

MEXICO'S POLITICAL CLIMATE

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The citizens of Mexico have long been accustomed to political unrest, with the expectation that politicians regularly pursue their interests as opposed to the interests of the country and its people. Adding to the concerns is that the political parties PRD, PAN, and PRI hold opposing philosophical views that are not readily resolved<sup>1</sup>. These three main parties have not shared in responsibility or power during the previous decades, leaving Mexico's citizens with the impression that regardless of which party appears to be in control, no real change takes place. This statement appears to be true even with the understanding that PRI has had the most dominant control of the three parties for the last 70 years and with the realization that to be in control, a political party must be able to strongly influence public opinion, the country's economy, and way of life.

Political dissention is not uncommon in Mexico. In fact, it is highly desirable as long as it favors the party in power. For example, the presidential election of September, 2005 was extremely controversial in that the election results were claimed to be invalid. Protestors and opposition parties argued that the election process involved a number of irregularities. The only way to break this pattern is for a party to allow within its own ranks a sense of dissention<sup>2</sup>. However, recent changes have taken place in the present Mexican political administration that offers hope for the everyday citizen. PRI, the main political party, is now successfully addressing key challenges. In addition, the parties appear to be working together for the good of the country, perhaps for the first-time ever. As a result, the citizens of Mexico are taking heart that the political powers that be are

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<sup>1</sup> Larry Birns, and Michael Lettieri. "Mexican President Fox Chooses US over Latin America." Political Affairs, 2006. [Accessed 24 November 2010], <http://www.politicalaffairs.net/article/view/3707/1/194/>

<sup>2</sup> Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, Congress of the Union of the United Mexican States. [Accessed 24 November 2010], <http://constitucion.gob.mx/index.php?idseccion=12>

finally laying aside self-interests in their endeavors to help make Mexico strong and prosperous.

One may ask if Mexico is healthy today in reference to politics. Many would argue that it is. For example, reforms are being successfully implemented into both the administrative and judicial branches of government. One of the most recent reforms is the Freedom of Information laws. Additionally, the country's criminal justice system has implemented the introduction oral trials<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, reforms continue to be introduced and set into place involving the electoral system, the country's financial health, conservation and production of energy, as well as how pensions or retirement are funded. The economy continues to improve despite the country's economic challenges, changes towards modernizing systems, and issues with the 2009 GDP. These positive changes for Mexico can readily be credited to the current political regime<sup>4</sup>. That is because a country's state of economic welfare is directly tied into having a strong, stable political system that works for the good of the common people.

Leadership sets the tone in any country. Mexico's current president has as a major administrative focus the need for job creation and elimination of poverty for Mexico's population. Of course, despite all of this wonderful news, Mexico has serious problems, such as organized crime. In response to that, Congress passed legislation in 2009 for the expansion of intelligence and support for the federal police in ongoing investigations of crime. Still, fighting the drug cartels will take a very long time and considerable

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<sup>3</sup> Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, 1917. [Accessed 24 November 2010], <http://web.archive.org/web/20070825041639/>

<sup>4</sup> Jorge Salaverry. "Evolution of Mexican Foreign Policy." The Heritage Foundation, 1988. [Accessed 24 November 2010], <http://www.heritage.org/research/latinamerica/bg638.cfm>

resources. However, the Mexican government is to be commended for the continued war against organized crime and its efforts to help Mexico become strong and sound.

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