

The 1998 Mexican State Elections

Post-Election Report

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Introduction

A year away from the beginning of the most intensive period of the 2000 campaign for the Mexican presidency, uncertainties abound. The 1997 midterm elections for Mexico's federal congress demonstrated that the long-ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional* or PRI) can be beaten nationally while gubernatorial and municipal elections in 1995, 1996, and 1997 put members of opposition parties into important governors seats and into power in the city halls of most large Mexican cities, including Mexico City. The many state and local elections held during 1998, however, indicated both that the PRI is far from dead and that the party's prospects can unravel in places where it would ordinarily expect to win easily.

During 1998, a reinvigorated PRI in Chihuahua took back the governor's seat from the center-right National Action Party (*Partido Acción Nacional* or PAN), which had won that office in 1992 during former president Carlos Salinas de Gortari's term. That loss clearly disappointed the PAN, whose fortunes had seemed on the rise in 1995 and 1996 when it seized on the public discontent with the economic crisis produced by President Ernesto Zedillo's bungled devaluation of the peso in December 1994 to win many mayoral posts. The loss of Chihuahua, coming on the heels of a disappointing performance in the 1997 midterm elections and in the 1997 Mexico City mayoral race, suggests that the PAN has reached a new plateau of electoral support and that it must struggle to avoid losing to the PRI what it has gained. The PAN did win the governorship of Aguascalientes in one of its strongholds, giving its partisans some hope for the 2000 election, when its candidate is likely to be the popular and charismatic governor of Guanajuato, Vicente Fox.

The PRI reclaimed the Chihuahua governorship after the party decided to choose its gubernatorial candidate in a primary election. That primaries might reinvigorate the PRI and avoid for its candidates the stigma of being chosen by *dedazo* (literally, "fingered"—selected by the president or other powerful figures in the national party or government, hence often resented by local voters) is perhaps the most important lesson of the 1998 election season. Yet not all PRI leaders are equally enthusiastic about primaries within the party despite evidence gained this year that when the PRI nominated unpopular candidates, voters supported PRI defectors. While the PRI won Chihuahua's governorship and fought off a challenge from the center-left Party of the Democratic Revolution (*Partido de la Revolución Democrática* or PRD) in Oaxaca, it lost gubernatorial elections in two of its traditional strongholds, the states of Zacatecas and Tlaxcala, to PRD candidates who had recently left the PRI.

One last lesson that the 1998 election has suggested holds critical significance for the upcoming presidential election of 2000. In the gubernatorial elections this past year, voters seemed attracted to candidacies as much as parties. This message comes on the heels of the 1997 Mexico City mayoral election in which the mediocre candidates of the PRI and the PAN lost by large margins to the PRD's Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and in which those candidates' coattails spelled disappointment for the PAN and the loss of its congressional majority for the PRI. In the coming year each party has critical decisions to make, if this pattern continues, as it selects its

presidential candidate for 2000 and as it formulates its campaign strategy. Upon the founding of the PRI (as the National Revolutionary Party or PNR) in 1929, Plutarco Elias Calles said that the era of strongmen had ended, to be followed by an era of institutions. Seventy years later, it appears that the era of institutions has ended, to be followed by an era of candidates and campaign managers.

In this report I will first summarize the constitutional and political background to the 1998 state and municipal elections. Then I will examine the elections in which the PRI and the PAN squared off, in Yucatán, Baja California, Chihuahua, and Aguascalientes, seeking to assess the PAN's future as a contender for power. Following that, I will explore the PRI's recovery from the electoral disappointments of the first three years of Zedillo's *sexenio*, or six-year term of office, looking especially at PRI successes in Durango, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Tamaulipas, Sinaloa, and Puebla. Finally, I will consider the PRD's unexpected victories in Zacatecas and Tlaxcala to weigh their meaning for the PRD's capacity to challenge the PRI and for the PRD's understanding of itself and its role in contemporary Mexican politics.

The Legal and Constitutional Setting

Mexico is a federal republic consisting of thirty-one states plus the Federal District (in which the national capital, Mexico City, is located). The national president is elected by plurality vote for a six-year term. The next presidential election comes in July 2000 for a term of office slated to begin in December 2000.

Each state elects its governor and a state assembly. Most six-year gubernatorial terms do not coincide with the presidential *sexenio*. In 1998, ten of the states held gubernatorial elections (see Table 1), the largest number of governorships open in any year of the six-year presidential cycle. Of the states holding gubernatorial elections in 1998, Oaxaca, Puebla, and Veracruz are heavily populated states in the center and south of the country and hence have special importance in the upcoming presidential race because any likely victor will have to be able to draw votes from them.

State assemblies vary in size. Each is constituted by a combination of deputies chosen in single-member district, first-past-the-poll races, and in proportional representation, list-based elections.¹ State assemblies sit for three year terms. Hence, in 1998, all of the states holding gubernatorial elections also held elections for local deputies, as state assembly members are known, but some states held elections for state assembly without holding gubernatorial elections (see Table 1).

Each state is divided into *municipios*, the lowest level of government in the Mexican federal schema. A *municipio* most closely resembles a county, in U.S. terms, often incorporating several villages, or a large town and some villages, or sometimes only a large city. *Municipios* are governed by *ayuntamientos*, the equivalent of city councils, and are headed by *presidentes municipales*, essentially mayors. The *ayuntamientos* are chosen in proportional representation arrangements that differ from state to state and the mayors by plurality vote.²

Table 1
Mexican Electoral Calendar 1998

State	Election Date	State Assembly	Municipal Government	Governor
Yucatán	May 24	✓	✓	
Baja California	June 28	✓	✓	
Durango	July 5	✓	✓	✓
Zacatecas	July 5	✓	✓	✓
Chihuahua	July 5	✓	✓	✓
Agascalientes	August 2	✓	✓	✓
Veracruz	August 2	✓		✓
Oaxaca	August 2	✓		✓
Chiapas	October 4	✓	✓	
Oaxaca	October 4		✓	
Tamaulipas	October 25	✓	✓	✓
Michoacán	November 8	✓	✓	
Puebla	November 8	✓	✓	✓
Sinaloa	November 8	✓	✓	✓
Tlaxcala	November 8	✓	✓	✓

Mexican federalism has been in many ways more formal than real since the PRI effectively centralized the regime in the 1930s. The federal government has controlled the purse strings, because it has had by far the greatest capacity to tax of any of the three levels of government. Most state and local revenue comes from federal revenue-sharing arrangements. Hence, those state or local governments not controlled by the PRI or otherwise inclined to cooperate with the federal government have typically been subject to various forms of financial blackmail—the holding up of distributions of state or federal revenue-sharing monies, for instance.³ Nevertheless, local governments have more impact on the lives of ordinary Mexicans than the federal government, given their responsibilities for providing basic public services, including law and order. The question has been whether the PRI is willing to cede municipal governments to the opposition when it has in fact lost a local election.

The Political Context

The first three years of Ernesto Zedillo's presidency had been little short of disastrous for the PRI. Shortly after Zedillo took office, his administration bungled a long-postponed devaluation of the peso, thereby producing a financial and economic crisis in 1995 and 1996.

The political consequence of this economic crisis was severe for the governing party. In 1995, the PRI lost the Jalisco and Guanajuato statehouses to the PAN. Many large cities were won by the PAN in 1995, including Guadalajara, Puebla,

Tijuana, Mexicali, Merida, Aguascalientes, and Morelia. In 1996, tight elections gave the PRD and the PAN several large Mexico City suburbs in the Estado de México; the PRI also lost control of the Estado de México congress. In 1997, the biggest blow came when the PRI failed to regain its majority in the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of the federal congress. The PRD's Cárdenas became the head of government of the Federal District, essentially the mayor of the nation's and world's largest city. The PAN seized the statehouses of Nuevo León in the north and Querétaro in the Bajío, along with the *ayuntamiento* of the large industrial city of Monterrey in July 1998.

Thus, the elections of 1998, involving as they did 14 of 32 federal entities, offered the opposition the opportunity to deal the PRI a severe blow just a year before the opening of the next presidential campaign. For the PRI, these elections could provide an important chance to find a new strategy to confront the growing strength of the opposition parties in time to reform itself prior to the 2000 elections. Failure in the 1998 elections would put further pressures on a party already divided between reformers and traditionalists just before it makes the all-important choice of its presidential candidate.

Important as they were for the PRI, the 1998 elections also held great significance for the opposition parties. Although they denied the PRI a majority of the Chamber of Deputies in the 1997 congressional elections, the opposition parties each took a lower percentage of the popular vote than the PRI in that election (see Table 2). Moreover, the PAN and the PRD remained weak in one or more large regions of the country. The PRD had made little headway in the northern states and in the region in the center-west of Mexico known as the Bajío even while it swept Mexico City in 1997. The PRD's strength has been concentrated in the greater Mexico City area, the southern and gulf states, and to a lesser extent, other states in the center of the nation. In these areas the PRD has effectively competed with the PRI which had always garnered its greatest electoral support in the south, the gulf states, and the states in the center (other than the greater Mexico City area). For the PRD, a key challenge as 2000 approaches is to make deeper inroads into the Bajío and the north. Elections in Baja California, Durango, Zacatecas, Chihuahua, Aguascalientes, Sinaloa, and Tamaulipas gave the PRD the chance to improve its competitiveness in the north and the Bajío prior to the 2000 presidential race.

The PAN, in contrast, has been strongest in the north and the Bajío. Entering 1998, the PAN governed Baja California, Chihuahua, and Nuevo León, important industrial states on the northern border. In the Bajío, PAN governors ruled the heavily populated states of Jalisco (home of Guadalajara, Mexico's second-largest city) and Guanajuato, as well as the smaller state of Querétaro. Almost all large cities in the north were in PAN hands too. Although the PAN draws largely from an urban, middle-class electorate, its performance in Mexico City has been disappointing, especially so in 1997 when its candidate, former party president Carlos Castillo Peraza, was crushed by Cárdenas. In the center, the gulf states, and the south, the PAN has had some success in urban areas and little success in the countryside. Thus, the PAN seems to do well in Yucatán, but that is largely due to its popularity in

Table 2
Electoral Results for the Federal Chamber of Deputies
1997-2000

Party	Vote %	District Seats Won	PR Seats Won	Total Seats
PRI	38.0	165	74	239 (47.8%)
PAN	25.8	64	57	121 (24.2%)
PRD	25.0	70	55	125 (25.0%)
PVEM	3.7	0	8	8 (1.6%)
PT	2.5	1	6	7 (1.4%)
Others	2.3	0	0	0
Annulled	2.8	—	—	—
		300	200	500

Source: Instituto Federal Electoral.

Merida, Yucatán's capital, where more than 40 percent of the state's population resides. Likewise, the PAN controlled the southern or center municipal governments of the city of Veracruz, the city of Puebla, the city of Oaxaca, Cuernavaca (capital of Morelos), Morelia (capital of Michoacán), and Tuxtla Gutiérrez (capital of Chiapas). To hope to move beyond 25-30 percent of the national vote in 2000, the PAN has to make gains in the south, the center, and the gulf states. With elections in Yucatán, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Michoacán, Puebla, and Tlaxcala, the 1998 contest offered the PAN an opportunity to build its organization and its appeal in those regions.

Contests between the PRI and the PAN

The PAN's best chances to make gains on the PRI came in Yucatán, Baja California, Chihuahua, and Aguascalientes. Only in the latter two were gubernatorial positions open. Yucatán and Baja California were first on the 1998 electoral calendar, a promising prospect for the PAN to renew the momentum it had gathered in the first two years of the Zedillo *sexenio* but that it had lost in 1997.

Yucatán

The gulf state of Yucatán held elections on May 24 for its state assembly and municipal councils (*ayuntamientos*) only. Yucatán's geographical isolation from central Mexico has produced a sense of political apartness since well before the beginning of Mexican independence. Like much of northern Mexico, there is a perception here that Mexico City cares little about local concerns.

The PRI's electoral machine continues to dominate most of the rural *municipios* in the state. In addition, we should note that anticentralism in Yucatán has been manifested electorally almost exclusively by voting for the PAN. The PRD has made

Table 3
Elections in Yucatán
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
State Elections 1992	37.9	59.8	0.2
Federal Elections 1994	41.0	54.3	2.7
State Elections 1995	45.6	49.4	3.5
Federal Elections 1997	38.3	51.2	7.4
State Elections 1998	35.2	52.8	8.1

Sources: Partido Acción Nacional at http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_loc95.htm and http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_fed97.htm.

little headway in converting *yucatecos* to its cause (see Table 3) in a region in which the PRD is otherwise the strongest party of opposition.

In 1995, Yucatán offered the PAN one of its early and important successes when it took over 45 percent of the vote in state and municipal-level elections, winning the city hall of Mérida, the state's capital and by far its largest city. It did not, however, take the gubernatorial election in 1995, leaving that important post in the hands of the PRI. In this year's elections, the PAN's vote share dipped to about 35 percent while the PRD gained 5 percent over its finish three years ago. While the PAN retained the city hall of Mérida and won nine other municipalities, all very small in population, the Yucatán election must be counted as a setback for the PAN. The PAN tries to put a good face on the situation, pointing out that it governs 45 percent of the population of the state (42 percent being the population of the single city of Mérida, however). It only won five of fifteen electoral districts in the state assembly races, however, the PRI taking the other ten. The new state assembly (incorporating the winners of district races plus ten deputies chosen by proportional representation) will have fifteen PRI members, eight from the PAN, and two from the PRD. In 1998, the Yucatecan PRI demonstrated that it could again turn out the majority of voters to its cause.

Baja California

The PAN has a longer history of contesting PRI dominance in the border state of Baja California than anywhere else. As in the Yucatán case, anticentralist sentiment stretches back decades, in this case to 1959 when the PAN claimed to have won the governor's race.⁴ In more recent years, there was a strong sense that the initial advances of the PAN in 1983 (in the aftermath of the 1982 debt crisis) were brought to a halt in Baja California and other states when the administration of Miguel de la Madrid reconsidered its political opening, allowing the PRI to turn to its traditional electoral manipulations to deny the PAN a win in the Mexicali municipal elections.⁵ In 1989, however, the PAN won its first gubernatorial election in Baja California, as

Ernesto Ruffo Appel swept past the PRI's candidate and Carlos Salinas, eager to legitimate his own rule, recognized the PAN victory there. Although the PRI took the majority of votes in Baja California in the 1994 federal elections, since then the PAN has taken first place in three elections: the state elections in 1995 and 1998 and the 1997 federal elections. In a key race, the PAN retained the governorship of the state in 1995 when Héctor Terán Terán led a PAN victory. Only in 1995 did the PAN take the majority of seats in the state congress, however, as the seats assigned by proportional representation left it shy of a majority of congressional seats in 1989 and 1992.

In 1998, only the city halls and the state assembly were up for renewal. Although the PAN's margin of victory declined from 1995, it remains the highest vote getter in Baja California, taking about 42 percent of the votes cast (Table 4) to the PRI's 39 percent and the PRD's 10 percent. That result, however, denied the PAN its majority of the state assembly. The PAN took eleven of the sixteen single-member district races, but with the addition of the proportional representation deputies, the new Baja California state assembly has eleven deputies each from the PAN and the PRI and three from the PRD. New governor Alejandro González Alcocer, formerly the PAN's state president and who succeeds the recently deceased Terán, will thus have to govern again with the votes of another party besides the PAN.

The 1998 elections confirmed the PAN's control of the city halls of Tijuana and Mexicali, two of the state's and the nation's largest cities. They also confirmed the PRI's grip on Tecate and Ensenada, the other two major municipalities in the state.⁶ Although the PRD made gains in Baja California, this state continues to be marked by strong two-party competition in which either the PRI or the PAN can take a victory at the state level.

Chihuahua

If Baja California indicated that the PAN can retain its first-place showing in two-party competition, Chihuahua demonstrated that the PRI can sweep a PAN administration out of office. Chihuahua too is a state where the PAN made early gains, seizing the city halls of Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua city in 1983 when Francisco Barrio and Luis H. Alvarez won those cities' mayoral posts. From this first PAN victory, the PRI in Chihuahua has battled against the PAN with nearly all of the weapons in its arsenal. In 1986, for example, the PRI resorted to blatant fraud to oust the PAN from the city halls it had won three years earlier and to deny Barrio the governorship.⁷ Alvarez went on to be the PAN's national leader and six years later Barrio took the governor's chair, thus sitting as the incumbent barred from reelection as the July 5 elections took place. As Table 5 indicates, though, the PRI came back from 1992's defeat to outpoll the PAN in both 1994 and 1995, regaining control of the Chihuahua state congress in the latter year.

Chihuahua thus has a classic two-party competition for control of the state government. In this context the out-party can effectively blame the in-party for poor economic conditions or breakdown in public order and expect swing voters to sweep

Table 4
Elections in Baja California
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
State Elections 1992	47.1	46.5	3.5
Federal Elections 1994	36.8	50.8	7.9
State Elections 1995	50.6	43.7	5.7
Federal Deputies 1997	43.3	35.8	13.5
State Elections 1998	42.1	39.1	9.9

Sources: Partido Acción Nacional at http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_loc95.htm and http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_fed97.htm.

Table 5
Elections in Chihuahua
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
State Elections 1992	48.2	46.5	2.8
President 1994	28.2	60.4	6.2
State Elections 1995	40.3	46.3	6.1
Federal Deputies 1997	42.4	40.8	10.5
Governor 1998	42.1	50.5	5.5

Sources: Partido Revolucionario Institucional; Partido Acción Nacional at http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_loc95.htm.

them back into office. This the PRI did in 1998. In one interview, PRI gubernatorial candidate Patricio Martínez García said, “Murder is out of control, so what should we do, throw rose petals or say our opponents have run a great government?”⁸ By many accounts, Barrio had improved the Chihuahua state government’s efficiency and responsiveness, but violent crime related to drug trafficking has been epidemic in the state, especially in Ciudad Juárez.⁹ The PAN’s gubernatorial candidate, Ramón Galindo, had been the mayor of Juárez until he stepped down to campaign for governor, thereby providing Martínez an easy target in a very tough campaign.¹⁰

Besides having a strong issue on which to criticize the incumbent PAN administration and his opponent, Martínez could also boast that he had been chosen as the PRI’s candidate in a primary election. A federal congressman and a former mayor of the city of Chihuahua representing a party that in Chihuahua has not simply been the puppet of the national PRI, Martínez could not be characterized as a politician who would not look out for local interests. Galindo unwisely sought to nationalize

the election in a state in which local concerns have been the basis for past PAN success.¹¹

The PRI's success in Chihuahua can in some ways be seen as politics as usual in that state. Chihuahua is a bastion of PAN strength, but the PAN has never become a hegemonic party there because the PRI has all along adjusted to the PAN's gains with its own internal reforms. That the PRI would defeat the PAN with well chosen campaign issues is democracy in action; however, the introduction of primaries open to all voters for the selection of PRI candidates seems to have contributed to the selection of an especially attractive PRI nominee. This innovation, as many observers have noted, holds much promise for the PRI in 2000 and beyond.¹²

Aguascalientes

Aguascalientes provided the PAN its one unambiguous success in 1998. In that small, center-north state, the PAN's Felipe González González, a local businessman, soundly defeated the PRI's Héctor Hugo Olivares Ventura, a member of a prominent family active in the national PRI who himself has a long record of holding national electoral posts.¹³ Olivares Ventura was not chosen in an open primary. González has the profile of the northern *panista*, the vigorous entrepreneur ready to turn to politics; Olivares Ventura, in contrast, fits the stereotype of the PRI *político*, indeed one who had built his career in the rural sector of the party.

With the exception of a modest decline in its electoral support in the 1997 federal elections, the PAN's growth in Aguascalientes has been steady (see Table 6). Already in 1995 the PAN had won the mayoral race of the city of Aguascalientes, by far the largest part of the population of this small state. It also became the largest party in the state assembly that year, taking 13 of 27 total seats, one shy of a majority but two more than the rival PRI.

Aguascalientes demonstrates that Mexican voters are not simply economic voters, or at least that local economic conditions do not determine solely how they will vote. PRI governor Otto Granados Roldán, politically close to former president Salinas, had overseen rapid economic growth in a state that has the third-highest standard of living in Mexico.¹⁴ Indeed, voters seem to have recognized that the state has prospered of late, but they did not grant that the state government or the PRI had anything to do with it, according to an exit poll conducted by *Reforma* and *El Norte*.¹⁵ Many analysts noted the PRI's political insensitivity of nominating (without a primary election process) a long-time leader of the rural sector of the party for a state that is now 70 percent urban. In the August 2 ballot, the attractiveness of the PAN candidate (71 percent of those polled had a favorable image of Felipe González) seems to have swayed voters—51 percent said they voted for the candidate, not the party.¹⁶ Also, whereas González took 53.1 percent of the vote, PAN deputy candidates received only 49.8 percent.

Table 6
Elections in Aguascalientes
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
Governor 1992	20.5	77.4	2.1
President 1994	37.5	47.5	8.8
State Deputies 1995	49.1	37.8	6.8
Federal Deputies 1997	34.3	41.8	15.6
Governor 1998	53.1	38.0	6.9

Sources: Partido Revolucionario Institucional at <http://www.pri.org.mx/elecciones1998/>; Instituto de Estudios de la Revolución Democrática at <http://www.teesa.com/ierd/elecc/ag.htm>.

Contests with a Still-Dominant PRI

While elections in the past five years have cast doubt on the PRI's capacity to hold off the growing opposition challenge, in 1998 the party showed that it remained the dominant party in five contests in different parts of the nation—Durango, Puebla, Sinaloa, Tamaulipas, and Veracruz. In some of these states, opposition weakness (Durango and Tamaulipas) continues to give the PRI hegemony. In others, a combination of attractive candidates and a still-powerful PRI electoral machine produced comfortable margins of victory.

Durango

In Durango, it is less the PRI's commanding majority than the opposition's division that permits continued PRI rule. In this mountainous northern state, the PRI has maintained about its national average in recent elections (Table 7). In Durango, however, the opposition is split not two ways, but three. There the small Workers' Party (*Partido del Trabajo* or PT) has had its greatest successes. In the 1997 federal elections, when the PRI mustered but 35 percent of the vote in Durango, the PT and the PAN each took about a quarter of the votes. The axis of competition, however, has turned around the PRI and the PT in the past few years. In 1995 the PT won the city hall of Durango city, putting it at the center of state politics.

The July 5, 1998 elections for governor, state assembly, and city halls demonstrated that "divide and rule" still works for the PRI in Durango and suggests it can work elsewhere too. The PRI's Angel Sergio Guerrero Mier received 39.9 percent of the votes cast for governor, enough to handily win a four-way contest. The PAN's Rosario Castro Lozano took 30.3 percent of the votes as the PAN rebounded from a disappointing finish in the 1997 federal elections. The PT's vote dropped off to 21.3 percent (Table 7). In the mayoral races, the PRI won 31 of 39 city halls, considerably above its 21 victories in 1995. The PAN, in contrast, retained only four of the twelve municipal governments it had won in 1995, while the PT dropped from four to three municipal victories.¹⁷

Table 7
Elections in Durango
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %	PT%
Governor 1992	34.3	52.5	3.1	—
President 1994	27.7	52.1	9.7	8.5
State Deputies 1995	31.8	36.3	9.9	13.4
Federal Deputies 1997	24.7	35.8	11.5	24.3
Governor 1998	30.3	39.9	8.4	21.3

Sources: Partido Revolucionario Institucional; Teresa Rojas Villaseñor and Rino Enzo Torres Baños, "Durango, avance opositor," *Coyuntura*, no. 85 (March-April 1998) at <http://www.teesa.com/ierd/coyuntura85/du.htm>.

On the heels of this defeat, the opposition parties cried foul, claiming that the PRI had resorted to its old tricks to win a near "carro completo" (literally, full car, suggesting it has refused to recognize any defeats in a particular election) in Durango.¹⁸ The opposition parties have often accused the PRI of playing unfairly, especially in violating campaign financing limits and drawing on government resources to buy votes and to truck the voters to the polls. That the PRI remains able to bring extra resources to the electoral arena seems highly probable, and Durango may be one example of that PRI advantage in 1998 (along with Tamaulipas and Oaxaca).

Sinaloa

Another state in which the PAN-PRI competition has been less intense than in other parts of the north, Sinaloa also presents an example of PRD penetration of that region. Thus, as in Durango, the PRI can and has divided the opposition to rule Sinaloa in recent years (see Table 8). 1998 proved to be no exception.

Sinaloa was one of the states in which the PRI held open primaries to choose its gubernatorial candidate. In the May 24 primary election, Juan Millán Lizárragan, a longtime PRI militant from the labor sector of the party and a federal senator, won the PRI's nomination in a primary that was hard fought against candidates from rival factions of the Sinaloa PRI.¹⁹ An able campaigner, Millán easily outdistanced the PAN's Emilio Goicoechea Luna. While the PAN's vote share grew modestly over its 1997 outcome, the PRD dropped about by about 5 percent, taking 18 percent of the votes on November 8. The PAN and the PRD shared almost exactly half of the votes in Sinaloa, together more than the Millán's 46.4 percent, but so long as they divide the opposition vote in a three-way contest, the PRI remains the likely victor, as this result showed.

Table 8
Elections in Sinaloa
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
Governor 1992	34.2	56.0	3.9
President 1994	31.1	51.7	14.1
State Deputies 1995	40.1	43.7	13.4
Federal Deputies 1997	30.1	42.7	22.7
Governor 1998	32.3	46.4	18.0

Sources: "Sinaloa, tendencia al cambio," *Coyuntura*, no. 86 (May-July 1998) at <http://www.teesa.com/ierd/coyuntura86/sin.htm>; *La Jornada*, November 10, 1998 (preliminary figures).

The PRI also took almost all of the municipal races and 21 of 24 districts in the elections for members of the state assembly.²⁰ The PAN yielded the city halls of Culiacán (the state capital) and Ahome, another large Sinaloan city, to the PRI, while holding on to Mazatlán and Navolato, two other major *municipios*. Having held a successful primary election, winning the state house and reclaiming two large *municipios*, the PRI can claim an unambiguous advance in Sinaloa.

Tamaulipas

As the PAN's national president wrote in the aftermath of the October 25 elections in Tamaulipas, this northeastern state is "strongly penetrated by drug trafficking,"²¹ probably more so than any other state in Mexico. Opposition parties have over the years been unable to make steady gains in Tamaulipas, as Table 9 suggests. Although the PAN made important gains in 1995, including winning the municipal elections in Matamoros and Tampico, its vote share plummeted in 1997 when the PRD surged forward. In 1998, the situation reversed. The PRI, meanwhile, has remained near or above the 50 percent mark for the whole decade of the 1990s.

In Tamaulipas too the PRI held primaries to select its gubernatorial candidate. In keeping with Tamaulipas's tough reputation, the primary campaign was bitter. For example, Marco Bernal, a federal senator and a contestant for the PRI nomination, accused Governor Manuel Cavazos Lerma of "funneling state money and goods—from cement to farm credits—to another leading candidate, Tomás Yarrington."²² Yarrington, a telegenic young member of Cavazos Lerma's cabinet and a former mayor of Matamoros, eventually won the primary, but accusations of electoral irregularities had begun early.²³

Yarrington won the gubernatorial race handily with more than 53 percent of the vote. Meanwhile, the PRI rolled up victories in most of the other elections, yielding but two of the nineteen state assembly districts to the PRD and taking 40 of 43 city

Table 9
Elections in Tamaulipas
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
State Elections 1992	20.6	63.7	5.9
President 1994	27.3	47.6	19.1
State Elections 1995	35.7	46.3	5.9
Federal Deputies 1997	18.6	48.0	26.9
Governor 1998	26.1	53.8	15.7

Sources: "Tamaulipas, avanza oposición," *Coyuntura*, no. 86 (May-July 1998) at <http://www.teesa.com/ierd/coyuntura86/ta.htm>; Partido Acción Nacional at http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_loc95.htm; Instituto Electoral Estatal de Tamaulipas at <http://www.ieetam.org.mx/page16.html>.

halls.²⁴ The PAN was hit hard, losing both Matamoros and Tampico as well as four smaller *municipios*.

The opposition parties, led by the PAN, accused Yarrington and the PRI of vote buying, violating campaign spending limits, and the use of public resources to fund their campaign.²⁵ Eventually, the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the state recognized Yarrington's victory, stating that they judged the election as clean and without irregularities.²⁶ Tamaulipas is another indicator, however, that the PRI can and will use some of its traditional means to win elections. Combined with an attractive candidate like Yarrington, the PRI machine remains formidable.

Puebla

Manuel Bartlett Díaz, the outgoing PRI governor of Puebla, is among the frontrunners for the PRI's presidential nomination. A vocal defender of the PRI of old, of the party of revolutionary nationalism and of electoral dominance, Bartlett has been minister of the interior (*Gobernación*) and of education. Many Mexican observers attribute to Bartlett the electoral irregularities—including the failure of the Federal Electoral Institute's computer—that allowed Carlos Salinas to win the presidency in 1988. As governor of Puebla, Bartlett has been an unflinching partisan, harassing the PAN mayor of the city of Puebla and making sure that the PRI retains its dominance at election time, as Table 10 suggests.

Bartlett does not favor open primaries, but he refrained from openly intervening in the primary elections held to choose the PRI's gubernatorial candidate in Puebla. In that primary, Melquidades Morales Flores, a senator identified with other factions of the Puebla PRI, defeated José Luis Flores Hernández, said to be Bartlett's favorite.²⁷ The Puebla PAN has fought Bartlett hard so as to defend victories, and it nominated Ana Teresa Aranda de Orea, who had been state party leader and had led the PAN's struggle to have an electoral victory in the *municipio* of Huejotzingo

Table 10
Elections in Puebla
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
State Deputies 1992	19.2	68.5	6.1
Federal Deputies 1994	27.2	52.9	14.2
State Deputies 1995	37.1	50.2	9.9
Federal Deputies 1997	25.7	48.7	18.3
State Deputies 1998	27.6	52.6	14.8
Governor 1998	29.7	55.5	11.2

Sources: Partido Acción Nacional at http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_loc95.htm and http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_fed97.htm; Partido Revolucionario Institucional at <http://www.pri.org.mx/elecciones1998/>.

recognized, generally considered a defeat for the hard-line governor. The PRD, meanwhile, had internal differences over the nomination of Ricardo Villa Escalera that weakened his candidacy and the party's campaign.²⁸ Given its proximity to Mexico City, the presence of the large manufacturing city of Puebla, plus the rural character of the remainder of the state, Puebla ought to be a state in which the PRD is strong. As Table 10 indicates, this has not been the case, and in 1998 the PRD lost further ground to the PRI and the PAN in Puebla.

Because of Bartlett's aspirations for the presidency, no one expected the PRI to lose in Puebla or even to have to fight a close race. Thus the election outcome came as no surprise. Morales won the gubernatorial election by a wide margin, and the PRI won 25 of 26 state assembly races and 180 of 217 *municipios*. A state with a strong PRI machine seems safe for the party.

Veracruz

1997 was a bad year for the PRI, not only because it lost its majority in the Chamber of Deputies in the July federal elections but also because in municipal elections held in Veracruz in October, the opposition parties had taken 107 of 210 city governments. The PAN seized 39 city halls in 1997, among them the port city of Veracruz, Orizaba, and Boca del Río. The PRD, into whose ranks moved many disappointed PRI aspirants for local office, took 59 *municipios*. Therefore, entering the 1998 campaign for the Veracruz governorship and the state assembly, PRI leaders had much to worry them.

As it turned out, the momentum the PRD had built in Veracruz during 1997 when it received 39 percent of the votes in October was broken by internal squabbling over the gubernatorial nomination. Ignacio Morales Lechuga, a disappointed aspirant to the PRI gubernatorial nomination, tried to obtain the PRD nomination, a method that had won several frustrated PRI office seekers mayoral victories under

Table 11
Elections in Veracruz
1994-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
President 1994	16.4	53.4	24.0
State Deputies 1995	23.4	53.6	15.1
Federal Deputies 1997	21.6	43.5	27.0
Governor 1998	27.2	49.0	17.9

Sources: Partido Revolucionario Institucional; Rino Enzo Torres Baños, "Veracruz, estado clave," *Coyuntura*, no. 85 (March-April 1998) at <http://www.teesa.com/ierd/coyuntura85/ve.htm>.

the PRD banner in 1997. The Veracruz PRD, however, did not uniformly accept Morales Lechuga, the issue went to the national PRD congress for adjudication, where Morales Lechuga lost his bid, and the Veracruz PRD did not come up with an alternative "unity candidate" until April 26, just three months before the August 2 elections.²⁹ Morales Lechuga eventually accepted the nominations of the PT and the Mexican Green Party (the *Partido Verde Ecológico de México* or PVEM) but fared poorly in the gubernatorial election.

The PRI, already benefitting from the PRD's internal quarrels, postulated Miguel Alemán Velasco, a billionaire television executive and the son of former president Miguel Alemán Valdes(1946-1952). Alemán Velasco, who is 66 years old, has been an active member of the PRI for decades and represents pro-business elements within the party without being identified with the Salinas sector of the party. Alemán Velasco is well connected in international business circles and was able to bring to his campaign events prominent PRI politicians like Puebla governor Manuel Bartlett and Tabasco governor Roberto Madrazo, international entertainers like Arnold Schwarzenegger, Mexican celebrities, and many other well-known people.³⁰ Media-savvy by virtue of a lifetime in the industry, Alemán Velasco proved to be the PRI's strongest candidate of the year, even being spoken of as a presidential candidate for 2000.

The result was a romp by Alemán (see Table 11). Furthermore, his coattails were long as PRI candidates won 21 of 24 races for the state assembly. When the state assembly seats chosen by proportional representation are added to the district races, the PRI has 27 of 44 state assembly posts, a comfortable majority.

In sum, the PRI seems to have been able to halt opposition advances in Veracruz, as well as in Durango, Sinaloa, Tamaulipas, and Puebla. Attractive candidates yielded comfortable victories in Sinaloa, Tamaulipas and Veracruz. In Durango and Tamaulipas, the electoral playing field still tilts in the PRI's favor. Party primaries produced large turnouts in Sinaloa, Tamaulipas, and Puebla, perhaps contributing to the legitimacy of the PRI's candidates (this is true of Chihuahua too).³¹ Opposition

weakness and the division of the opposition vote among the PAN, the PRD, and in the case of Durango, the PT, further worked to the PRI's advantage. Combining some traditional elements of PRI electoral success with a new attention to the attractiveness of candidates and consultation during the nomination process has produced a reinvigorated PRI, at least in some places.

Elections Where the PRD and the PRI Compete

In the 1990s, the PRD has become the PRI's strongest competition in southern Mexico, with Morelos, Michoacán, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Campeche, and Tabasco becoming battlegrounds—not only electorally, unfortunately—between the two parties. Of these, only Oaxaca held a gubernatorial election in 1998, but there were also municipal and state assembly races in Chiapas and Michoacán. In addition, the PRD surprised the PRI in gubernatorial elections in Zacatecas and Tlaxcala when frustrated PRI office seekers sought the PRD nomination and defeated their former copartisans. The phenomenon of disappointed PRI aspirants for electoral office defecting to the PRD has implications for party discipline in the PRI and for party identity in the PRD, on which I will comment in the conclusion.

Oaxaca

The southern state of Oaxaca traditionally gave upwards of 70 percent of its votes to the PRI and did so as late as 1992 (Table 12). Composed of a staggering 570 *municipios*, the state is home to thousands of indigenous peoples living in hundreds of communities. PRI rule in Oaxaca has in part been the result of allowing the indigenous communities to choose their own leaders by their own methods so long as they support PRI candidates for state-wide and national offices.³² This does not necessarily produce the highest degree of political loyalty among voters. In addition, the neoliberal economic development model pursued by the Salinas and Zedillo governments has produced difficult times for southern states like Oaxaca, which remain largely agrarian and find it hard to compete against U.S. grain farmers. The primary sector has been largely stagnant since the mid 1980s. Furthermore, the attention drawn to discrimination against indigenous peoples by the Zapatista uprising in neighboring Chiapas has given salience to the issue of indigenous rights.

These issues have been exploited by the PRD, which generally runs on a platform of opposition to neoliberalism and economic integration and in favor of extension of civil rights protection for indigenous communities. Since the 1994 Chiapas uprising, Oaxaca and other southern states have become strong bases for the PRD.

To hold Oaxaca, the PRI nominated José Murat, a party activist with a long record of holding party positions and national legislative posts in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, in short, a *político*. Against Murat, the PRD put forward Héctor Sánchez López, also a federal senator who came into the PRD not as a PRI defector but as a socialist from the old independent left, a founder of the *Coalición Obrero Campesino y Estudiantil* (the Worker, Peasant, and Student Coalition or COCEI) in Juchitán in the 1970s. Murat ran on a platform of respecting the cultural identity of

Table 12
Elections in Oaxaca
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
State Deputies 1992	3.6	73.9	13.2
President 1994	13.5	52.3	28.4
State Deputies 1995	11.5	50.8	22.7
Federal Deputies 1997	13.0	49.7	30.8
Governor 1998	10.2	48.9	37.6

Sources: Partido Acción Nacional at http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_loc95.htm; Partido Revolucionario Institucional <http://www.pri.org.mx/elecciones1998/>; Carmen Lloréns Fabregat and Rino Enzo Torres Baños, "Oaxaca, perspectiva electoral," *Coyuntura*, no. 85 (March-April 1998) at <http://www.teesa.com/ierd/coyuntura85/oa.htm>.

indigenous communities and fighting poverty. Sánchez López likewise promised to help the indigenous and to seek a truce with the People's Revolutionary Party (*Ejército Popular Revolucionario* or EPR), an armed rebel group operating in southern Mexico.³³

A strong campaigner, Murat was expected to win easily. Sánchez López gained on his rival toward the end of the campaign, however, in the end losing to Murat by a 48.9 to 37.6 margin in the August 2 gubernatorial election (Table 12). The PAN meanwhile received but 10 percent of the vote.

The Oaxacan municipal elections were held separately on October 4. In those elections, the PAN retained the municipal government of the city of Oaxaca and those of Tuxtepec and Hujuapan while the PRD won Juchitán again and took the port of Salina Cruz for the first time. These are the five largest cities of Oaxaca.³⁴

Chiapas

The troubled state of Chiapas went to the polls on October 4 to elect municipal governments and the state assembly. Like almost all collective acts in this very divided state, elections are highly charged affairs. Long the most reliable of the PRI's rural bases, since the Zapatista uprising began on January 1, 1994, Chiapas has become highly contested by the PRD and the PAN (Table 13). In 1995, the PAN won Tuxtla Gutiérrez, the capital, and both opposition parties took the *ayuntamientos* of smaller *municipios*. Scrutiny of all political acts by Mexican human rights organizations and international organizations is close here. The PRI also feels a strong need to reclaim the state, hence its efforts are intense.

When the ballots were counted, the results closely mirrored the past three elections (Table 13). The PAN retained its control of Tuxtla's city government and won the two state assembly districts located there. It won four other *municipios*. The PRD won a total of fifteen city halls, all in relatively small towns, and it finished first

Table 13
Elections in Chiapas
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
State Elections 1992	6.5	80.1	8.2
President 1994	11.6	45.2	31.9
State Elections 1995	15.2	48.8	30.7
Federal Deputies 1997	12.5	47.9	28.3
Governor 1998	14.4	49.1	28.1

Sources: Partido Revolucionario Institucional at <http://www.pri.org.mx/elecciones1998/>; Partido Acción Nacional at http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_loc95.htm; Consejo Estatal Electoral del Estado de Chiapas at http://www.chiapascee.org.mx/4oct/di_org/proceso98/diputados98.htm.

in one state assembly district. The PRI won back three *municipios* from the PRD and one from the PAN.³⁵ The PRD remains the PRI's biggest challenger in Chiapas, but the PAN has shown it can win in larger cities in the south, like Tuxtla and Oaxaca.

Michoacán

Like Chiapas, Michoacán held state assembly and *ayuntamiento* elections this past fall. Like Chiapas, this relatively rural southwestern state has been the site of fierce competition in the past decade. Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas hails from Michoacán; when he left the PRI in 1988, so did many of his followers in the state.³⁶ Thus, Michoacán has been the PRD's most reliable state. The PRI, however, has fought tooth and nail to defeat the PRD there; electorally related violence has been common; and with the exception of the federal election of 1997, the PRI has come in first in the official electoral results (Table 14). Many, of course, accuse the PRI of fraud and vote stealing in the state. While the PRD has been the PRI's greatest competition in Michoacán, the PAN won several large *municipios* in 1995, among them Morelia, the state capital, home to a half million people. All told, the PAN won 14 municipal governments in 1995. The PRD, meanwhile, has governed between one third and nearly half of Michoacán's *municipios* since 1989.

With other states electing governors on November 8, the day Michoacán went to the polls, these state and local elections received little national attention. The results were disappointing for the opposition parties, especially the PRD. The PAN lost the *ayuntamiento* of Morelia, but the PRD's vote share dropped by more than 6 percent. This meant that, in this closely contested region, the PRD lost in 25 of the *municipios* that it had governed previously.³⁷ Apparently, divisions within the Michoacán PRD contributed to the party's downfall.³⁸ Like Veracruz and Puebla, this outcome indicates that internal divisions will diminish the appeal of an opposition party to the electorate.

Table 14
Elections in Michoacán
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
State Deputies 1992	8.0	51.9	36.1
Federal Deputies 1994	15.4	45.3	35.7
State Deputies 1995	26.0	36.6	31.8
Federal Deputies 1997	18.1	35.8	40.2
State Deputies 1998	20.1	41.7	33.9

Sources: Partido Acción Nacional at http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_loc95.htm and http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_fed97.htm; Instituto Electoral de Michoacán at <http://www.iem-michoacan.org.mx/>.

Zacatecas

Until 1998, the northern state of Zacatecas was anything but a bastion of PRD strength. The center-left party had performed better there than in some northern states but had yet to reach 15 percent of the popular vote statewide. No one expected 1998 to be any different.

Zacatecas and Tlaxcala represent a new strategy pursued by the PRD to defeat the PRI. Given opportunities by divisions with the PRI over the nomination of candidates for important offices, the PRD has accepted as its candidate a frustrated PRI aspirant. In Zacatecas, this frustrated aspirant was Ricardo Monreal Avila, a federal deputy who had been passed over by the national leadership of the PRI in favor of José Olvera Acevedo. Monreal had a long record of holding important party and electoral posts, including leadership of the state party and membership in the federal senate and had been working for three years seeking the support of PRI mayors and state assemblymen to gain the nomination for governor.³⁹ His acute disappointment led him to denounce his PRI membership and seek a “citizen alliance” against his former party and its candidate for governor. Although the PVEM nominated Monreal, his real institutional support came from the PRD. Monreal did not, however, join the PRD, running as an external candidate on the PRD ticket.

Monreal’s popularity in Zacatecas was apparent throughout the campaign, and in the July 5 elections, he won by a comfortable margin over Olvera. Monreal had coattails that benefitted PRD candidates, but the PRD slate of state deputy candidates polled fully 10 percent below Monreal’s 44.7 percent of the vote (Table 15). Apparently, almost a quarter of Monreal voters cast votes for PRI or PAN state assembly candidates. This meant that the PRI triumphed in 11 of 18 electoral districts, whereas the PRD took six and the PAN one. The PRD seized ten of the 56 *ayuntamientos* and the PAN nine, two fewer than in 1995. Here the centrality of a candidate for a prominent office to the electoral process is most strongly manifested. Strong candidacies can overcome institutional advantages to win important elected

Table 15
Elections in Zacatecas
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
State Deputies 1992	13.6	68.6	12.9
Federal Deputies 1994	22.0	61.7	9.7
State Deputies 1995	30.3	47.3	10.8
Federal Deputies 1997	25.8	50.4	14.0
Governor 1998	12.9	38.1	44.7
State Deputies 1998	17.6	37.8	34.9

Sources: Partido Revolucionario Institucional at <http://www.pri.org.mx/elecciones1998/>; Partido Acción Nacional at http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_loc95.htm.

posts, and they can—through coattail effects—influence the outcomes of elections for lower offices. This could have critical consequences in the elections of 2000.

Tlaxcala

Tlaxcala, a small state just to the north of Mexico City, had long been one of the PRI's safest bases. As late as 1992, the PRI won over 80 percent of the votes in statewide elections. Since then, the PRI has declined precipitously, as Table 16 indicates. In the 1994-1997 period, the PRD made significant gains, but the PAN also established a presence in Tlaxcala. In the 1995 state elections, the PAN won five *municipios* and the PRD four (there are 60 in all). In May, the PRD, the PVEM, and the PT agreed to try to forward a common candidacy in order to better contest the November 8 elections; the PAN declined to join that alliance.⁴⁰

The "Democratic Alliance," as the coalition of parties called itself, found its opportunity when a popular PRI politician, Alfonso Sánchez Anaya, left the PRI before its May 9 primary in Tlaxcala, "charging it was rigged by party bosses."⁴¹ The Tlaxcalan experience with primaries, in which Joaquín Cisneros Fernández was chosen as the PRI's candidate, suggests that primary elections do not necessarily produce a stronger candidacy, particularly if they divide the party and if the intervention of power figures calls the democratic process so into question that long-time party militants choose to bolt from the PRI. Once nominated by the Democratic Alliance, Sánchez Anaya had to struggle to overcome Cisneros Fernández's initial lead. In the November 8 election, however, he narrowly won.

In Tlaxcala, as in Zacatecas, the PRD won without a candidate from within its membership. Its image in state has become largely positive, being associated with notions of democracy, progress, and change, while the PRI is identified by Tlaxcalans as corrupt, violent, and authoritarian.⁴² While the PRI has to worry much about the precedent set by Monreal and Sánchez Anaya, the PRD must consider the consequences for its self-identity of promoting candidacies of non-PRD members. The

Table 16
Elections in Tlaxcala
1992-1998

Election	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
State Elections 1992	6.1	82.8	7.3
President 1994	24.6	54.2	15.7
State Deputies 1995	18.0	50.9	13.5
Federal Deputies 1997	19.6	43.4	23.9
Governor 1998	8.3	43.0	45.4*

Sources: "Tlaxcala, tiempo de alianzas," *Coyuntura*, no. 87 (August-September 1998) at <http://www.teesa.com/ierd/coyuntura87/tl.htm>; Partido Acción Nacional at http://www.pan.org.mx/electoral/r_loc95.htm; *La Jornada*, November 10, 1998 (preliminary figures).

*Candidate of Opposition Alliance (*Alianza Opositora*), including the PRD, the *Partido del Trabajo* (PT), and the *Partido Verde Ecológico de México* (PVEM).

party must carefully assess the advantages of being associated with victorious candidates for high office, including that the winner's coattails can sweep other PRD candidates into lower office, in comparison to the potential costs to the party. Two significant costs can be the dilution of the PRD's ideological message (although that is less than tightly defined anyway) and the need to ask longer-term PRD militants to stand down from the nominations they had awaited to allow more electable PRI defectors to take the PRD mantle.

Toward the 2000 Election

Although the governments under which millions of Mexicans were subject experienced significant change in the 1998 state and local elections, most observers paid attention to these elections for the possible clues they could give to the upcoming presidential and congressional elections in July 2000. To conclude this report, I will comment on some of the possible meanings of this electoral season for the 2000 race.

Most importantly, the 1998 elections demonstrated that the PRI can, in the right places, following the right strategies, hold its own or even make inroads against the opposition parties (see Table 17 for a comprehensive list of the 1998 electoral outcomes). We must always remind ourselves that the PRI has ruled since 1929. It may find adjustment to competitive electoral politics difficult, but it has made adjustments before, in the early 1990s, for example. The PRI will definitely face a stiff challenge in 2000, but it remains the party with the greatest resources available to it.

Primary elections can produce better candidates for the PRI—at least candidates more likely to win in the general election. They can also exacerbate the internal divisions within the party. Further, there is no guarantee that those thwarted by the primary election process will not bolt from the party and seek the nomination of another party.

The PRD has shown that it can and will take advantage of the PRI's internal problems. Zacatecas and Tlaxcala demonstrate how the PRD can take advantage of the opportunities afforded it by the PRI's internal differences. This short-term strategy to deny the PRI electoral victories, however, may well bring long-term divisions within the PRD itself. Neither Veracruz nor Puebla can be considered PRD successes this year.

The PAN must develop a coherent strategy to address the PRD's growth in almost all parts of the nation and to counter the PRI's determination to win back those states it has lost to the PAN. The PAN has prospered in recent years by an attention to local races—city halls and state houses, especially the former. In 1998 the PAN held on to most of the city halls it had won in earlier elections; however, the PAN made only one major gain in 1998—in Aguascalientes—and lost more than it won. To avoid becoming the third party, it must find the vigor it exhibited in 1995.

Finally, Mexican elections have become more candidate centered. The old politics of organization, especially of the powerful PRI electoral machine, is being

Table 17
1998 State-level Electoral Results
Elections for State Assemblies

State	Election Date	PAN %	PRI %	PRD %
Aguascalientes	August 2	49.8	38.3	8.0
Baja California	June 28	41.3	38.7	9.8
Chiapas	October 7	14.4	49.1	28.1
Chihuahua	July 5	41.9	47.4	7.2
Durango	July 5	26.3	41.5	8.2
Michoacán	November 8	20.1	41.7	33.9
Oaxaca	August 2	11.1	48.9	36.0
Puebla	November 8	27.6	52.6	14.8
Sinaloa	November 8	32.3	46.4	18.0*
Tamaulipas	November 8	25.7	53.8	14.7
Tlaxcala	November 8	8.3	43.0	45.4**
Veracruz	August 2	26.9	46.2	20.3
Yucatán	May 24	35.9	54.9	8.3
Zacatecas	July 5	17.6	37.8	34.9

*Preliminary gubernatorial election results.

**Preliminary gubernatorial election results; candidate was of Opposition Alliance (*Alianza Opositora*), including the PRD, the *Partido del Trabajo* (PT), and the *Partido Verde Ecológico de México* (PVEM).

replaced by a politics of candidates, campaigns, and television. Parties that fail to put forward attractive candidates risk losing even their strongholds. Parties that alienate attractive aspirants to office risk losing those candidates to other parties. The PRI itself has shown it can put forward appealing, vigorous candidates, however, and this PRI could win a three-way election in 2000.

Notes

1. José Antonio Crespo, *Votar en los estados: Análisis comparada de las legislaciones electorales estatales en México* (Mexico City: Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 1996) offers comprehensive data on the state and local electoral arrangements.
2. See the description in Victoria E. Rodríguez and Peter M. Ward, *Political Change in Baja California: Democracy in the Making?* (La Jolla: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California at San Diego, 1994), pp. 48-51.
3. See Victoria E. Rodríguez and Peter M. Ward, *Policymaking, Politics, and Urban Governance in Chihuahua: The Experience of Recent PANista Governments*, U.S.-Mexican Policy Studies Program Policy Report, no. 3 (Austin: LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas, 1992), pp. 65-86.
4. Rodríguez and Ward, *Political Change in Baja California*, p. 27.
5. Wayne A. Cornelius, "Liberalization in an Authoritarian Regime: Mexico, 1976-1985," in Judith Gentleman (ed.), *Mexican Politics in Transition* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1987), p. 23.
6. Sergio Sarmiento, "Jaque Mate: Elección in Baja," *Reforma*, July 1, 1998.
7. M. Delal Baer, "The 1986 Mexican Elections: The Case of Chihuahua," CSIS Latin American Elections Series (Washington, D.C.: CSIS, September 1986).
8. Sam Dillon, "Dominant Mexican Party Tries Out Critic's Role," *New York Times*, July 4, 1998, p. A3.
9. "Chihuahua, cambios por venir," *Escenario preelectoral 1998* (Instituto de Estudios de la Revolución Democrática, May 1998), at <http://www.teesa.com/ierd/elecc/ch.htm>.
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