could be stolen or the results not accepted. Carter Center representatives pursued these issues, first in conversations with the opposition. The critical question was whether the law had been broken. There were only five formal complaints filed against the Ministry for Social Development (SEDESOL), and 86 complaints were filed with the Congressional Commission on individual violations of the distribution of aid from the *Programa de Educación, Salud y Alimentación* (PROGRESA). None concerned the federal government's program of agricultural subsidies, PROCAMPO (*Programa de apoyo al Campo*). When asked why so few complaints had been filed, opposition representatives said that charges were very difficult to prove, in part because peasants were reluctant or fearful of criticizing the PRI. Opposition parties also claimed that the authorities charged with punishing electoral violations did not take them seriously, particularly the FEPADE, which is a nominally independent office in the executive branch, working under the attorney general.

Javier Patiño, head of the FEPADE, complained that his small budget of $4 million, permitted him to hire only 65 prosecutors, inadequate for

the caseload. He said that in the year 2000, he received 285 complaints, of which 60 resulted in arrest warrants. Of these 60, the courts have found that 20 contained grounds for criminal prosecution. Eight of these 20 concerned the misuse of government funds by public employees, usually at the municipal level. Patiño did not recall that any of them related to PROGRESA or PROCAMPO. The record in previous years reflected a comparatively small number of cases that were prosecuted. Between 1997 and 1999, the FEPADE received 1,341 complaints; it resolved 76 percent of them. Of the cases resolved, only 140, or 14 percent, were ruled violations of the law, and FEPADE obtained 135 indictments. Of these 135 indictments, 73 were for falsifying elector credentials; 19 were for misusing public funds and 43 were for stealing electoral documents. Critics have argued that FEPADE had spent a great deal of money on relatively few prosecutions.


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The Carter Center's ground representative in Mexico City, Dr. Vikram Chand (right), *coordinates agendas with Fox's scheduler Juan Hernández.*

It was also hard to judge whether the lack of formal complaints reflected satisfaction with the system or, conversely, widespread fear based on residual memories of fraud and intimidation and a consequent lack of faith in the judicial system. It was worrisome, however, that the government and FEPADE had not been more aggressive in pursuing election-related crimes. The Carter Center's exploratory team urged FEPADE to take seriously the complaint of a PEMEX (the national oil monopoly) official who accused the government agency of compelling its workers to work and vote for PRI. They also asked officials in the office of the presidency and in Gobernacion to take steps to prevent violence against PRD leaders or party representatives in rural Chiapas, Guerrero, the state of Mexico and Oaxaca. The FEPADE official said he would make sure that the state governors would take special precautions to allow party representatives to work without fear of reprisals or intimidation.

The Carter Center team raised concerns that the government budget was increased in the first quarter of 2000 by more than 15 percent from the same period of the previous year. PRI officials claimed that was due to the vast increase in funding for the census and IFE. In the table given to the delegation, the increase in both of these programs

DEANNA CONGILEO

The plastic board boxes with windows were assembled and sealed before witnesses of the different parties.

was dramatic — 3.4 billion pesos more in the first three months of 2000 as compared to the same period the previous year — but this only amounted to 7 percent of the 51 billion pesos increase in the government budget. The explanation given was that the government had been able to keep the previous budget deficit low because of the soaring price of oil, which accounts for so much of its revenue.

The pre-election delegation also encountered concerns about vote buying. IFE sponsored many advertisements that "the vote is secret," but all the political parties shared with IFE the responsibility to ensure that the polling sites were monitored closely so as to make that promise real. Some of the NGOs took a different tactic, telling people they should not be averse to accepting offers from any party, but should then feel free to vote their conscience without fear that the way they voted would be known. An opinion poll, commissioned by the *Dallas Morning News*[22] and published on May 12, 2000, suggested that Mexicans might be following this strategy: 85 percent of the 4,634 respondents indicated that they felt their vote would be "free and fair" regardless of what some parties might be saying.

It would not be unusual for a strong incumbent party, like the PRI, to want to use its superior resources to retain power. But incumbency is a double-edged sword. The recipients of state largesse may be grateful, or they may be angry that the party acts as if it owns the government. The key is to make sure that the people understand that their vote is their own.

In conclusion, the pre-electoral process in Mexico presented flaws and inequities as one might expect from a system that has not seen alternation in power at the national level for 71 years. Nonetheless, the Carter Center exploratory team believed that the campaign provided sufficient political space and access to the media for the major parties to get their messages to the people. The next test would come on voting day, when observers would assess whether legally prescribed procedures were followed, whether the vote was secret, and whether the count accurately reflected the preferences of the population. n

[22] Conducted by MUND Opinion Services.

ELECTION DAY

As of June 25, the last day opinion polls could be published, the presidential election seemed a dead heat between Labastida and Fox. Cárdenas maintained a consistent, and distant, third position. The continuous accusations of vote buying and coercion, plus the declared intention of both Fox and Cárdenas to challenge the results should the margin be slim, were bad omens. Could The Carter Center do something to ease the democratic process?

The modality of the Carter Center's election observation mission was adapted to Mexico's high population, large territory, and well-developed communications infrastructure and electoral institutions. The team agreed with IFE President Jose Woldenberg that large-scale fraud was impossible. However, given the close race that the polls were indicating, it was conceivable that even small-scale fraud of 1 percent to 2 percent could affect the outcome of the election. If such manipulation were to occur, it would most likely happen in the most remote areas, precisely those that would be most difficult for international observers to monitor. Some estimates suggested that as many as 30,000 polling sites were at risk. It would have been clearly impossible for international observers to monitor so many remote *casillas*, so, the exploratory team devised a unique strategy that adapted to the large size of Mexico and the small size of the delegation that would monitor the July elections.

This approach was based on the premise that the first line of defense for any election is party poll watchers and nonpartisan domestic observers. The Carter Center requested that each party, the IFE, the UN, and domestic NGO groups accept a Carter Center representative in their headquarters during the election. The effectiveness of this monitoring model relied on the eyes and ears of those with the most at stake — the political parties and candidates — to keep open lines of communication among all the actors and thus to help resolve disputes and keep tensions low.

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Long lines of voters started forming very early in Cuernavaca, state of Morelos.

After the pre-electoral assessment delegation rendered its conclusions in June, a small delegation of Mexico experts was formed. Besides the Center's Latin American

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Senator Rodolfo Elizondo (left), *Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, Fox campaign spokeswoman Martha Sahagún, Senator Adolfo Aguilar Zínser, Vicente Fox, and daughter Ana Cristina, pause after their first meeting with the Carter Center delegation.*

and Caribbean Program staff, this tailor-made monitoring model relied on the participation of scholars and professionals of various nationalities, some of whom were residents in Mexico and others of whom came halfway around the world specifically to monitor elections with the Center. These expert observers would stand watch with the main political parties, the IFE, the UNDP, and several organizations of Mexican observers which received information about local problems in even the most remote areas through pre-established communications channels. They hoped to detect and defuse conflict by letting parties know the problems they encountered were being noted by observers, and by cross-comparison of reported problems to confirm the seriousness of reported incidents and learn how the IFE responded.

The observation model called on delegation leaders, President and Mrs. Carter, and former President of Bolivia Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, to visit the party headquarters, the IFE, and the U.N. offices between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., while the voting sites were open across the country. Their objective was to reinforce the smooth solution of misunderstandings and incidents as they arose, such that the first reports of exit polls and later release of partial results would arrive in a climate of confidence among party leaders that the IFE was willing and able to resolve electoral disputes. Other delegates accompanied the IFE's quick response units on the ground to gain a better understanding of how problems were remedied in practice. They had the opportunity to witness elections officers' resolution of complaints.[23]

President Carter routinely asks candidates at the close of the campaign and before voting begins whether the campaign conditions were open enough so that they would accept the results of a procedurally correct election and an honest count. In Mexico, the candidates also were invited to pledge that all disputes would be solved through legal channels, meaning that they would not call their followers to any action other than the legal procedures spelled out by the Federal Code of Electoral Institutions and Procedures (COFIPE).

Two days before the election, delegation leaders

[23]For example, in Cuernavaca, Morelos, a voter complained that her name did not appeared in the nominal lists, but she had a voting credential. As was explained by the local IFE officer to the voter, in the presence of the Carter Center delegates, she had failed to pick up her new voting credential. She was using an outdated one.

met with each of the presidential candidates. Presidents Carter and Sánchez de Lozada received a formal pledge from all presidential candidates to accept the results or contest them only through the existing legal procedures. President Zedillo met with the leaders of the delegation on June 30 for a fully candid discussion of election issues. The candidates' willingness to accept the results was announced by President Carter on July 1 in an election-eve press conference. The Carter Center shared the news with the NDI and IRI delegations that evening.

The delegation members deployed early to the key communications centers, including the party headquarters, the IFE, and the United Nations. Others accompanied IFE "*asistentes*,"[24] rapid response units set up to resolve electoral problems at the local level. Another delegate visited the domestic observer groups, where irregularities were to be reported all day long. The Center's office in Mexico City compiled information reported by the delegates and the press and relayed it to delegation leaders. Carter Center observers visited voting sites in different areas of Mexico City. Former Bolivia President Sánchez de Lozada and staff leader Dr. Shelley McConnell visited Morelos, where the governship was hotly contested. President and Mrs. Carter and Dr. Robert Pastor witnessed the opening and the closing of different voting sites in Mexico City and visited the presidential candidates several times during the day.

Overall, The Carter Center did not observe a pattern of irregularities on election day. There were isolated incidents detected by the Mexican observer groups, related mainly to late opening of voting sites, missing voting site officials, nonin-

[24] The 18,000 roving IFE officers who could be called in to voting sites to help solve a problem.

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After their visit to the IFE, the leaders of the Carter Center delegation met with President Ernesto Zedillo in the official residence of Los Pinos.

delible ink used to mark the voters' fingers, and pressure on voters to favor any of the three main parties. The largest number of incidents reported to the Center came through the *Movimiento Ciudadano para la Democracia* (MCD), an organization that coordinated its efforts with nine other Mexican observer groups. At the end of the day, the MCD had registered 191 reports of irregularities in 13 states.[25] Several thousands cases reported directly to the IFE asistentes were resolved on the spot.[26] Of nearly 114,000 polling sites, only 18 had to be closed because of irregularities, such as polling officers absent or insufficient ballots. The Electoral Tribunals, both the *Sala Superior* and the five S*alas Regionales*, had until Aug. 28 to resolve the challenges (*juicios de inconformidad*) submitted by the different parties.

There was one type of complaint, however, that was repeated in several of the "*casillas especiales.*"[27] The *casillas especiales* have only 750 ballots apiece for transient voters who are traveling outside their district on voting day and thus do not appear on the local registration lists. The number of ballots is limited to prevent fraudulent multiple votes. On July 2, an unexpectedly high number of people wanted to vote with these ballots, leading to frustration as citizens stood in line for hours only to be unable to vote for lack of a ballot. Most of the transient voters said they were away from their home districts on election day because they had to work in the other location the next day, a Monday. In *casillas especiales*, voting is limited to the presidential race, so there could be no suggestion that voters had been purposefully transported outside their district in an effort to influence local races.

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Delegation leaders in Cuernavaca witnessed the rapid resolution of this voter's (center) *complaint by one of 18,000 IFE roving officers*

Dr. Robert Pastor described his experience on the afternoon of election day.[28] At the PAN Headquarters at 4 p.m., "Fox handed us a table with about eight exit polls from the media, newspapers, and the major political parties. The numbers differed, but they all showed that Fox was

[25] *Informe de la Observación Electoral Realizada por el MCD durante el Proceso del 2 de Julio*, July 2000.
[26] The IFE reported 3,043 incidents; 2,964 were resolved within a few hours.
[27] Where voters out of their voting district and who do not appear in the lists can vote for president.
[28] "Mexico's Victory: Exiting the Labyrinth," *Journal of Democracy* 11, no. 4 (November 2000).

leading. Yet Fox was not celebrating; he was not even exhilarated. "There are two hours before the polls close," he said. "This is the moment when the PRI machine will steal the election!" We told him we were going to the PRI headquarters next." At the PRI headquarters, Dr. Pastor continues, "The atmosphere was subdued. Senior PRI officials did not acknowledge that their exit polls showed them losing, but their smiles had disappeared and the somber look on their faces suggested that they were absorbing the unthinkable – the pillar of PRI power was crumbling. The unstated fact was that the PRI machine had run out of gas; they were not going to steal the election."

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS

Complying strictly with IFE regulations, by 8 p.m. Sunday, election day, the main TV stations began revealing the results of their exit polls. Televisa gave the first shock to Mexican voters: Fox was ahead of Labastida by 6 points. As the other TV stations aired their results, followed by the Chamber of the Radio and Television Industry (CIRT), which had commissioned three exit polls, the trends were confirmed. By law, no official proclamation of victory was to be given before the first results of the IFE's quick counts[29]

[29] *Programa de Resultados Electorales Preliminares.*

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Associate Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Program, Dr. Shelley McConnell (right) *and President Sánchez de Lozada discussed with an exit poll taker*

were in, which were promised for 11 p.m. A pressured Fox addressed his jubilant followers, asking them to be patient until that hour.

At 11 o'clock, IFE President Jose Woldenberg appeared on national TV and informed that there was sufficient data to identify the first three finishers: Fox, with 39 percent to 45 percent of the vote; Labastida, with 35 percent to 38.9 percent; and Cárdenas, with 15.1 percent to 18 percent.[30] Immediately, President Zedillo addressed the nation.

First, President Zedillo congratulated the people of Mexico, the IFE, and then Fox. "The IFE has just told all Mexicans that there is information, – although preliminary, but sufficient and reliable — to know that the next president of the Republic will be Vicente Fox Quesada[31]." He confirmed that he had called Fox to congratulate him and offer his full support during the five-month transition. "I expressed to Vicente Fox my confidence that his term will begin with a united Mexico, in good order, working and with a very solid base to initiate vigorously the national development challenges for the coming six years."

In his message, President Zedillo did not forget his own party. He recognized the virtues of Labastida and asserted that "the PRI has contributed to social peace, political stability, international respect, the progress of the nation, and the liberties and rights enjoyed by the Mexicans." He added that "the PRI, in its new role assigned by popular will, will continue contributing to the stability and progress of our country." Then came the messages from Cárdenas, Labastida, and Fox. Jubilant Fox supporters roared in the street below The Carter Center's office at the *Angel de la Independencia*, beginning a joyful and peaceful victory celebration.

DEANNA CONGILEO

Mexico faced significant changes with a big smile.

[30] Press release no. 101, *Instituto Federal Electoral*, 2 July 2000.

[31] Mexican Presidency Official Site, <http://www.presidencia.gob.mx>.

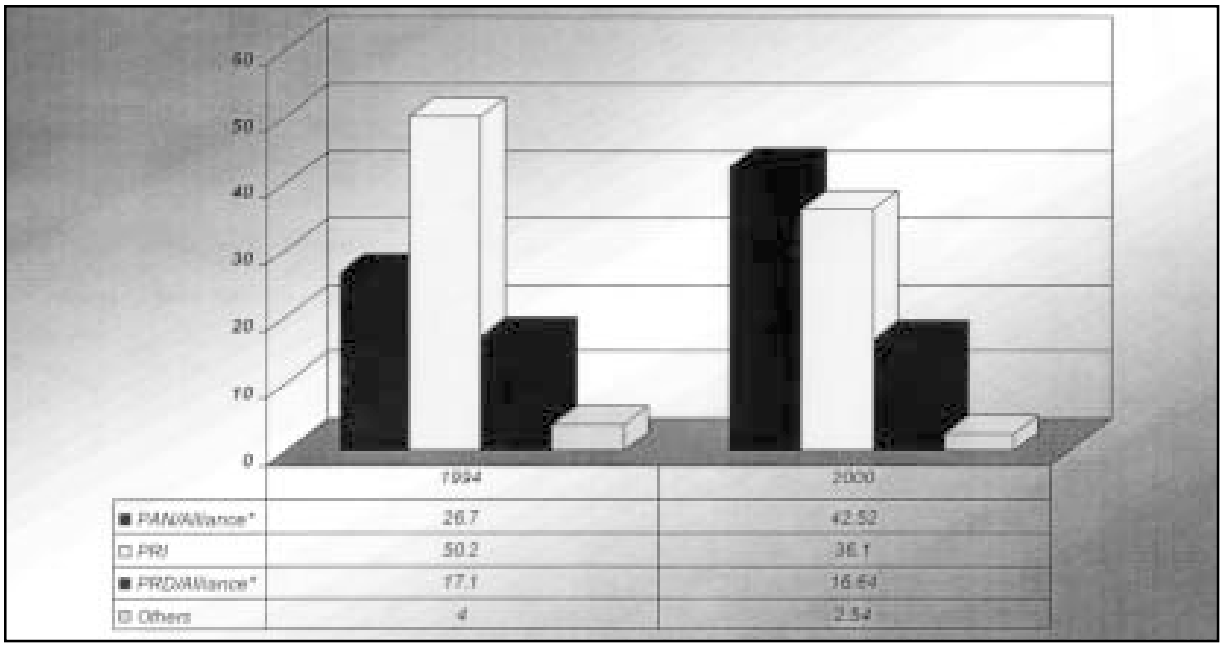
ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

In the final analysis, Fox received almost 16 million votes, 42.5 percent of a total of 37.6 million. Labastida received 13.6 million, or 36.1 percent. Cárdenas received 6.3 million, or 16.6 percent.

Eighty percent of the pollsters did not detect a possible Fox victory, and the average error compared to the official results fluctuated between 0.5 percent and 5.1 percent.[32] Rafael Giménez, from the polling company ARCOP did not hesitate to blame the media for self-censorship and media owners for succumbing to pressure from the PRI.[33] According to his own experience, pollsters who dared publish results favoring Fox said they received death threats, were fired, or discredited by government officials. The disinformation campaign was so effective that even Labastida acknowledged during a TV interview after July 2 that his own polls had him ahead until the results of the exit polls

[32] Octavio Rivera, *Oficialismo ocultó tendencias a favor de Fox*, <http://www.to2.com> (17 July 2000).

[33] Sam Dillon, "Mexican Party Reported to Quash Polls Predicting Its Defeat," *The New York Times*, 17 July 2000.



** Only the PRD was in an alliance in 1997, and it included different parties than the 2000 Alliance.*

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS:
PERCENTAGE OF THE VOTE
(SOURCE: BANAMEX-ACCIVAL AND IFE)

appeared. The undue pressure from the party in power toward the press is likely to disappear soon, which could guarantee more predictable electoral outcomes.

In an opinion piece published in the newspaper *La Jornada*,[34] Labastida pollsters Stanley Greenberg and Jeremy Rosner explained that the errors in the polls were caused by a particular statistical mistake. They explained that most pollsters counted all the "undecided" respondents, and then attributed their possible vote proportionally to each one of the main parties. "The best empirical rule for the July 2 elections would have been to assign to the PRI none, or only a few (possibly two points) of those votes," they wrote. They then used the example of a poll published by the Mexican daily newspaper *Reforma* on June 22, when 19 percent of voters were undecided. If the empirical rule had been followed, that poll's results would have been almost exactly the same as those of the July 2 election.

"Perhaps the hard-core voters for the PRI stayed at home," Alejandro Moreno, the polls director for *Reforma* told the *The New York Times*. *Reforma* had consistently placed Labastida in first place until election day, when it had accurate results with exit polls. Did the Priístas refuse to vote? They could have, according to Federico Reyes Heroles, a reputable Mexican political analyst. He wrote that ever since the PRI decided to transform the country into an essentially urban, service-oriented economy, they set aside the demands of their traditional, hard-core voters: peasants and blue-collar workers.[35] No wonder, Reyes Heroles considers, that they started voting for the opposition.[36] A month after the elections took place, the president of the PRI, Dulce María Sauri, recognized that "had we maintained our traditional, historic alliance with the poor sectors, with the Mexican society, which has been transformed, we would have had the capability to renew our triumphs."[37]

In breaking the results down to each IFE electoral district, there is a clear trend in favor of Fox in large, industrial cities. These include traditional PRI voting centers in the cities where PEMEX[38] has its largest plants and operations — Veracruz, Coatzacoalcos, Tampico, Ciudad Madero, and Villahermosa. In the port of Veracruz where the PRI won the state, Fox won over Labastida with almost a 3:1 margin. Other districts where the opposition would have been expected to win, however, such as the Zapatista region of Ocosingo in Chiapas, gave their votes to the PRI in large proportion. This could be due to voter abstention being the highest in Chiapas, and that the Zapatista leadership had called its followers to refuse registration in the IFE listings.

PRI strategists intentionally targeted states where the PAN was strong, and in the latter days of the campaign, the party veterans known as the "Dinosaurs" redoubled the PRI's efforts with a no holds barred approach. The former governor of

[34] 22 July 2000.

[35] *Reforma*, 25 July 2000.

[36] Immediately after election day, the PRI immersed itself into a bitter dispute, searching for a scapegoat and blaming even President Zedillo for his rapid acknowledgment of Fox's victory. It was no use to try and blame the PRI "technocrats." The trend toward an urban economy had begun much earlier, when the Partido de la Revolución Mexicana became the Partido de la Revolución Institucional in 1946, under the presidency of Miguel Alemán, known as the "Presidente Empresario."

[37] "Me voy cuando decida Consejo Político-Sauri," *Reform*a, 5 August 2000.

[38] *Petróleos Mexicanos* (PEMEX) is the federal government's oil-extraction and processing monopoly.

Puebla, Manuel Bartlett, announced that he would claim for the PRI all the votes from social-program beneficiaries, particularly in PAN-ruled states.[39] Nonetheless, these alleged efforts to buy votes did not have the desired effect; Fox won in all PAN states. An outstanding example was the flood-stricken community of Chalco, officially named "*Valle de Chalco Solidaridad*," after President Salinas de Gortari's anti-poverty program, in the state of México. In spite of overtly marking emergency aid with electoral propaganda, such as water bottles with Labastida's photo,[40] according to IFE final results in that district, the majority of flood victims voted for Fox. Strong turnout and opposition voting, even in communities dependent on government programs, suggested that voters believed their vote was secret and would count. n

[39] Jacinto Munguía, "Manuel Bartlett: '*La maquinaria priísta está en pie de guerra,*'" *Revista Milenio*, 29 May 2000, p. 31. The former governor confirmed being ready to recover the vote in the 10 states governed by the opposition and stated, "*Progresa* and *Alianza para el Campo*, the *Ramo* 33, and other federal social programs belong to a PRI government, and we are going to use them to win the presidency."

[40] As denounced by Movimiento Ciudadano por la Democracia in its *Informe de la observación electoral realizada por el MCD durante el proceso del 2 de Julio.*

THE CARTER CENTER

President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada answers questions from the press in Cuernavaca, State of Morelos.

THE ELECTORAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Complementing the institutionalization of the IFE was the establishment of an independent electoral tribunal. When Salinas de Gortari and Zedillo were named presidents, the Congress had to approve the resolutions of the Electoral Tribunal, and the debate was influenced by each party's own agenda. Violence broke out in the Chamber of Deputies when Salinas de Gortari was appointed after a debate that lasted almost three days; Zedillo counted only on the votes of his party, the PRI, to be appointed to the presidency. In a change that kept pace with other electoral reforms, Fox received the certificate of his victory from José Luis de la Peza, president of the *Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federación* (TEPJF, also known as TRIFE), on Aug. 2, 2000.

Those who witnessed Mexico's electoral transformation look forward to future changes.

In November 1996, the TEPJF had replaced a tribunal with "mixed jurisdiction," i.e., political and electoral jurisdiction. The TEPJF is fully integrated within the structure of judiciary power. It is composed of one "*Sala Superior*," with a seat (sede) in Mexico City and five "*Salas Regionales*," corresponding to the five pluri-nominal electoral districts. These have their seats in Toluca, Monterrey, Xalapa, Guadalajara, and Mexico City. The *Sala Superior* is responsible for qualifying the presidential election. The *Sala* is composed of seven magistrates, elected for 10 years. The magistrates elect their president among themselves.

Instead of being appointed by the president of the republic, or by the magistrates of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, the candidates for the *Sala Superior* are appointed by the Senate. The Senate must elect each magistrate, by two-thirds majority from a list prepared by the Supreme Court. The *Sala Superior* of the TEPJF is a permanent institution, while the *Salas Regionales* are seated only during the year of federal elections. The *Sala Superior* has jurisdiction not only over federal elections, but also when the *Salas Regionales* cannot solve a case at the local level. The TEPJF also protects citizens' political and electoral rights.

For the presidential elections, the TEPJF had to meet two deadlines: Aug. 31 to solve all complaints and Sept. 6 to certify the election and proclaim the winner. This time, however, the TEPJF received only two complaints. One was declared unfounded, and the other was solved by annulling a ballot box with 436 votes. This led to an early ending of the qualification procedure, and Fox was officially named president-elect Aug. 2.

There was a larger number of complaints regarding the election of federal deputies and senators, but these were solved by the *Salas Regionales* and the *Sala Superior* by Aug. 28. The pluralistic composition of the chambers revealed a great deal of impartiality at the TEPJF, largely dissipating the initial distrust of the opposition parties. For the presidential election, a total of 112 reports of irregularities were filed with the electoral authorities. The Salas Regionales of the TEPJF passed on to the *Sala Superio*r only two of them; the rest of the cases were resolved locally. Since the parties can appeal the decision of the *Salas Regionales*, a total of 38 appeals were received by the *Sala Superior*, which were all solved by Aug. 28, 2000.

A high-profile case, in which President and Mrs. Carter were especially interested, involved

allegations of vote buying and coercion against PEMEX employees. The lack of follow-up by the Special Commission of the Chamber of Deputies proved to be a stumbling block for electoral justice, endangering the lives of the witnesses and the few public servants who had pressed charges against their superiors and testified before that Special Commission. The case of Ramiro and Angélica Berrón, both high-ranking engineers with PEMEX, received sufficient press coverage as to assure them some protection from death threats. However, at the time of this report, of the three complaints introduced by the Berróns before (FEPADE, the *Secretaría de Contraloría y Desarrollo Administrativo*, or SECODAM, and the Special Commission of the Chamber of Deputies), only the one in FEPADE was still open. Ramiro Berrón informed The Carter Center on Sept. 12, 2000, that the SECODAM had declared their complaint unfounded due to lack of evidence, but failed to communicate this decision to the Berrons, who learned about it only by Sept. 11, 2000. Meanwhile, the Special Commission had been dissolved following the conclusion of the special electoral period, with no follow-up to the case they had presented. On Sept. 30, 2000, Angélica Berrón communicated to The Carter Center that members of the transition team of Vicente Fox had contacted them. They were told that although their case had been put on hold by the FEPADE and several pieces of evidence were missing, the coming administration could reopen it at SECODAM. The Berróns confirmed that the death threats had stopped.

The five months between election day and the day Fox was sworn into office posed new problems. Past transitions had involved handing over the presidency to a fellow PRI member and a routine reshuffling of the Cabinet. Now that the presidential sash was to be passed from one party to another, constitutional voids became apparent. One of them was a lack of funding to support the transition team. No money was foreseen even to ensure the physical security of the president-elect. For civil servants, another problem took shape. Were they to remain in their job or expect to be replaced by members of the new president's party? This time there was no certainty for any of them.

By and large, Mexico met these challenges with good grace, organizing funding for the transition team and supporting the president-elect as he went about visiting neighboring countries to initiate ties to his administration. Given the rapid progress Mexico had made since 1988 to become fully democratic by 2000, the flexibility and creativity it brought to these transition period decisions came as no surprise. Those who witnessed Mexico's electoral transformation look forward to further changes that Mexico will no doubt undertake under the Fox administration with the confidence that Mexican elections can meet and, indeed, set international standards. ■

APPENDICES

A. The Carter Center Delegation

B. Parties and Candidates for the Presidential Race

C. Abbreviations

D. Meetings and Interviews of the Carter Center Delegates

E. Newspaper Clippings

APPENDIX A

THE CARTER CENTER DELEGATION

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Honorable Jimmy Carter, 39th President of the United States, Chairman of The Carter Center and the Council of Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas

Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, former First Lady of the United States, Carter Center Vice Chair

Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, former President of Bolivia, Member of the Council of Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas

Dr. Robert Pastor, Professor of Political Science at Emory University in Atlanta, fellow and founding director of The Carter Center's Latin American and Caribbean Program from 1985 until 1998

Dr. Shelley McConnell, Associate Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Program and visiting Assistant Professor in the political science department of Emory University

INTERNATIONAL DELEGATES

Mary Anne Chalker, President of LFC Insurance Brokers & Agents

Vikram K. Chand, Associate Research Professor at the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi and former principal consultant to The Carter Center's Mexican elections program in 1994 and 1997

Todd A. Eisenstadt, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of New Hampshire

Charles Krause, Independent Film Editor in Washington, D.C.

Edgardo Mimica, Executive Secretary for the Association of Supervisors of Banks of the Americas

Morgan Neill, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Government and Foreign Affairs at the University of Virginia.

Andreas Schedler, Professor of Political Science at the *Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales* (FLACSO) in Mexico City

STAFF DELEGATES

Deanna Congileo, Senior Associate Director of Public Information, The Carter Center, USA

Faith Corneille, Program Assistant, Latin American and Caribbean Program, The Carter Center, USA

Marcela Szymanski, Graduate Intern, Latin American and Caribbean Program, The Carter Center, USA

VOLUNTEER DELEGATES

Andrea García de Hamilton, Graduate, University of Virginia, USA, and the Institute for International Mediation and Conflict Resolution, The Hague, Netherlands

Jonathan C. Hamilton, Attorney in the Mexico City office of White & Case

DEANNA CONGILEO

Shown here is The Carter Center Mexico Elections 2000 Delegation: (back row from left) *Edgardo Mimica, Andreas Schedler, Shelley McConnell, Morgan Neill, Charles Krause, Wyeth Ruthven, Giselle Grayson, John Hamilton, and Marcela Szymanski;* (front row from left) *Faith Corneille, Robert Pastor, President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, President Jimmy Carter, Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, Vikram Chand, Andrea García, Mary Ann Chalker, and Deanna Congileo.*

APPENDIX B

PARTIES AND CANDIDATES FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE

MAIN CONTENDING PARTIES AND ALLIANCES

Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). Presidential Candidate: Francisco Labastida Ochoa, former Minister of the Interior and former governor of Sinaloa.

Partido Acción Nacional (PAN). Formed an alliance with the *Partido Verde Ecologista Mexicano* (PVEM). The alliance is called *Alianza para el Cambio*. Presidential candidate: Vicente Fox Quesada, former governor of Guanajuato.

Partido de la Revolución Democratica (PRD). Formed an alliance with the *Partido del Trabajo* (PT), *Convergencia por la Democracia* (CD), *Partido de la Sociedad Nacionalista* (PSN), and *Partido Alianza Social* (PAS). The alliance is called *Alianza por Mèxico*. Presidential candidate: Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, former mayor of Mexico City, running for the third time.

SMALLER REGISTERED PARTIES

Partido del Centro Democrático (PCD). Identified with its founder and presidential candidate: Manuel Camacho, former mayor of Mexico City under President Salinas de Gortari.

Partido Auténtico de la Revolución Mexicana (PARM). Candidate: Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, a founding member of the PRD. Retired from the race June 14, 2000; joined the PAN campaign.

Partido de la Democracia Social (PDS). Candidate: Gilberto Rincón Gallardo, federal deputy.

APPENDIX C

ABBREVIATIONS

COFIPE	Codigo Federal para Institutos y Procedimientos Electorales
FEPADE	Fiscalia Especial para la Atencion de Delitos Electorales
IFE	Instituto Federal Electoral
IRI	International Republican Institute
LACP	Latin American and Caribbean Program, The Carter Center
NDI	National Development Institute for International Affairs
PAN	Partido Acción Nacional
PARM	Partido Auténtico de la Revolución Mexicana
PCD	Partido del Centro Democratico
PDS	Partido de la Democracio Social
PRD	Partido de la Revolución Democratica
PRI	Partido Revolucionario Institucional
PEMEX	Petroleos Mexicanos
PROCAMPO	Programa de apoyo al Campo
PROGRESA	Programa de Educacion, Salud y Alimentacion
SEDESOL	Secretaria de Desarrollo Social
TEPJF	Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federacion

APPENDIX D

MEETINGS AND INTERVIEWS OF THE CARTER CENTER DELEGATION (JUNE 12 TO JULY 3, 2000)

Members of The Carter Center delegation and their representatives in Mexico met on different occasions with the following people and their teams:

Electoral Authorities
Jose Woldenberg (IFE), President Counselor
Manuel Carrillo (IFE), International Relations Coordinator
Alonso Lujambio (IFE), Electoral Counselor
Victor Guerra (IFE), Quick Count Coordinator
Alberto Monroy (IFE), Press Relations
Juan Molinar Horcasitas (IFE), Electoral Counselor
Emilio Zebadua (IFE), Electoral Counselor
Jose Luis de la Peza (TEPJF), President of the Electoral Tribunal
Raul Avila (TEPJF), Coordinator of the Sala Principal of the Electoral Tribunal
Javier Patino (FEPADE), Head of the Special Prosecutor for Electoral Offenses

Political Parties
Vicente Fox (PAN), Presidential Candidate of the *Alianza para el Cambio*
Julio Faesler (PAN), Federal Deputy
Carlos Flores (PAN), Campaign Strategist
Carlos Salazar (PAN), Secretary of International Affairs
Jorge Ocejo (PAN), Campaign Strategist
Jose Gonzalez Morfin (PAN), Secretary of Electoral Affairs
Cecilia Romero (PAN), Executive Secretary
Elodia Gutierrez (PAN), Federal Deputy, President of the Special Commission to Watch Over Allegations of Improper Use of Federal Resources for Electoral Purposes during the Electoral Process in 2000

Cuauhtemoc Cardenas (PRD), Presidential Candidate of the *Alianza por Mexico*
Amalia Garcia (PRD), President of the P*artido de la Revolucion Democratica*
Carlos Heredia (PRD), Federal Deputy
Pablo Salazar Mendiguchia (PRD), Federal Senator for the State of Chiapas

Francisco Labastida Ochoa (PRI), Presidential Candidate of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*
Fernando Solis Camara (PRI), Campaign Strategist
Carlos Almada (PRI), Secretary of Electoral Action
Sandra Fuentes Berain (PRI), International Relations strategist for Francisco Labastida

Political Parties (cont.)
Gilberto Rincon Gallardo (PDS), Presidential Candidate of the *Partido de la Democracia Social*

Manuel Camacho Solis (PCD), Presidential Candidate of the *Partido del Centro Democratico*

Government Officials
President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon
Jose Luis Barros Horcasitas, President Zedillo's Chief of Staff
Ulises Beltran, Presidential Staff
Carlos Jarque, Minister of Social Development (SEDESOL)
Romarico Arroyo, Minister of Agriculture (SAGAR)
Armando Labra, Under-Secretary of the Interior

Citizen Organizations
Luz Rosales, *Movimiento Ciudadano por la Democracia*
Silvia Alonzo, *Alianza Civica*
Gabriel Sanchez Diaz, *Presencia Ciudadana*
Martha Delgado, *Presencia Ciudadana*
Marie-Claire Acosta, *Comision Mexicana de Defensa y Promocion de los Derechos Humanos*

Other
Jorge Castaneda, UNAM. Advisor to candidate Vicente Fox on International Affairs
Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, Federal Senator (Independent), Advisor to candidate Vicente Fox on International Security Affairs
Carlos Elizondo Mayer-Serra, Director of the *Centro de Investigacion y Docencia Economicas* (CIDE)
Nguyen-Huu Dong, UNDP Representative in Mexico
Jeffrey Davidow, U.S. Ambassador
Gabriel Aguirre, Confederation of Employers of Mexico (COPARMEX)
Ramiro and Angelica Berron, PEMEX employees

APPENDIX E

A12 MARTES 4 DE JULIO DE 2000 NACIÓN

Felicita Carter a Fox por su triunfo

Sugerirá el presidente del Centro Carter modificar la ley electoral en materia de casillas especiales; "el triunfo del panista nó afecta la relación México-EU"

ALEJANDRO LOLO DE LARREA

El ex presidente estadounidense James Carter felicitó a Vicente Fox por su triunfo en la contienda electoral del domingo, y resaltó que sin la reforma electoral de 1996, "aplicada de forma casi perfecta, México no habría alcanzado la democracia".

El ahora presidente del Centro Carter, que estuvo en el país para presenciar el movimiento electoral, sugerirá –como resultado de su observación– se realice una modificación de la Ley Electoral para agregar más casillas especiales en cada distrito, aunque sigan teniendo 750 boletas cada una.

Y es que, sostuvo, ese fue el principal problema que observó durante la jornada electoral.

Carter, miembro del Partido Demócrata, afirmó que el triunfo de Vicente Fox no modifica en lo más mínimo la relación México-Estados Unidos.

"En Washington, cualquiera de los tres candidatos, que hubiera triunfado, habría sido bien recibido", dijo.

Momentos antes de abandonar el país, Jimmy Carter comentó que la labor del Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) fue "sumamente importante, porque en ningún momento estuvo en duda su imparcialidad".

Selley McConnell, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, Jimmy Carter y Bob Pastor durante la conferencia de prensa del Centro Carter

El ex presidente opinó que la parte más difícil que tendrá el gobierno del inminente presidente electo, Vicente Fox, será "implantar los cambios que la gente de México le ha pedido. Se deberá trabajar mucho estos cinco meses en coordinación con el actual gobierno federal, para buscar los programas que puedan ayudarle a cumplir sus compromisos con el pueblo de México", dijo.

Carter contó que el domingo por la tarde, en una reunión que tuvo con el candidato del PRI, Francisco Labastida, no lo encontró tan elusivo para hablar de encuestas de salida.

Por último, el ex mandatario estadounidense felicitó al presidente Zedillo, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas y Francisco Labastida, por "el alto sentido de responsabilidad civil y política al reconocer el triunfo de Vicente Fox".

Nueva era: NDI

El Instituto Nacional Demócrata (NDI, siglas en inglés), del Partido Demócrata de Estados Unidos, concluyó que las elecciones de este domingo "marcan el principio de una nueva era en la historia de México, pues por vez primera habrá una alternancia partidista en el Ejecutivo federal, de manera democrática".

Resaltaron que los comicios se llevaron a cabo en "forma ordenada y pacífica. Aunque hubo pequeños problemas en el periodo preelectoral y durante la jornada de este domingo; el proceso político cruzó un umbral democrático sin precedentes, al permitir la alternancia en el poder".

La delegación del NDI estuvo integrada por 42 personalidades de 12 países, bajo la coordinación del ex presidente de Guatemala, Ramiro de León Carpio; la ex gobernadora de Texas, Ann Richards, y el congresista estadounidense, Ed Pastor, de Arizona.

Visitaron casillas electorales en 15 entidades, donde encontraron que "los esfuerzos realizados por el IFE, para dar confianza al proceso, tuvieron éxito".

De León Carpio puntualizó que el siguiente paso para los mexicanos es "alcanzar la democratización social y económica. Es su gran reto, ahora que ya se superó la democracia representativa, y hay que llegar a una democracia participativa".

Elección "limpia y transparente": observadores

■ **Se** registraron irregularidades "aisladas" que no afectaron el resultado, coincidieron; destacan diarios europeos la victoria de Fox

ALEJANDRO LELO DE LARREA
Y CARLOS VELASCO

Organismos internacionales y nacionales de observación de la jornada electoral de este 2 de julio calificaron el proceso como "limpio y transparente", sólo con algunos hechos irregulares "aislados", que no afectaron el resultado electoral.

Hicieron un reconocimiento al Instituto Federal Electoral, sin embargo propusieron el perfeccionamiento de las leyes para eliminar las irregularidades que todavía ahora se presentaron y para introducir un esquema de cero tolerancia a delitos electorales.

El diputado del Parlamento Europeo, Rocco Buttiglione, aunque por la tarde había denunciado la existencia de una "casa de mapaches del PRI" en Ciudad del Carmen, Campeche, y la posibilidad de integrar actas electorales "falsas", tras conocer la inminente victoria de Vicente Fox, calificó al proceso como "totalmente democrático".

Sin embargo, la jornada no fue absolutamente limpia para los observadores electorales. El propio Buttiglione, doctor en filosofía de la política y también legislador del Parlamento de Italia, acusó que observadores fueron agredidos en Ciudad del Carmen.

Y es que los observadores descubrieron una "casa de mapaches" y le tomaron fotografías. Pero presuntos priistas, contó, arrebataron las cámaras a los visores y las rompieron.

Aunque no se pronunció en torno de reconocer al triunfador de la contienda presidencial, el organismo estadounidense Global Exchange coincidió en que los hechos irregulares reportados no interfirieron en la libertad de los mexicanos para elegir a su presidente.

David Huey, vocero de Global Exchange, insistió en que la jornada electoral "fue limpia" y anticipó que este martes darán a conocer un informe completo sobre su labor como observadores.

Los nacionales

En representación de Alianza Cívica, Asociación Nacional Cívica Femenina, Centro Mexicano para la Filantropía, Club Tecolhuacán, Coordinadora Ciudadana, Confederación Patronal de la República Mexicana, Organización Política, UNO, pro Democracia, y Vertebra, Carlos Abascal y Antonio Sánchez Díaz de Rivera dieron a conocer la posición de la sociedad civil respecto al proceso electoral.

Según los reportes de la Coparmex, Alianza Cívica y la Asociación Nacional Cívica Femenina, la elección de ayer se caracterizó por la gran afluencia de votantes desde las primeras horas del día, hecho que mostró la responsabilidad cívica y el entusiasmo de los mexicanos por participar democráticamente en la transición de nuestro sistema político.

El ex presidente de Estados Unidos, James Carter, observó el proceso electoral de la casilla 4874 de la calle de Río Rhin

Respecto de las denuncias que se recibieron durante el día, se relacionaron más con problemas derivados con problemas de retraso en la apertura de casillas, inexperiencia de los funcionarios de las mesas, insuficiencia del número de boletas en las casillas especiales o exceso de votantes en ellas.

Precisaron en su informe que hubo reportes que no correspondieron al espíritu general de la elección.

Asimismo, hubo reportes de exceso de representantes del PRI en casillas, proselitismo telefónico, compra de votos en Ziuacatepec y Metepec, estado de México.

En Ensenada y Rosarito, Baja California, hubo encuestas de salida realizadas por personas no acreditadas. En algunas casillas en Morelia no se revisó el dedo pulgar y no aparecieron ciudadanos en la lista nominal.

Carlos Abascal puntualizó en la necesidad de reformar las leyes electorales, de manera consensuada con las demás fuerzas políticas del país, para que haya cero tolerancia a delitos electorales en justas futuras.

Destacan en Europa la victoria del "ranchero revolucionario"

Los principales diarios de España, Gran Bretaña y Francia destacaron la victoria del candidato de la Alianza por el Cambio, Vicente Fox, calificándola de histórica para México, y saludó el "fin de régimen autoritario".

El influyente diario británico "Financial Times" informó en su edición del lunes que Fox, un ranchero revolucionario, se perfilaba a poner fin a 71 años de régimen del PRI.

Dijo que si se confirman los sondeos de salida de casilla en los resultados finales, el centroderechista Fox podría transformar el panorama político, cimentando la larga transición del país del dominio unipartidista a una democracia multipartidista.

El diario británico destaca que el candidato de la Alianza por el Cambio prometió preservar la estabilidad económica de México y la creciente integración con la economía estadounidense. No obstante, destacó que su victoria sería una sorpresa para los inversionistas que esperaban la victoria de Francisco Labastida.

En España, los principales diarios, "El País", "El Mundo" y "ABC," dieron una amplia cobertura a las elecciones mexicanas con el triunfo de Fox.

"El País" informó que la alta participación en los comicios benefició al candidato centroderechista ya que la asistencia masiva disminuyó el peso del voto corporativo del PRI.

Al citar los resultados de los sondeos a pie de urna, "El País" dijo que de confirmarse la tendencia, el triunfo de Fox sería el "acontecimiento más trascendente" desde la Revolución de 1910.

Personas votaron en una hoja en blanco debido a que funcionarios del IFE cancelaron la casilla del aeropuerto "Benito Juárez"

Los tres candidatos se comprometieron a aceptar los resultados, dice James Carter

YERI CORREA

Los candidatos de los tres principales partidos políticos se comprometieron a aceptar los resultados de esta jornada electoral, si no hay fraude o si éste es mínimo, aseguró el ex presidente de Estados Unidos, James Carter, luego de entrevistarse por separado con los candidatos presidenciales del PRI, Alianza por el Cambio y Alianza por México.

Y agregó que los abanderados no tomarán en cuenta las denuncias preliminares de compra y coacción del voto y su aceptación o rechazo de los resultados electorales "se va a basar en lo que ocurra el día de las elecciones".

...a presidente de Estados Unidos, James Carter, se reunió ...r con el candidato de Alianza por México, Cuauhtémoc ...denas.

FOTO: ERNESTO MONTOYA

Carter urgió al gobierno federal a atender las denuncias de los trabajadores de Pemex de ser coaccionados a votar por el PRI.

También señaló que "los partidos de oposición le dijeron que no tienen tanta confianza en el Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federación como en el IFE" y propuso que no difundir la obra pública de gobierno 30 días antes de la elección será "una de las reformas futuras inevitables". No obstante, consideró que "ahora México sí es una verdadera democracia".

En rueda de prensa, el ex mandatario se deslindó del informe de evaluación preelectoral que realizó el Centro Carter. El documento señala que: "es posible que incluso un fraude relativamente menor, del 1 al 2 por ciento afecte el resultado de la elección. Si tal manipulación ocurriera sería probablemente en las áreas rurales más remotas".

Al respecto, Carter aseveró: "yo no he contado sobre un fraude de 1 ó 2 por ciento. A mí me parece un número muy alto. Yo no espero que ocurra, yo no he clasificado la probabilidad de que haya más fraude en las zonas rurales".

Enseguida solicitó a Robert Pastor, ex secretario del Consejo Nacional de Seguridad de EU y autor del informe que explicara la expectativa de fraude. Pastor explicó que la posibilidad de un fraude del 2 por ciento "se podría interpretar de una forma diferente. Dice que es concebible que un pequeño porcentaje de fraude, 1 ó 2 por ciento, podría afectar el resultado final, no que es probable, ni es mi predicción tampoco".

Sobre la coacción al voto, Pastor indicó que no hay forma de estimar su porcentaje de influencia.

El viernes a las 20 horas, Carter recibió al candidato de la Alianza por el Cambio, Vicente Fox, en el hotel María Isabel Sheraton, donde se hospeda. El sábado a las 9:15 se reunió con el abanderado de la Alianza por México, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, en el mismo hotel y dos horas después visitó al candidato del PRI, Francisco Labastida.

Después de las entrevistas, Carter informó que "los tres principales candidatos se han comprometido a aceptar los resultados si no hay fraude o éste es mínimo.

Aunque se reservan el derecho a criticar el papel del gobierno en estas elecciones". Subrayó que, a pesar de las denuncias preliminares, su aceptación o rechazo a los resultados electorales "se va a basar en lo que ocurra el día de las elecciones". También expresaron que consideran aceptables los caminos legales para instrumentar denuncias.

Informó que durante su entrevista con el presidente Ernesto Zedillo expresó su preocupación porque el gobierno federal no suspendiera la publicidad de los programas gubernamentales 30 días antes de las elecciones, a lo que el mandatario mexicano respondió que "fue una decisión difícil no parar sus actividades". Carter asentó que la divulgación de la obra pública será una "una de las reformas futuras inevitables".

El ex mandatario urgió a atender la denuncia de coacción al voto del empleado de Pemex, Ramiro Barrón. Pese a todo, Carter aseguró que "ahora México sí es una verdadera democracia, lo que también se refleja en el número de candidatos de oposición, donde el PRI ha perdido.

Enfatizó que México ha cambiado mucho en materia electoral en los últimos 10 años y que en 1994, México realizó grandes progresos debido a los consensos entre los partidos de oposición.

Por su parte, el ex presidente de Bolivia, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada dijo que "la verdad que México es el más atrasado políticamente, pero ha avanzado mucho" respecto a otros países de América Latina en su democratización, a ser entrevistado al final del evento. El ex mandatario reconoció los avances económicos de México, pero señaló que aún está pendiente la justa distribución del ingreso.

"La mejor definición de progreso es cambio con orden y orden en el cambio y no ha sido una característica ni mexicana ni boliviana que seamos ordenados, la injusticia sigue", afirmó. ■

THE CARTER CENTER'S LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN PROGRAM & THE COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS AND PRIME MINISTERS OF THE AMERICAS

The Carter Center established the Latin American and Caribbean Program (LACP) in 1986 to promote democracy and improve inter-American relations. Today, LACP's work reflects a new hemispheric agenda: to improve the quality of democracy, thwart corruption, decrease inequalities, and foster closer trade relations across the Western Hemisphere.

The Carter Center's Council of Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas is instrumental in these efforts. Based in the LACP, the Council is a group of 32 current and former heads of government from throughout the Americas. Established at a November 1986 meeting at The Carter Center chaired by former U.S. Presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, the Council's goals are to reinforce democracy in the Americas, help resolve conflict in the hemisphere, and advance regional economic cooperation.

The Carter Center has monitored and mediated elections in 20 countries worldwide. Typically, the Center monitors the entire electoral process, beginning with pre-electoral missions to assess election rules, political campaigns, and voter registration. An international delegation returns to observe activities on election day and monitor the resolution of any challenges to the electoral results.

Monitoring to promote free and fair elections, mediation, training for civil society organizations advancing transparency in government and opening channels of communication amongst the government, private sector, media, and civil society are just a few of the LACP's activities. The LACP staff includes:

- ✓ Dr. Jennifer McCoy, director
- ✓ Dr. Shelley McConnell, associate director
- ✓ Laura Neuman, senior program associate
- ✓ Faith Corneille, program assistant

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Founded in 1982 by Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter in partnership with Emory University, the nonprofit Center works to prevent and resolve conflicts, enhance freedom and democracy, and improve health. The Center collaborates with other organizations, public or private, in carrying out its mission. In this way, the Center has touched the lives of people in more than 65 countries.

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PAUL DINGMAN

The Carter Center is located in a 35-acre park, two miles east of downtown Atlanta.

The Center is located in a 35-acre park, two miles east of downtown Atlanta. Four circular pavilions house offices for the former president and first lady and most of the Center's program staff. The complex includes the Ivan Allen III Pavilion and the nondenominational Cecil B. Day Chapel, other conference facilities, and administrative offices. Adjoining the Center is The Jimmy Carter Library and Museum, a repository for the records of the Carter administration. It is operated by the National Archives and Records Administration of the federal government and open to the public. The Center and the Library and Museum are known collectively as The Carter Presidential Center.

More information about The Carter Center is available on the World Wide Web at www.cartercenter.org. ■

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