# Democratic Governability in Latin America: The Emerging Agenda

Michael Coppedge

SAIS, John Hopkins University

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Michael Coppedge is Assistant Professor of Political Science and Latin American Studies at the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), The Johns Hopkins University, Washington D.C.

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# Introduction

On October 8 and 9, 1990, the Center for Latin American Studies at Georgetown University sponsored an International Workshop on Democratic Governability in Latin America, with financial support from the Tinker Foundation. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together high ranking government officials, technical experts, and academics from diverse countries and institutions to discuss the difficult challenges which the new democracies in Latin America face in governing complex societies at a time of serious economic and social crisis. Joining the workshop were several Latin American ambassadors with significant experience in government, accredited to the United States and the Organization of American States.

The workshop was organized by Professor Arturo Valenzuela within the framework of Georgetown University's on-going project on "Democratic Governability in Latin America." Former President Julio María Sanguinetti of Uruguay presided over the workshop while in residence at Georgetown as a Tinker Visiting Scholar. In addition to President Sanguinetti, present and former high ranking government officials set the stage for the discussion by reviewing the difficulties of democratic governance in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay and Venezuela. Former Minister of Planning and leader of the Movimiento Revolucionario Nacional of Bolivia, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, who was to present the Bolivian case was unable to attend the meeting at the last minute. The workshop continued with panels dealing with the challenge of macro-economic stabilization policy and structural reform and continued with panels dealing with the broad issue of political reform of the state. Issues discussed included centralization and decentralization, legislative-executive relations, and political parties and electoral laws. The agenda of the workshop can be found in Appendix A of this report and the list of attenders in Appendix B.

Because the challenges of reconciling democracy and governance in Latin America are numerous and complex, the aim of the workshop organizers was to help define an agenda for research and action that will make it possible to propose realistic options and solutions in the future. Such an agenda could be set only by a joint effort in which the theorists encouraged the practitioners to think imaginatively, and the practitioners challenged the theorists to tailor their ideas to real-world situations.

Former president Sanguinetti was enthusiastic about the venture, and his expectations were fully rewarded, as the workshop yielded a rich lode of ideas and experiences. Many of the participants were pleased by the degree of overlap between the concerns of Latin Americans and Anglo-Americans, and between the practitioners and the theorists. The purpose of this report is to distill these ideas and synthesize them into a coherent agenda for research and action on the problems and prospects for democratic governability in Latin America. It is not meant to be a strict narrative of the discussions of the workshop, but a more interpretive essay on the principal issues and controversies which informed the debate and its conclusions.

## Dilemmas and Problems

Democracy and governability are inherently antagonistic goals. Attaining one necessarily means sacrificing some measure of the other. Democracy requires that the people rule; governability requires that they be ruled. The contradiction between these two principles is an old one whose resolution has been eagerly sought at least since Rousseau asked

> how to find a form of association which will defend the person and goods of each member with the collective force of all, and under which each individual, while uniting himself with the others, obeys no one but himself, and remains as free as before.[1]

For every requirement for democracy there is an equal and opposite requirement for governability. (1) Democracy requires personal freedoms--to think, to speak, to organize, and to make demands; but if everyone were to exercise these freedoms fully, the result would be chaos. Governability requires some curtailment of these freedoms, either voluntarily by the citizens themselves or coercively by the state. (2) Democracy requires that all positions be fully represented and taken into account in the political process; but if a democracy is to be governable, the executive must be able to decide, that is, to choose one position over all others. (3) In a full democracy, there are no important restrictions on whom the citizens may choose to head the government; but if the democracy is to be governable, they must choose someone who is wise and capable, and not merely popular. (4) A democracy should also insure accountability: the capacity for self-correction so that policies and personnel are continuously adjusted to fit the changing mood of the public; but governability sometimes requires the executive to lead against the grain of public opinion without interruption for a distressingly long period of time.

Formulas exist that would resolve each of these dilemmas in ways that strike a morally acceptable balance between governability and democracy. In Latin America, however, these fundamental dilemmas are often poorly resolved. Sometimes the result is governability at the expense of democracy; sometimes it is democracy at the expense of governability; too often it is neither very democratic nor governable.

**Freedom vs. Order:** Some of the most obvious, and most intractable, manifestations of ungovernability in Latin America stem from the difficulties involved in reconciling personal and political freedoms with the need for public order. The ideal formula for resolving this tension is an institutionalized political order, in which citizens voluntarily channel their demands through the established procedures of the state, and even those few who refuse to work within the system are tried and punished according to due process of law. But in Latin America this high degree of institutionalization is often lacking, and consequently politics is plagued by naked struggles for power in which the very rules of the

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[1] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract (London: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 60.

competition are in dispute. Freedoms are limited too little by self-restraint and too much by violent coercion, intimidation, and powerlessness rooted in deep inequalities.

Authoritarian regimes do not have a monopoly on such abuses. Andrés Pastrana pointed to the guerrilla war and the drug war as two of the greatest threats to governability in Colombia, which has been a nominally democratic regime since 1958. The Colombian government has been fighting with guerrilla movements since the early 1960s. It has also been unable to control the growth of two cocaine-trafficking mafias, which have sponsored an epidemic of murder and kidnapping against the press, government officials, and hundreds of candidates for political office, including three candidates for president in the last election. These challenges weaken the Colombian state, but they are also symptoms of weakness, for the government does not have effective control over large portions of its own national territory. Partly as a result of this weakness, government forces do not always bother to respect due process, and grotesque human rights violations are committed against innocent peasant populations. The drug trade poses similar problems for governability in Peru, Bolivia, and increasingly, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Brazil. Guerrilla movements (and the harsh and sometimes indiscriminate violent repression they provoke) are an even greater threat to governability in Peru and much of Central America, as well as a minor threat in Ecuador.

Levels of violence are much lower in Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Chile, and Uruguay with occasional exceptions such as the February 1989 riots in Venezuela, and even then the violence has taken the form of looting and other crime rather than organized terrorism or guerrilla war. In Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, however, the legacy of repression under the most recent authoritarian governments continued to challenge governability for years after democracy was restored. In all three countries, the new democratic governments had to decide how harshly to prosecute the perpetrators of the authoritarian repression and terrorist violence. A decision in favor of prosecution threatened to provoke a coup by the military in self-defense; a decision in favor of amnesty threatened to de-legitimize the democratic regime in the eyes of citizens seeking justice. In Uruguay this issue was laid to rest after a plebescite that ratified President Sanguinetti's policy of amnesty. While the issue is still alive in Chile, and will become more salient as investigations into the extent of the repression continue, Edgardo Boeninger did not consider it sufficiently serious to threaten democracy there, as consensus is so strong on other fundamental issues.

**Popular Sovereignty vs. Capable Leadership:** There would be little conflict between the need for capable leadership and the people's right to choose their leader if (1) party systems were institutionalized well enough for parties to control the nomination of candidates, and (2) competition among parties obliged them to select only candidates who were both broadly popular and able to govern effectively. While it would be utopian to expect any party system regularly to produce leaders who retained their popularity for a whole term, Latin America has produced its share of executives who fall short of even realistic expectations.

In party systems that are not well institutionalized, candidates recruit parties rather than the other way around, and eccentric personalities or telegenic faces with media access suddenly become electable. In Brazil and Peru, for example, virtually unknown candidates have come from nowhere at the last minute and won, or come dangerously close to winning, important elections. The fact that such candidates are likely to be inexperienced is only the most obvious problem in this state of affairs. The more serious problem is that they lack a reliable base of support and almost always find themselves politically isolated and unable to govern soon after the election.

**Representation vs. Decisiveness:** President Sanguinetti proposed a Proyecto de Paz which would reconcile the conflicting needs of representation and decisiveness. As he suggested, the democratic goal of effectively representing all groups and the decisiveness of governability are both adequately served if all of the politically relevant groups are included in the decision-making process. That is, the actors that would have the ability to disrupt society if their interests were ignored--parties, unions, armed forces, businesses, and the Church--are confident that they will be consulted before major decisions are made. Democracy is served by this arrangement because consultation is fairly broad. Governability is served because, having been consulted, and knowing that they will be consulted in the future, all of the politically relevant groups are willing to support or at least acquiesce in the decisions made. This does not mean that decisions are made without conflict, only that decisions can be made without undermining any important group's willingness to work within the system.

In actual practice, systems of representation and interest aggregation in Latin America deviate from this ideal in numerous respects. In many cases, political parties do not serve as useful channels for communicating demands from the grass roots to policymakers. In Colombia to an extreme degree and in the rest of the region to a lesser one, this happens because the connections between parties and society at the local level are dominated by clientelism, and as a result, demands made upon the parties tend to be either particularistic or vague--not much use to policy-makers. According to Paredes Pisani, representation in Venezuela is also distorted by excessive party penetration of civil society. Highly centralized political parties have come to dominate other organizations, subordinating these organizations' interests to the narrower imperatives of partisan competition and thereby stifling society's potential for expressing autonomous demands. Boeninger argued that party penetration is harmful in Chile as well because it extends polarization throughout society, making it more difficult for the elite accommodation required in a governable democracy to succeed.

Fragmentation of the party system is another hindrance to the aggregation of interests necessary in a governable democracy. Vallejo attached great emphasis to this problem in Ecuador, which has one of the most divided party systems in the hemisphere: there are a great many parties, none very large, and many of them are internally fractionalized as well. To a lesser degree, fragmentation is also a problem in Chile, as its

multiparty system makes it difficult for a president to win a majority of the vote in an election or to negotiate a working majority in the congress.

A final deviation from the ideal concerns the representation of corporate interests whose power is not based on organized numbers, but on weapons, wealth, or religious authority. Nearly twenty years ago, Douglas Chalmers noted that the military and foreigners (and I would add economic groups and the Church) are actors "whose primary resources for exerting influence are extraordinarily difficult to compare by any known constitutional technology."[2] This is still a very real problem with respect to the military in Chile and Uruguay, where public opinion remains divided over whether to recognize the military's power and give it influence disproportionate to its numbers (as written into the constitution by Pinochet, for example), or to attempt to render military power politically irrelevant by depoliticizing the institution.

**Accountability vs. Insulation:** In an ideal world, an executive faced with a politically difficult task does not have to accept the obvious choice between doing it despite the opposition or not doing it because of the opposition. There is a third way: if the task really is necessary, he should be able to convince the opposition to support it. Leadership, in other words, can afford executives some breathing room to undertake a normally unpopular program without sacrificing their accountability to the public. In the real world, however, leaders are not always willing to risk political suicide in an attempt to convince the opposition that the difficult course is the right one, and even when they are, the opposition is not always willing to be convinced (which is one reason why leaders are reluctant to try in the first place).

Latin America has recently passed through one of the least encouraging atmospheres for leadership--the debt crisis. For years after the crisis hit in 1982, democratic leaders stared the inevitability of structural adjustment in the eye...and denied it, flirting with default, begging creditors for a little extra time, waiting for new lending, and casting the blame elsewhere. The tendency, in effect, was to favor accountability over insulation: when executives encountered vehement opposition every time they made a move in the direction of serious adjustment, they gave in. It was only after adjustment programs began to show some positive results in Chile, Mexico, and Bolivia (the ones that insulated their economic teams, at the expense of accountability) that it became politically feasible for most democratic leaders to attempt similar reforms with the reluctant blessing of the opposition.

In the meantime, the economic issue aggravated one of the chronic symptoms of ungovernability in Latin America--the vicious cycle of stalemate and circumvention. Since presidents lacked majority support for their programs in congress, and the parties in the congress preferred to remain safely in the opposition, governments were unable to take decisive action on pressing issues through legitimate, constitutional channels. All presidents

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[2] Douglas Chalmers, "Parties and Society in Latin America," <u>Studies in Comparative International Development</u> 7:2 (Summer 1972): 102-128.

were tempted, and several tried, to break the deadlock by ignoring the congress's role in the legislative process, which they did by declaring states of siege (Colombia), asking for emergency decree powers (Venezuela), vesting legislative authority in the bureaucracy (Chile), and refusing to implement laws duly passed by congress (Ecuador). These circumventions enhanced governability (in the short term), but only at the expense of accountability, and therefore of democracy.

## The Search for Solutions

Some observers have argued that the solutions to the problems mentioned above can be found only if Latin America were to dramatically expand its resource base, overhaul its political traditions, and guarantee an endless supply of exceptional leaders. Workshop participants focused their attention on realistic assessments of Latin American reality and exhibited a strong bias towards solutions that could be characterized as "the art of the possible"-- very much in the spirit of Albert Hirschman's plea for "reform mongering."[6] Latin American governability must be achieved recognizing that many countries will continue to count on limited resources, grave inequalities, conflictive political relations, and even at times mediocre leadership.

Political engineering properly begins with the aspects of political systems that are most easily addressed by would-be "reform mongers"--political institutions (meaning constitutions and other fundamental laws and procedures; and bureaucratic agencies, parties, interest groups, and other organizations.) Institutional reform cannot solve all the problems of governability, but it can accomplish more than one might think, and much of its potential is still unexplored. We are looking for institutions that will recruit leaders who are both capable and popular; institutions that allow all politically relevant groups to feel effectively represented in the political process; institutions that provide incentives for cooperation and mutual accommodation. And ultimately, we are looking for institutionalization itself.

<u>Economic Stabilization and Adjustment</u>:

The most important problem faced by most Latin American countries today is economic stabilization and structural adjustment. It poses the highest-priority challenge to governability because, if these economic problems are not addressed and economic growth is not resumed, the region is likely to slide into a much more severe kind of ungovernability--rampant crime, corruption, and random violence--in a word, chaos.

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[3] Albert Hirschman <u>JourneysTowardProgress</u>(NewYork: TwentiethCenturyFund,1963).

The problem is especially important because success is by no means assured. Stabilization and adjustment are tasks that seem to have been designed for the express purpose of testing the governability of developing democracies. The requirements of stabilization and adjustment by their very nature open what could be called a window of ungovernability, which has an economic and a political dimension. The economic dimension, as described by Richard Newfarmer and Osvaldo Sunkel, consists of the fact that the costs of adjustment--demand reduction, devaluation, elimination of subsidies, government jobs, etc.--are paid up front, while the benefits--efficiency, new investment, export growth, lower inflation, job creation--come (if at all) too late to be of any political benefit to the policymakers.

The political dimension of the window of ungovernability results from the fact that the necessity of stabilization and adjustment becomes apparent only to the insiders at the top at first, and only gradually diffuses to include political leaders beyond the inner circle and finally large numbers of people at the grass roots. From the day of the first attempt at stabilization until the time when it earns the reluctant support of most politically relevant groups, the window of ungovernability is open. And as long as it is open, technocrats find themselves frustrated by short-sighted politicians, governments are frustrated by the opposition parties, and elites are threatened by the disappointment and anger in civil society. These successive reactions add up to a crisis of governability.

Important questions concerning this process of diffusion need to be answered. What does it take to discredit old ideas and to make new ones legitimate? Is there any way to speed up the process? Is there some way to make it less costly, with fewer trials and fewer errors? Other questions relate to leadership. Why did (and in a couple of cases, does) it take leaders so long to take serious steps toward liberalization? What discourages leaders from adopting what John Bailey called a "discourse of visionary realism" to deal with the crisis? Perhaps institutions could be reformed in a way that would encourage bolder leadership.

If it is not possible to accelerate the diffusion of support for economic reform or to improve leadership, then attention must be focused on the later stages of ungovernability. When a government reaches the point of initiating the reform, is there a formula or strategy that favors successful implementation? Is it possible to mollify the popular sectors with non-economic benefits, such as democratization, decentralization, and symbolic rewards, until the difficult phase of adjustment is complete? Are there ways to pursue liberalization selectively, in a way that would win the support of its natural opponents, as Sunkel suggested? Robert Kaufman reported that the social pact strategies have not had encouraging results, probably because they require strong institutional ties among labor, business, and governing parties if they are to hold together. If that is the case, then what kinds of institutional arrangements favor success?

In the sixties and seventies, many argued that authoritarian regimes possessed a superior capacity for stabilization and, indeed, the first Latin American governments to

succeed at stabilization and adjustment (Chile and Mexico) were authoritarian. Since then, however, in part because of the example of Chile and Mexico, it has become politically feasible for even democratic regimes to sustain serious liberalization efforts. New hypotheses regarding institutional capacities should be studied, such as Mailson da Nóbrega's argument that the decentralization mandated in the 1987 Constitution handicapped the Brazilian federal government at the worst possible moment for coping with adjustment.

Different questions arise at a still later stage of reaction. What forms of incorporation work best to contain strikes, protests, and (as Sunkel reminded us) economic sabotage by economic elites? A state corporatist structure like Mexico's certainly gives a government more breathing room to carry out unpopular policies, but even in Mexico the pain of adjustment has strained corporatist structures to the cracking point. How long can this form of incorporation hold out? How long does it need to hold out? And what are the long-term costs for political institutions? Are less authoritarian forms of incorporation adequate for containing dissent, especially now that the idea of adjustment has gained a foothold of legitimacy in civil society? Are governing parties so dependent on patronage for their support that cutting public sector jobs amounts to political suicide?

While these questions are being answered, we cannot neglect the question of feasibility. It would not be surprising to find that it is too late to try to build an effective form of incorporation once the crisis has started. Corporativism in Mexico and Brazil, for example, took root because Cárdenas and Vargas provided real and unprecedented benefits to workers at the beginning, feats of generosity that contemporary governments are in no position to repeat. And in our concern for governability, we must not forget about democracy. There is a danger that the very idea of democracy could be discredited if "democratic" regimes resort to overt or subtle repression in order to achieve economic stabilization and adjustment or other goals. The levels of political violence in Peru and Colombia amply justify cynicism about the quality of democracy in those countries.

<u>Executive-legislative relations and the parliamentary option</u>:

One institutional change that is thought to have the potential to improve governability in Latin American democracies is the adoption of a parliamentary system. Advocates of this change blame presidentialism for some of the problems of governability and believe that these problems would be diminished or absent in a parliamentary system. Arturo Valenzuela argued that presidentialism reinforces divisions in society. This happens because the direct election of the president is interpreted as a powerful mandate to govern as he sees fit, which reduces the incentives to consult with other party leaders or groups before making important decisions. While some parliamentary elections are also interpreted as mandates for a particular party leader who is certain to become prime minister, a parliamentary system keeps open the possibility that executive power will be more dispersed among the members of the cabinet, with the prime minister only a first among equals. In a presidential system, parties participating in a coalition can never be more than very junior members of the cabinet; in a parliamentary system, small parties can enjoy a greater share

of power, even a disproportionate share, which provides all of the coalition members with an incentive to cooperate and seek accommodation.

Valenzuela also criticized presidential government for its inflexibility: in the event of an impasse between the executive and legislative branches, the president cannot dissolve the congress, and the congress cannot dismiss the president. This stalemate lasts until the next election, or until the two branches patch up their differences, which is not likely because of the lack of incentives for cooperation. A parliamentary system is considered superior because this kind of stalemate could be resolved with a vote of no confidence or the dissolution of the chamber. The essential difference is that it is easier to hold a parliamentary executive accountable between elections.

Greater accountability is an advantage for democracy, but as Robert Kaufman argued, it could be a disadvantage for governability if it involves constant cabinet crises, dissolutions, and lost votes of no confidence. Governability requires some degree of insulation, and the president's fixed term of office is arguably superior at providing exactly that. However, we need not settle for the easy (and frustrating) conclusion that the debate on the relative merits of presidentialism and parliamentarism boils down to a trade-off between accountability and insulation. We must remember that an executive can be both accountable and insulated if he provides strong leadership. The better system is the one that provides the greatest incentives for leadership.

A case can be made that presidentialism frustrates leadership and parliamentarism encourages it. Truly effective leaders earn their positions by their service to the party, their personalities, their ideas, and their background. They are evolved, not elected. But presidents have a fixed term and cannot succeed themselves in office (except in the United States and the Dominican Republic). There is no reason to suppose that fixed terms correspond closely with the periods of a leader's strongest support. If the president is a poor leader, one would want to get rid of him before the end of his term; if he is a good one, it would be a shame to lose him because of an arbitrary deadline. In addition, the fact that everyone knows that the president's term will expire encourages others to challenge his leadership in order to succeed him in office. There are also frequently former presidents and former presidential candidates in the party who can claim considerable support, especially if they are eligible for candidacy in the future. All of these considerations combine to undermine the president's leadership of his own party. Prime ministers, by contrast, hold office because they are the leaders of their parties, and when they are no longer able to lead, they are replaced by someone else.

Valenzuela rhetorically raised the possibility of reforming the presidential system as an alternative, since parliamentarism is alien to Latin America. Presidents could be made accountable to the congress; the congress could be dissolved by the president; and presidents could be allowed to serve consecutive terms. The first two reforms would indeed address the problem of stalemate, and the last one would make a marginal improvement in the

continuity of leadership. None of them, however, would create the incentives for consensus-building that presidential systems lack.

While presidential systems may have clear weaknesses and parliamentary systems clear strengths, parliamentary systems also have their weaknesses (even setting aside the problems of the assembly type of parliamentarism of the Weimar Republic and the French Fourth Republic), and greater attention should be paid to them. Some of these problems are well-documented but of minor importance compared to the dangers of immobilism and regime breakdown. In this category I would include the complaint that small parties exercise disproportionate influence in coalition governments and the observation that coalition governments formed after the general election lack the legitimacy of direct election. Jeffrey Sachs' finding (mentioned by Robert Kaufman) that coalition cabinets respond more slowly to fiscal crisis should be carefully considered.

We should also examine closely the assumption that parliamentary governments (as opposed to regimes) would be reasonably stable in Latin America. The assumption seems to be based on the experience of Germany and France: after years of fragmented and unstable cabinets, they adopted "modern" parliamentary rules, and have since enjoyed very stable government. But the new rules may not be responsible for the new stability; it may be that both the rules and the stability are the product of the years of instability. In other words, politicians learned by experience that the regime suffers if the government falls too often, and for that reason they were willing to adopt and practice the rules designed to discourage that behavior. Can Brazil in the 1990s learn from the history of Germany in the 1930s? Is it enough to adopt the right rules, or will Latin America have to learn these lessons the hard way, by living through the consequences of unstable parliamentary government itself?

Fred Riggs' statistic that two thirds of the parliamentary regimes in developing countries have not failed should be examined more closely: What counts as failure? Will their failure rate approach that of presidential systems when they have been independent as long as Latin America? This question, as well as the question of whether it is politically feasible for a Latin American country to decide to adopt a parliamentary system, will begin to be answered when Brazil holds a referendum on parliamentarism in 1993. There is a real danger, however, that without profound changes in its party system, Brazil will be the first country in the region to adopt parliamentarism, and the first country to discredit it.

Political parties, electoral laws, and democratic stability:

Several workshop participants discussed characteristics of parties and party systems that help or hinder governability in Latin American democracies. Kaufman argued that centrist, two-party systems are better at economic stabilization; Valenzuela detailed the hazards of multi-partyism in a presidential system; Cavarozzi called for an end to the polarization of Radicals and Peronists in Argentina, and sufficient internal cohesion to make pacts enforceable; Vallejo lamented the fragmentation and undiscipline of parties in

Ecuador. Implicit or explicit in all of these statements is the notion that these countries would be more governable if elections regularly produced disciplined and cohesive governing majorities.

Could majorities be created in Latin American party systems? One way to do it would be to create single-party majorities. The electoral technology that would accomplish this is well known. Plurality elections in single-member districts, legislative elections held concurrently with presidential elections, gerrymandering, and other practices such as awarding an automatic majority of seats to the largest party in each district, all tend to produce a dominant or two-party system. Our understanding of why majority parties are a rarity is still sketchy (in part because no complete collection of electoral laws and election results exists in one place), but if one wanted to create majorities where they do not exist, there would be little doubt about the appropriate technical means to that end.

The hard part would be summoning the will to enact such a reform, because the reduction of the number of parties in the system would entail the demise or forced merger of some of them. This is not absolutely impossible--the generals did it in Brazil in 1965--but it is certainly very difficult to accomplish in a democratic system. Any reform of the party system must take into account the party leaders' interest in continuing their careers and controlling their own parties.

Another way to create majorities would be to encourage inter-party cooperation sufficient to hold together a governing coalition of several parties in a multiparty system. There is less consensus about any palatable way to accomplish this goal, which amounts to ending party polarization. Authoritarian repression of parties created willingness to cooperate in order to re-establish democracy in Venezuela, Colombia, and Chile, but no one would advocate doing it deliberately. Genaro Arriagada argued that the electoral law imposed by Pinochet forced parties to cooperate in order to survive but again, it is highly doubtful that parties in a democratic system would impose such a law on themselves. The only morally acceptable suggestion offered so far is the adoption of a parliamentary system. While there are many good logical reasons to believe that parliamentarism would be better at encouraging cooperation (or riding out crises of lack of cooperation), we will not know for sure until a country actually tries it. In the meantime, studies of the workings of parliamentarism in other developing countries (India, the Caribbean, Malaysia, etc.) would put the debate on more solid footing.

A second allegedly desirable characteristic for parties is discipline. There is little or no comparative research on how disciplined Latin American parties are, much less on why some are more disciplined than others, which leaves us with few useful suggestions on how to go about making the existing parties more disciplined. The conventional wisdom in Western Europe used to be that the type of ballot used in legislative elections had a decisive impact on party discipline: closed and blocked lists promoted discipline and various types of preference voting allowed candidates to act independently. Numerous exceptions have been found to these generalizations, however, and no other institutional explanation has

taken their place. Valenzuela and others assert that parties would behave in a more disciplined fashion in the legislative arena within a parliamentary system, but others have come to the opposite conclusion. These arguments need to be developed more fully.

It may turn out to be difficult or impossible to centralize authority within parties if they were not born disciplined. According the Angelo Panebianco, European parties that originated as alliances of pre-existing local organizations or clubs began with a decentralized internal power structure and once established, it is hard to change that institutional tradition. Parties that are tightly disciplined started out as a nucleus of national leaders who spread their organization throughout the country.[4] If this is true, it suggests no way to create disciplined parties other than starting from scratch. We will not know, however, whether this is true until there are comparative studies of party discipline and the evolution of party organizations in Latin America.

A third characteristic that is often associated with strong parties--party penetration of civil society--was mentioned both favorably and unfavorably. Paredes Pisani and Coppedge criticized Venezuelan parties for their high degree of penetration, and the importance of a vibrant civil society free of party control was recognized by Valenzuela, Boeninger, and Cavarozzi. Panelists from Ecuador and Brazil, on the other hand, would like to see their parties tied more closely to other organizations. More thought needs to be given to defining the happy medium between the two undesirable extremes of tight control and disorganization.

A final question relating to parties is how to insure that they effectively represent all of the politically relevant actors. There are three basic ways to make headway on this issue, and all of them are now being tried. The first way is to incorporate excluded groups within existing political parties. This is probably the most difficult path for now because the established parties tend to receive the blame for the current economic situation and little credit for avoiding potentially worse crises. Nevertheless, by decentralizing elections and administration, leaders in Colombia, Venezuela, and other countries hope to make the existing parties more accountable, and therefore more effective representatives of citizens who previously felt excluded.

An easier route is to incorporate these excluded groups through new political parties. In a consolidated party system, this approach probably takes conscious effort, as in the negotiations which led to the incorporation of the M-19 guerrilla group in Colombia. But in a larger number of Latin American countries, party systems are more fluid, and new parties arise more naturally. Such is the case in Brazil and Peru, where candidates from outside the traditional parties have won presidential elections. Whether these electoral

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[4] AngeloPanebiano PoliticalParties: Organizatiomand Power(Cambridge:CambridgeUniversity Press, 1982),Chapter4.

"phenomena" are able to represent their supporters effectively over a longer period of time is a question that will be answered only in the next year or two.

There are certain unrepresented groups that one would not want to see included in politics through the party system--the military, drug traffickers, and foreign interests, to name a few. For them, the solution is not incorporation through parties, but depoliticization. Their potential to influence politics may be an unchangeable fact of life, but they do not have to exercise that potential. A few countries have managed to depoliticize the military, and more study should be given to the feasibility of accomplishing a similar result with other Latin American militaries and other groups whose power is not derived from elections.

## The Emerging Agenda

Because democratic governability faces threats from many different quarters and because research in many of these areas is just beginning, the agenda of research and action that lies ahead is an ambitious one, and must be approached on three fronts. On one front, there is an obvious need for the simple collection and dissemination of basic information relating to democracy and governability. Comparative analysis is hindered by the difficulty of collecting detailed information on election results, electoral laws, party statutes, campaign platforms, rosters of party leaders, lists of cabinet members and their backgrounds, legislative activity, party discipline, factions, and coalition composition. The Congressional Quarterly publishes this kind of information for the United States, and financial institutions publish massive amounts of economic data, but political scientists have no similar sources for the basic data of their trade. If such information were available for most countries through an international clearinghouse, yearbooks, a periodical, or software updated by subscription, it would greatly improve the quality of analysis possible and, what is equally important, speed up the cross-national learning process.

On another front, there are at least two unresolved normative debates that would impede a concerted solution to ungovernability. One is the now old debate about the desirability of corporativism. After a surge of popularity in the 1970s, the corporatist model of incorporation fell out of favor because it was seen as authoritarian and perhaps exploitative, and because the most notable corporatist systems (Brazil and Mexico) entered into crisis in the late seventies and eighties. Among scholars working on the politics of stabilization and adjustment, however, any institutions that can contain opposition and buy time for necessary structural reforms appear increasingly attractive, and corporativism, when it was working, performed this function quite well. This debate needs to be restarted in the light of current economic challenges.

A second and newer debate concerns the proper relationship between political parties and civil society. Some wish for parties that are closely tied to labor unions, professional associations, and other organizations so that party leaders are able to mobilize or restrain society when necessary to preserve the democratic regime. Others prefer to strengthen parties only within the arenas of formal politics (legislatures and elections), while

encouraging a vibrant civil society free of party control. There is a conflict between these two positions that needs to be explicitly addressed.

On the third front we confront questions of means rather than ends: we agree on the goals but do not know how to get to them. We agree, I think, several key questions need to be answered:

1. How to depoliticize the military and improve civil-military relations?
2. How to end polarization and promote consensus?
3. How to institutionalize parties and party systems?
4. How to discourage irresponsible populist leaders while promoting stronger leadership?
5. How to improve executive legislative relations, by encouraging stable governing coalitions?
7. How to encourage more effective central state bureaucracies?
8. How to decentralize authority while maintaining governmental effectiveness?

For these and many other similar questions, the Latin American experience contains cases of success and cases of failure, which suggests that the comparative study of these cases may provide answers (what to do, what not to do) that would be useful for other countries. For some of these questions, such as the depoliticization of the military, the answers may be voluntaristic: one-time actions that would resolve the problem for an extended period. For other questions, the solution may be a more permanent institutional reform.

The amount of progress that has already been made varies, depending on the question. On the question of leadership, we hardly know where to begin. When it comes to polarization and consensus, however, a respectable amount of research has been taking shape in which the behavioral consequences of presidential and parliamentary institutions are compared. Even this research is not finished, however; for example, none of the assertions about the superior performance of parliamentarism in the developing countries have yet been tested in third-world parliamentary systems. And while it is clear that electoral systems, party systems, and presidential or parliamentary institutions are all three intricately related, we have rarely attained more than a partial understanding of their relationship in Latin America. The possibilities for comparative analysis are practically endless.

In seeking ways to implement this broad and tentative agenda, a smaller group of scholars attending the Georgetown Conference met at the conference's conclusion to chart future directions. Participants were critical of much of the work done so far in the hemisphere on this important theme. Some argued that research projects based at particular institutions in individual countries tend to focus excessively on the local reality and become more descriptive overviews of political developments than solidly constructed research designs. Others noted that the conference format itself, while bringing scholars together and

contributing to dialogue and the sharing of information, has tended to work against the carefully conceived research project with carefully defined hypothesis and an adequate methodology to test the validity of those hypothesis. What is needed in the study of democratic governability is a series of carefully conceived research projects on critical dimensions of the topic.

Arturo Valenzuela proposed that the next direction of research concentrate on the inter-relationship between three critical levels: the electoral system, the party system, and the institutional system (understood as regime type-- i.e. presidential, semi-presidential or parliamentary forms of governance.) Often research focuses on one level without paying sufficient attention to the linkages between each level. As an illustration he referred to the impact of various kinds of electoral system on party strength and overall political stability. How do different kinds of electoral systems encourage or discourage the development of stronger parties? In what way can party leadership contribute to strengthening legislative-executive relations? Would proportional representation systems of a closed list variety be preferable in strengthening parties, to open list systems? If so, what effect do such systems have on representation? Would the reduction of the size of districts help strengthen parties, while maintaining viable mechanisms of representation?

The group concluded that the most promising direction for future research is to set up a small network of scholars from several countries which would embark on carefully designed research projects drawing on the Latin American experience, but also on the literature dealing with these issues developed in the United States and Europe. Three or four complementary projects could be conceived dealing with some of the issues raised in the conference. There was a strong consensus, however, that the research should not be carried out as pure research per se. The ultimate objective of the network would be to develop a capacity to advise governments and parties on reform proposals. What is needed is informed judgment on the potential impact of various political and constitutional reforms and their implications for democratic governability. It was agreed that the group would explore these issues further and in subsequent meetings define a strategy for approaching funding sources for support of a "Latin American Research Network on Democratic Governability." The coordination of the group would be done out of Georgetown, but research and outreach activities would emanate primarily from the work done in Latin America. The project would be in the hands of individual researchers as members of the network and not be anchored in particular research institutions, although it is expected that most participants would have appointments in universities or social science research think tanks in the region.

## APPENDIX A

## PROGRAM

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON
DEMOCRATIC GOVERNABILITY IN LATIN AMERICA
Georgetown University

<u>Monday, October 8, 1990</u>

8:30-9:00          Registration

9:00-9:15          Opening Remarks:

Arturo Valenzuela, Director, Center for Latin American Studies,
          Georgetown University
Julio María Sanguinetti, Former President of Uruguay

## I. THE CHALLENGE OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNABILITY

9:15-10:45          **Session One:  Country Panel I.**

Chair:  Arturo Valenzuela

CHILE: Edgardo Boeninger, Minister Secretary General
          of the Presidency of the Republic of Chile
ECUADOR:  Andrés Vallejo, President of the Monetary Board of the
          Republic of Ecuador and former Minister of Government
URUGUAY: Julio María Sanguinetti, Former President of the Oriental
          Republic of Uruguay

10:45-11:00          Coffee Break

11:00- 12:30          **Session Two:  Country Panel II.**

Chair:  Julio María Sanguinetti

BRAZIL: Mailson da Nobrega, Former Minister of Finance of the
          Republic of Brazil
BOLIVIA: Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, Former Minister of Planning 6
the Republic of Bolivia and Presidential Candidate of the          MNR
COLOMBIA:  Andrés Pastrana, Former mayor of Bogotá

VENEZUELA: Edgar Paredes Pisani, Executive Secretary, Presidential Commission for Reform of the State of the Republic of Venezuela

ARGENTINA: Guido di Tella, Ambassador of Argentina to the United States

1:00- 2:00       Lunch

## II. ECONOMIC STABILIZATION, STRUCTURAL REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT: THE DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGE

2:15- 3:30       **Session One: The Politics of Economic Stabilization and Structural Adjustment**

Chair:  Eusebio Mujal-León, Georgetown University

Discussion Leaders:
Richard Newfarmer, World Bank
Robert Kaufman, Rutgers University
Osvaldo Sunkel, CEPAL Santiago

3:30- 3:45  Coffee Break

4:00- 5:30       **Session Two: General Discussion**

Chair:  John Bailey, Georgetown University

6:00- 8:00       RECEPTION  Georgetown University Conference Center
Ball Room Foyer

EVENING       FREE

## Tuesday October 9, 1990

## III.  THE POLITICAL REFORM OF THE STATE

9:00- 10:45       **Session One: Executive Legislative Relations: The Parliamentary Option.**

Chair: Catherine Conoghan, Queens University

Discussion Leaders:
Arturo Valenzuela, Georgetown University
Bolivar Lamounier, IDESP, Sao Paolo
Genaro Arriagada, Chile

| 10:45- 11:00 | Coffee Break |
|---|---|

**11:00- 12:30**      **Session Two: Political Parties, Electoral Laws, and Democratic Stability**

Chair:   Richard Nuccio, Inter-American Dialogue and Georgetown University

Discussion Leaders:
Marcelo Cavarozzi, CEDES, Buenos Aires
Juan Rial,          PEITHO, Montevideo
Michael Coppedge, SAIS, Washington

| 12:30- 1:30 | Lunch |
|---|---|

## IV. GENERAL DISCUSSION and Concluding Remarks

1:30- 3:00          Chair: Sally Shelton Colby, Georgetown University

Discussion Leaders:
Andrés Stambouli, Commission for the Reform of
the State, Venezuela
James Malloy,  University of Pittsburgh

3:30      Meeting of Academic Participants from Latin America
Center for Latin American Studies

## APPENDIX B

## INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON
## DEMOCRATIC GOVERNABILITY IN LATIN AMERICA

### List of Attenders

**John Bailey**
Professor of Governemnt
Georgetown University

**Gonzalo Biggs**
Inter-American Development Bank

**Cole Blaiser**
Director, Hispanic Division
Library of Congress
Hispanic Division

**Edgardo Boeninger**
Minister Secretary General of the Presidency
Republic of Chile

**Colin Campbell, S.J.**
The Martin Professor of Politics and Philosophy
Georgetown University

**Marcelo Cavarozzi**
Senior Researcher, CEDES
Argentina

**Catherine Conoghan**
Associate Professor of Political Science
Queens University, Canada

**Simon Alberto Consalvi**
Ambassador to the White House
Venezuela

**Michael Coppedge**
Assistant Professor of Political Science
School of Advanced International Studies
Johns Hopkins University

**Jorge Crespo Velasco**
Ambassador to the White House
Bolivia

**Maílson da Nóbrega**
Former Minister of Finance
Brazil

**Steven Dachi**
Visiting Scholar, Center for Strategic and
International Studies

**Margaret Daly Hayes**
Director of Public Affairs
Inter-American Development Bank

**Mario del Carril**
Fellow, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

**Guido di Tella** ‹
Ambassador to the White House
Argentina

**Mark Falcoff**
Senior Scholar, American Enterprise Institute

**Charles Gillespie**
Assistant Professor of Political Science
University of Wisconsin, Madison

**Louis W. Goodman**
Dean, School of International Services
The American University

**William Glade**
Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs
United States Information Agency

**Peter Hakim**
Staff Associate, Inter-American Dialogue

**Robert Kaufman**
Professor of Political Science
Rutgers University

**Bolivar Lamounier**
Senior Fellow IDESP
. Sao Paolo, Brazil

**Silvia Llorens Avalos**
Ministry of the Treasury
Mexico

**James Malloy**
Professor of Political Science
University of Pittsburgh

**Marcílio Marques Moreira**
Ambassador to the White House
Brazil

**Cynthia McClintock**
Professor of Political Science
George Washington University

**Jaime Moncayo**
Ambassador to the White House
Ecuador

**Eusebio Mujal-Leon**
Associate Professor of Government
Georgetown University

**Heraldo Muñoz**
Ambassador to the OAS
Chile

**Joan Nelson**
Senior Fellow, Overseas Development Council

**Richard Newfarmer**
The World Bank

**Richard Nuccio**
Inter-American Dialogue

**Edgar Paredes Pisani**
Executive Director, Commission for the Reform of the State

Venezuela

**Andrés Pastrana**
Former Mayor of Bogotá, Colombia
Fellow Center for International Affairs
Harvard University
**Carina Pirelli**
Senior Researcher PEITHO
Uruguay

**Mark Plattner**
Editor Journal of Democracy
National Endowment for Democracy

**Juan Rial**
Director, PEITHO
Uruguay

**Francisco Sagasti**
The World Bank'

**Gonzalo Sanchez de Losada**
Former Minister of Planning and President of MNR
Bolivia

**Julio María Sanguinetti**
Former President, Republic of Uruguay

**Margaret Sarles**
Director, Latin American Division
Foreign Service Institute

**Peter Schecter**
Sawyer Miller

**Sally Shelton-Colby**
Center for Latin American Studies
Georgetown University

**Patricio Silva**
Ambassador to the White House
Chile

**Andrés Stambouli**

Professor of Political Science and Consultant
Commission for Reform of the State
Venezuela

**Osvaldo Sunkel**
Comisión Económica para América Latina
Chile

**Joseph Tulchin**
Director, Latin America Program
Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

**Arturo Valenzuela**
Director, Center for Latin American Studies
Georgetown University

**Andrés Vallejo Arcos**
President of the Junta Monetaria and Former Minister of Government
Ecuador

**Steven Webb**
The World Bank

**Timothy Wickham-Crowley**
Assistant Professor of Sociology
Georgetown University

**Alexander Wilde**
Director, Washington Office on Latin America

**Guillermo Yunge**
Chairman, Commission on Foreign Relations
Chamber of Deputies
Chile

**Vladimir Zaemsky**
First Secretary Embassy of the USSR
Washington, D.C.

**Nicholai Zeitsev**
Deputy Director, Institute for Latin America
Soviet Academy of Sciences, USSR