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Guatemalan Values and the Prospects for Democratic Development

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by

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I. Introduction

Recent political events in Guatemala the coup and the public reaction that restored democracy, suggest the role that public opinion can play in maintaining a democratic order. As those events emphasized, an effective and sustainable democratic order needs to draw its strength from a significant portion of the population who are participant within the national society to the extent that they are aware of the existence of a nation-state, aware of the institutions of democratic government, possess the necessary tolerance of dissent and willingness to act within the democratic process. Thus, a critical component of democratic development is the presence of an appropriate set of democratic values and attitudes.

This study describes the current state of democratic values in Guatemala, both those values that are the building blocks of a stable political order, and those values and attitudes necessary to assure that the existing political order is a democratic one. In this introductory chapter, we shall describe the background to the study's development, and the broad outline of the methodology used and deal as well with issues related to the reliability and validity of the data collected. In Chapter II, we will explore the historical context of the study, examining in broad outline the march of relevant aspects of Guatemalan political development. Chapters III-VIII describe the results of the analysis of the survey data collected, placing them in an appropriate comparative perspective. Chapter IX contains the conclusions that can be drawn from the data.

Background

Guatemala over the past several years, like virtually all countries in Latin America, has been undergoing a process of political transformation moving toward popular sovereignty and responsible governance. In some countries such as Chile which emerged from a military dictatorship in 1990, the process has proceeded at a rapid pace, building on a past in which democratic rule had earlier established itself as an acceptable, even desirable form of government. In effect, that return to democracy could build on the fact that ample opportunity existed for the development of what we might call a democratic political culture prior to the onset of authoritarian rule.

In Guatemala the democratic tradition is far thinner than it is in Chile. Prior to the present period, Guatemala enjoyed only a relatively brief period, from 1944-1954, of free and fair elections and responsive government. Hence, public experience with and memory of democracy is very limited. One cannot expect that democratic values, that have taken decades or even centuries to evolve in other countries, could be established full-blown in Guatemala after only a very few years of elected, civilian rule. Moreover, in Guatemala several military men have been elected to office, and have proceeded to institute brutal, dictatorial regimes. Therefore, in the popular mind there

is room for considerable confusion between democratic governments and elected governments.

Guatemala's problems in establishing democracy are further complicated by the fact that deep racial cleavages have long divided the country. Only in Guatemala among all the countries in Central America is fully one-third of the population comprised of indigenous peoples, substantial proportions of which reside in and around the nation's capital and major urban centers.

Since the early days of contact between European and indigenous populations, Indian communities have been subject to continual repression, sometimes terminating in outright massacres. Many ladinos, in turn, believe that the indigenous population is not loyal to nor supportive of the dominant culture. Both indigenous peoples and ladinos are distrustful of each other.

A further difficulty limiting democratic political culture is related directly to the indigenous population itself. The basic elements of democracy such as minority rule and majority rights may also be missing or limited among many of the Mayan populations. Indeed, although the anthropological evidence is incomplete and contradictory, there are numerous indications of authoritarian political practices among the indigenous populations of Guatemala. In short, winning the allegiance of this population to any political system, let alone a democratic one constructed by the ladino population, presents a major challenge.

But, the problems are not limited to the above-mentioned factors. In the country as a whole, economic issues are likely to be far more important than questions of style of governance. Faced with overwhelming poverty, high infant mortality, high levels of illiteracy and other indicators of a bleak economic and social situation, any regime, irrespective of form, that can deliver to the population improvements in economic welfare is likely to win the support of that population.

Finally, one cannot ignore the military and the economic elites. Military men no doubt view civilian governments with much suspicion, fearing that their own privileged position in society could be threatened. Indeed, there is the added concern that civilian governments could seek to punish those in the military who have been accused of human rights violations. Economic elites fear an erosion of their own position, knowing that in terms of votes alone, they stand very little chance of resisting challenges to their economic privileges.

In Guatemala, then, it is not obvious that large sectors of the population, neither rich nor poor, Ladino or Indian, would hold any deep-seated allegiance to democratic norms. Yet, it is a reality that popular, free and fair elections are now regularly being held and that when called to support a democratic government during the recent coup

attempt, a broad cross section of Guatemalans expressed themselves in favor of democracy.

The question at this juncture is to determine the level of legitimization of democratic practice in Guatemala, and, beyond that, to determine trends in that process of legitimization.

Prior Research

A major handicap in the study of support for a democratic political culture in Guatemala is the limited baseline data available. In fact, a rapid review of the literature reveals only a very limited set of instances in which any attempts were made prior to the past few years to do any serious public opinion research, particularly research that touched the opinions of those outside the capital city.¹

Normally, one could expect to consult public opinion survey data to see how attitudes have shifted over the years. But social science in Guatemala has, for three reasons, not developed that data base. First, social scientists here have long been a target of persecution by the military. Countless social scientists have been killed, while others have fled the country and now live in exile in Costa Rica, the United States and elsewhere. Second, public opinion research involves asking questions, and asking questions for many years in Guatemala was a dangerous undertaking. As a result, social science tended toward the theoretical, since obtaining empirical data simply was too dangerous. Third, the social science community as a whole associated survey research with U.S.-style social science, an enterprise that was rejected because of a generally misplaced belief that a covert relationship existed between North American academics and the U.S. intelligence community.

The establishment of elected government has meant a rapid expansion in public opinion polling. The first studies were conducted in connection with the elections themselves. These studies made little or no attempt to measure underlying attitudes. There are other, more serious, surveys being conducted in Guatemala. Several studies focus on nutrition, demography, ethnolinguistics, etc. The only extensive study of democratic political culture of which we are aware, is the one conducted by the University of Pittsburgh Central American Public Opinion Project in March, 1992.

¹. One early example was a survey on attitudes toward political participation in San Antonio Sacatepéquez and Cobán in the early 1950s. This survey noted, as expected, important differences between ladinos and indigenous peoples regarding both knowledge and attitudes concerning politics. See, Kalman H. Silvert, *The Conflict Society*. New Orleans: Hauser Press, 1961, pp.35-46.

Hence, in a real sense, we are starting with an almost blank slate. The Pittsburgh project is useful for establishing the reliability of key questionnaire items and some parameters for urban areas, but does not provide a solid basis upon which to draw national conclusions because of its geographic and linguistic limitations. Thus, this project will establish the needed baseline data that can be used to monitor the evolution of a civic culture of democracy in Guatemala.

How quickly might we expect that culture to change? There is no easy answer to that question. Previous research has shown that much depends on national political developments. We know, for example, that values in Italy and Germany evolved rapidly during the 1950s and 1960s, as Ronald Inglehart has shown in his volume, Culture Shift.² Seligson has shown, using data from Costa Rica, that once established, the legitimacy of a system does not rapidly erode and is quite resistant to failures in performance, such as those brought on by economic crises.³

But, we also know that the values that have developed in Guatemala have evolved over the centuries. It will require significant changes in the performance of the system in terms of respect for human rights and civil liberties, along with important improvements in the quality of life of the poor, for those changes to substantially affect attitudes. The establishment of the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, along with 21 regional offices, is an important step in this direction. The growing sense of openness in the media is another. But, it is not at all clear that these changes are being perceived in rural (especially indigenous) areas; indeed, it is not at all clear that conditions have improved in these areas. Therefore, a key element in the design of this study is to assure a national sample that adequately represents rural and especially indigenous populations. This requirement is reflected in the sample design as well as in items included in the instrument.

The Need for A National Sample

To meet the need to represent the full range of opinions and attitudes within Guatemala, nothing short of a national sample that reflects the views of all Guatemalans, rich and poor, urban and rural, Indian and Ladino, male and female, will do. A concern with a truly national sample is important because it fulfills a need and because it represents an important innovation in survey research within the country. It may be the case that there has never been a national sample of public opinion in Guatemala. The great majority of surveys in Guatemala are marketing surveys. Since rural Guatemalans earn little and consume less, they are not a high priority for

²Inglehart, Culture Shift. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

³Mitchell A. Seligson and Edward N. Muller, "Economic Crisis and System Support: Costa Rica, 1978-1985." International Studies Quarterly. 1990.

marketing firms. Election studies similarly designed to test the "voter market" exclude many rural areas since voter turnout in those areas is often substantially lower than in urban areas. From the point of view of candidates who use the polls to guide their election strategies, the widely dispersed rural populations are too difficult to reach. Therefore, the cost involved in inclusion of rural Guatemala in all types of marketing studies is seen as not being justified by the benefits.

A further complexity that limits sample frames in Guatemala is that of the variety of languages spoken. According to the National Bilingual Education Program of the Ministry of Education, there are between 20 and 30 indigenous languages spoken in Guatemala, including two non-Mayan languages. Some 11 of the Mayan languages have distinct dialect variants.⁴ Studies have, of course, been conducted among the populations of many if not all of these languages, but the task of conducting a study that would incorporate them all has been daunting. In fact, those surveys that claim to be national in scope merely use a single survey instrument prepared in Spanish and claim to use bilingual interviewers who do on-the-spot translations.⁵ Since studies have shown that monolingual speakers of Mayan languages are far more likely to be female than male, these studies systematically exclude Indian females.

The concentration of large portions of the population into a relatively small number of indigenous languages, coupled with widespread bilingualism among these populations presents the opportunity for a reasonable compromise between a "perfect" but enormously expensive sample and a study that would exclude monolingual natives altogether.

The great bulk of the native population speak one of only four languages. The early 1980 figures show that of the 2.9 million Mayan language speakers, 2.3 million, or 79 percent are concentrated in these four languages:

K'iche'	930,000
Mam	644,000
Kaqchikel	405,000
Q'eqchi'	361,000

A clear division point emerges after these four languages are taken into consideration, because the next most popular language, Q'anjob'al, is spoken only by

⁴Michael Richards and Julia Becker Richards, Languages and Communities Encompassed by Guatemala's National Bilingual Education Program. Guatemala: Ministerio de Educación, División de Socio Educativo Rural, Programa Nacional de Educación Bilingüe, 1990, p. 5.

⁵Based on a conversation with the director of one major international polling organization.

112,000 natives, and from there on down, the numbers drop rapidly. Hence, from the point of view of cost-effectiveness, it makes sense to attempt to include the speakers of the four major languages, knowing that even the next most popular language is spoken by only 1 percent of the population and that all remaining Mayan languages together comprise some 8 percent of the population.

Excluding these minority languages does not mean that 8 percent of the population is being excluded from the sample. In fact, a large proportion of speakers of all Mayan languages are to at least some extent bilingual. For example, among the four major languages, only one, Q'eqchi', has a large proportion of entirely monolingual speakers. The bilingual education project found that 49.6 percent of the Q'eqchi' speakers they surveyed were monolingual. However, this is a gross overestimate of the total monolingualism among Q'eqchi' speakers because their data is based upon the location of bilingual schools, none of which were located in county seats (cabeceras cantonales). The schools were all located in villages (aldeas). Bilingualism is extremely common among those in urban and semi-urban environments in Guatemala. Hence, a survey of all Q'eqchi' speakers would unquestionably produce a far higher proportion of bilingual speakers, although there is no data that would allow us to establish precise figures.

The other three major Mayan languages were found to have no more than 13 percent monolingual speakers. Again, these data are based on village studies, and therefore the bilingual proportion of the total Mayan language population is much higher. Furthermore, the rapid spread of radio and television throughout Guatemala coupled with the continued decline of the relative size of the Indian population has, no doubt, further increased the speed of bilingualism in recent years.

It is safe to speculate that bilingualism among the speakers of the minority languages could be no higher than it is among the Q'eqchi' (i.e., less than half of all speakers) and probably is a lot lower. The speakers of these minority languages live in relatively small and compact regions according to the linguistic maps prepared by the Bilingual Education program and may well have greater contact with Spanish speakers. For example, the speakers of Xinka, Poqomam, Chorti', Itza and Mopan are completely surrounded by speakers of Spanish and must, no doubt, deal with Spanish speakers on a regular basis. Hence, at most, the exclusion of these minority languages may result in the exclusion of some 4 percent of the population. The actual percentages will emerge from the sample design procedures described below.

Summarizing this discussion, cost-benefit analysis suggests that the preparation of the questionnaire in Spanish plus the four major Mayan languages enumerated above would allow the sample to include not less than 96 percent of the population and, in all likelihood, closer to 98 or 99 percent. This was the procedure followed in the development of the study's instruments. Other issues related to sample design and

related considerations, including the weighting of the sample, are presented in the appendices to this report.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire designed for this study is based upon prior research in Central America, South America, the U.S. and Western Europe that has attempted to tap mass attitudes toward democracy. The immediate antecedent of this study was a comprehensive examination of attitudes in each of the five Central American countries plus Panama, stimulated by the onset of democracy in these countries. The study, referred to as the University of Pittsburgh Central American Public Opinion Project, received support from the Mellon Foundation and the Tinker Foundation and the North-South Center. The project was conducted in collaboration with research institutes and universities throughout Central America as well as colleagues in several U.S. universities.

The Guatemalan component of this six country survey was conducted in March, 1992, with the field work the responsibility of Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales (ASIES). That survey was urban in nature since resource limitations prevented it from being extended to rural areas in which Mayan language translations would have been needed. The total sample size was 900.

Initial analysis of the Guatemalan data confirmed that, at least insofar as urban populations are concerned, the questionnaire utilized was largely successful. However, it also became clear that a number of items needed refinement and some were best dropped. In addition, with the involvement of graduate students at the University of Pittsburgh, new items (some used in Uruguay) were included to get a better measure of respondent support for democratic versus authoritarian rule. Finally, Development Associates' PARTICIPA project in Chile had also developed a questionnaire that included some items that appeared to be good measures of attitudes toward the judiciary, an institution of considerable interest to USAID/Guatemala.

The instrument used in this survey was refined during April and May, 1992, with the collaboration of University of Pittsburgh graduate students. Development Associates in collaboration with ASIES set up a series of focus groups of native speakers of the four major Mayan languages that translated and tested the viability of the questionnaire in those four languages. The experiment resulted in the development of four indigenous language instruments. A copy of the spanish language version of the instrument is included as an appendix.

Data Reliability

A major concern in all self-report data is the reliability of the data. Reliability refers to the degree that the data represents a consistent and accurate picture of the

responses of those interviewed to the questions asked. The reliability of this survey was enhanced by a series of procedures: training of interviewers and their supervision assured that agreed upon procedures were followed; all responses were reviewed for internal consistency, and response patterns for appropriate sub-samples (Spanish speaking urban residents) have been compared to similar responses in the March, 1992, University of Pittsburgh/ASIES survey to check for consistency over time.

A significant concern in the conduct of this survey or any other public opinion survey is its timing. Although certainly not by design, the survey took place a week before the period of the events that constituted the auto-golpe by President Serrano, his subsequent removal from office and replacement by Ramiro de León Carpio. However, it is hard to imagine that given the survey instrument's focus on basic attitudes and values, this timing will affect the quality of most of the answers received. In point of fact, comparisons between the 1993 and the 1992 survey suggest a certain consistency of patterns that suggests the fundamental nature of the attitudinal measures being used.

A key question which we shall return to in the conclusion, a question of significant interest in the design of development programs, is how and through what means the values and attitudes presented can be altered.

In the next chapter, we shall examine in greater detail the nature of Guatemalan political development in the twentieth century. We shall also present the events of the period in late May and June of 1993, which constituted the process of transition to the current government. As indicated above, the following chapters present the results of the survey and the conclusions that can be drawn from the data we have gathered.

II. The Political Context of the Study

Historical Antecedents of Guatemalan Democracy

To understand the current Guatemalan political culture it is necessary to remember that historically Guatemala lacks a democratic tradition. In fact, prior to 1984, the country's political history starting in 1821, the year of independence from the Spanish crown, has been marked by caudillismo, coup d'états, transitional governments and military dictatorships.

During the first half of the 20th century, the most significant governments were the dictatorships of Manuel Estrada Cabrera (1898-1920) and Jorge Ubico (1931-1944). These regimes were characterized by heavy-handed personalistic control and the suppression of political liberties and free expression of ideas. Both dictatorships were overthrown thanks to social movements autocratically controlled by groups drawn largely from the capital city. Estrada Cabrera was obliged to resign, removed from his position by Congress, after various anti-Cabrera protests led by artisans and by the political ruling class of the period.

The beginning of a more profound political change in the country must be necessarily be linked to the so-called "October Revolution" in 1944. The result of that revolution was the emergence of a democratically oriented government, legitimated by a majority of those who were politically participant in the effective Guatemalan nation [i.e. the majority of ladinos located in Guatemala City and other major urban areas and those in control of rural areas (the land owning families)]. This was not a radical transformation of the system of power rather a limited expansion of the effective nation, the body politic, complimented by the access to government of progressive forces. Nevertheless, this meant that for the first time various important marginal groups began to participate in national politics, notably university students, workers and ladino peasants (Gonzalez, R: 29).

In the presidential elections held at the end of 1944, after three transitional governments that followed the toppling of the Ubico dictatorship, Juan Jose Arevalo won a landslide victory (86% of the total vote). During his presidential administration, there were important reforms in the structure of political and judicial institutions. The right of women and the illiterate to vote was recognized; the right of political parties and other types of interest groups to organize and operate was guaranteed as was the notion of the representation of minority groups, the autonomy of municipalities and ideological diversity. In addition, laws protecting the right of labor to organize were promulgated and a social security system established. Reflecting a greater emphasis on social concerns, for the first time in the history of Guatemala, the National Budget was dominated by spending for education, health and welfare.

In institutional terms, the promulgation of the Constitution of 1945 laid the groundwork for the establishment of a democratic society, recognizing the right of political association and the right to form labor unions.¹ Clearly, this was a period of institutional creation and reform, a period that would be looked upon as the foundation for a Guatemalan democratic order in decades to come.

Colonel Jacobo Arbenz succeeded Arevalo as president in a democratic election where Arbenz secured 65% of the votes (Torres Rivas: 152). The so-called "second government of the revolution" focused its objectives on securing a national development less dependent on foreign interests and sustained by a dynamic internal market. During his government, Arbenz gave impetus to the construction of a modern communications network and the redistribution of agricultural holdings (Polo, 58). This last action was the immediate cause that led to the overthrow of Arbenz in 1954 by a counter-revolution, supported by the United States, which initiated a period of military governments.

The changes promoted by the government of Jacobo Arbenz resulted in a polarization of Guatemalan society that has lasted over the past four decades. In 1954, this polarization translated into a confrontation between social forces over the fate of the Arbenz government. Left-leaning portions of the middle class along with representatives of the working class lined up to support Arbenz. Large property holders, both national and foreign, along with sectors of the middle class who saw the president's reforms as "socialistic" lined up to oppose Arbenz. The confrontation led to a political crisis.

In mid-June of 1954, counter revolutionary forces led by Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas entered the country from various points within Honduras, overthrew the Arbenz regime and initiated a counter-revolutionary period that was also referred to as "the era of liberation".

The ease with which the counter-revolution succeeded in destroying a democratically elected order was ample evidence of the weakness of the Guatemalan commitment to democracy. It was also a demonstration of the extent of the effective nation, the body politic, of Guatemala--only a very small proportion of the total population was politically involved in support for the Arbenz government or support for the counter-revolution. The rest were essentially silent because they were ladinos located in rural areas who had little real participation in politics or were indigenous peoples who were not, at the same, included with the body politic or saw themselves as part of the Guatemalan nation. The expansion of the effective nation as evident by the political culture of present day Guatemalans is AN important contribution to, the

¹. For a detailed analysis of the 1945 constitution see Kalman H. Silvert, A Study of Government: Guatemala, ISHI: Philadelphia, 19__.

probability of democracy in Guatemala, a discussion we shall return to in the conclusions.

As Edelberto Torres Rivas indicates, the most important aspects of the period from 1944 to 1954 was the opportunity that was created for popular mobilization, through the growth of worker-peasant organizations and the access that was opened to the middle classes to participate in political life and public administration. In effect, although the effective nation was not broad enough to preserve these openings in the short-run in the face of the counter-revolution, the period had shown the way for greater participation in the future.

In the interval between 1954 and 1984, politics were characterized by instability and repeated accusations of electoral fraud on the part of the governments, most of which were military in character, that ran the country. As Torres Rivas notes, the identifying characteristic of all of the governments that came into power after July of 1954 were that they were counter-revolutionary and used political violence as the basis of control. (Torres, 162). Nevertheless, the social mobilization generated by ten years of democratic experience, meant an important advance in the consciousness of the population.

Starting in 1954, the de facto government headed by Castillo Armas eliminated many of the important advances of the democratic period. The agrarian reform was reversed as were the measures that regulated labor relations. Only official political organizations and labor unions were permitted. Congress was dissolved and the Constitution of 1945 abolished. The most powerful labor unions were eliminated. Labor leaders were dismissed from their positions, and new unions set up free of "communist influence" as part of a "free labor movement", limited in terms of their sphere of action to strictly economic issues (wages etc.). Castillo Armas sought to ratify the legitimacy of the takeover through a plebiscite in October of 1954, where he secured 98% of the votes cast. (Torres Rivas, 162)

Castillo Armas was assassinated in 1957. The motive for the crime was never discovered. Suspicions were raised that he was eliminated by ultra-conservative elements, because he did not reverse some measures of the revolutionary governments. After an aborted electoral process at the end of 1957, General Miguel Ydigoras was elected President in January of 1958. Ydigoras tried to reinstate a tutelary democratic order (Torres Rivas, 166). As part of this attempt at democracy, a free Congress had been elected which included representatives of opposition parties. The regime ended in another military coup, led by Ydigoras' Minister of Defense, Enrique Peralta Azurdia, in 1963, labelled by its protagonists "Operation Honesty". To some observers, Peralta's coup was directed at assuring that Juan Jose Arevalo did not get elected once more as President of the Republic.

It is worth noting that during the Ydigoras administration, various young officers of the Army organized an uprising which led to the initiation of guerrilla activities in the country. The movement, led by Marco Antonio Yon Sosa and Luis Turcios Lima, lacked an ideological component and was fundamentally aimed at eliminating the alleged corruption of the Ydigoris regime as well as its support of the US government's efforts to overthrow Fidel Castro in Cuba.

The de facto government of Peralta Azurdia abolished the constitution of 1956, suspended political parties, declared illegal all labor union activity and frequently governed through a state of siege. Peralta's military dictatorship was obliged by external forces to call elections in 1966. The winner of those elections was Julio César Méndez Montenegro whose term in office was known as "the third government of the revolution" (Torres Rivas, 169). Although Menendez Montenegro and his vice-president, Clemente Marroquin, were civilians, they were severely circumscribed in their radius of political action by the military. Military leaders, using as a basis their fight with the guerrilla movement, established formal limits to the president's power in a document signed by Méndez Montenegro at the start of his term.

General Arana Osorio was elected president in 1970. General Kjell Eugenio Laugerud succeeded Osorio (1974-1978) to be followed in office by General Fernando Romeo Lucas Garcia (1978-1982). Both Laugerud and his successor were elected in what were considered to be fraudulent electoral processes. These military governments, particularly the ones in the latter part of the 1970s, were characterized by an absence of both civil liberties and the effective exercise of democracy. They repressed any form of organized opposition. Moreover, in the context of eliminating the guerrillas, the state together with para-military groups used violence as the principal means of expressing their demands and eliminating their enemies.

In institutional terms, the official political parties governed the country, while opposition parties had little if any representation in Congress. Leaders of opposition parties were persecuted. Electoral laws were twisted to cover the fraudulent electoral practices of authoritarian governments. As a result of these controls, the Congress, the judiciary and the Public Ministry, all were dominated by official parties linked to the military and the most powerful economic groups within the society.

Labor unions, which had a brief respite from political pressure under Méndez Montenegro were sharply repressed under the government of Lucas Garcia as was the case with other organizations that represented a variety of social interests and concerns. The leadership of all of these organizations suffered under a wave of assassinations, kidnapping and disappearances.

In 1982, after another attempt at imposing the election of the Army's official candidate, General Anibal Guevara, through an electoral fraud, a movement consisting

of a combination of young officers of the armed forces and leaders of opposition political parties organized a coup. The coup of March 23, 1982 resulted in the formation of government junta which became a platform for a member of the junta, General Efraim Rios Montt, to declare himself president.

It is important to bear in mind that the 1982 coup as well as the subsequent initiation of a formal democratic process was influenced by external as well as internal factors. On the one hand, there was a great deal of pressure from the international community to improve the human rights situation within the country and to initiate a democratic process. The pressures came above all from the European Community and the United States as well as from international non-governmental human rights organizations. The Guatemalan government began to feel pressure to end its isolation from the world political system, an isolation that had begun as a result of the Carter administration's human rights policies.

Internally, the economic situation continually deteriorated from the 60's on due in part to the corruption of the military governments and the lack of government economic policy that were planned in accordance with the existing national reality. At a political level, the coming to power of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and the consequent installation of a populist regime put in evidence the authoritarian character of the Guatemalan government. The Sandinista victory also had an impact on the guerrilla movement in Guatemala. At the start of 1982, despite open and indiscriminant state repression, the military had not succeeded in stopping the insurgents who controlled important portions of the nation's territory. In addition, there was increased and more aggressive activity by various organizations and groups within the body politic looking for an opening for democracy.

Thus, the 1982 coup can be seen as the starting point of a new era for Guatemalan politics. The viability of the system of political domination that had characterized Guatemala since the 1954 coup was no longer viable.

Recent Political Development

After the 1982 coup, there were discussions of the possibilities of democratic elections. However, but it was not until the August 8, 1983 coup which brought to power the de facto government of General Oscar Mejia Victores that elections were called for a Constituent Constitutional Assembly. Those elections saw the return of opposition political parties, and the free election of deputies to the assembly. That assembly drafted the present Political Constitution of the Republic which came into force in May of 1985.

The 1985 Political Constitution of the Republic has as its principles the importance of human life, of liberty, of equality, of the sovereignty of the people, respect for local cultures, community participation in development, decentralization of

political authority and municipal autonomy (ASIES, 1990:4). The constitution places emphasis on the role of the state as protector and promoter of human dignity and as promoter of the common good. As one commentator noted, "For the first time in Guatemalan constitutional history, the organization of power and judicial and political structure of the state are put into second place, putting a priority on persons and their rights with respect to public power." (De León, 1989: 19).

Important innovations incorporated in the constitution included an emphasis on the independence of the three branches of government, executive, legislative and judicial as well as a spelling out of the rights of the individual. The constitution guaranteed a electoral system which permitted complete liberty of political organization and called for the direct election of municipal authorities. Decentralization was promoted by the establishment of development regions and the creation of regional development councils. This had the potential for expanding the opportunities for meaningful democratic participation. The administrative decentralization was to be reinforced by a budgetary decentralization since the constitution assigned 8% of the General Budget of Ordinary State Revenues to municipalities. (von Hoegen, 1991:28).

Specific rights protected by the constitution included the right of petition on political matters, the right to meet and to demonstrate, the right to associate and the free expression of thought. The constitution also established the primacy of international law over internal law. To assist in the preservation of citizens' rights, the constitution provided for the creation of the Court of Constitutionality to defend the constitution, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal to supervise the electoral process and the Procurator of Human Rights to exercise vigilance and moral suasion with respect to human rights.

Using the new constitution as a basis, elections were called in December, 1985. There resulted in the election of the Christian Democrat, Vinicio Cerezo. The assumption of power of a civilian did not resolve the problems of democracy in Guatemala. The two military governments that had come out of the coups of 1982 and 1983 left behind enormous economic problems. The new government also could not mend the international image of the country and end its international isolation because the violations of human rights continued.²

The military governments had left behind a legacy of a society divided, fearful, and without a tradition of democratic practice which would have facilitated an opening toward democracy. Those governments had also been unwilling to reform in the least the rigid social and economic structure of the county which continued to show a high level of inequality and exclusion of the majority of the population.

². The extent of the violations were documented by a United Nations report in February, 1986.

It is important to underscore that the democratic opening was a concession by the military, overwhelmed by the internal and external pressures discussed above. It was not the result of a popular uprising or of intense popular pressure rather a need for accommodation on the part of the military to the existing political situation. This meant that the military still retained a great deal of maneuvering room with respect to the civilian government. However, the opening generated a good deal of expectations in the populace with respect to the end of repression, violations of human rights and restoration of social tranquility. In addition, there was a hope that the arrival of a civilian government would bring an end to corruption, and the beginning of an economic resurgence which would result in a broad based improvement of living standards.

The context in which the first civilian government took office was a complex one. On the one hand, there was a great deal of popular support as well as support from abroad. On the other hand, the economic, social and political crisis did not facilitate the possibilities for action. Within this context, the civilian government had the burden of demonstrating that a democratically elected government could provide a better alternative than a populist revolutionary government such as the Nicaraguan one or a military government.

The Cerezo administration (1986-1991) faced various attacks aimed at destabilizing the government and various attempted coup d'états. Many political commentators felt that the greatest achievement of the government was its ability to survive until the end of its term. Nevertheless, the government suffered a considerable erosion of support in the last years of the presidential term. Critical decisions were postponed because of their political cost. The result was a lack of concrete achievements. At the end of the presidential term, the government was widely viewed as corrupt and inefficient in its management of public spending.

On a more positive note, Cerezo was credited with fostering a foreign policy in Central America that contributed to the resolution of conflicts in the region. To this can be added the achievement of passing the mandate of government onto another democratically elected administration in January of 1991, that of Jorge Serrano.³

The new government came to power with certain limitations. The government's political party was weak, without much in the way of popular support and without a clearly defined political program. Congress was dominated by opposition parties. In its favor, the government was received with a far lower level of expectations than had been the case with the previous administration.

³. This was the first time in the 170 years of Guatemalan independence that a civilian president received the mandate from another civilian president.

The first year of Serrano's government was characterized by relative stability, in part a result of the breathing space associated with a new administration. Various accommodations had to be made. Serrano was obliged to share power with a Congress dominated by the opposition. The resultant process of negotiation often reflected narrow party interests rather than a broad concern for national goals. In positive terms, the government was able to achieve a stabilization of the national economy although at the cost of a deterioration of the living standards of a large portion of the population. Thus, the government also faced demands of groups seeking to redress the structural imbalances in the system, demands it did not meet.

The government was incapable of ending the continuing violations of human rights, although there were some positive changes taking place. The president was able to make some changes in the upper echelons of the military, placing in key command positions officers willing to enter into a peace dialogue with the guerrillas. But at the same time his position on the peace dialogue and relations with the guerrillas moved more toward those of the military as his administration advanced.

Towards the end of 1991, the president's political problems began to increase. Serrano was not able to hold on to the coalition that had won him victory in the second round of the presidential election. He began to be accused by a portion of the media of being excessively authoritarian in his actions. He failed to reach an understanding with the labor unions about a "Social Pact".

The government made little head way, despite its promises, in combating corruption and punishing ex-officials involved in corruption. This was due in part to the strength of the Christian Democrats in Congress who were concerned about protecting their fellow party members. As important, Serrano's government, despite having made the decision to reduce presidential expenses, operated along lines similar to the previous administration. Rumors of corruption began to surface. In effect, the government did not take the firm stand against corruption that the public expected.

Things worsened in 1992. Serrano became more autocratic, more hostile to and more in conflict with the press. Accusations of corruption increased. A climate of political tension existed between the president and various groups intent on reducing corruption, increasing political accountability and supporting the dialogue with the guerrillas which had reached a stalemate. In addition, during the course of the year, controversies arose over the actions and decisions of both the Court of Constitutionality and the Public Ministry as well as a result of alliances formed between the President and the Congress.

In general terms, positions hardened, both those of the president and the Army, as was evident in the aggressive attitudes of the military and the president towards their critics. These included fights both with the Procurator of Human Rights and ex-officials of government.

The case of relations with Belize caused even greater problems for the Serrano administration than did the internal conflicts. Opposition to his actions to move toward a reconciliation with Belize came from the media as well as from leading scholars. Support by the Constitutional Court and the Congress of the president's actions only generated additional discontent among the public and additional disrespect for the institutions that supported this unpopular policy.

Legislation approved by Congress which was dominated by an alliance of UCN, DCG and the government's party, MAS, favored the most economically powerful sectors of society. Examples included the repeal of the Economic Compensation for Time in Service Law, approval of the Program of Economic Modernization and the elimination of the subsidy for transport. Salary raises for deputies, the rejection of impeachment processes against members of Congress, the politization of the election of justices of the Supreme Court and the rapid approval of presidential legislative initiatives, virtually without debate, reduced the credibility of the Congress in the eyes of the general public.

A consequence of the loss of faith in the Congress was a loss of faith in political parties (as we shall see reflected in the data in the next chapter). The Catholic Church served more effectively than did the political parties to bring together various interests and present coherent positions to the government.

While 1992 was touted by the president as a year of social investment, little was done to develop and fund social programs. The lack of a peace agreement with the guerrillas and the continuing concerns over human rights violations indicated the hardening of positions by the president and the Army mentioned earlier. The government's approach to the indigenous question, reflected above all in its essentially negative reaction to the Nobel Peace prize awarded to Rigoberto Menchu, placed all its efforts at establishing a better international image for Guatemala in question. Concerns regarding Guatemala's approach to human rights remained a sticking point in relations between Guatemala, and the United States as well as with other countries including the European Community members. Little was done as well in moving to combat corruption, particularly after the impeachment by Congress of the Procurator General of the Nation.

The Political Environment of the Study

1993 was ushered in with an abundance of confrontations and general discontent with the President. During the first quarter of the year, public attention focused on President Serrano's new peace proposal to the URNG, which urged the insurgents to endorse a peace agreement within a period of 90 days. However, the proposal did not elicit the outcome hoped for by the President. The stalling of the peace dialogue, combined with other internal events, fostered a climate of political instability. By May of 1993, the country showed signs of being ungovernable, viewed

from the perspective of the questionable legitimacy of its institutions, and the loss of political support for the government. It was evident that the process of democratization was not on track. The wear and tear on figures of authority was affecting the democratic institutions themselves. Popular discontent was growing. During the first two weeks of May, tensions seemed to intensify.

Two noteworthy events which contributed to the political atmosphere during the period prior to the study were: the abrogation of the parliamentary agreement known as the "triple alliance" in the Congress of the Republic, and the magnitude of the electoral victory of the MAS in the municipal elections of May 9, 1993.

On the one hand, the rupture of the alliance in the Congress represented an obstacle to Serrano's authoritarian style of government and obliged him to play a game of give-and-take in the Legislature in order to be able to govern. It became evident that the corruption of the Executive-Legislative relationship that Serrano had initiated during his first two years in office, through payoffs and other inducements, was now going to backfire against him. The lack of parliamentary support increased the possibility of a political judgement against him based on accusations of corruption and abuse of authority. The events in Venezuela (the impeachment of Carlos Andres Perez for corruption) had a considerable influence on the political environment in Guatemala City.

On the other hand, the jubilant attitude of Serrano and other members of the at-that-time official party, as a consequence of the results of the municipal elections, demonstrated that they were interpreting this victory rather liberally and unrealistically. Figures provided by the Central Elections Board indicated that between 60 and 65 percent of the electorate failed to vote, which shows a decided lack of popular support of the victory. Analyzing the results at the municipal level, it can be seen that the perspective of the government with respect to the popular support they enjoyed was clearly in error. It should also be remembered that pre-election activities were called into question on charges of manipulation, the use of resources such as the 8% for municipalities, and taking advantage of the prestige of the presidency to promote the party.

Other problems, generated by an increase in the costs of electricity and criticism of Serrano for the so-called "Summit of Thought", created an atmosphere of generalized noncompliance. Also to be noted is the intensification of the confrontation between President Serrano and the then Attorney General for Human Rights, based on the latter's lodging of an appeal against the raising of electricity rates.

Constant and open confrontations demonstrated the President's minimal capacity for accepting criticism or listening to other opinions. The deterioration of the situation accelerated, rooted in student dissent, again showing opposition to open dialogue on the part of the government, which responded to the protests by

marshalling forces, including the army, to the streets.

The student disturbances, in reaction to the rejection on the part of some educational centers of the so-called student transportation card, were situations which had gotten out of hand, ones which would have been manageable, had it not been for the open authoritarianism of, and the breakdown of credibility being suffered by the President and, in general, the entire Executive Branch.

Going beyond the weaknesses and mistakes of the Serrano Government, it is important to point out that other factors and other agents in Guatemalan society were also contributing to the deterioration of the democratic process, since it is impossible to deny the dissatisfaction of the public with other State powers.

Very concrete facts, such as the politization of the Public Ministry, the politization of the election of the Supreme Court in the Congress, the feeling of insecurity on the part of the general citizenry, the limited independence of the different powers - evidenced above all by the passage of unpopular laws by the "triple alliance" in the Congress - and the continued violation of human rights, etc., caused the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches alike to be accused of impunity, based on immunity, corruption, special privileges, abuse of power and incompetence. By May of 1993, there was an overt lack of credibility in the authorities of the country, and a lack of ability on the part of the powers of state to generate consensus.

Besides what was happening to the three powers of the State, the country's political parties were also suffering damage. It was obvious that their function as intermediaries between social needs and the government had broken down, and that the public was far from feeling adequately represented by them. It was also true that their actions in Congress contributed to the deterioration of their public image.

In addition to the deficiencies of the political parties, the erosion of the democratic process is also due to social fragmentation within Guatemala; in recent years a number of organizations have proliferated precisely to fill the void left by the political parties. However, social organizations in general have been falling part, thanks to the absence of clear leadership and many of the same problems being suffered by the political parties, such as a lack of internal democracy and of an ample social base.

The factionalization of Guatemalan society probably allowed Serrano more leeway in his actions. The prevailing sectarianism in Guatemala, as evidenced above all by a tangible lack of desire for dialogue and negotiation, as well as little flexibility among various sectors, provided a channel for the deterioration of the process of democratization and contributed to the lack of governability. That lack of governability was, at the time this study was conducted, probably the most relevant characteristic of the Guatemalan political environment.

The Coup and the Return to Democracy

On May 25, 1993, President Serrano Elias announced to the country his decision to temporarily suspend various articles of the Constitution of the Republic, dissolve Congress and the Supreme Court, replace the members of the Court of Constitutionality, the Procurator General of the Nation and suspend various constitutional guarantees. As a result of this auto-coup, Guatemala between May 25 and June 5 went through one of the most important political phenomenons in its history. Jorge Serrano and his Vice-President, Gustavo Espina, were removed from their offices thanks to a popular movement, limited in its scope to the capital, that made possible the election of Ramiro de Leon Carpio, then Procurator of Human Rights, as the new president.

The institutional crisis of May-June 1993 and the public reaction to the "auto-golpe" was visible evidence of a shift, at least in the capital, of popular support for the democratic order. Across a broad spectrum of economic and political interests, important groups and prominent individuals demonstrated their rejection of the seizure of power by Serrano and his supporters. The result was the return of power to democratic institutions. The events of this period underscored the respect that existed for organizations such as the office of the Procurator of Human Rights and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal as well as the relatively low level of respect for many of the political parties and the Congress. The role played by the Army demonstrated that it could no longer be considered a single bloc. While early on, the armed forces demonstrated support for the auto-golpe, fissures within the upper ranks of the military limited the role that it could play in determining the outcome.

It is important to note that the popular movement that ended the auto-golpe was essentially limited to the capital which, as can be seen from past political history, represents the normal state of affairs in Guatemala.

In Conclusion

Reviewing the history contained within this chapter, certain themes stand out. Historically, except for two brief periods, 1944-1954 and 1984 to the present, Guatemala's political history has been one of personalistic, militaristic authoritarianism. In the period from 1954 until 1984, the military dominated politics. Repression was the tool used to control dissent and manage the political order. Change resulted from a use of force. The past eight years of democratic development have been a process of moving slowly toward the construction of democratic institutions and a democratic consensus. Human rights violations remain a concern, but at the very least there is an institutional presence to express that concern. A variety of political parties exist as does a Congress which serves as a forum of expression for those parties. However, the party structure and the Congress are weak, with a reputation for corruption. The one critical test of democratic commitment in the past eight years, the reaction to the

auto-golpe of May, 1993, demonstrates that at least at the level of the historically active political arena, the capital city, there is a strong sentiment and a willingness to defend the existing democratic order, however imperfect.

It is the task of this study to relate these historical manifestations to the underlying attitudes and orientations of a national sample of Guatemalans with a view towards better understanding the terms of democratic development in Guatemala. The balance of this work attempts to do just that.

III. System Support

The Logic of the Comparisons

There are three central goals of this analysis of public opinion data in Guatemala. First, we want to be able to examine the levels of support for democracy for the country as a whole. Second, we want to be able to compare important subsets of the population (Indian versus ladino, women versus men, young versus old, etc.). Third, we want to be able to detect changes in attitudes, both for the nation as a whole and for relevant subgroups. The third goal will form the basis for the second (and possible subsequent) studies. As previously noted, a follow-up study is planned for 1995, at which time comparisons will be made with the 1993 data.

The second goal will comprise the bulk of the analysis of this report, as we attempt to compare and contrast a variety of key subgroups of the Guatemalan population. It is the first goal, that of examining the levels of support for democracy for Guatemala as a whole, that requires this explanatory note.

In order to make some statement about the level of democracy, it is necessary to compare Guatemala against some standard. We could use the United States as that standard, but we think that would be inappropriate. After all, Guatemala is a small, poor, nation inside the Latin American political tradition that has only recently inaugurated democracy whereas the U.S. is a large, rich, nation within a distinct Anglo-Saxon political tradition with one of the longest democratic heritages of any nation. It may well be that ultimately Guatemalan views and North American views will converge on a common point, but it is equally likely that the distinctiveness of Guatemala's own traditions and history will result in permanent differences between the two countries over the long term.¹

We feel that a much more appropriate standard for comparison are the other Spanish speaking countries of Central America: Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua,

¹José Medina Echavarría commented on the nature of liberalism in Latin America in the late 19th and 20th centuries by pointing to the historical differences between the Latin (French and Spanish) emphasis on the rights of the individual, above all of the aristocracy, and Anglo-Saxon concerns which focussed on increasing participation of all classes in the democratic process. This was an important difference in the character of democratic development in Latin America that only recently has begun to work itself out. See, Jose Medina Echavarría, Consideraciones Sociologicas sobre el desarrollo economico. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1964; Aspecto Sociales del desarrollo economico; Editorial. Universitario: Santiago, 1973; Discurso sobre politico y planeación. Siglo XXI: Mexico, 1972.

Costa Rica and Panama. While important differences in the details of their history cannot be ignored,² there is far more that binds these countries together than there is that sets them apart. The availability of a data set in which identical questions were asked to over 4,000 urban residents in these countries in 1991-92, allows us to make these comparisons. The data come from the University of Pittsburgh Central American Public Opinion Project.³ The project received support from several sources.⁴

The 1993 study of public opinion in Guatemala, hereafter known as the "Guatemalan Democracy Study, 1993," had to differ in a variety of ways from the prior survey work. Specifically, the language of the questionnaire had to be simplified

²Héctor Pérez-Brignoli, A Brief History of Central America. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

³ The sample sizes varied for each country (Guatemala, 904; El Salvador, 910; Honduras, 566; Nicaragua, 704; Costa Rica, 597; Panama, 500). These differences partly reflect the different sizes of the populations studied, but are mainly the product of differences in the resources available to the study team in each country. Country sample designs were of area probability design. In each country, the most recent population census data were used to stratify the urban areas into lower, middle and upper socio-economic status (SES). The sample size assigned to each stratum was based upon these SES estimates. Within each stratum, census maps were used to select, at random, an appropriate number of political subdivisions (e.g., districts) and, within each subdivision, the census maps were used to select an appropriate number of segments from which to draw the interviews.

⁴That project, conceived in 1989, was designed to tap the opinion of Central Americans on a variety of issues. The study received funding support from a wide variety of sources: The Andrew Mellon Foundation, the Tinker Foundation, Inc., the Howard Heinz Endowment, the University of Pittsburgh Central Research Small Grant Fund and the Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos (IDELA). The collaborating institutions in Central America were: Guatemala-- Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales (ASIES); El Salvador--Centro de Investigación y Acción Social (CINAS) and the Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos (IDELA); Honduras--Centro de Estudio y Promoción del Desarrollo (CEPROD) and the Centro de Documentación de Honduras (CEDOH); Nicaragua--Centro de Estudios Internacionales (CEI), and the Escuela de Sociología, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA); Costa Rica--Universidad de Costa Rica; Panama--Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos "Justo Arosemena" (CELA). Collaborating doctoral students in Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh were Ricardo Córdova (El Salvador), Annabelle Conroy (Honduras), Orlando Pérez (Panama), and Andrew Stein (Nicaragua).

and the response formats reduced in complexity. Two factors required those changes. First, the Guatemalan sample was the first other than Costa Rica that was to be national in nature. As a result significant numbers of rural and poorly educated respondents were to be included in the sample. Second, the presence of significant numbers of bi-lingual Indians in the Guatemalan sample, added a complexity to the project that encouraged us to simplify the questionnaire as much as possible.

The major change in the questionnaire, for those items that were repeated from the University of Pittsburgh study of 1991-92, was the elimination of seven and ten-point response scales and their replacement with three and four-point response formats. For example, if the original item requested that the respondent give his/her opinion with reference to a scale that ranged from a low of one, indicating strong disagreement to a high of ten indicating strong agreement, the revised items used in the Guatemala Democracy Study, 1993, might have had the respondent select from four options, labeled "strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree."⁵

In light of these changes in the 1993 survey, we decided to make all comparative references to the other Central American countries by using the 1992 Guatemala survey, which did use wording and coding identical to the other five countries included in the study. Since the six-nation study was urban, limited in most cases to the capital city of the nation, we limit our comparisons to the Guatemala City portion of the sample and compare it to the other capital cities of Central America. Only in the case of Honduras, in which Tegucigalpa is considered the political capital and San Pedro Sula the economic capital did we include more than one city in the sample compared with Guatemala City.

The task of comparison, then, becomes a two-stage process. First, we will compare the opinions of the residents of Guatemala City to the other capital cities of Central America. We then compare various sub-sets of the Guatemalan population, using Guatemala City as the point of comparison. In that way, should we detect

⁵ It is possible to adjust the coding formats of one or the other survey to make them *numerically* equivalent, but doing so does not make them qualitatively equivalent. For example, we found that using the seven-point format on the item, "To what degree are you proud of the Guatemalan system of government," produced responses that averaged around 4, or the middle-point on the scale. When we changed the format in the 1993 survey to read, "Do you feel very proud, somewhat proud or not at all proud of being Guatemalan," 85 percent said "very proud." Of course, in this case, we changed both the coding format of the item as well as the content (substituting pride in the government for pride in being a Guatemalan).

higher or lower values on any given variable than we found in Guatemala City, we will also know how these values compare to the other countries in the region.

The Scoring Methodology

The original data set utilized a number of different measuring devices to tap respondent opinion. In some cases a 7-point scale was utilized, in others 10-points were used and in still others 4 and 5-point scales were used. Part of the reason for this variation had to do with the nature of the item being asked, while part had to do with comparability with similar items asked in prior studies of opinion in Central America.

We felt it was important not to confuse the reader with a different scoring method for each set of items in the study. Moreover, when comparisons are made using multiple regression analysis, the use of a single metric for all items allows us to compare the relative contribution of each item to the equation both within Guatemala and among the six countries in the region without having to resort to the complexity of standard scores. As a result, we opted to convert all items to a common 0-100 scale, with 0 always representing the low end of the continuum and 100 the high end.⁶ We followed this same procedure when we created summated scales that combined two or more items in the study.

System Support in Comparative Perspective

In Guatemala we are concerned with the promotion of a system which is both democratic and stable. System stability has long been thought to be directly linked to popular perceptions of the legitimacy of the system. Illegitimate systems, ones that do not have the support of the populace, can only endure over the long haul through the use of repression. When repression no longer can be used effectively, or if opposition elements are willing to risk even extremely grave sanctions, illegitimate regimes will eventually fall. Hence, the failure of the Tiananmen Square protestors to bring about changes in the Chinese system can be attributed to either of two causes: (1) the level of coercion that state was willing to apply exceeded the willingness of the protestors and their supporters to bear it; or (2) system legitimacy was greater among the mass public than it appeared from observing the protestors alone. In contrast, the rapid demise of the communist governments of Eastern Europe suggest

⁶The arithmetic conversion of scales was performed by subtracting 1 from each item and then dividing by one less than the total number of points in the original scale and, finally, multiplying the result by 100. For example, a scale that ranged from a low of 1 to a high of 7 would first be reduced by subtracting 1 from each score, giving a range of 0-6. Then by dividing by 6 the lowest score would remain a 0, but the highest would be 1. Multiplying by 100 would make the maximum equivalent to 100.

rather strongly that once repressive forces are weakened (in this case by the removal of the threat of Soviet intervention on behalf of those governments), illegitimate regimes will quickly crumble.

But what of democratic systems? Since almost all of Latin America is today democratic (in structure at least), we want to know what forces have, in the past, been responsible for their downfall? In most cases, military coups have been the main actors responsible. Certainly this has been the case in the vast majority of democratic breakdowns in Latin America. Democratic systems provide a wide variety of mechanisms for the popular expression of discontent and numerous obstacles to the widespread use of official repression. Hence, even when citizens are discontented with government performance, they tend to wait until the next election to seek a change in incumbents. But there are some instances in which popular sentiment seems to have been at least partly responsible for democratic breakdowns. The best known case is the demise of the Weimar Republic, where the voters made their choice. In Latin America, it would be easy to suggest that the Fujimori "auto-golpe," which extinguished democratic rule in Peru in 1992, emerged out of a popular revulsion over the inability of the democratic system to deal effectively with Sendero Luminoso terrorism. According to several reports, President Alberto K. Fujimori remains among the most popular heads of state in all of Latin America.⁷ Similarly, the repeated attempts to overthrow the elected government of Venezuela have been supported, according to the polls, by the vast majority of its citizens. But in Guatemala, the effort in 1993 to overthrow democracy via an "auto-golpe" resulted in the complete failure of the attempt. Our survey of democratic norms was conducted on the eve of that failed effort.

Hence, while authoritarian regimes survived based on some combination of legitimacy and repression, democracies tend to rely primarily on legitimacy alone.⁸ According to Lipset's classical work, systems that are legitimate survive even in the face of difficult times. In Central America, by the mid 1980s all six countries were regularly holding free and fair elections.⁹ The survival of these democracies, each of which are facing very difficult economic times, depends upon continued popular support. One need only think of the ballot box ouster in 1990 of the Sandinistas in

⁷James Brooke, "Fujimori Sees a Peaceful, and a Prosperous, Peru," *New York Times*, April 6, 1993, A3. According to the article, Fujimori's approval ratings are between 62 and 67 percent.

⁸This is not to say that democracies does not use coercion, but that its use is very limited.

⁹Participation by leftist parties was highly restricted in El Salvador up until the peace accords implemented in 1992-93. In Guatemala such participation still remains restricted.

Nicaragua, to see how critical such support can be. In that case, the inability of the system to cope effectively with the severe economic crises and the protracted Contra war, caused voters to turn against the system.¹⁰

Until recently, efforts to measure legitimacy have been hampered by reliance on the Trust in Government scale devised by the University of Michigan.¹¹ That scale, it has turned out, depended too heavily on a measurement of dissatisfaction with the performance of incumbents rather than of generalized dissatisfaction with the system of government. The development of the Political-Support Alienation Scale, now tested in studies of Germany, Israel, the United States, Mexico, Costa Rica, Peru and elsewhere, has provided a much more powerful analytical tool for measuring legitimacy.¹² The scale has been shown to be reliable and valid. It is based upon a distinction made by Easton, relying upon Parsons, by defining legitimacy in terms of system support, or diffuse support vs. specific support (support for incumbents)¹³.

General System Support

We begin this exploration of comparative levels of system support by looking first at the most general of all of the items in the series: pride. We asked the respondents. "To what extent do you feel proud to live under the political system of Guatemala?" (or the other countries of the region). Figure III.1 shows the results. As

¹⁰See Vanessa Castro and Gary Prevost, The 1990 Elections in Nicaragua and their Aftermath. Lanham, MD.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1992. Since the ouster of the Sandinistas involved a dramatic shift in the entire system of government, from socialist to capitalist, from Soviet/Cuba alignment to realignment with the U.S., it is appropriate to think of this election as having changed the system rather than merely the personnel of government.

¹¹Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government," *American Political Science Review* 68 (September 1974):951-972

¹²For a review of this evidence see Mitchell A. Seligson, "On the Measurement of Diffuse Support: Some Evidence from Mexico," *Social Indicators Research* 12 (January 1983):1-24, and Edward N. Muller, Thomas O. Jukam and Mitchell A. Seligson "Diffuse Political Support and Antisystem Political Behavior: A Comparative Analysis," *American Journal of Political Science* 26 (May 1982): 240-264. The present discussion draws on that evidence.

¹³David Easton, "A Re-assessment of the Concept of Political Support," *British Journal of Political Science* 5 (October 1975):435-457; Talcott Parsons, 'Some Highlights of the General Theory of Action,' in R. Young, ed. *Approaches to the Study of Politics*, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press).

we can see, with the major exception of Costa Rica, levels of pride in Central America are nearly identical. Only Costa Rica, with the longest democratic tradition and the highest standard of living of any of the countries in Central America stands out from the other countries, with a statistically significant ($< .001$) difference from the other countries. Guatemala does not appear much different from the remainder of her neighbors.

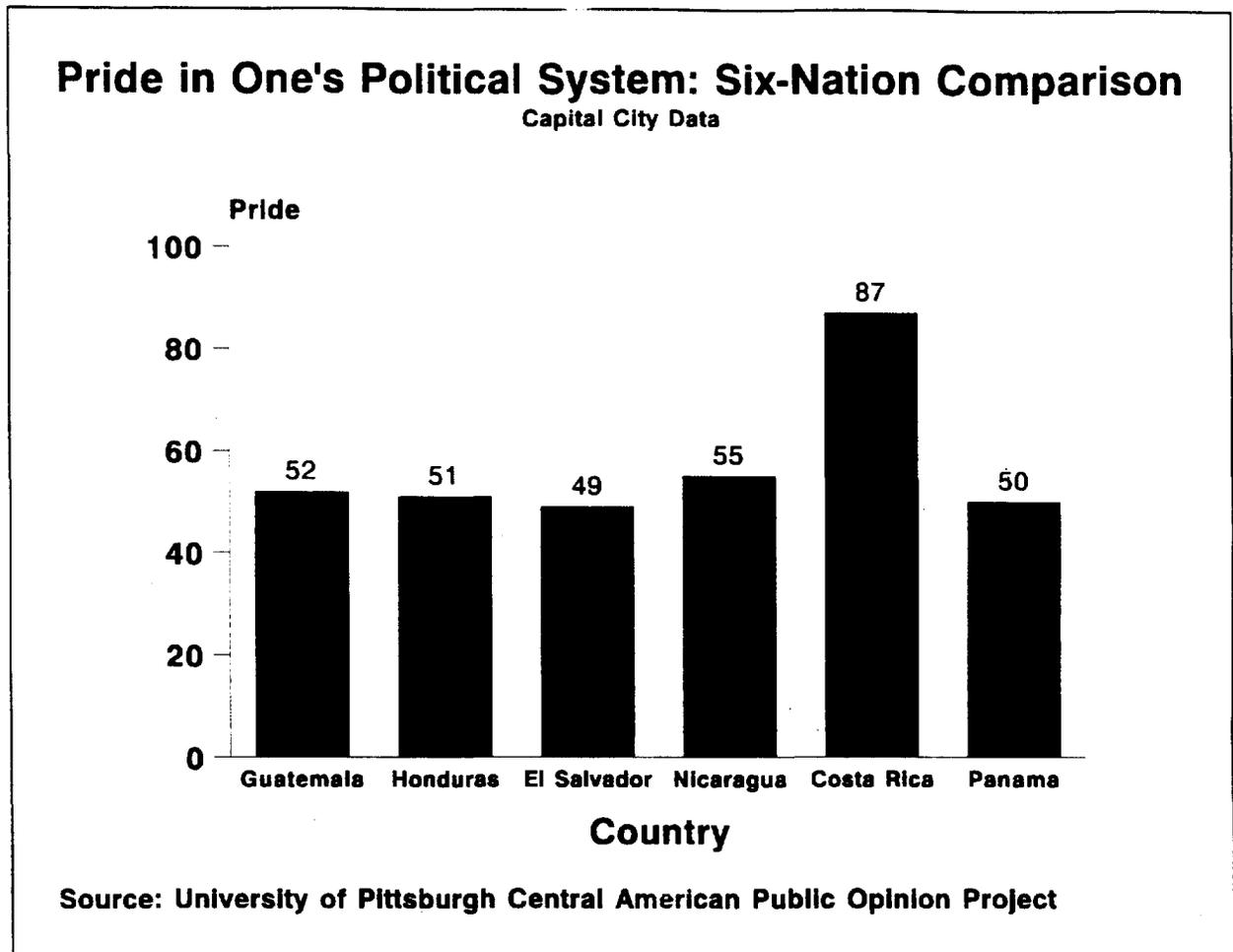


Figure 1

The second general item in this series on system support asked, "To what extent should one support the Guatemalan system of government?" As is seen in Figure III.2 below, a pattern very similar to that developed on the pride item emerges; once again Costa Rica stands out from the other countries, with citizen expressing much higher (sig. $< .001$) levels of pride than in the other countries. Guatemala's levels of support among its capital city residents is statistically indistinguishable from the samples from Honduras, El Salvador and Panama. Only Nicaraguans express a bit more support than do the other nations.

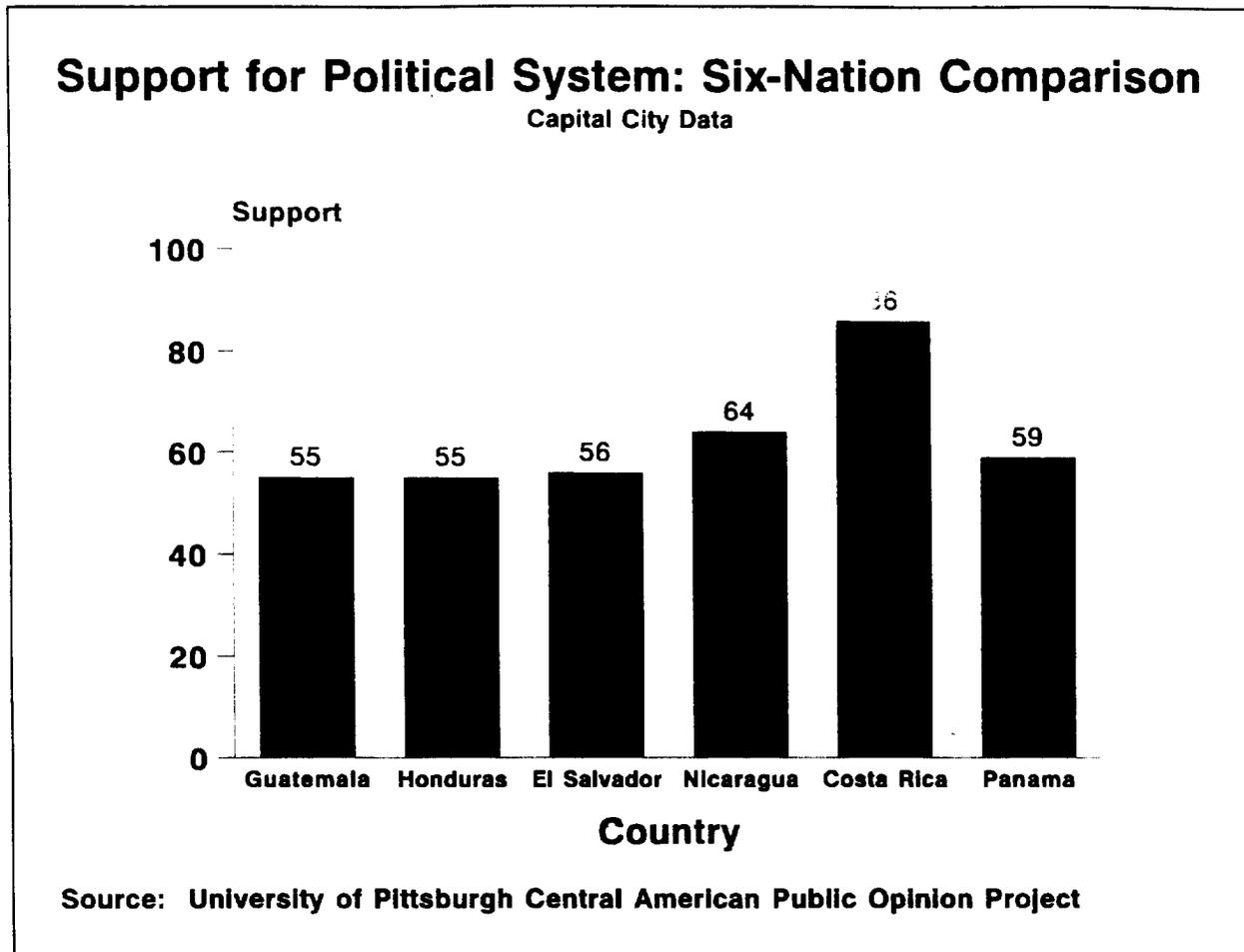


Figure 2

The third, general measure of system support is given by the responses to the question, "To what extent do you have respect for the political institutions of Guatemala?" In contrast to the "pride" and "support" items, this measure shows statistically significant differences among the countries (sig. < .001). As shown in Figure III.3 below, Costa Rica still leads the other countries in the region, but this time Nicaragua is not far behind. Somewhat surprisingly, Hondurans have the lowest level of respect for their political institutions. Guatemala City residents appear, once again, to be neither particularly high nor particularly low in this system support measure.

The fourth and final general indicator of system support measures protection of basic rights. We asked: "To what extent do you think that the basic rights of citizens are well protected by the Guatemalan political system." We learned from our interviewers that many respondents interpreted this question to be referring to human rights, a concept we very much had in mind when we formulated the question. When we asked it again in Guatemala in 1993, we changed the item to refer directly to

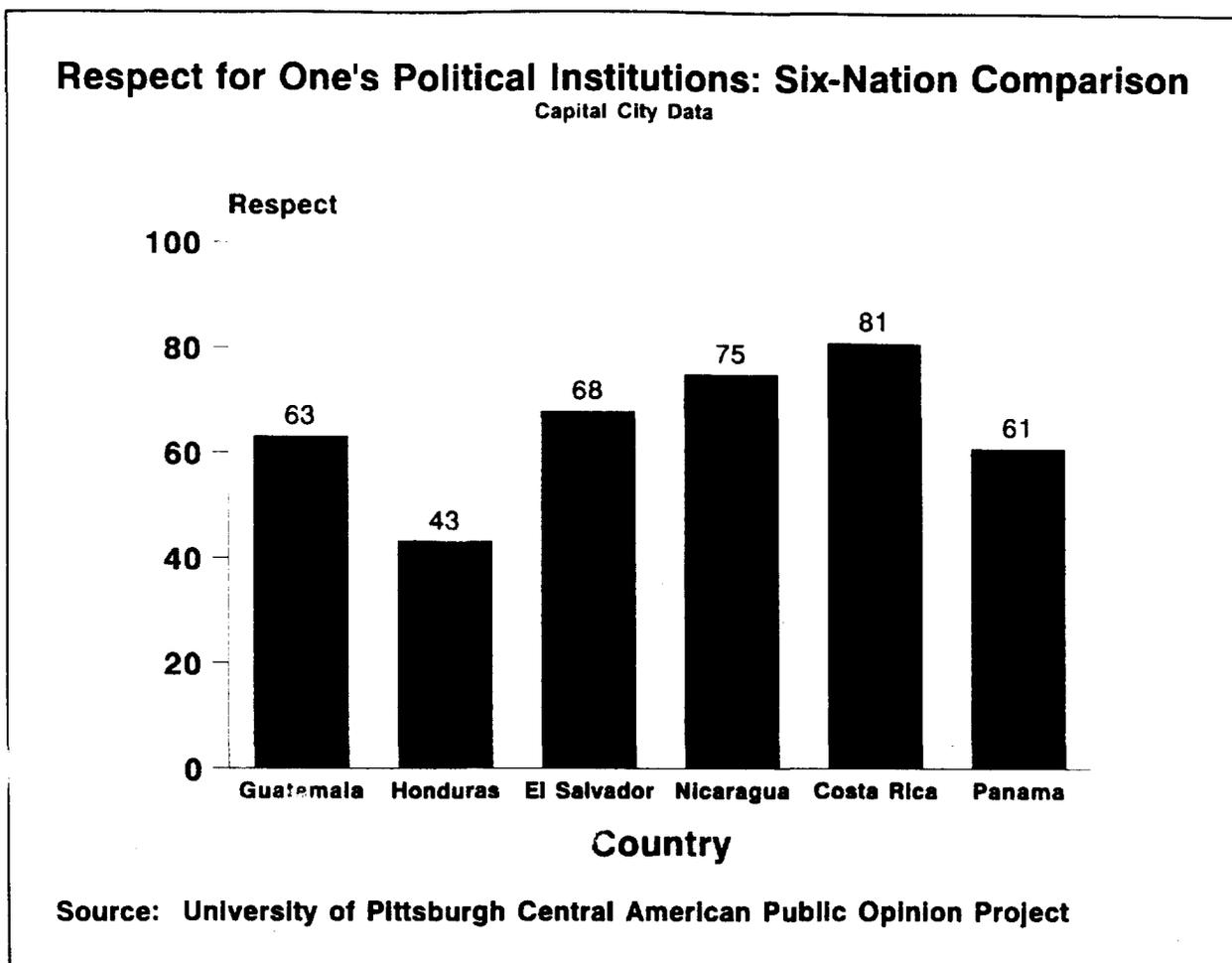


Figure 3

human rights. But in the six-nation study, the text read "basic rights." Figure III.4 contains the results. Once again Guatemala is found in the middle of the pack, with Costa Rica at the high end and Honduras, once again surprisingly, at the low end. These findings for Honduras are troubling and reflect a different picture from that which we have been given in many media accounts of the country. But since this report focuses on Guatemala, we will leave it to others to examine the implications for these findings for Honduras.

Support for Specific Institutions

We now move on to examine a series of specific institutions that are crucial for the functioning of any democracy: the courts, the legislature and the election tribunal. We start with the courts first, the institution that throughout Central America has the lowest support rating of any of these three institutions, averaging, for the six countries, 42 on our scale of 0-100. The comparative results are shown in Figure III.5. We asked our 4,000 Central American respondents: "To what degree do the courts in

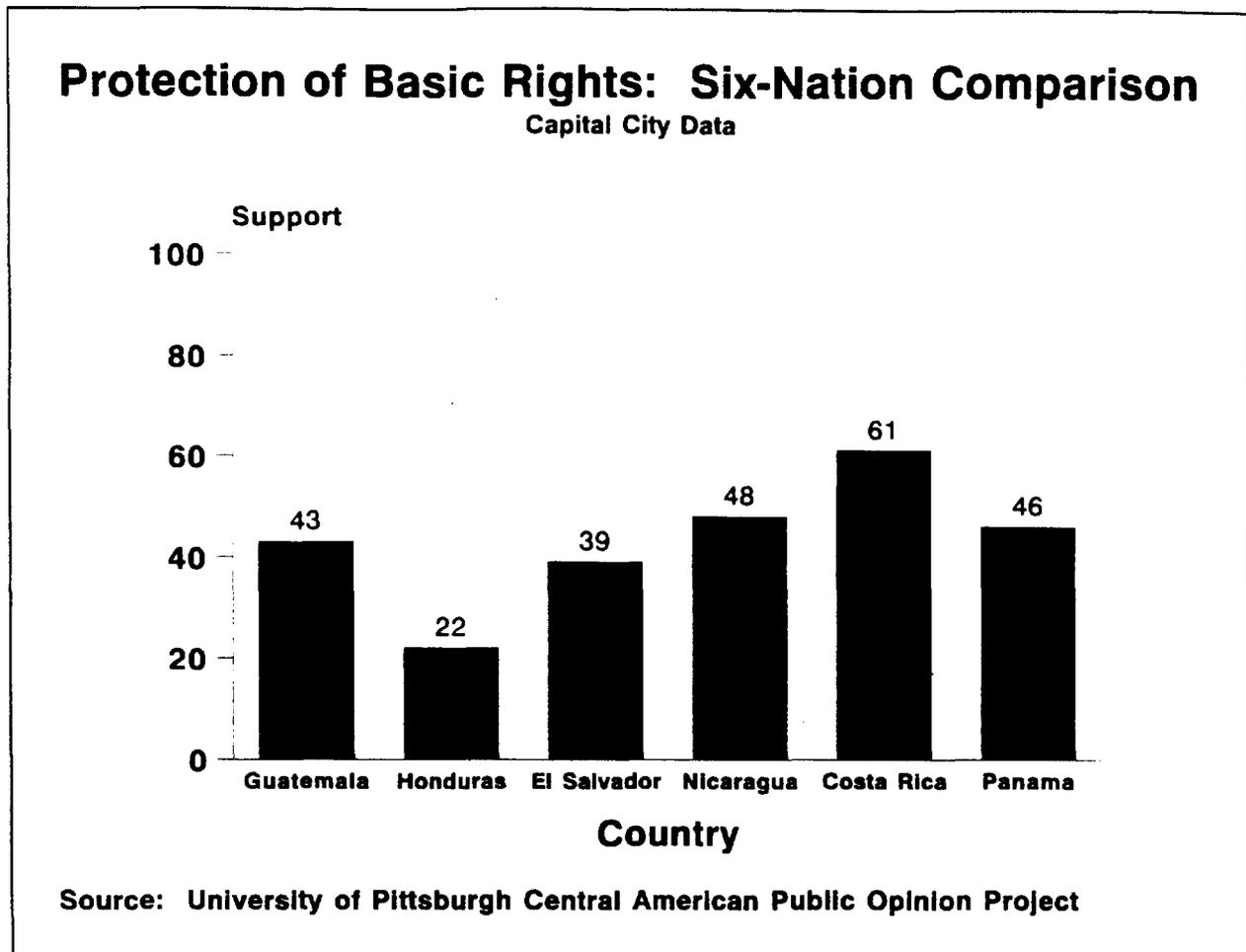


Figure 4

country (e.g. Guatemala) guarantee a fair trial?" It is in El Salvador, not surprisingly, where the courts have the lowest level of support. The 12 years of civil war in that country and the inability of the court system to prosecute the most horrendous violation of human rights apparently has had its impact on citizen confidence in the judiciary. Panama, too, with the Noriega dictatorship fresh in its mind, has citizens with little confidence in the judiciary. In Guatemala, the courts have a somewhat higher standing among the public, with the strongest support found in Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Honduras, which had done so poorly in other respects, apparently has a court system that is more widely trusted by its citizens than are some of its other institutions.

The legislatures of Central America have long been subservient to the executive branch. During the long years of dictatorial rule either they did not function at all or were virtually powerless. Nonetheless, they have a somewhat higher rating than do the courts, with an average of 46 on our scale of 0-100. We did not ask this question in Costa Rica, and therefore do not have comparable data for that country. As can

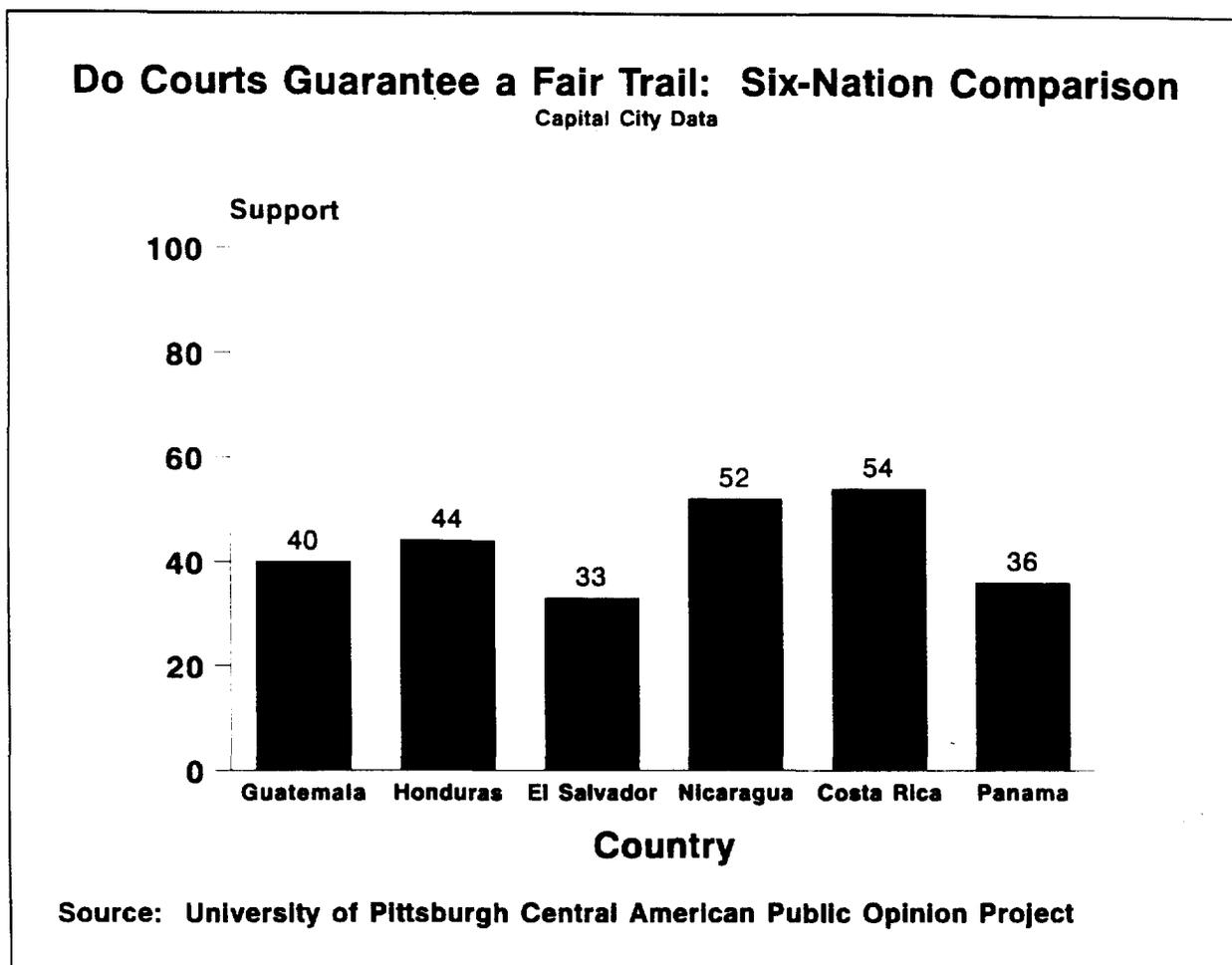


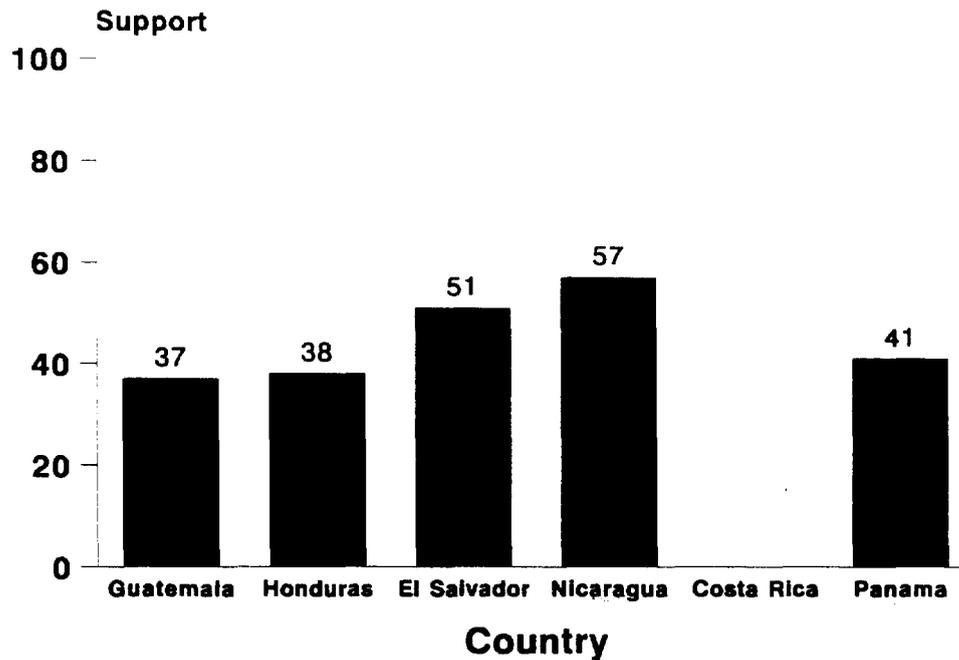
Figure 5

be seen in Figure III.6 below, the legislature of Nicaragua has the highest level of support, followed by El Salvador and Panama. At the bottom of the list, tying for last, are Guatemala and Honduras. The differences between Nicaragua and El Salvador, on the one hand, and the other countries on the other, are statistically significant (sig. < .001).

The final democratic institution to be examined is that of the electoral tribunal. Throughout Central America, elections are supervised by such tribunals, although the specific responsibilities of each tribunal varies from country to country. In every case they are the primary institutions charged with the responsibility of insuring the integrity of voting and the vote count, and hence play a key role in the democratic process. The question asked was: "To what degree do you trust the Supreme Electoral Tribunal?" We found that for Central America as a whole, trust in this body was higher than it was for any other institution studied. This question was not asked in Costa Rica. As is shown in Figure III.7 below, confidence in the tribunal in Guatemala is higher than it is for any country except Nicaragua, although the gap

Trust in the Legislature: Six-Nation Comparison

Capital City Data



Source: University of Pittsburgh Central American Public Opinion Project

Figure 6

between Guatemala and Nicaragua is quite large.

Support for the Military

The role of the military in politics seems to be receding throughout Central America. However, as recent events in both Guatemala and Nicaragua have shown, as an institution, the military still plays a critical role. We, therefore, wanted to measure support for the military as an institution. We asked: "To what extent do you have trust in the Armed Forces?" Costa Rica has no army and we did not ask this question there. The results are presented in Figure III.8. Hondurans have very low trust in their military, whereas Guatemalans, Salvadorans and Nicaraguans have significantly more trust.

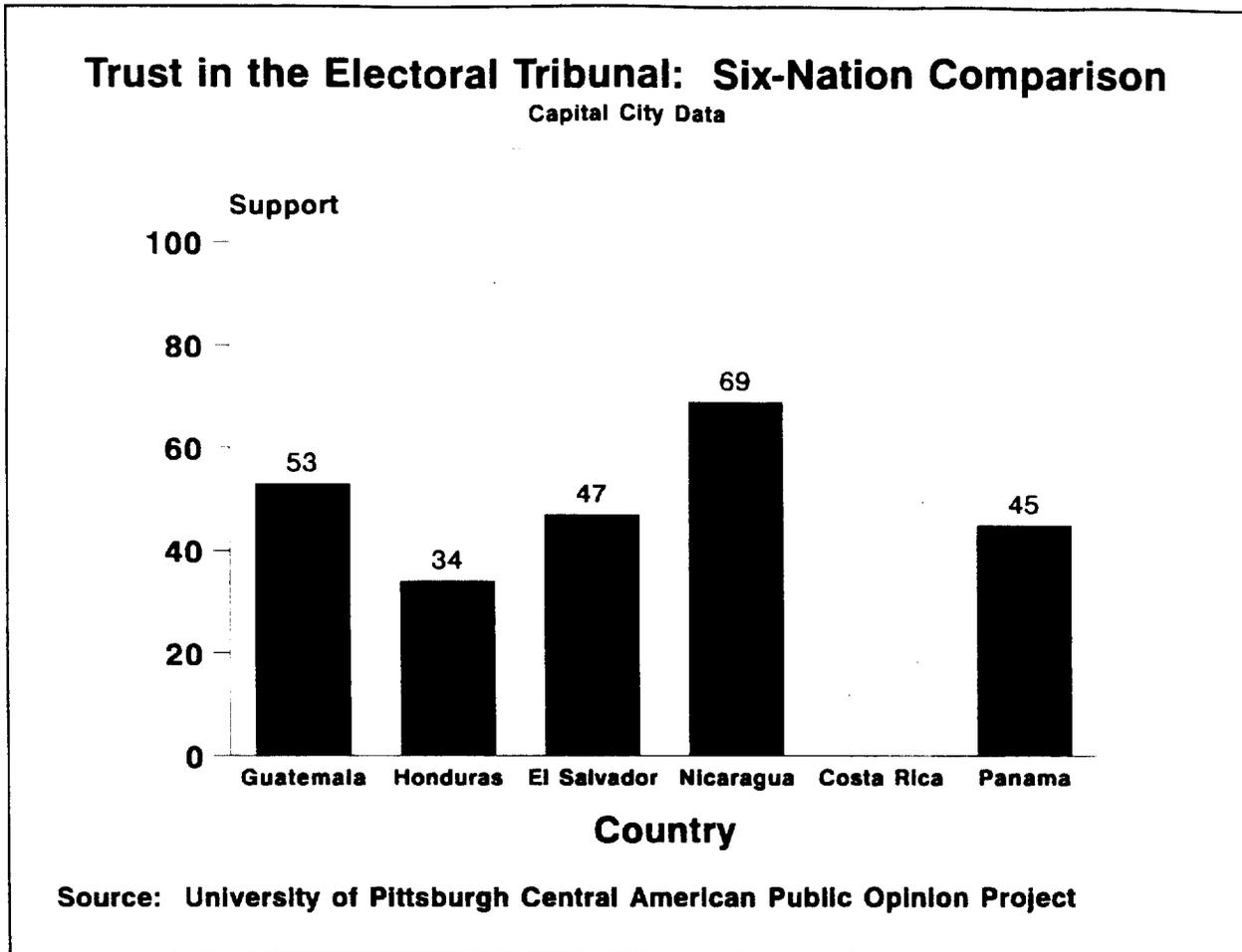


Figure 7

Levels of System Support within Guatemala

We have examined eight distinct indicators of system support in comparative perspective. Our task now turns to a comparison of various subsets of the Guatemalan population. To do this we need to utilize the 1993 Democratic Values Survey since it is the only one that is a national probability sample of the entire Guatemalan population.

The overall picture is presented in Figure III.9 below. There is a clear hierarchy of support for the different institutions in Guatemala. The greatest support is found on the "pride" item, but it should be noted that this item is different from the one utilized in the other Central American countries or the one used in the 1992 Guatemala survey. In this application of the survey we were asking not about pride in the political system, but pride in "being Guatemalan." In many ways it is a measure of nationalism, and it is clear from the overwhelmingly positive responses, Guatemalans are quite proud of their country. When it comes to support for the

political system, not surprisingly support is lower. Even so, one component of that system, the Human Rights Ombudsman, stands out as having the highest level of support of any of the remaining items in the study. It is of considerable note, of course, that within days of the administration of this questionnaire, the Human Rights Ombudsman, Ramiro de León Carpio, was selected by the Congress of Guatemala to assume the presidential sash after the failed "auto golpe" of President Jorge Serrano.

The Supreme Electoral Tribunal, Courts and public offices have a surprisingly high level of support. Lower support was expressed for the Army, the Congress, and respect for human rights. At the very bottom, however, were the political parties, with support at extremely low levels. These attitudes may well reflect both an appraisal of the political situation and a political preference. The Guatemalan government's lack of respect for human rights has been well documented. Thus, it is not surprising that few consider basic rights are being protected. Support for both the electoral tribunal and the human rights ombudsman may represent the opposite direction -- a hope that these two institutions and their leaders (now the two top executives of the country) may increase basic rights.

Low levels of support for the Congress and political parties may also go hand in hand -- reflecting the weakness of both institutions and the high level of personalism associated with Guatemalan politics.

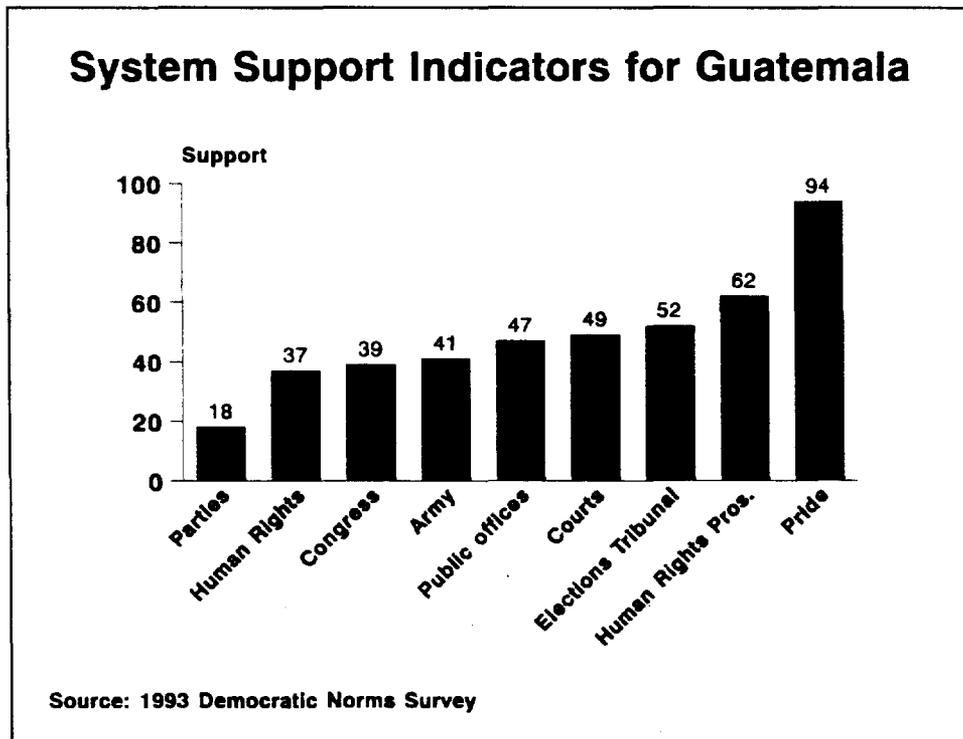


Figure 8

37

It would be possible to continue to conduct this examination on a variable-by-variable basis, commenting on, for example, support for the legislature vs. support for the courts. We believe, however, that it would be more appropriate at this point in the analysis to concern ourselves with the overall concept of system support so as not to lose sight of the "forest because of the trees" in the analysis.

In order to analyze the single concept of system support, we first examined the relationship of each of the variables analyzed above to see if they relate to each other in a systematic way and therefore can be formally considered to form part of a single dimension called "system support". Since our focus is on democratic institutions, we exclude from this list of variables the one question on support for the army. The item measuring "support for the political system" was excluded from the 1993 survey. That left us with six items. We found, however, that the item measuring pride, which was reworded for the 1993 administration to focus on pride of being a Guatemalan rather than pride in the political system, did not provide sufficient discrimination among the respondents to be included here.¹⁴ In the 1993 administration of the scale we added a new item, "trust in the political parties." We found that we could form a reliable scale with these six items: courts, congress, electoral tribunal, public offices,¹⁵ human rights and political parties.¹⁶ We summed these six items into an overall scale that ranges from a low of 0 to a high of 100.¹⁷ The overall mean for the entire sample was 40 on this scale.

System Support, Age and Gender

We first explore the relationship between system support and two basic demographic variables, age and gender. There are numerous theories in the social sciences that suggest that these two variables can be very important in determining attitudes. In Guatemala, however, system support is not a function of either. We did find that males had a somewhat higher level of system support than females (41 vs 39), but the difference was not statistically significant. Age showed no significant linear relationship to system support.

¹⁴When we included the "pride" item, in which most respondents said that they were "very proud," reliability dropped to .75. For that reason, and the limited variance, we excluded the item from the scale.

¹⁵This item is the equivalent of "public institutions" analyzed above in the Central America data set. In order to make the object of the question more concrete for less well educated Guatemalans, we changed the wording to "public offices."

¹⁶The Alpha reliability index for the seven items was .78.

¹⁷We summed each item, which ranged from 0 to 100 and then divided by 6.

System Support and Education

Education has been viewed as a central mechanism for the socialization of populations in democratic norms. Less is known about the relationship between education and system support, but expectations are that increased education should be associated with higher system support. Such a relationship is found in Panama and Costa Rica. In Guatemala, however, the reverse is the case: those with lower education have higher system support (sig. < .001). As can be seen in Figure III.9 below, system support peaks among those with one to three years of education, and then declines steadily thereafter. The lowest level of support is found among those with the highest level of education.

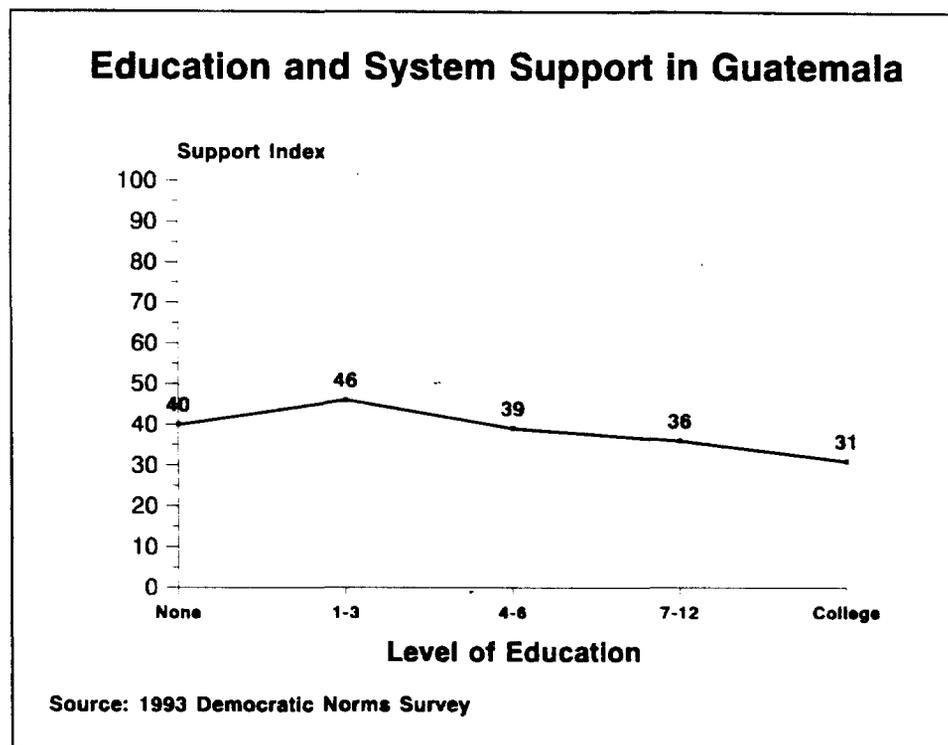


Figure 9

Residents of Guatemala City are, as a group, more highly educated than the residents of other areas of Guatemala. It is not surprising, therefore, that support for the system of government in Guatemala is lowest in Guatemala City. Highest system support is found in the North-eastern region of the country. Figure III.10 below shows the relationship between education, system support and geographic region of Guatemala.

Wealth and System Support

Since we have found that education is negatively associated with support for the system in Guatemala, and since education and wealth are generally positively associated with each other, we can hypothesize that wealth should also be negatively associated with system support. That is, we should find that wealthier Guatemalans are less supportive of their system of government than poorer Guatemalans.

In this study we have measured wealth in two ways. First, we used the conventional format of requesting the respondent to disclose their monthly income, and the total household income. We have found in our previous work in Central America that such a measure normally does not work very well. Perhaps it is because respondents are reluctant to tell interviewers about their income or perhaps it is because many Central Americans work in agriculture and their crop sales and home consumption are not easily translated into monthly cash income. A further problem is that students and housewives often earn little or no income and therefore we have a considerable amount of missing data on this item. We nonetheless correlated the income data with system support and, not surprisingly, did not find a statistically significant relationship.

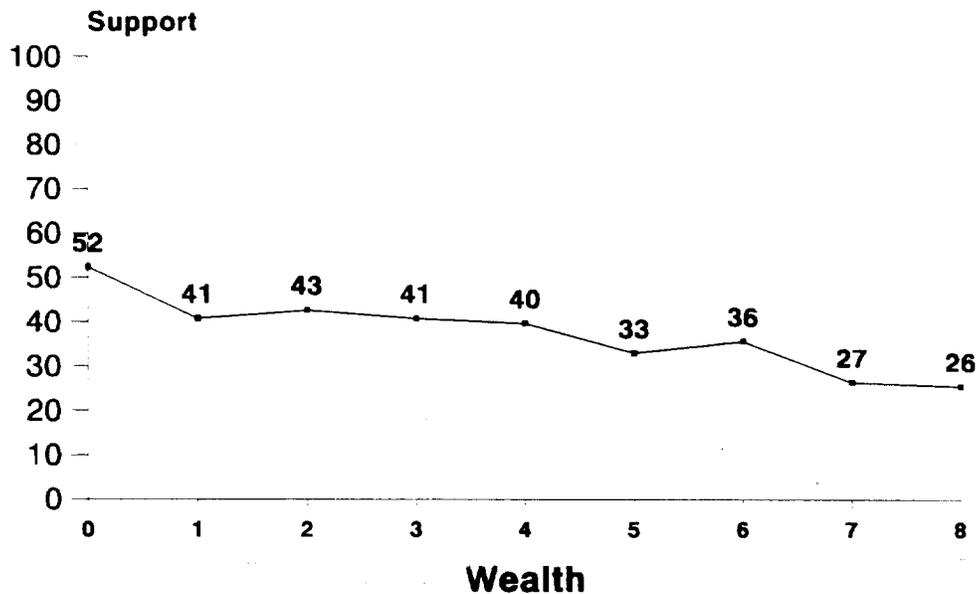
We have been more successful using an index based upon the presence of key appliances in the home, as well as the condition of the home. We constructed an index based upon the presence of the following appliances in the home: radio, TV, refrigerator, washing machine, car or tractor, telephone.¹⁸ We found that this index of wealth was significantly correlated ($r = .17$, sig. $< .001$) with system support. Figure III.11 shows the association between wealth, as measured by ownership of these appliances and system support. Among the poorest 6.7 percent of the population, those who have none of these appliances, system support is the highest, whereas among the 1.7 percent of the sample who own all of the appliances, support is the lowest.

Ethnicity and System Support

¹⁸The index was created by assigning a score of 1 to any respondent whose home had the appliance, and a score of zero to those who did not. The scores were then added. The questionnaire distinguished between black and white and color TV. We combined the two types of TVs, scoring 0 for no TV, 1 for a black-and-white, 2 for a color and 3 for both. The overall scale was not especially reliable ($\text{Alpha} = .56$). Factor analysis of the items demonstrated, however, that there were two dimensions in the scale, the first comprising radio and TV, and the second comprising washing machine, car or tractor and telephone. Refrigerator had distributed loadings, but loaded more heavily on the second factor. We found that both factors were associated with system support, although the second was more closely associated than the first. To avoid adding this complexity to the analysis, we decided to maintain a single appliance index.

Wealth and System Support

(as measured by appliances in the home)



Source: 1993 Democratic Norms Survey

Figure 10

In Guatemala there is perhaps no more socially relevant characteristic than ethnicity. It is the one country in Central America with a large concentration of indigenous population. Unfortunately, there are no universally accepted definitions of ethnic identity in Guatemala, and consequently it is difficult to select the measure that most clearly distinguishes the Indian population from the non-Indian population. In the questionnaire we used several distinct methods. We determined the respondent's use of language (Spanish vs. Indian languages), we asked the respondents to self-identify (Indian vs. "ladino"), we noted the language in which the interview was conducted, and, finally, we noted if the respondent was dressed in Indian or Western clothes. A clear pattern emerged in the analysis: the Indigenous population expressed lower system support than did the ladino population, this despite the fact that, as we have already shown, lower education (characteristic of Indians in Guatemala) is associated with higher system support. Respondents in our sample who dressed in indigenous clothing averaged 2.8 years of formal schooling compared to 4.8 years for those in Western dress.

The analysis of the linkage between ethnicity and system support is complex, and we need to take it one step at a time so as to avoid misleading generalizations.

We first examined the question of self-identification. In our sample, 36 percent identified as Indian, 56 percent as ladino and 8 percent did not specify an identification. We found that those who identified as Indians expressed a somewhat lower level of system support than did the ladino population, but the difference was not dramatic.

We then examined the question of Indian versus Western dress. In our sample, 11 percent of the respondents wore Indian garb. Among those who did, we found a sharply lower level of system support, statistically significant at $< .001$. We present these results in Figure III.12 below.

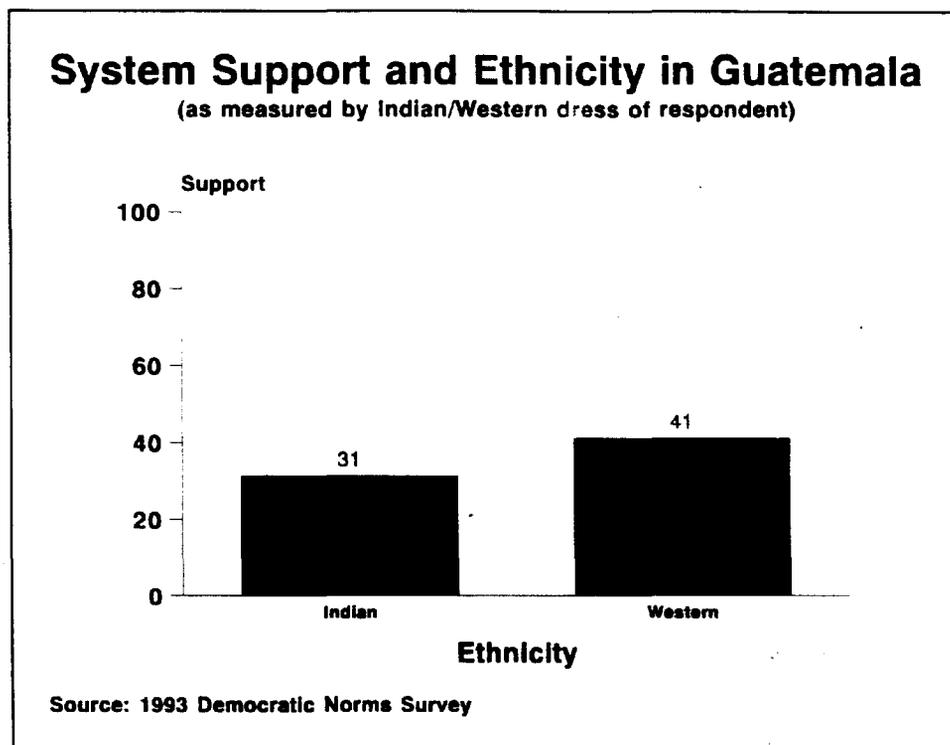


Figure 11

Indian dress sharply marks the individual as unmistakably Indian. But we know that it is far more common to see women dressed in Indian clothing than men. In fact, in our sample, of those who wore Indian garb, only 18 percent were men. Therefore, we can assume that there are many men in the sample who were Indian by any definition but who did not dress in Indian clothes. We also found that even though males in Indian garb were somewhat more supportive of the system than

females in garb (index of 34 versus 30), both Indian males and females expressed lower system support.

We then examined system support by the individual Indigenous languages spoken by our sample of Guatemalans to see if there was any variation among the groups. For the sample as a whole, 25 percent of the respondents spoke an Indigenous language, although most of those were bilingual in Spanish. We examined levels of system support for each of the languages in our study. This analysis reveals that there are sharp differences in the levels of system support among the various Indian language groups. Only Kiche speakers stand out as having dramatically lower support. Indeed, the other Indian language groups show support that does not significantly vary from that expressed by the mono-lingual Spanish speakers. It should be noted, however, that the Kiche speakers constituted the largest group of Indian language speakers in our sample. According to the National Bilingual Education Project, this is the largest group of Indians in Guatemala, comprising some 930,000 people.¹⁹

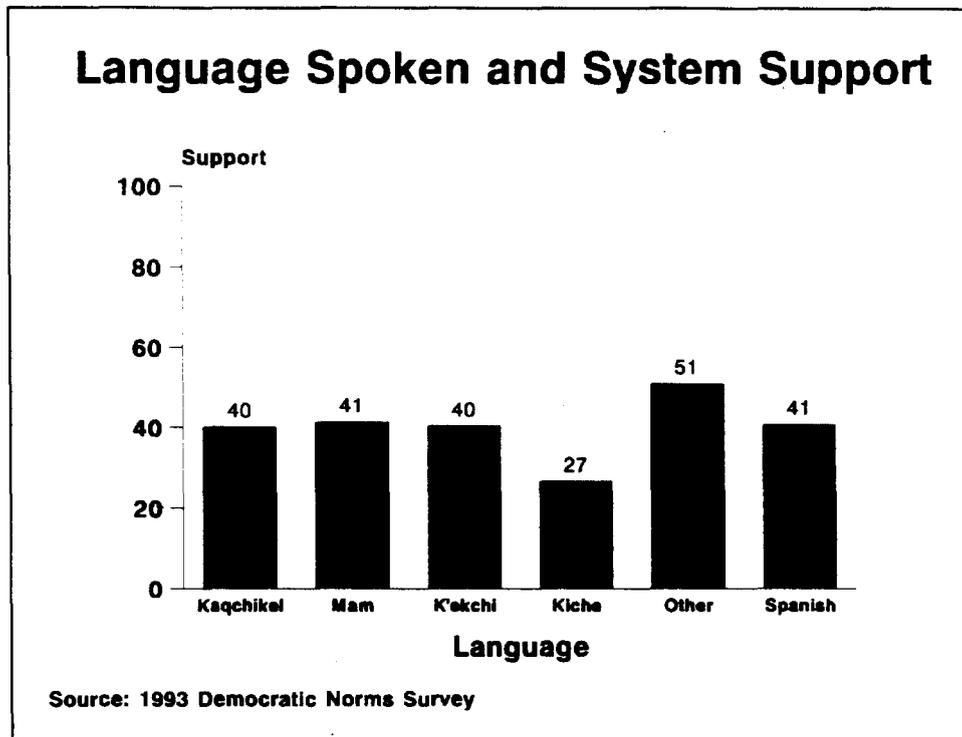


Figure 12

¹⁹See Michael Richards and Julia Becker Richards, Languages and Communities Encompassed by Guatemala's National Bilingual Education Program. Guatemala: Ministerio de Educación, División de Socio Educativo Rural, Programa Nacional de Educación Bilingüe, 1990, p. 9.

Thus far our exploration of system support within Guatemala has utilized the combined six-item index of support. Our study did include some additional items related to system support that were not included in the six-item scale. We reported on those at the beginning of this section. The item measuring support for the armed forces was excluded because of its negative correlation, among certain segments of the population, with support for other components of the political system. That is, some people who are negative about the army are positive about the courts, legislature, etc., and therefore the inclusion of this item would have lowered the overall reliability of the system support scale. A second excluded item was support for the Human Rights Ombudsman (El Procurador de los Derechos Humanos). We did not include this item in our overall system support scale because it was the only one directly associated with an individual rather than an institution.

An examination of system support and ethnicity in Guatemala on these two items (see Figure III.13) reveals interesting contrasts. First, and not at all surprisingly, for each group, including the mono-lingual Spanish speakers, the army receives far less support than does the human rights ombudsman. Second, among all of the Indian groups except the Kaqchikel, support for the army is significantly lower than it is among the mono-lingual Spanish speaking population of Guatemala. Third, the Kiche speakers express the lowest support for the Army of any group. Finally, even among the Kiche, whose support is quite low compared to other groups on the general Support index, support for the Human Rights Ombudsman is dramatically higher than it is for the army and only somewhat lower than it is among the mono-lingual Spanish speakers.

We can probe into the ethnicity question a bit further, although the size of our sample makes generalizations from this exploration rather risky. We would like to know if the low support expressed by the Kiche speakers is a generalized phenomenon or one confined to certain geographic areas of Guatemala. In Figure III.14 below, we examine the Kiche speakers in the departments in which our survey found concentrations of these individuals, and contrast their system support scores to mono-lingual Spanish speakers in the same departments. We do not attempt to control here for factors such as education or wealth, but focus exclusively on ethnicity (as defined by language). We can draw two conclusions from this figure. First, although system support among Kiche speakers varies from department to department, it is lower in every department than the national average of mono-lingual Spanish speakers. Therefore, we can conclude that the low support is a characteristic associated with ethnicity and is not an artifact of geography. Notwithstanding that conclusion, system support among Kiche speakers is particularly low in the Departments of Quiché and Totonicapán. Second, in each department (except the composite "other" group), Kiche

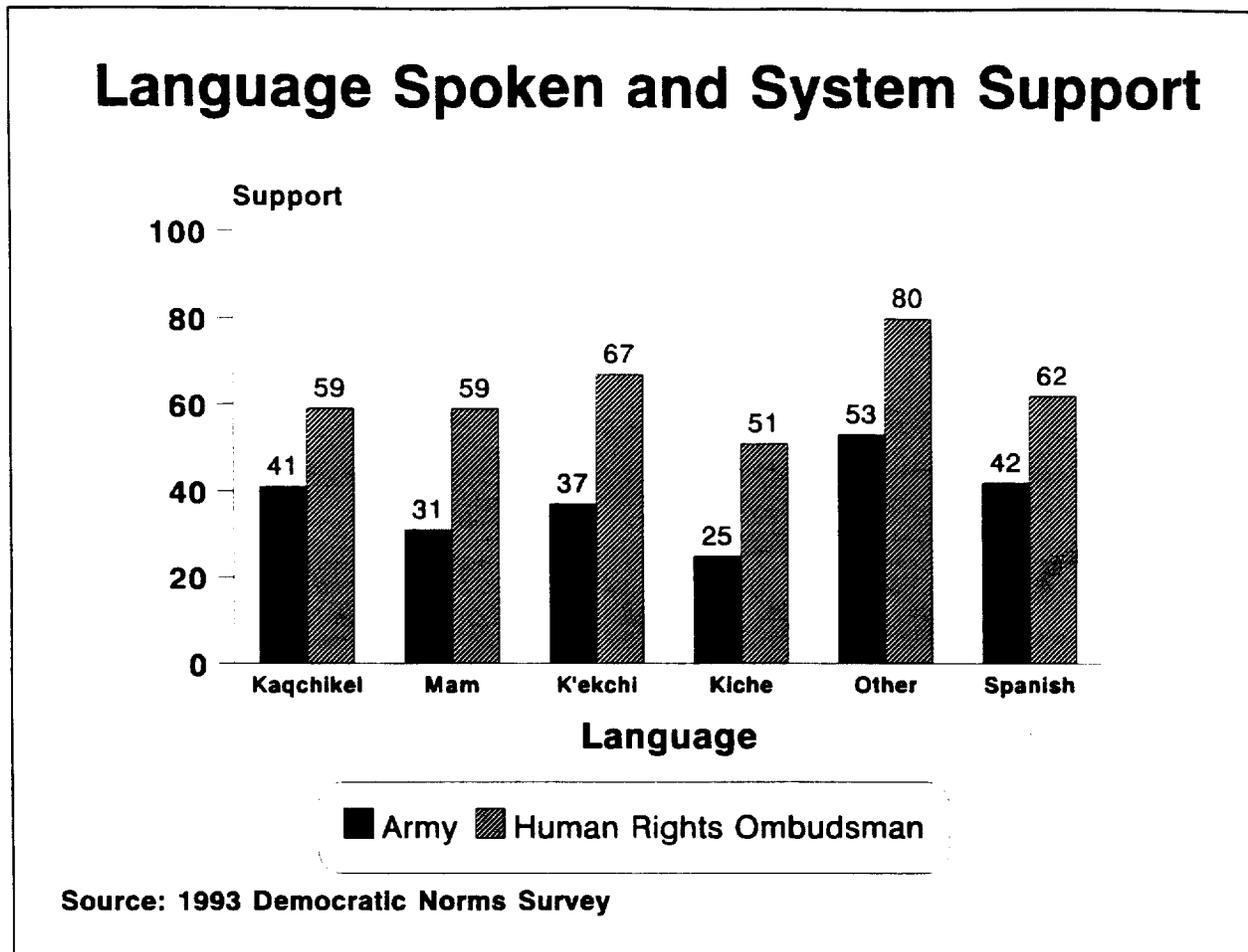


Figure 13

speakers have lower system support scores than mono-lingual Spanish speakers. The difference is not significant in Guatemala City, but our sample of Kiché speakers there is very small ($N=6$). The sample of monolingual Spanish speakers in Totonicapán is so small ($N=2$) that we should not draw any conclusions from those findings. Yet, in Quiché and Quetzaltenango, the pattern is clear and the samples sufficiently large for us to conclude that ethnicity is directly associated with lower system support.

Summing Up: Predictors of System Support in Guatemala

We have examined a number of factors that influence system support in Guatemala. But our analysis thus far has not compared the relative strength of each factor in explaining levels of support. To do this we need to utilize multiple regression analysis. We will not burden the reader with the complexities of that analysis, but only point out that the technique allows us to compare the relative importance of each of the factors we have analyzed while controlling for (holding constant) all of the others.

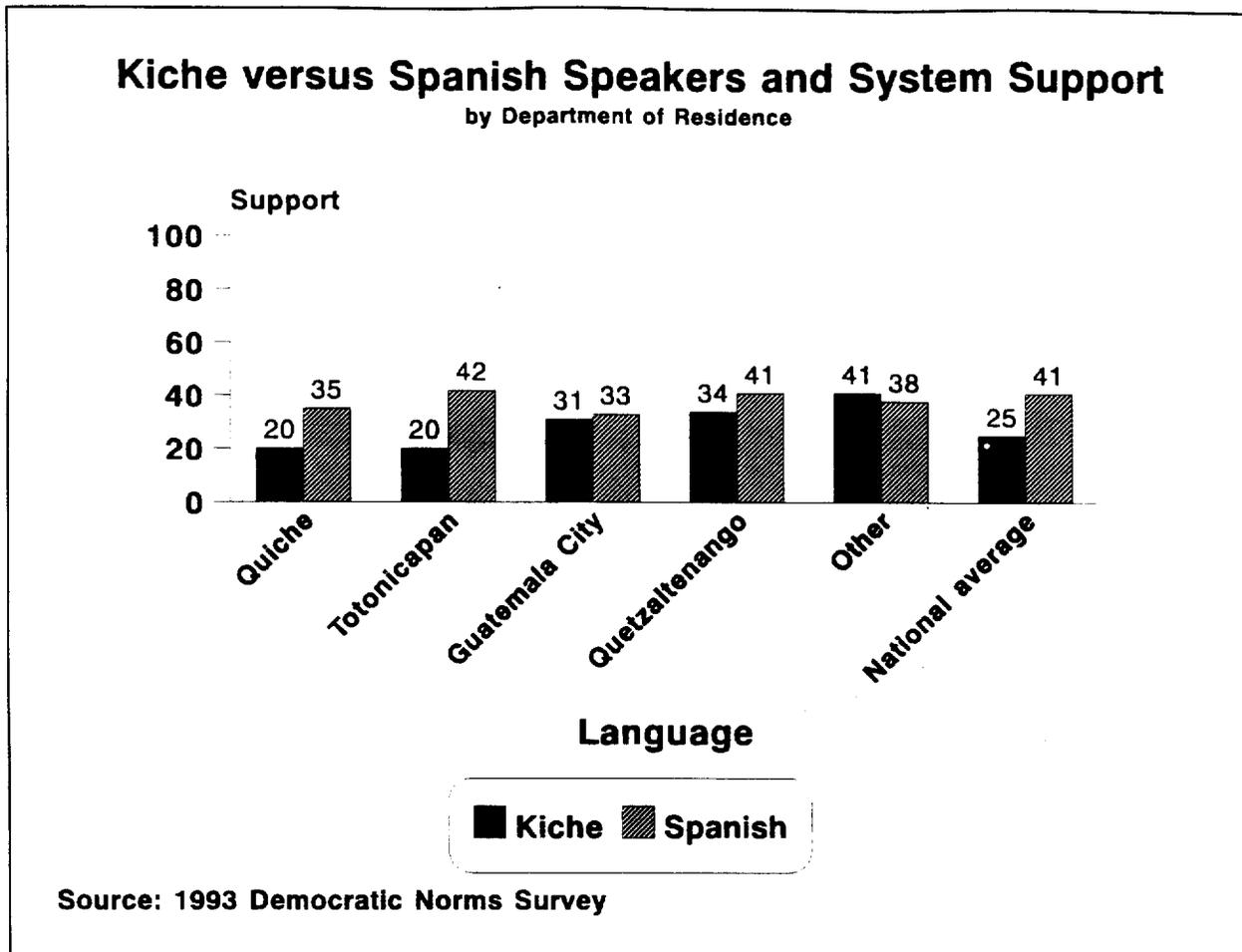


Figure 14

Our analysis finds that the single most important factor in predicting system support is ethnicity, followed by wealth and trailed by education. Each one of these factors is statistically significant (sig. <.01).²⁰ We can visualize this better by referring back to the 100-point scale we have been using throughout this analysis. Holding constant for wealth and education, Kiche Indians have system support levels of 16 points below the ladinos. Holding constant for ethnicity and education, the wealthiest Guatemalans express system support of 15 points below the poorest Guatemalans. Holding constant for ethnicity and wealth, college educated Guatemalans are 10 points below Guatemalans with no education.

²⁰The multiple R = .24. The beta weights are: Indian = .16; Wealth = -.14; Education = -.10. The overall significance of the equation (F test) < .001.

In the next Chapter, we will move from a discussion of system support to a discussion of a critical underpinning for democracy -- attitudinal support for democratic liberties.

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IV. Support for Democratic Liberties

System support is a critical factor in determining political stability. Nations in which the citizens support their system of government are likely to remain stable for many years. Stable systems, however, are not necessarily democratic ones, as we well know from observing the histories of dictatorships throughout Latin America and the world. Stable democracies are ones that, presumably, are undergirded not only with high levels of system support, but high levels of support for democratic norms, especially support for civil liberties and political tolerance. In this chapter we examine support for democratic liberties in Guatemala, first in comparative perspective, and then within certain key groups of the Guatemalan population. Once again we will make use of the 1992 urban data for the cross-national comparisons and the 1993 Democratic Norms Survey for the intra-national exploration.

Comparative Perspectives

Measurement of Democratic Political Culture

We build our study on a long tradition of empirical research that has two principal, highly influential strands which may be labelled "the civic culture tradition" and the "tolerance tradition." In the civic culture tradition, almost all comparative empirical studies of democracy begin from The Civic Culture (Almond and Verba, 1963). Active (but not extreme) political participation is the vital distinguishing feature of the civic culture, which is differentiated from "parochial" and "subject" cultures largely by greater citizen participation (Almond and Verba, 1963:31-32).¹

The political tolerance tradition has its roots in studies by Stouffer (1955) and McClosky (1964) of U.S. respondents' willingness to extend civil rights to proponents of unpopular causes. In the context of 1950s and 1960s, tolerance towards communists was a central issue of national concern; thus these studies focused on the rights of communists. Replications of these studies later reported increased

¹Also important was a sense of civic competence, and degree of national pride. Numerous critiques of the Civic Culture have noted that while the emphasis on participation was valid, the addition of national pride and civic competence confused things. Some national political cultures exhibit high national pride but not democratic orientations. Civic competence has been shown to be problematical as a component of democratic political culture because of the confusion between citizen expectations and citizen orientations (Baloyra, 1979). Thus what remains of the notion of civic culture, qua democratic culture, is support and encouragement for political participation. The key tests of participatory political culture thus involve, at a minimum, support for the right to organize civic groups, work for political parties, protest, and, of course, vote.

tolerance (Nunn, Crockett and Williams, 1978), but the increases were seen as illusory because by the late 1970s antipathy toward other disliked groups had supplanted that toward communists. Later methodological refinements honed tolerance measures by centering on groups the respondents themselves disliked (i.e., one's "least-liked group").² Sullivan, Pierson and Marcus (1982) argue that tolerance is a critical element in democratic political culture because intolerant attitudes eventually can produce intolerant behavior that may victimize the targets of intolerance (Sullivan, et al., 1982:51).³

In sum, support for the right to participate and tolerance of disliked groups are central pillars of democratic political culture. In *Polyarchy*, Dahl (1971) argued that two key mass attitudes underlie a political culture that supports liberal, representative institutions: support for a system of widespread political participation and support for the right of minority dissent. In other terms, a democratic political culture is one that is both Extensive and Inclusive. Extensive cultures support democratic participation, while inclusive cultures support civil liberties for unpopular groups.

Central to the argument of linking political culture to political democracy is that culture change usually occurs gradually. For example, Inglehart (1988:1205) assumes that "autonomous and reasonably enduring cross-cultural differences exist and that they can have important political consequences." His data from over 200 national surveys in Western Europe lead him to conclude that the differences among political cultures are "remarkably stable." We sought measures of democratic political culture that not only encompassed the Extensive (widespread) participation and Inclusive (tolerance of dissenters) participation dimensions as defined by Dahl, but had already been shown to be stable, even under conditions that produce major variation in more transitory opinions, such as support for a given candidate or policy.

We selected a set of ten items measuring democratic attitudes that had been tested in the United States, Mexico and, most extensively, in Costa Rica. Repeated administration of those items in Costa Rican surveys conducted in 1978, 1980, 1983 and 1985 showed that despite a major economic crisis in the early 1980s, democratic norms varied little (Seligson and Muller, 1987; Seligson and Gómez B., 1989). This is not to say, of course, that the response patterns could not change, especially under such revolutionary conditions as existed in Nicaragua, but these items do seem to

²One well known part of the tolerance tradition (Prothro and Grigg 1960, Budge 1970) focused on communists, but the core of the argument involved inconsistency between support for general procedural norms of democracy and specific applications of those norms to unpopular groups.

³The comparative work, including the cases of Israel and New Zealand, is contained in Sullivan et. al, 1985.

meet the test of measuring an "enduring cultural trait" as specified by Inglehart (1988:1209).

Extensive Participation is measured by three variables: support for participation in civic groups, political parties and protests. We did not ask about support for voting since we expected near unanimity in its favor and therefore little or no variance. We believe, however, that Inclusive Participation is the more stringent test of commitment to democratic norms; one can support a wide variety of participatory forms and still be opposed to the right to participate for unpopular groups. Thus we employed seven questions divided into two batteries: The first three items measures Opposition to the Suppression of Democratic Liberties -- approval or disapproval of the government prohibiting protest marches, meetings of government critics, and censorship of the media.⁴ The last four items comprise a measure of the Right to Dissent, in which we asked about extending to critics of the government the right to vote, organize demonstrations, run for office and speak out.

Comparative Perspectives

Extensive Participation

Figure IV.1 below compares levels of support for conventional modes of political participation: legal demonstrations, communal problem solving, and election campaigns. Although the average scores for all nations are in the positive end of the continuum (i.e. 50 or higher on the scale of 0-100), in comparative perspective Guatemalans do not appear very supportive of these forms of participation. In two of the three forms, participation in community groups and elections campaigns, they give the lowest levels of support of any country in Central America. On the question of support for legal demonstrations, they are slightly above El Salvador, the lowest of the six countries, but substantially lower than Nicaragua, Panama, Honduras and Costa Rica.⁵

⁴The list could have been expanded by including, as did Sullivan *et al.* for example, questions on the rights of dissenters to teach in public schools or, as did Stouffer, questions on book banning. But the strong associations among the items we did use found in our prior surveys in Costa Rica suggested that we would gain little additional understanding of democratic culture by adding additional items. More important, these items have little salience where teachers are appointed by national ministries and school libraries are almost nonexistent.

⁵Note that the Costa Rican data set only included one of the variables. As a result, for this series, a 1987 national probability sample, also conducted by the University of Pittsburgh group, was utilized. The subset of the metropolitan area of the capital city included 304 cases, and is the basis on which the means are

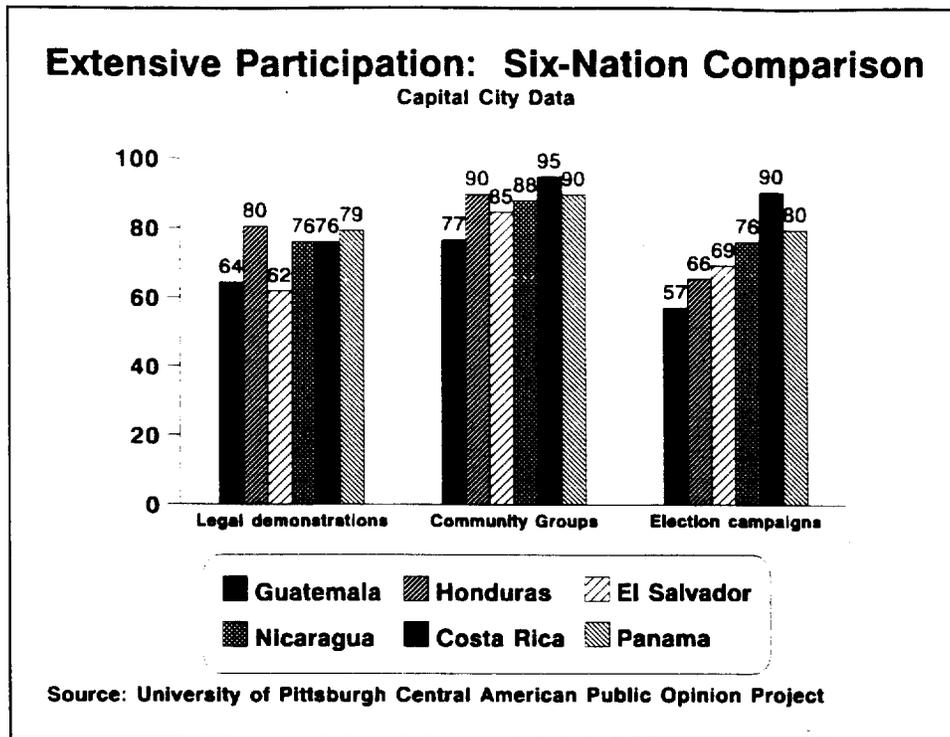


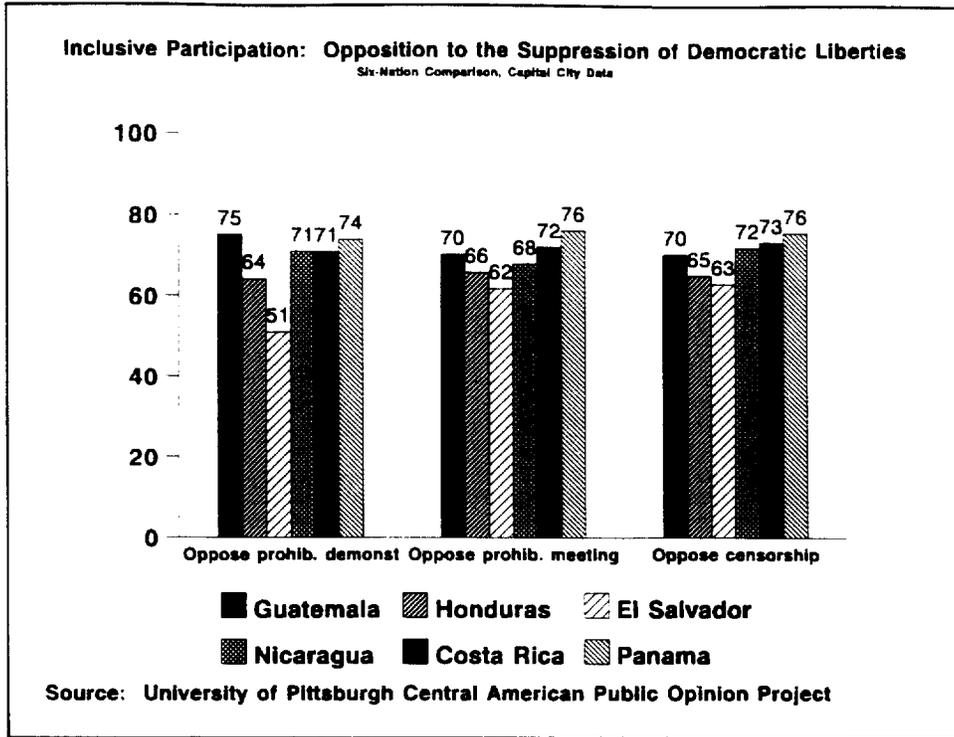
Figure 1

Inclusive Participation:

Opposition to the Suppression of Democratic Liberties

We move on now to a more stringent test of support for democracy. Here we ask the respondents if they would approve or disapprove of the government taking action to restrict civil liberties. The data are shown in Figure IV.2. In this set of variables, the differences among the countries are not as great. Only El Salvador stands out as having relatively low support on these democratic norms, but even in El Salvador's case, all of the averages are in the positive, (i.e., democratic) end of the continuum. Noteworthy is that Guatemalans are especially supportive of these democratic liberties, scoring above all other nations in the opposition to the prohibition of demonstrations.

built in the figure.

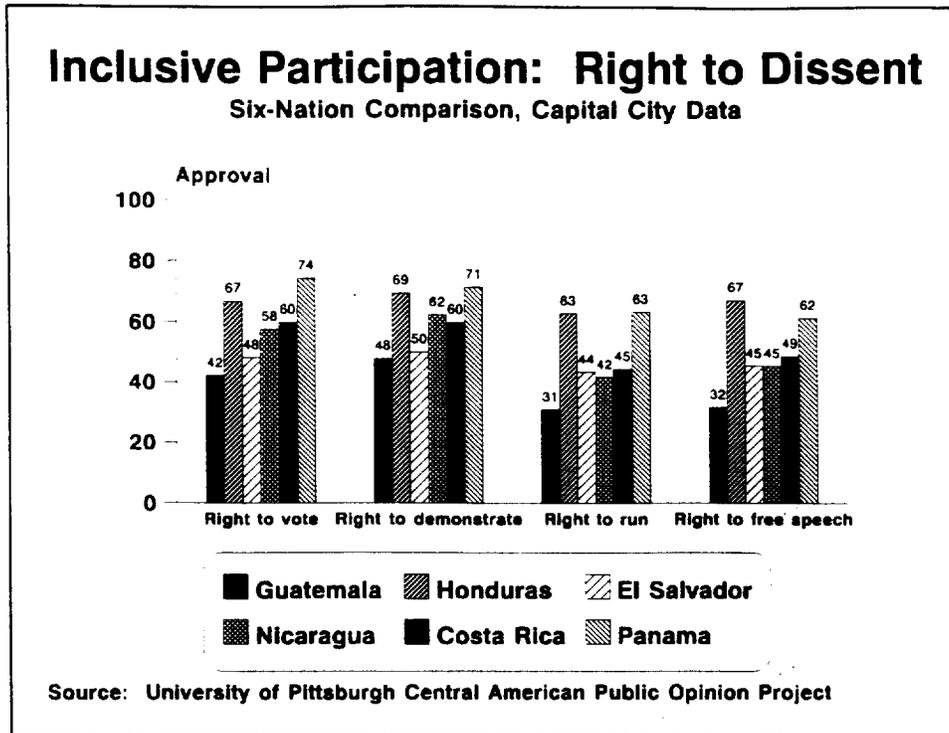


Inclusive Participation: The Right to Dissent

Figure 2

We consider the Right to Dissent items the most stringent test of democratic liberties. In these items we are asking the respondents if they are willing to extend the crucial civil liberties of the right to vote, demonstrate, run for office, and exercise free speech (by making a speech on radio or TV), to those who are critics of their system of government. Not surprisingly, approval of these liberties by our respondents in Central America was, on average, lower than it was for the other, "easier" tests of support for democratic norms.

The comparative results are presented in Figure IV.3. As can be seen, in each of the four items, Guatemalans scored lower than did the citizens of any other nation in Central America. On the right to demonstrate item, the differences were the smallest, with Guatemalans scoring 48 and Salvadorans, the next lowest country, scoring 50. On no item in this series did the average score of the Guatemalans move into the positive range (50 or over), and on the final two items, the right to run for office and the right to free speech, we observe the lowest score for any item for any nation that we have examined thus far. Clearly, Guatemalans have little tolerance for the right to dissent.



On the whole, **Figure 3**

then, this comparison of Guatemala with the rest of Central America has demonstrated that on two of the three series of questions, Guatemalans scored lowest. We now turn our attention to exploring differences in support for democratic norms within the Guatemalan population.

Levels of Support for Democratic Liberties within Guatemala

The overall picture of support for democratic liberties in Guatemala for the country as a whole is presented in Figure IV.4 below. We have grouped the ten items into the three major areas described above: extensive participation, opposition to suppression of democratic liberties, and support for the right to dissent. We can make several observations about these results. First, as we found in our comparative survey, in Guatemala support for extensive participation is *lower* than is support for opposition to the suppression of civil liberties. In most countries, support for civic participation in communal groups, election campaigns and legal demonstrations is higher than is opposition to the suppression of democratic liberties. Second, support for participation in election campaigns, is surprisingly low. Third, for each of the right to dissent items, the average score for Guatemalans as a whole is in the negative end of the continuum, whereas the OSDL and Extensive Participation are firmly in the positive end of the continuum. Quite clearly, the majority of the Guatemalans in our sample are more concerned about the protection of their own liberties, than about the rights of other Guatemalans to express their dissent. This reflects an historical reality

marked by extreme repression of dissent by central authorities (including the military), use of death squads and other direct force as tools of control. This finding also underscores the need for an effort to foster a broader definition of democracy among Guatemalans.

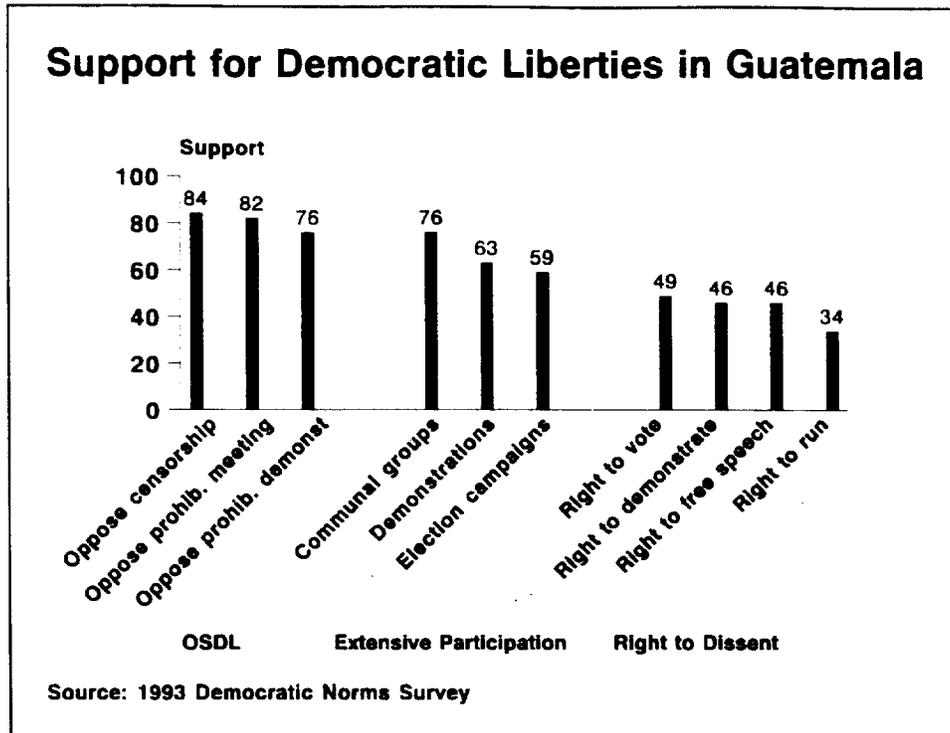


Figure 4

An Index of Support for Democratic Liberties

In order to simplify the analysis of the internal factors that relate to lower or higher support for democratic liberties, we have created a single index combining all ten variables on the three separate sets of measures analyzed above. We determined that the combined scale was reliable ($\text{Alpha} = .75$), and formed three distinct factors corresponding to each of the three main dimensions.⁶ We summed each of the ten variables in the index and divided by 10 so that the index had the same 0-100 range as it did in all of our previous analyses. In the discussion below we use this combined index of democratic liberties.

⁶A varimax rotation factor analysis produced loadings of .66 or higher on each of the variables that loaded on its factor, with no evidence of distributed loadings.

educated population (sig. < .001). The important increase seems to occur sometime in high school.

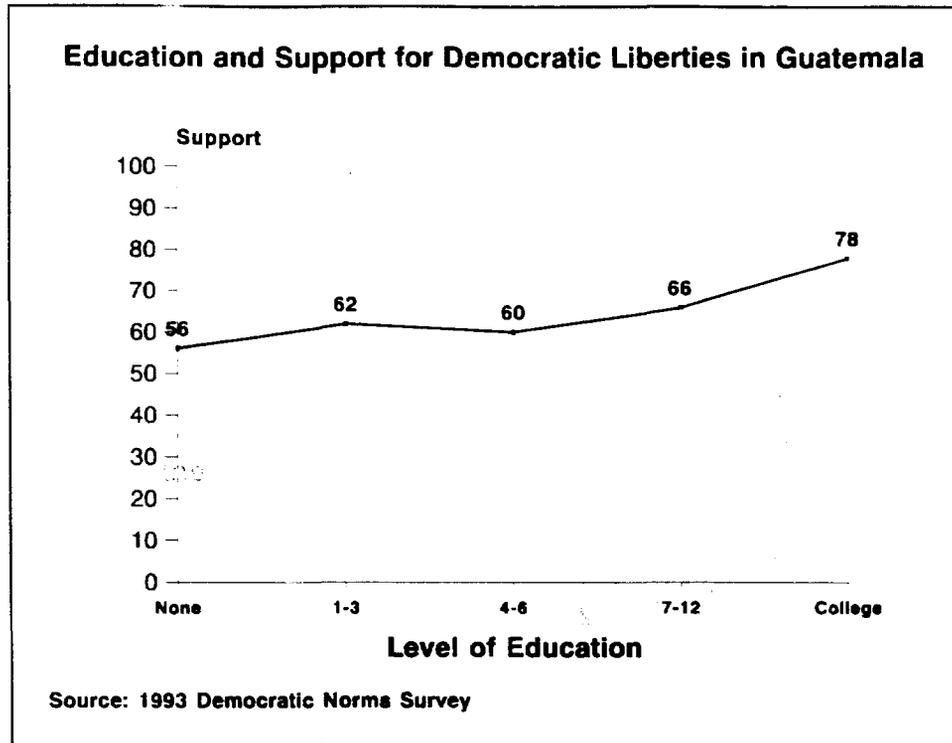


Figure 6

Unlike our examination of system support, there were no major differences among the regions in Guatemala, as is shown in Figure IV.7. The differences among the regions are fairly small (although significant at .01), but not clearly associated with the overall level of education in that area.

Wealth and Support for Democratic Liberties

Wealth has a significant but unusual relationship to support for democratic liberties. We found that both family income ($r = .14$, sig. < .001) and wealth measured by appliances ($r = .08$, sig. = .01) in the home had a significant, positive correlation with support for democratic liberties. As is shown in Figure IV. 8 below, however, the pattern is reversed among the wealthiest Guatemalans. Indeed, among that group support for civil liberties is lower than it is for any other level of wealth in the study. This finding suggests quite strongly that two factors are at work here. First, increased economic means tends to increase one's support for democratic liberties. Beyond a certain level, however, among the very wealthy, support for such freedoms drops off dramatically, perhaps as a result of fears among this group that they might be the target of social unrest should civil liberties be widely exercised in

Gender, Age and Democratic Liberties

We did not find any significant differences in system support that differentiated men from women. In support for democratic liberties, however, we do find some significant (.05), albeit small, differences. As can be see in Figure IV.5 below, males have somewhat higher overall support for democratic liberties than females. One might jump to the conclusion that the greater support for democratic liberties among males is a function of their higher level of education. In fact, as will be shown in the multiple regression analysis below, gender remains a determinant of support for democratic liberties even when controlled for education.

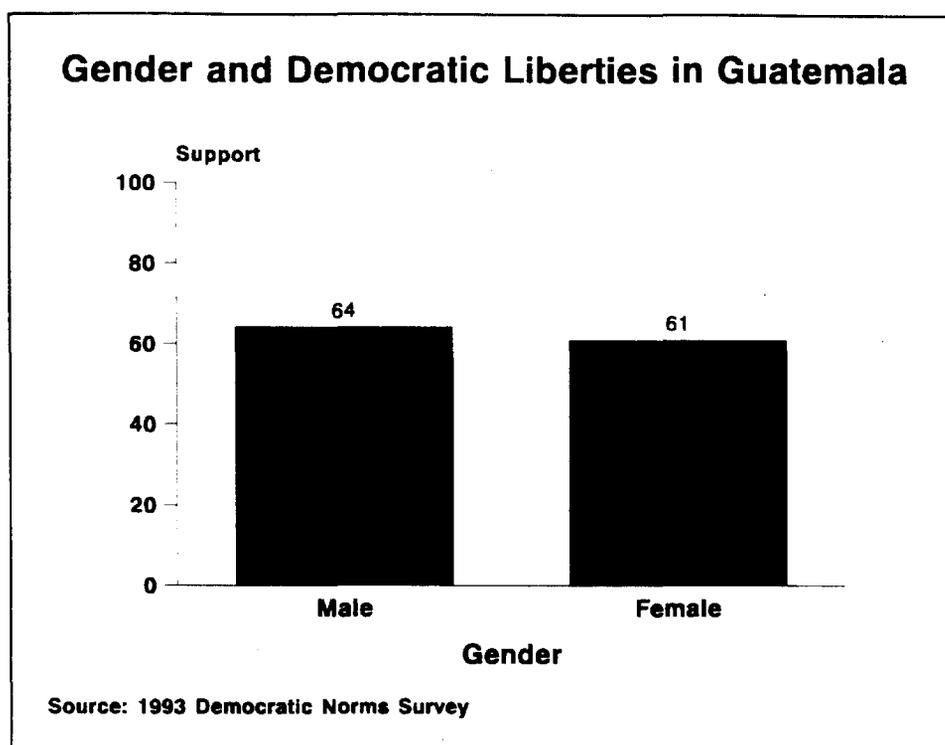


Figure 5

Turning to age as a predictor of democratic liberties, we find that there is no relationship. This parallels our results for system support.

Education and Support for Democratic Liberties

In most studies of support for democratic liberties, especially those that focus on political tolerance, education is found to be an important determinant (Muller, Seligson and Turan, 1987). More highly educated individuals come to appreciate the value of free expression. We find that this is also the case in Guatemala as is shown in Figure IV.6. The lowest levels of support for democratic liberties are found among Guatemala's illiterate population while the highest levels are found among its college-

- o Guatemala had the highest score of all countries in the region on support for a military coup--over one quarter of the residents of Guatemala City in 1992 supported military intervention in politics;

From the 1993 Survey:

- o More than a third of the respondents in May of 1993 on a national level supported a coup;
- o A smaller portion (10-15%) of those responding believed that military rule was more effective than civilian rule in dealing with a wide range of public issues;
- o System support is weakly albeit positively associated with support for military rule;
- o Those who have suffered political violence are more likely to support military rule;
- o Catholics are more supportive of military rule than Protestants or those who profess no religious beliefs;
- o Poorer Guatemalans expressed higher support for military rule than wealthier Guatemalans.

As the data suggest, while the majority of the Guatemalans in our study do not support the idea of a coup, a significant proportion do in fact support a military takeover. This represents a constant danger to the existing democratic order, a danger that argues for increased efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and processes and the attitudinal support of Guatemalans for democracy.

Ethnicity and Support for Democratic Liberties

It will be recalled that we found that system support was lower among the Indians than it was among the ladino population in Guatemala. An examination of support for democratic liberties reveals some very interesting results. First, we note that when we define Indians by their dress, we find that they express *higher* support for democratic liberties than do those in Western dress (66 versus 62), but the difference is rather small for the overall scale of democratic liberties. An examination of one component of the scale, right to dissent, shows systematic and statistically significant differences on the four items that comprise this scale, our most stringent test of support for democracy.⁷ The other components of the scale produce inconsistent results, with those with Indian dress sometimes expressing higher support for democratic liberties than those in Western dress, and vice versa.

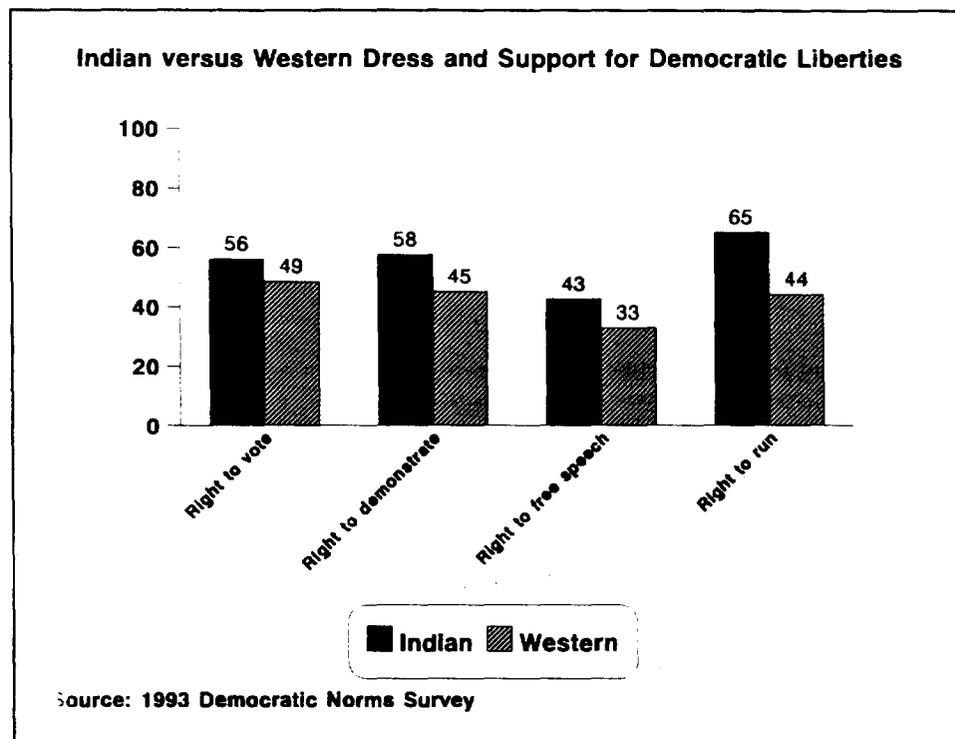


Figure 9

A clearer pattern for the overall scale of support for democratic liberties emerges when we examine the population by the language they speak. Figure IV. 10 below shows that the monolingual Spanish speakers are, as a group, noticeably lower in their support for democratic liberties than are the Mam and Kiche-speaking (monolingual or bilingual) populations. The remaining Indian groups do not distinguish themselves from the mono-lingual Spanish speakers.

⁷The differences are significant at .01 or better on all but the first item, right to vote, in which the difference while substantively notable, is not statistically significant.

Guatemala. We will find, however, that wealth proves to be a far weaker predictor of democratic liberties than education.

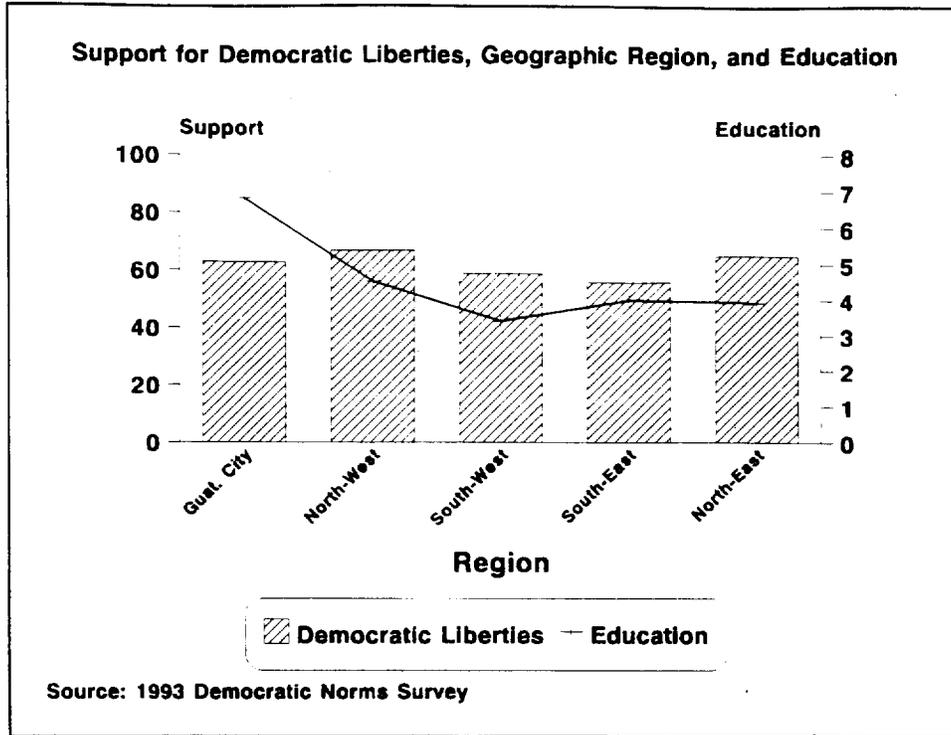


Figure 7

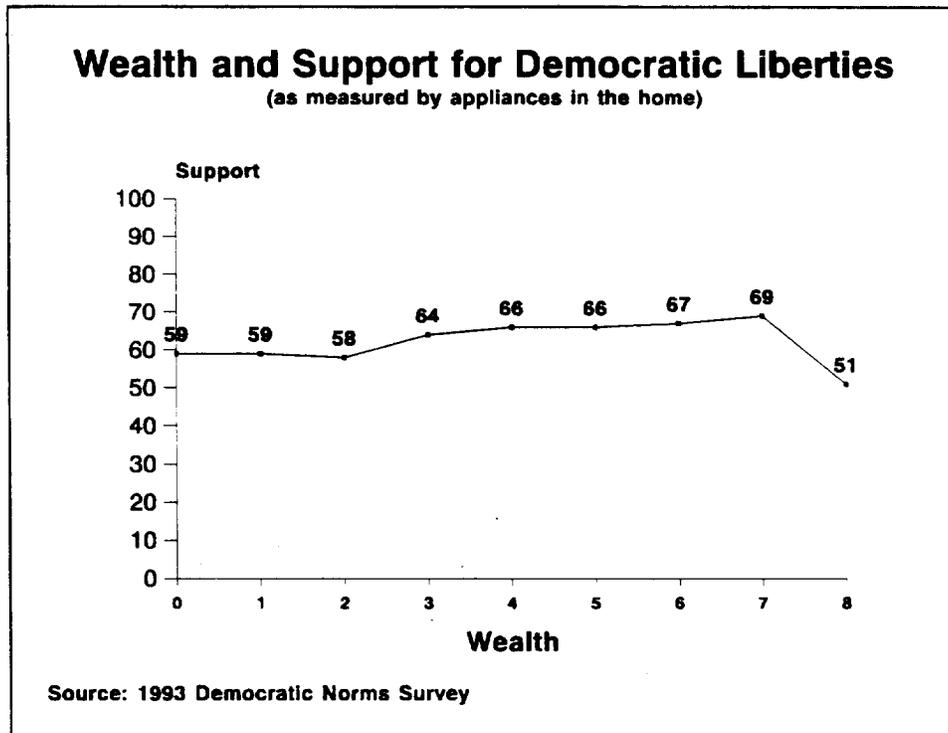


Figure 8

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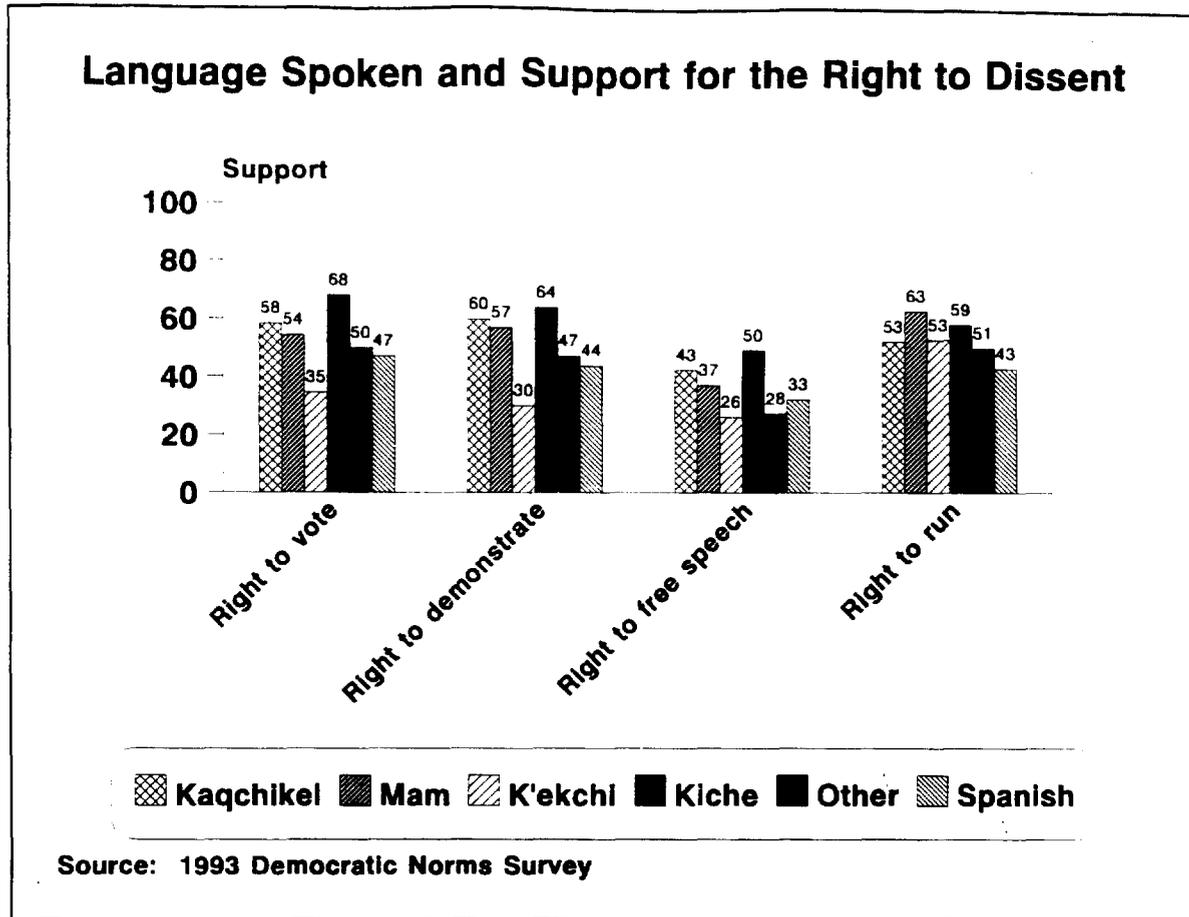


Figure 11

dissent. Apparently, discontent is expressed in part by the felt need to have increased freedom of expression. A second, and perhaps far more important finding emerges from this analysis: in direct contrast to many ladino images of Indians, who are held as being authoritarian in nature and therefore partially responsible for Guatemala's long authoritarian political tradition, Guatemalan Indians appear to value the key civil liberties that underlie stable democracy more than Guatemalan ladinos .

We now take a look at all of the variables that we have examined thus far to see what impact they each have when the other variables are held constant. It is especially important to do so in this chapter since we have discovered that both wealth and education are related to support for democratic liberties, and as we know, wealth and education are normally correlated with each other.⁸ That is to say, people of higher education normally earn more, and we need to know if education and/or wealth each make an independent contribution to predicting support for democratic liberties or if the relationship of either one of these variables is merely spurious.

We ran a multiple regression analysis to predict support for the ten-item support for democratic liberties index. We found that education was the strongest predictor,

⁸Indeed, in our sample the correlation between family income and education of the respondent is .41.

We find these results particularly fascinating because they show that ethnicity appears to be more powerful than education in explaining how some Guatemalans think about democratic liberties. Upon investigation, however, we find that this explanation holds only for the Kiche speaking Indians. The average education for the monolingual Spanish speakers in the sample is 4.7 years, compared to the bilingual Kiche speakers, whose education averaged 3.0 years. The bi-lingual Mam group for whom we have a full set of responses on all support for democracy questions is quite small (N = 20) and averages 5.7, obviously unrepresentative of Indians in general. But once we dismiss the results of the Mam speakers we are still left with an important finding that the Kiche Indians, despite their low level of education are more supportive of democratic norms and less supportive of the political system than are the mono-lingual Spanish speakers.

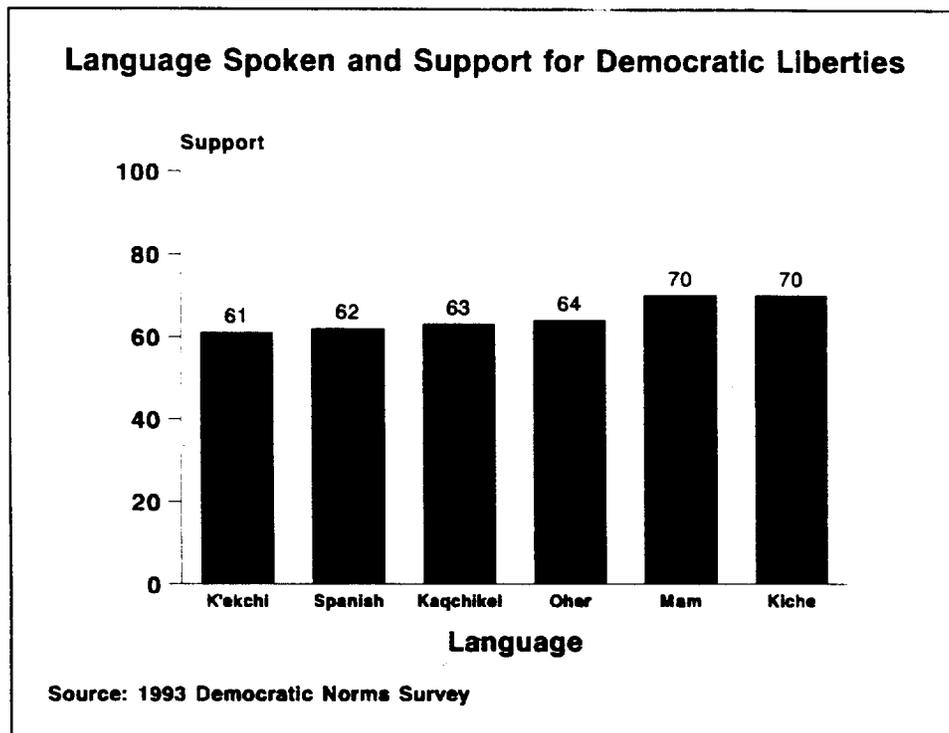


Figure 10

The distinctiveness of the Kiche speakers becomes more obvious when we focus exclusively on the Right to Dissent item, the most stringent test of support for democratic norms. As we see in Figure IV.11 below, the Kiche score notably (and statistically significantly) higher than any other ethnic group in Guatemala on three of the four variables. The Spanish speakers, the extreme right-hand bar on Figure IV.11 score lower than do any of the Indian groups except the K'ekchi on three of the four variables.

Summing up: Predictors of Support for Democratic Liberties in Guatemala

Combining our knowledge of system support with our understanding of support for democratic liberties, one pattern has begun to emerge: Indians, especially the Kiche, are less supportive of the political system than other Guatemalans while at the same time being more supportive of democratic liberties, especially the right to

V. The Interrelationship of System Support and Democratic Norms

We have now studied both the levels of system support and the levels of support for democratic norms. Now we would like to go beyond those numbers and to see if we can predict the impact of those attitudes on democratic stability in Guatemala. We want to do this from two perspectives. First, we want to compare Guatemala to the other countries in Central America. Second, we want to examine the position of some of the critical subgroups we have already identified in the previous two chapters. But first, we briefly explain the relationship between the two sets of attitudes.

Theoretical Background

Much of the research on the impact of culture on democracy has two serious limitations. First, the research ignores the question of system stability and focuses exclusively on its content. That is, those who argue for a cultural explanation of democracy often forget that it is of little interest to determine that a particular culture or combination of attitudes favorably predisposes a political system to democracy if the system is so unstable that it breaks down.¹ An extreme case would be a society populated entirely by anarchists, in which each individual would be willing to grant to all others any and all freedoms. If they have their way, the anarchist would dissolve government and leave the territory without a functioning political system. Under such extreme circumstances, issues of democracy become moot since rule by the many (democracy) becomes rule by the individual (anarchy). While few such extreme cases can be found to some measure in the real world, the breakdown of the state in Somalia and the emergence of ubiquitous clan warfare is a case that brings home the importance of system stability and the potential irrelevance of democracy (or any other form of governance). We have other illustrations, the most significant of which are the breakup of the Soviet Union and the question of political authority in Russia and the newly independent states. It is not surprising, therefore, that one of few exceptions to the neglect of the stability question in studies of political culture was a recent survey conducted by Finifter in the waning days of the Soviet Union, a nation whose stability was very much in question as the survey was being conducted and

¹See Jeffrey W. Hahn, "Continuity and Change in Russian Political Culture," *British Journal of Political Science* 21 (October 1991):393-421. See also James L. Gibson, Raymond M. Duch and Kent L. Tedin, "Democratic Values and the transformation of the Soviet Union," *Journal of Politics* 54 (May 1992):329-371.

with each year of education increasing support for democratic liberties by 1.2 points on our scale when all other factors are held constant. Gender was the second most important factor predicting support for democracy, with women 4 points lower than men, when all other factors are held constant. Finally, ethnicity, defined in terms of wearing Indian garb, produced a 7 point increase in support for democratic liberties, again, with all other variables held constant. When we separate out the Kiche Indians from the others, then the impact on support for civil liberties is even greater. In this equation, being a Kiche Indian increases support for democratic liberties by 10 points, with other Indian groups having no significant impact in the equation. In this equation, gender also drops to insignificance. Wealth, which earlier had proven to be a predictor of support for democratic liberties, was found, as suspected, to have been a spurious variable, making no significant impact when education is included in either model. But, we need to recall that wealth has a non-linear relationship with tolerance.

In the next chapter, we will relate attitudes toward system support and attitudes toward democratic norms to provide a fuller picture of the way Guatemalans view the possibilities for stable democracy.

needed for the system to remain democratic. Systems with this combination of attitude, are likely to experience a deepening of democracy.

Table V.1
Theoretical Relationship Between
Tolerance and System Support
in Institutionally Democratic Polities

		Tolerance	
		High	Low
System support	High	Stable (deepening) Democracy	Oligarchy
	Low	Unstable Democracy	Democratic Breakdown

When system support remains high, but tolerance is low, then the system should remain stable (because of the high support), but democratic rule ultimately might be placed in jeopardy. Such systems would tend to move toward oligarchical rule in which democratic rights would be restricted.

Low support is the situation characterized by the lower two cells in the chart, and should be directly linked to unstable situations. Instability, however, does not necessarily translate into the ultimate reduction of civil liberties, since the instability could serve to force the system to deepen its democracy, especially when the values tend toward political tolerance. One could easily interpret the instability associated with the Martin Luther King years in the United States as ones that led directly to the deepening of democracy in that country. Hence, in the situation of low support and high tolerance, it is difficult to predict if the instability will result in greater democratization or a protracted period of instability characterized perhaps by considerable violence. On the other hand, in situations of low support and low tolerance, democratic breakdown seems to be the obvious eventual outcome. Presumably, over time, the system that would replace it would be autocratic.

It is important to keep in mind two caveats that apply to this scheme. First, note that the relationships discussed here only apply to systems that are already

has now ceased to exist.² Unfortunately, the prevailing trend in studies of nations that are democratizing is to focus on democracy to the exclusion of stability. In this chapter we hope to remedy that deficiency by focusing directly on system support, a variable long thought to impact directly on system stability. As Dahl has recently said, "No satisfactory explanation of why polyarchy exists in some countries and not in others can ignore the pivotal role of beliefs.... countries vary a great deal in the extent to which activists (and others) believe in the legitimacy of polyarchy."³

A second significant shortcoming of much of the political culture research is that it tends to focus on variables far removed from the core values of democracy. One 1990 survey of the political culture of a city in the former Soviet Union explicitly recognized the importance of such core values, especially political tolerance, but then proceeded to measure political efficacy, political trust and other variables not directly measuring democracy.⁴

Theoretical Interrelationship of System Support and Tolerance

How do system support and tolerance relate, and what impact is there on democratic stability of the different combinations of these two variables?⁵ Reducing complexity to the simple, dichotomous case, support can be either high or low, and likewise tolerance can be either high or low. The following chart represents, for this dichotomous situation, all of the theoretically possible combinations of system support and tolerance.

Let us review each cell, one-by-one. Systems that are populated by individuals who have high system support and high political tolerance are those we would predict would be most stable. This prediction is based on the simple logic that high support is needed in non-coercive environments for the system to be stable, and tolerance is

²Ada W. Finifter and Ellen Mickiewicz, "Redefining the Political System of the USSR: Mass Support for Political Change," *American Political Science Review* 86 (December 1992):857-874.

³Robert A. Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989:260-261.

⁴Hahn, "Continuity and Change in Russian Political Culture," pp 406-407. In contrast, the Gibson, Duch and Tedin study cited above, does directly measure political tolerance.

⁵This framework was first presented in Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova Macías, *Perspectivas para una democracia estable en El Salvador* (San Salvador: IDELA, 1993).

An examination of Table V.2 makes it very clear why, from the perspective of the political culture literature, Costa Rica has been so stable. All but seven percent of the urban population are in the "high" support zone. Moreover, the cell with the largest proportion of respondents, the majority of the entire sample, are those in the stable democracy cell. Yet, over two-fifths of the respondents are in the oligarchy, or restricted democracy cell based on their low levels of tolerance. Before commenting on these findings further, we should compare the Costa Rican case to the other five countries in the region. This is done in Table V.3.

Our focus is on Guatemala in comparative perspective. The results are disturbing. Guatemala has the following key characteristics: 1) It is the country in Central America with the lowest proportion of its citizens in the "stable democracy" cell, 2) It is the country in Central America with the highest proportion of its citizens in the "democratic breakdown" cell, and 3) it is the country that has the lowest percentage of its citizens in either the stable or unstable democracy cells (see shaded center column in Table V.3). The "auto-golpe" that occurred within days of the completion of the 1993 survey seems to support the findings of this table.

We should comment briefly on the other countries in the region. The Costa Rican case stands apart from the others, with its high proportion of citizens in the stable democracy cell. In sharp contrast, less than one-quarter of urban Salvadorans possess the combination of attitudes needed to sustain stable democracy. More troubling for El Salvador is that next to Guatemala, it has the largest proportion

Table V.3. Joint Distribution of System Support and Tolerance in Central America (Capital Cities)					
Country	Stable Democracy	Unstable Democracy	Sum of Democracy Cells	Oligarchy	Democratic Breakdown
Costa Rica	52%	3%	55%	41%	4%
Panama	37%	36%	73%	16%	12%
Nicaragua	37%	18%	55%	33%	12%
Honduras	30%	42%	72%	5%	22%
El Salvador	23%	23%	46%	31%	24%
Guatemala	18%	15%	33%	39%	29%

Percents do not always total 100 owing to rounding.

Source: University of Pittsburgh Central America Public Opinion Project

institutionally democratic. That is, they are systems in which competitive, regular elections are held and widespread participation is allowed. These same attitudes in authoritarian systems would have entirely different implications. For example, low system support and high tolerance might produce the breakdown of an authoritarian regime and its replacement by a democracy. Second, the assumption being made is that over the long run, attitudes of the mass public make a difference in regime type. Attitudes and system type may remain incongruent for many years. Indeed, as Seligson and Booth have shown for the case of Nicaragua, that is what may well have occurred. But the Nicaraguan case we studied was one in which the extant system was authoritarian (i.e., Somoza's Nicaragua) and repression had long been used to maintain an authoritarian regime, perhaps in spite of the tolerant attitudes of the citizens.⁶

It is now time to put together the two variables that have been the focus of our discussion by examining the joint distribution of the two variables. To do this, both variables are dichotomized into "high" and "low."⁷ The results for Costa Rica alone, or paradigmatic case of democratic stability in Central America, are presented in Table V.2 below, with all six countries being presented in Table V.3.

Table V.2.
Empirical Relationship Between
Tolerance and System Support
in Costa Rica

System support		Tolerance	
		High	Low
High	Stable (deepening) Democracy 52%	Oligarchy 41%	
Low	Unstable Democracy 3%	Democratic Breakdown 4%	

⁶Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "Political Culture and Regime Type: Evidence from Nicaragua and Costa Rica," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 55, No. 3, August, 1993, pp. 777-792.

⁷Since both variables ranged from 0 to 100, dichotomization was done by dividing the scale at 50. Doing so approximately divides the entire Central American sample into 50% high and 50% low for both support and tolerance.

presumably be supportive of both democratic *and* undemocratic means to achieve their political objectives.

An examination of Figures V.1 through V.3 reveals quite clearly the implications for democracy of the typology developed in this paper. Figure V.1 shows that although approval of participation in legal demonstrations is quite high in all countries, it is highest among those who are in the stable or unstable democracy cells.⁸ This is precisely what the theory would predict. Far less approval is shown in each of the six countries among those who fall into the oligarchy or breakdown cells.

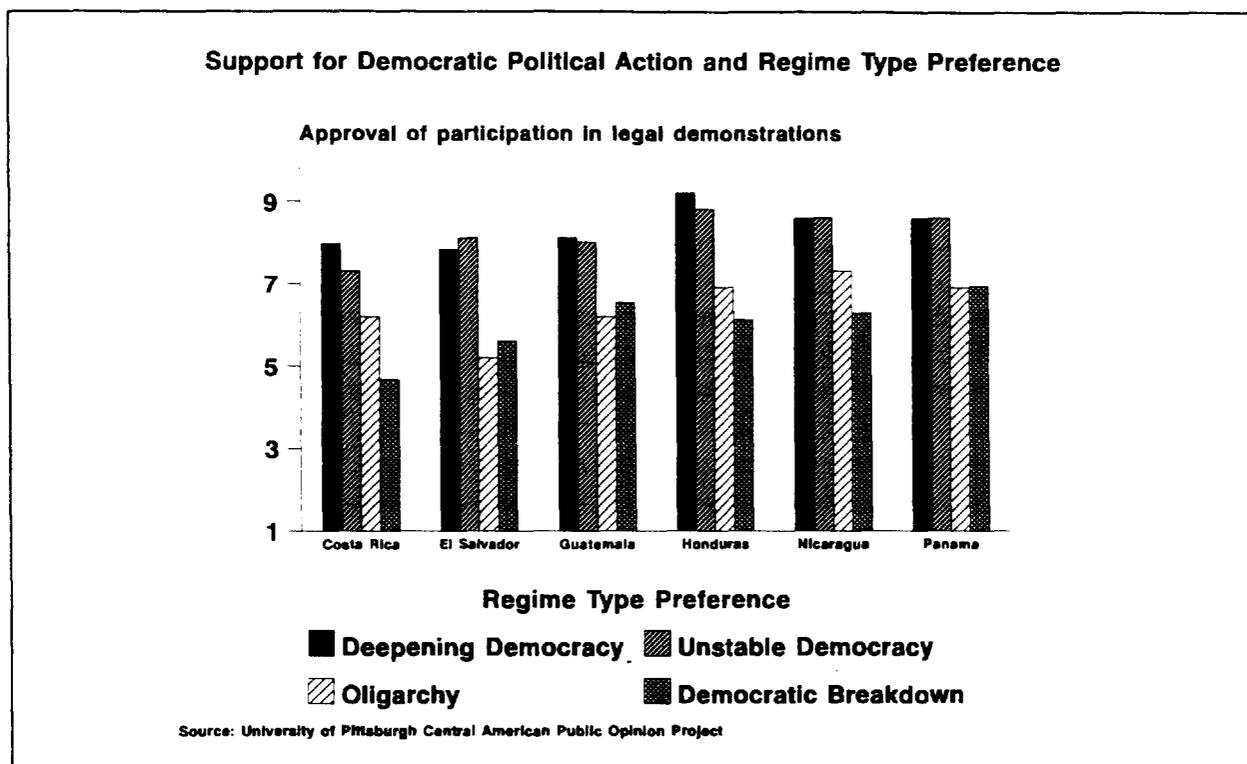


Figure 1

A similar pattern is found when we examine approval of participation in election campaigns.⁹ In each country for which there is data (the question was not asked in

⁸The actual question read: To what extent (on a ten-point scale) do you approve or disapprove of people participating in a demonstration that has been legally permitted.

⁹The actual question was: To what extent do you approve or disapprove (on a ten point scale) people working in election campaigns for a political party or candidate?

of any of the six countries in the breakdown cell. Further, the largest concentration of its population are found in the oligarchy cell. Of the six countries, Guatemala and El Salvador would seem to have the darkest possibilities for maintenance of stable democracy. These findings coincide with most expert opinion on Central America, which has long viewed the decades of guerrilla warfare and ethnic violence in Guatemala and the problems of overpopulation and land distribution in El Salvador as significant barriers to stable democracy. El Salvador's situation seems especially complex, given that the population is almost evenly divided among the four cells. This may produce extreme fragmentation as the country attempts to reconstruct itself after the decade of civil war.

Honduras and Panama have somewhat similar profiles. The great bulk of their populations are concentrated in the two democracy cells, with Panama having a slightly larger proportion in the stable democracy cell, and Honduras a larger proportion in the unstable democracy cell. Neither country is likely to end up with an oligarchical system, but the low levels of system support in Honduras may drive it towards breakdown or toward further democratization.

Nicaragua is unique among these six cases. The largest proportion of its population is found in the stable democracy cell, yet, this amounts to only somewhat more than one-third of the citizens. Like Costa Rica, its second largest concentration is in the oligarchy cell. Comparatively low proportions of the population are in the unstable cells (unstable democracy and democratic breakdown). This distribution may well reflect the fact that Nicaraguans have had their revolution and are now seeking stability, democratic or otherwise.

These projections have been made based on the theoretical impact of the relationship between system support and political tolerance. There is no way of knowing at this juncture if these predictions will be fulfilled. Obviously, numerous factors will influence the long-term deepening, erosion or stagnation of democracy in each Central American country. Moreover, the impact of public preferences on regime type remains an area of much speculation. Nonetheless, it is possible to attempt to answer a relevant but more restricted question with this data, namely, what is the relationship between the four regime preference categories outlined in this chapter and political behavior, democratic or otherwise, in each country? It seems reasonable to hypothesize that those who support stable democracy should be more supportive of conventional democratic participation and less supportive of violent political participation. Similarly, those whose attitudes favor oligarchy or democratic breakdown could be expected to be less supportive of democratic participation, yet because those who fall into the oligarchy or breakdown cells are also low in their levels of tolerance, they may also have low support for violent political participation. The unstable democracy cell is the greatest puzzle, since this cell is populated by individuals with low system support and high levels of tolerance, and would therefore

discouraged individuals from approving that path as a means to achieve their political objectives. Honduras, however, which up until now has had a relatively peaceful political landscape, is populated by individuals who seem far more willing to embark upon aggressive political participation, with the unstable democracy cell, representing the largest proportion of the entire sample (42%), being far more supportive of these kinds of actions than any other group in any other country in the survey. These potential activists are seconded only by the unstable democracy cell in Nicaragua, where comparatively high levels of support for violent actions are also found. It is notable that in both Honduras and Nicaragua, support for violent political participation is also relatively high even in the stable democracy cell.

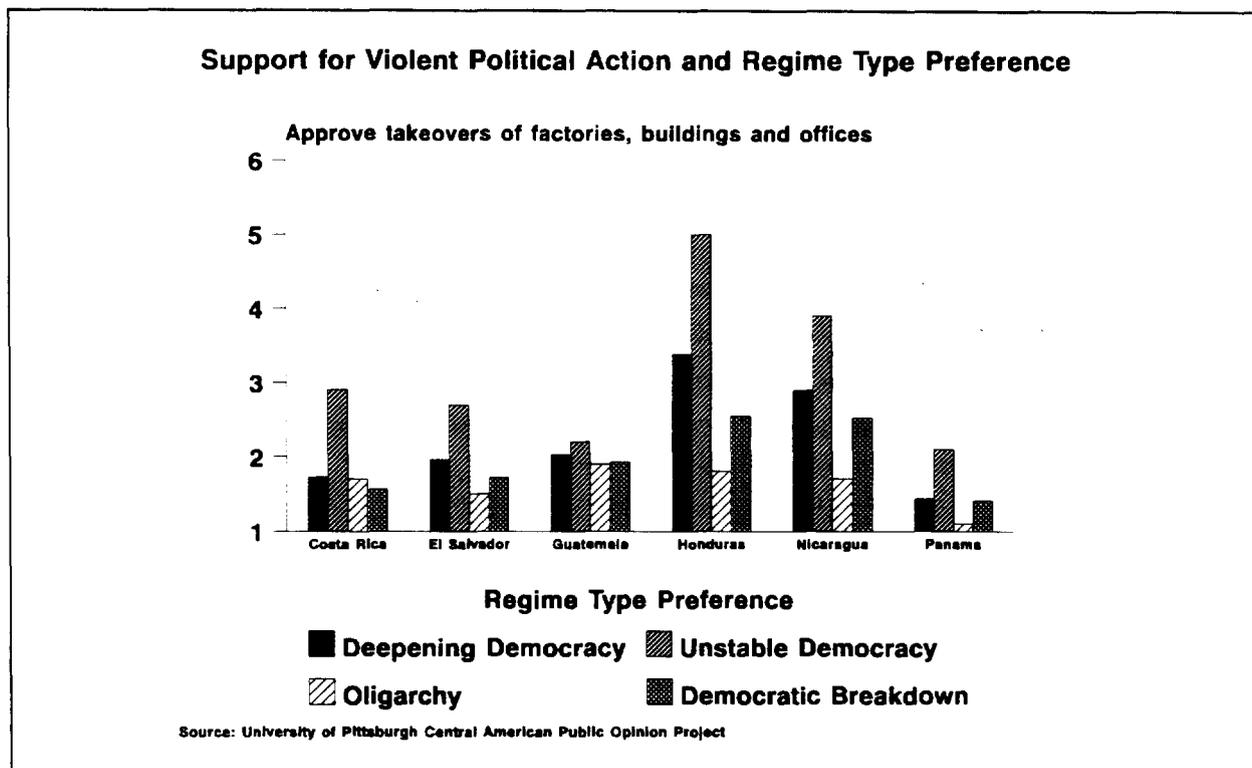


Figure 3

Ethnicity and the Stability of Democracy in Guatemala

Now let us turn to an examination of the Guatemalan data set alone. Here we once again utilize the 1993 democratic norms survey. We anticipated differences between the 1992 cross-national study and the 1993 study because the later was national in nature and the former only urban. As we have seen before, the urban samples differ from the national results. Moreover, since the scoring method of the 1993 differed from that of the 1992 six-nation study, the percents in each cell vary considerably. Examining the sample as a whole, we see that the pattern of the 1993

Costa Rica), the two democracy cells show higher approval of this form of democratic participation. Also for every case, the lowest approval is found among those in the democratic breakdown cell.

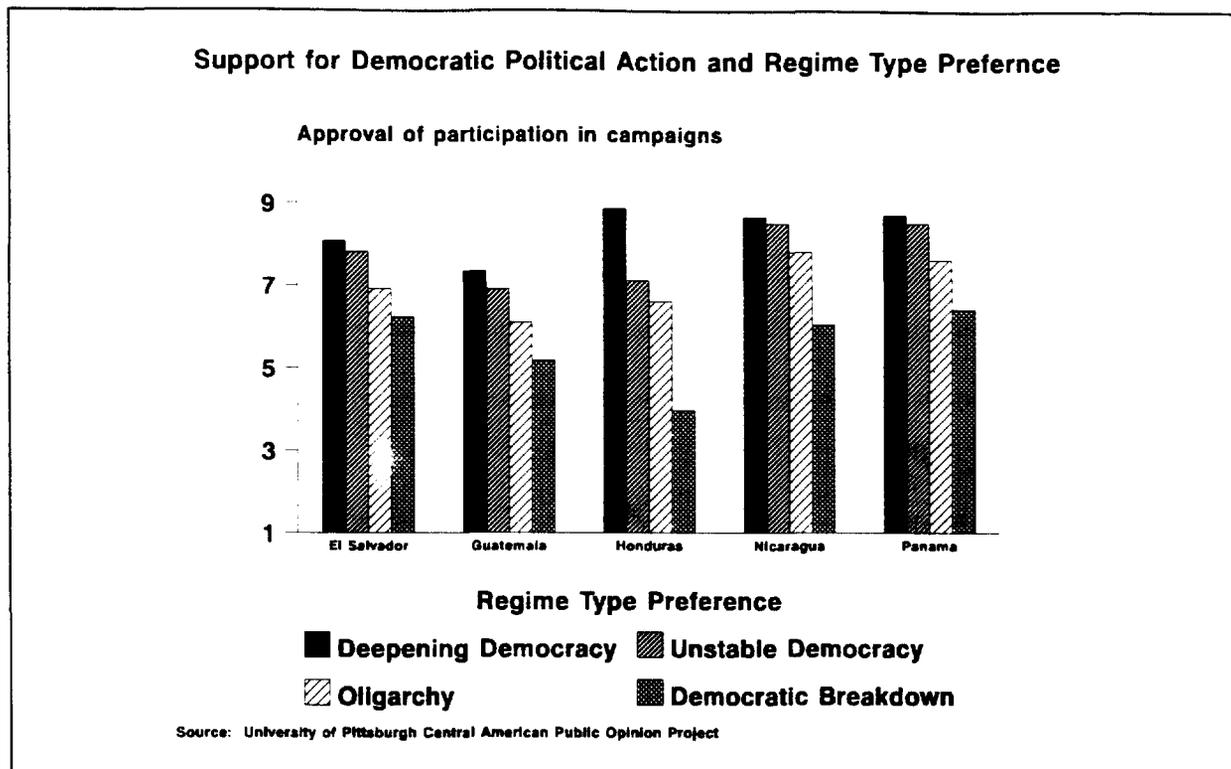


Figure 2

Finally, what of support for violent political participation; the willingness of citizens to approve the use of force to achieve their objectives? Figure V.3 shows the results.¹⁰ There are two patterns of note there. First, the unstable democracy cell stands out as being far more willing to approve violent behavior for political purposes. This is not surprising given their low system support and high tolerance. Even in Costa Rica, the small proportion of respondents who are in the unstable democracy cell are far more willing than any of their compatriots to support such violence. The second pattern that emerges is that levels of support for such actions is higher in both Honduras and Nicaragua than it is in the other countries. Neither El Salvador nor Guatemala, countries that were shown as having dim prospects for democracy, exhibit any significant support for violent actions. Perhaps the exceptionally high levels of violence in the recent past in both of those countries has

¹⁰The actual question asked was: To what extent (on a ten-point scale) would you approve or disapprove of people taking over factories, offices or other buildings in order to achieve their political objectives?

study is similar to the 1992 study, with the 1992 sample for urban Guatemala showing 33 percent in the two democracy cells, compared to 27 percent for the 1993 national study. Where there is marked variation is the substantially higher proportion of the respondents in the 1993 study is in the breakdown cell. We cannot determine if this is a function of the different scoring method utilized or if it indicates a genuine shift in the direction of breakdown.

The most important conclusion to be drawn from Table V.4 is the notable difference between the Indian and ladino population. We have defined Indians and ladinos in Table V.4 in different ways, based upon dress and language. Irrespective of the manner of definition, Indians have a twice as high a proportion of their respondents in the stable democracy cell as do non-Indians. In addition, Indians as defined by dress, have a far higher percentage of respondents in the unstable democracy cell than do the ladinos. Kiche Indians once again stand out, with none of them in the stable democracy cell, but nearly half in the unstable democracy cell. This indicates their greater support for democratic norms, but their lower support for the system of government. Finally, it is notable that for all sub-groups of the study, with the exception of the Kiche, the largest concentration of Guatemalans can be found in the breakdown cell.

Table V.4. Joint Distribution of System Support and Support for Right to Dissent in Guatemala					
Sample	Stable Democracy	Unstable Democracy	Sum of Democracy Cells	Oligarchy	Democratic Breakdown
Entire country	6%	21%	27%	22%	52%
Indians (defined by language)	10%	18%	28%	22%	52%
Kiche Indians	0%	49%	49%	9%	42%
Indians (defined by dress)	10%	31%	41%	12%	47%
Non-Indians (defined by Western Dress)	5%	21%	26%	22%	52%
Monolingual Spanish speakers	5%	20%	25%	23%	53%

*Percents do not always total 100 owing to rounding.
Source: 1993 Democratic Norms Survey*

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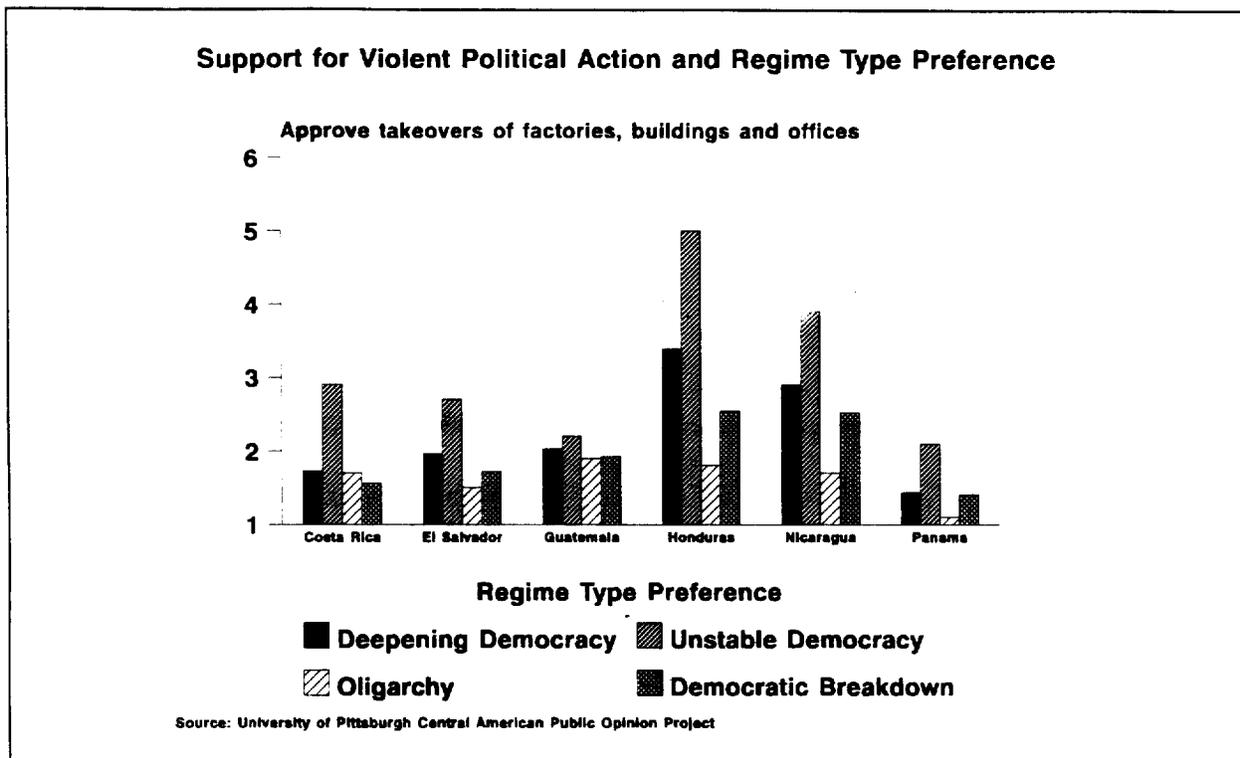


Figure 3

Ethnicity and the Stability of Democracy in Guatemala

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metropolitan region of Guatemala City and the North Eastern region were above the national average, the other areas below.

We then asked if "a family member has disappeared or has sought refuge in another country because of political violence." We found that 8.6 per cent of our sample had suffered from this kind of violence, with the highest levels in the North West, as is shown in Figure VI.1. Victims of violence seem to be dispersed throughout the ladino and Indian communities, with little or no difference detected by the survey in the level by ethnic group. It is possible that this result is in part a function of the limitations on our sample. We were not able to enter the regions of the country in which the military maintained a travel ban. It is possible that had we interviewed in these areas we would have detected considerably greater violence there. But we suspect that the sensitivity of the item may be responsible for less than candid responses among those who were most likely to have been victims of violence. Gender also had no relationship to victimization. Education, however, is related to victimization, with the highest educated respondents being somewhat more likely to have suffered from the violence. These findings are shown in Figure VI.2. Indeed, among the tiny proportion of the sample that reports having post-graduate education, 60 percent report having been a victim of violence, but the sample of this group is too small to make any generalizations.

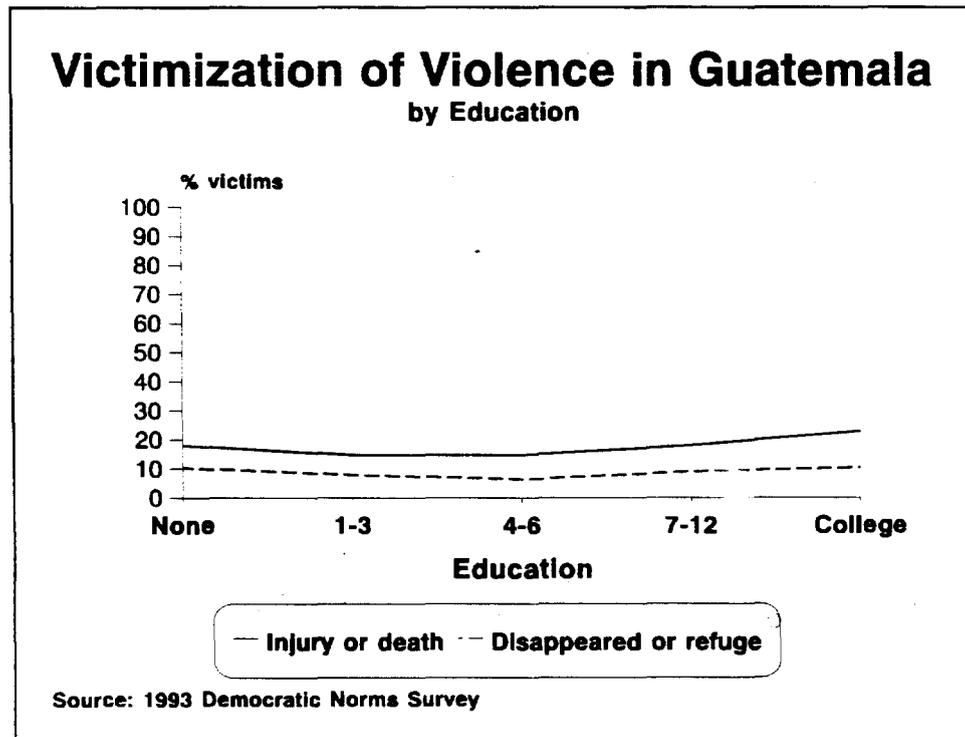


Figure 2

VI. Political Violence in Guatemala

The previous chapter discussed the combination of attitudes that could lead to democratic breakdown in Guatemala. One of the most destructive factors in the maintenance of stable democracy is political violence. Violent solutions to political disagreements represent the breakdown of democratic principles, in which peaceful mechanisms of dispute resolution are shunted aside and praetorian politics comes to the fore.

Violence has been an unfortunate legacy of Guatemala's history. While much has been written about that history, our interest in this analysis is to examine its impact on the prospects for democracy.

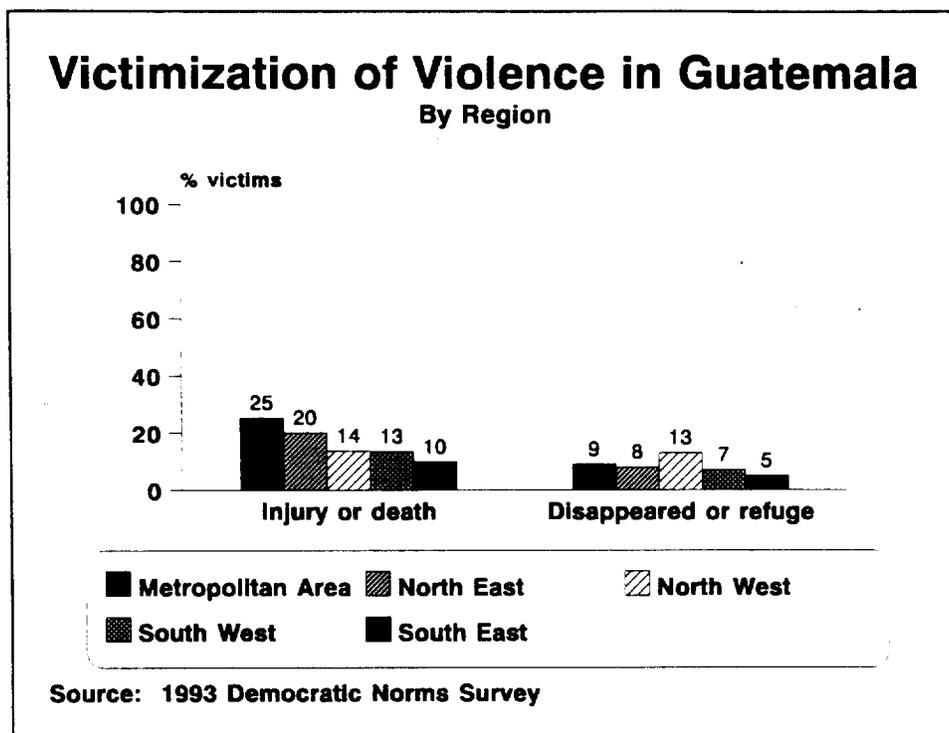


Figure 1

Victimization of Violence

We need to establish first the levels of political violence suffered by the respondents to our survey. Figure VI.1 reports on the answers to two of the questions in the instrument. We first asked, "Let's talk a bit about kidnapping, murders, bombings and massacres. That is what is called political violence. Have you or a member of your family suffered some of these kinds of political violence? For the country as a whole, 16.7 percent of the population replied in the affirmative. The

Nicaragua and the U.S. invasion of Panama), the proportion of the population that sees inequality as a cause of violence is somewhat lower than it is in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

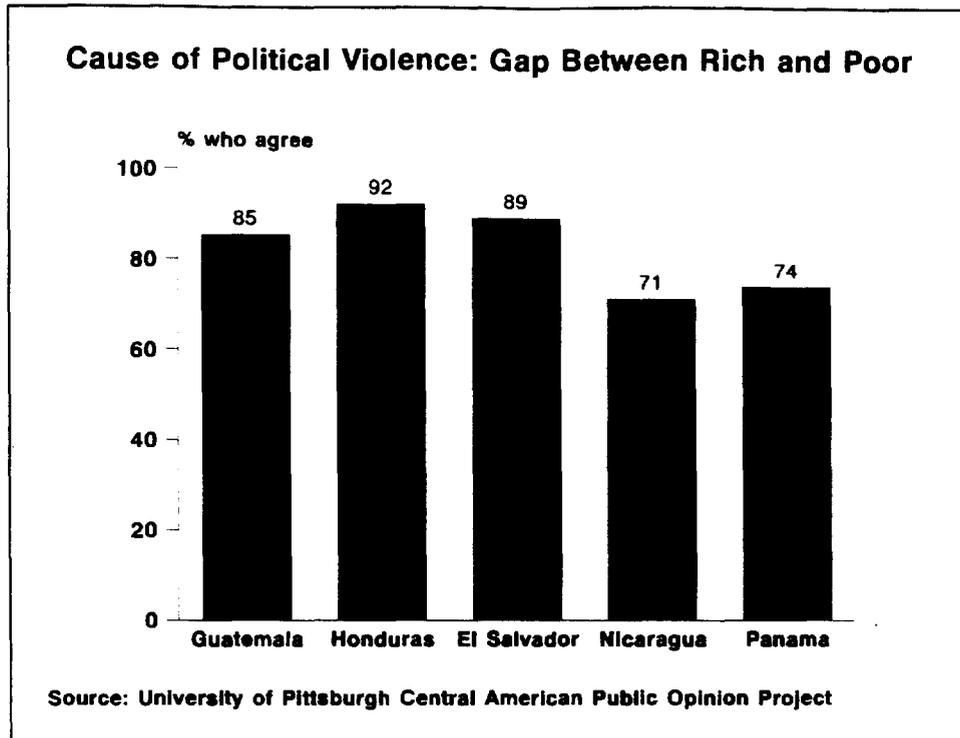


Figure 4

For Guatemala as a whole, we can compare various perceived causes of violence.³ Figure VI.5 shows how three commonly mentioned causes were ranked by our respondents. As can be seen, land inequality was listed even more commonly than income inequality as a cause of violence. Differences between Indians and ladinos was the third most commonly noted cause, but even in this case it was mentioned by over half the sample.

Although most Guatemalans are in agreement that these are the major causes of political violence in the country, there are some notable differences based on education. For example, Figure VI.6 below shows that the higher the education, the more the respondent believes that the income gap is a cause for violence.

³Note that differences in question wording to not allow direct comparison between the Central America survey results and the 1993 Democratic Norms survey.

Perceptions of Violence in Guatemala

Compared to its neighbors, Guatemala has suffered an extraordinary amount of violence. Only El Salvador, which fought a 12 year civil war, has been more violent. Figure VI.3 below shows the popular perception of the degree of political violence coincides quite well with reality.¹ Within Guatemala, our 1993 survey does not find significant differences in perception by sex, age, wealth or ethnicity.

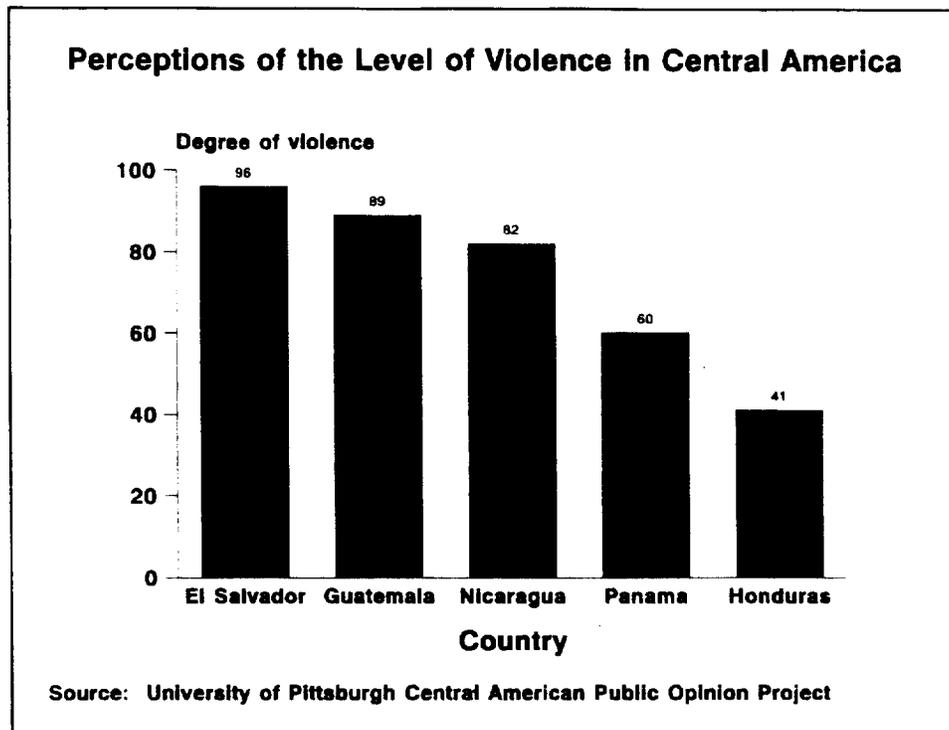


Figure 3

Throughout Central America there is widespread agreement that inequalities between rich and poor are a major cause of political violence. Figure VI.3 shows the results for the region. Certainly popular perception fits in with the most current research on the subject.² Not surprisingly, however, in both Nicaragua and Panama, where the violence has been directly linked to international factors (the contra war in

¹. The item read, "Do you believe that there is a lot, a little or no political violence in (country)?"

²See Edward N. Muller and Mitchell A. Seligson "Insurgency and Inequality," *American Political Science Review*, 1987.

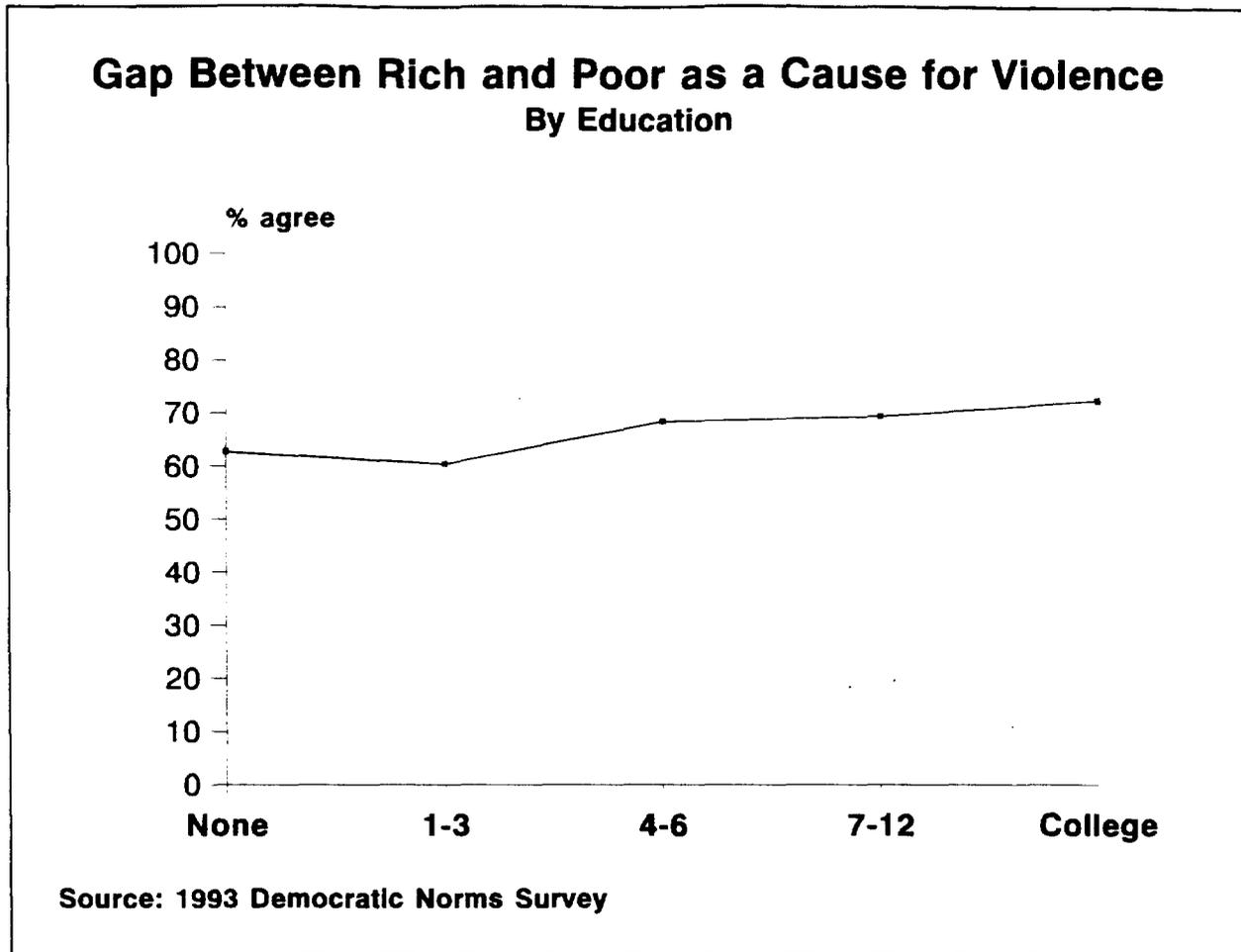


Figure 6

Guatemalan system of government. Presumably, these individuals hold that system at least partially responsible for these social ills and the resultant violence.

In democratic societies, citizens have defenses against violence. The key institutional defenses are the police and the court system. In Latin America, where the army often plays a police role, the army can defend citizens against violence. But armies and police forces in Latin America have often been major perpetrators of violence against their own citizens. How do Guatemalans feel about these three key institutions?

We asked our respondents the following question: "I am going to name various organizations in order for you to tell me if they defend the right to life. Tell me please if you believe that the right to life of the inhabitants of this country are respected and defended by.... the police, the army, judges. The responses are displayed in Figure

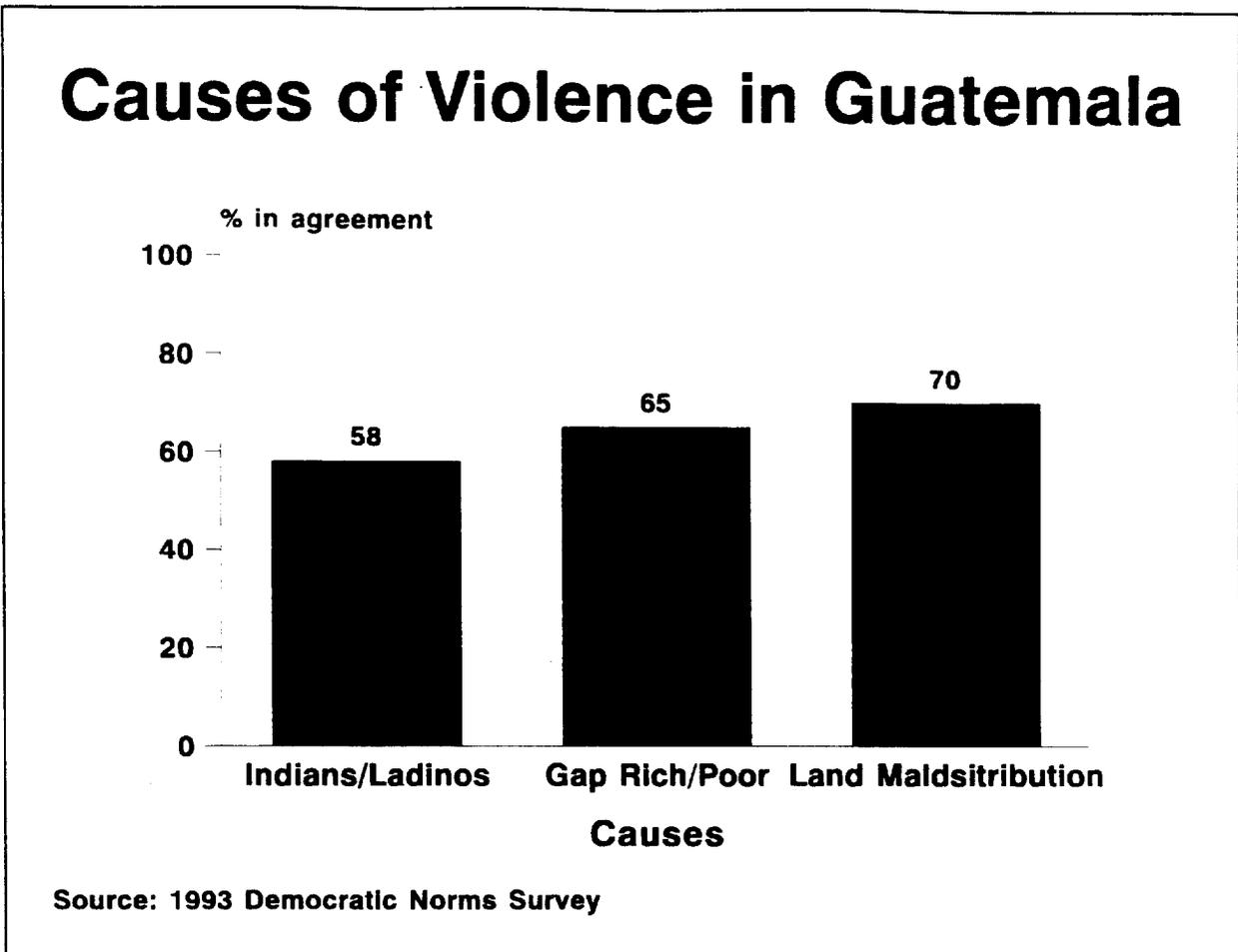


Figure 5

Even more notable is the systematic difference in the levels of support for democratic liberties and the respondent's views of the causes of violence. As can be seen in Figure VI.7 below, for each of the possible causes mentioned, support for democratic liberties, measured by the Right to Dissent scale, is higher (sig. <.01) among those who agree that the given cause does produce violence. The same findings (not shown) emerge for the overall scale of Support for Democratic Liberties.

Institutional Defenses Against Violence

In contrast to the findings showing that democratic liberties are higher among those who believe that social problems is a cause for violence, system support is *lower* among those who think this way, as is shown in Figure VI.8 below. The differences are statistically significant (<.01) on all but the rich/poor item. Thus, those who believe that social ills (inequality and discrimination) cause violence, are more educated, more supportive of civil liberties and less supportive of the

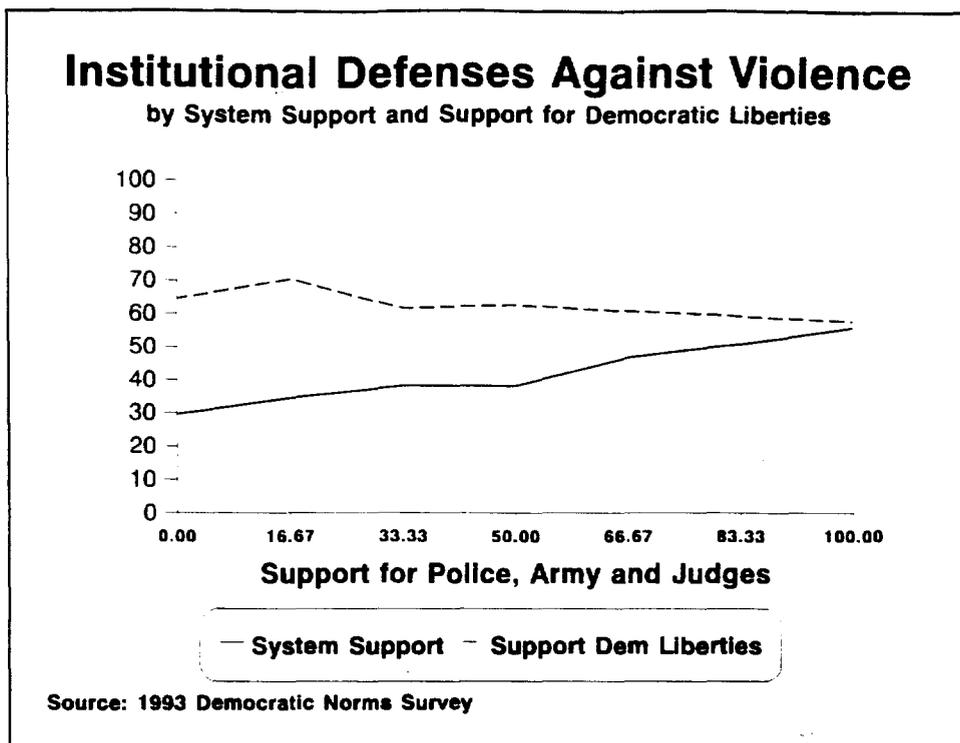


Figure 8

VI. 9. Belief in these institutions hovers around the middle point on the scale, with the police and army slightly below and judges slightly above.

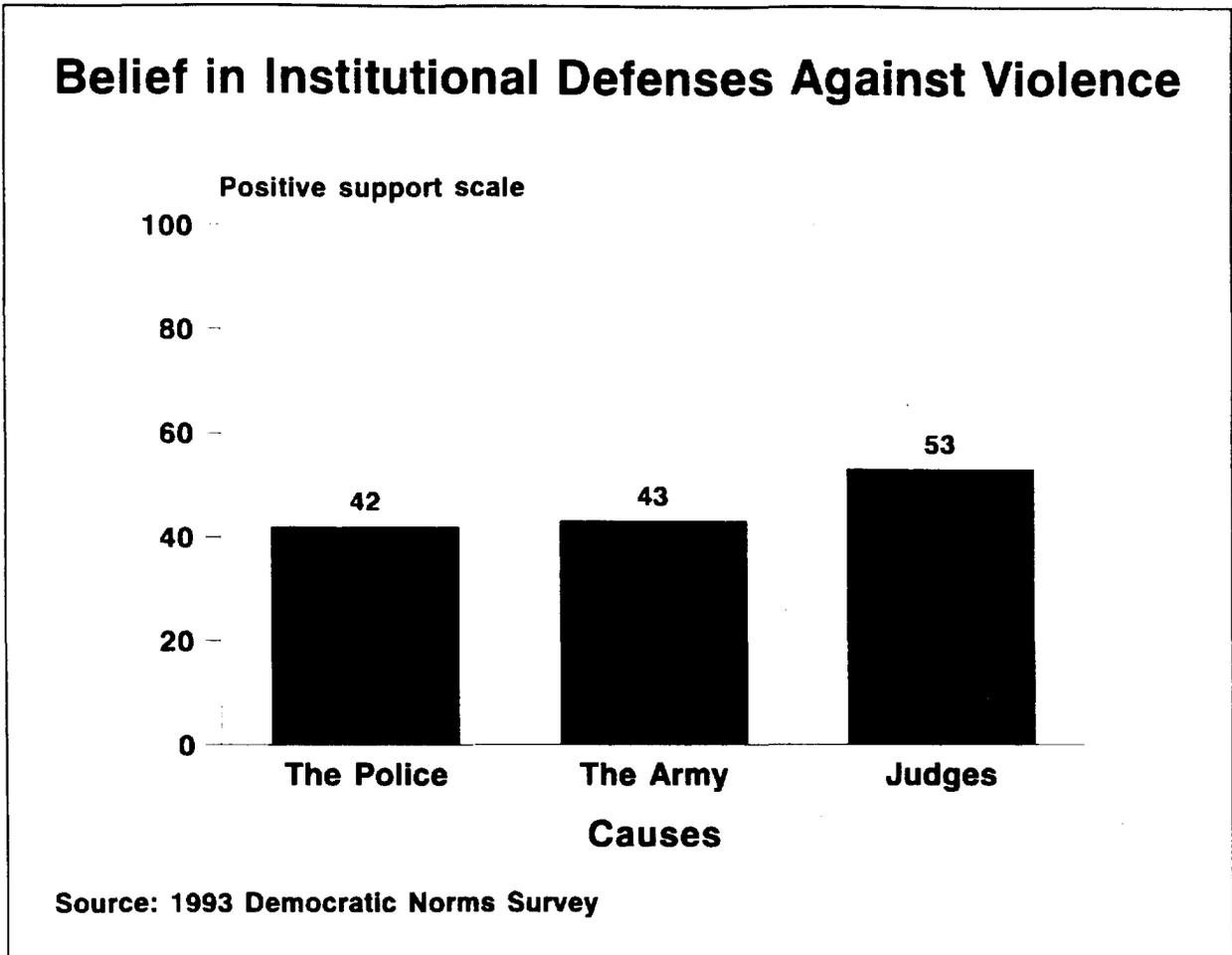
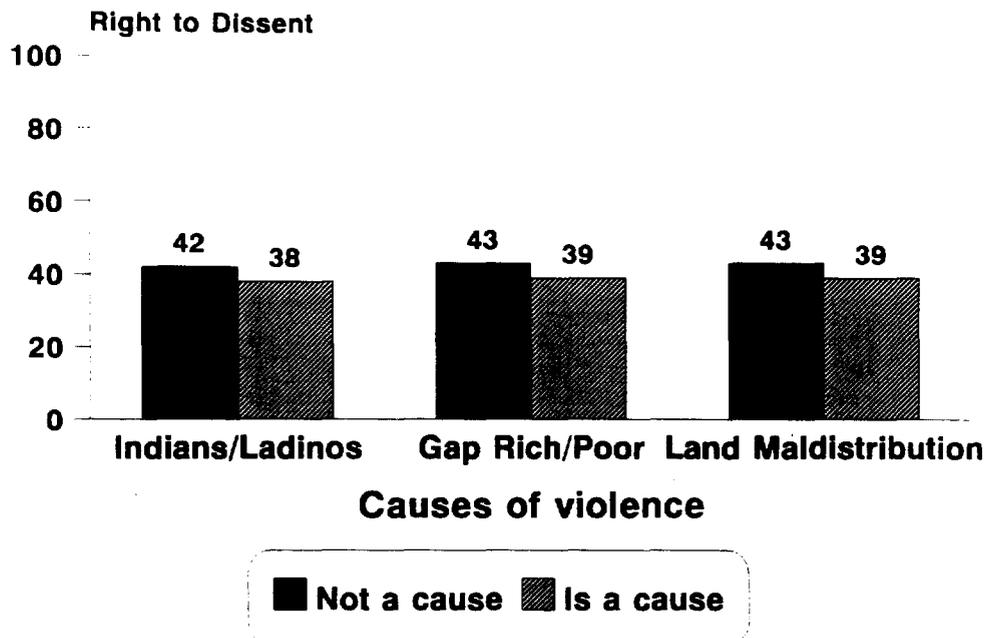


Figure 7

We can observe a close positive relationship between support for these institutions that can defend citizens against violence and our measure of System Support (Figure VI.10). Furthermore, there is also a negative relationship between Support for Democratic Liberties and belief in these institutions. Both are statistically significant ($< .001$). These results show that the greater one believes in the ability of the police, army and courts to defend the right to life in Guatemala, the greater support for the system one has but the lower support for democratic liberties. One can think of this finding in another way: those who support civil liberties are less likely to believe that the right to life is being protected by key institutions. Again this may reflect the experience of respondents as well as the historical experience of Guatemala.

Causes of Violence in Guatemala by System Support



Source: 1993 Democratic Norms Survey

Figure 10

a far smaller proportion of the sample to admit to supporting such acts. But an even greater surprise is that approval of "overthrowing violently a government elected by the people" was higher than it was for less drastic forms of civil disobedience. One would have assumed that support for such a drastic measure would have been lower than for other forms of protest, but apparently in Guatemala the more gradual, nuanced, "ramping-up" strategy of civil disobedience has not emerged. Rather, there is evidence here of an "all-or-nothing" strategy. Indeed, when these four items are included in a factor analysis to determine if they form part of a single dimension, the overthrowing an elected government item proves to be distinct from the others.⁴ Of course, given the history of Guatemala, perhaps one should not be surprised by these

⁴The four items do form a single factor, but the loadings on the overthrow item are .5, compared to about .8 for the other items.

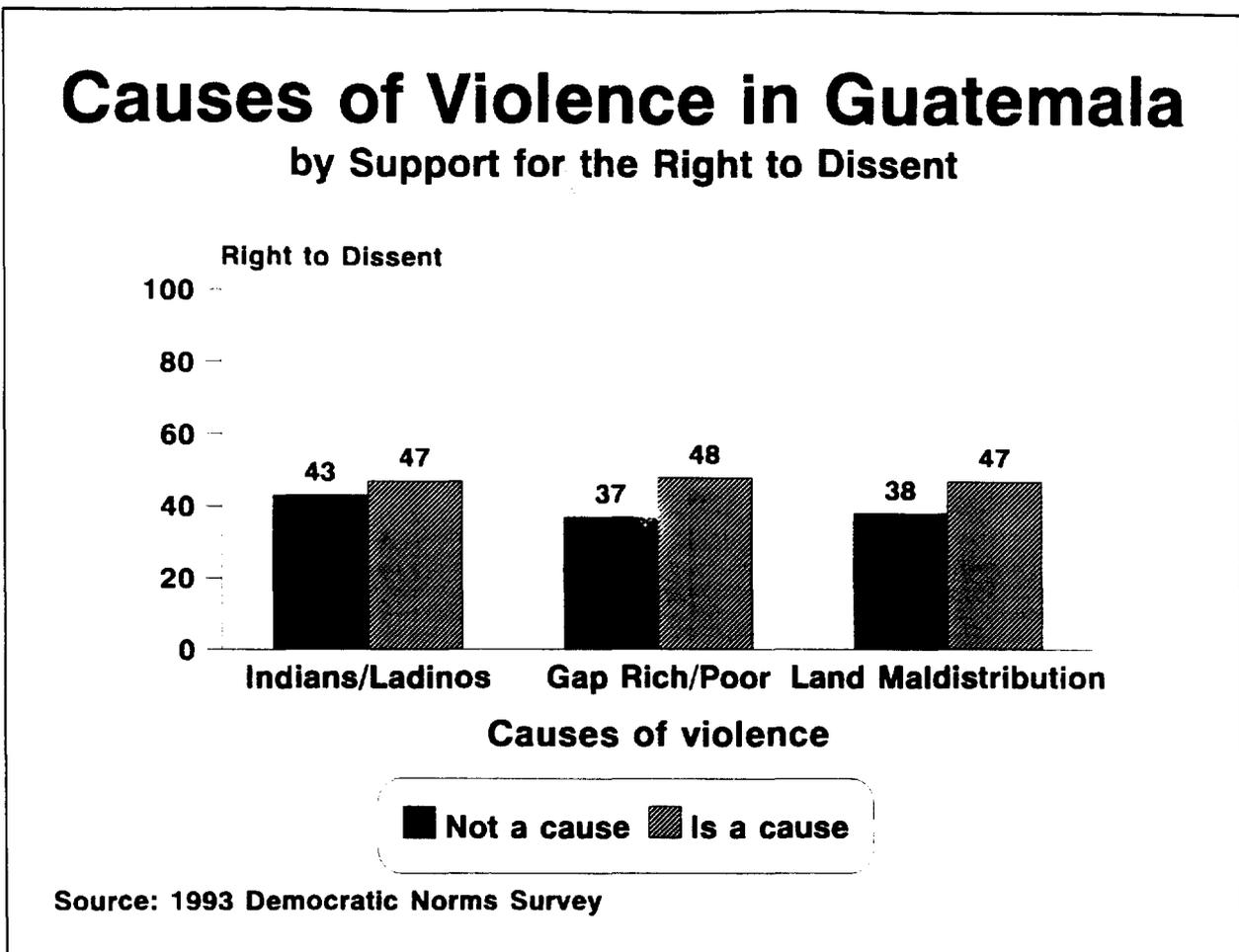
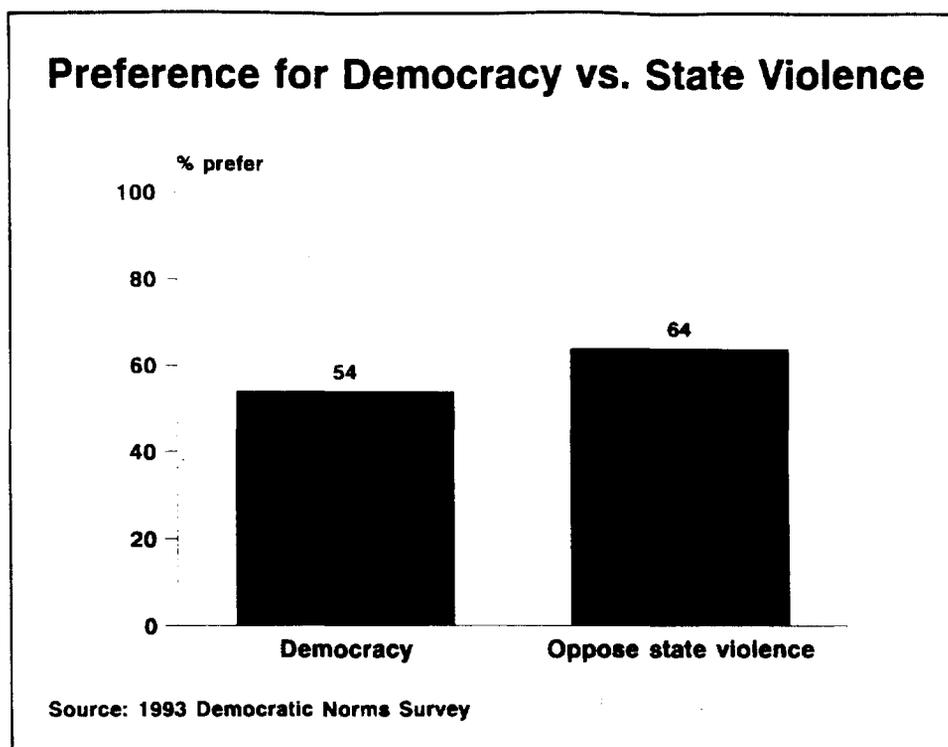


Figure 9

Support for Aggressive Political Participation

In countries in which the basic rules of the game have not been fully accepted by all citizens, people sometimes resort to illegal acts such as blocking streets, land invasions, taking over of public buildings, or even trying to overthrow elected regimes. We wanted to find out how much approval there was for such acts in Guatemala. We should note that since such acts are illegal, we suspect that support is frequently understated. For this series of questions the respondent had two options: approve, disapprove, but interviewers coded as "indifferent" those who were uncertain which option to pick but who still wanted to give an opinion. Since that group varied little from question to question (from 9-11 percent of the sample), we focus here exclusively on those who approve of such aggressive acts.

Figure VI.11 presents two surprises. First, we were surprised that support for aggressive political participation was as high as it turned out to be. We had expected



support
for a
hard

Figure 12

line to be taken by the government. First, we asked, "Do you think that in our country what is needed is a dictatorial government (*gobierno de mano dura*), or that problems can be resolved by everyone participating?" Our second question was: "Some people say that to stop political violence, the only way is to also use official violence. Are you in agreement, somewhat in agreement or in disagreement with this view?"

Figure VI.12 shows that approximately two-third of the respondents opposed the used of state violence as a means to stop political violence. Somewhat less support for democracy was shown in the response to the question on dictatorship versus democracy. In that item, a slim majority of Guatemalans preferred democratic participation over the "mano dura." When, however, those who did not respond are included in the tabulation, the situation is reversed and a slight majority favors the "mano dura."

Both of these variables are closely linked to education. As can be seen in Figure VI.13, the higher the education of the respondent, the more likely he/she will be to select the democratic alternative. This is an encouraging sign since education levels have been increasing in Guatemala in recent years and are likely to continue to increase in the years to come. Among those with college education in Guatemala, 78 percent oppose state violence and 68 percent prefer democracy over authoritarian rule.

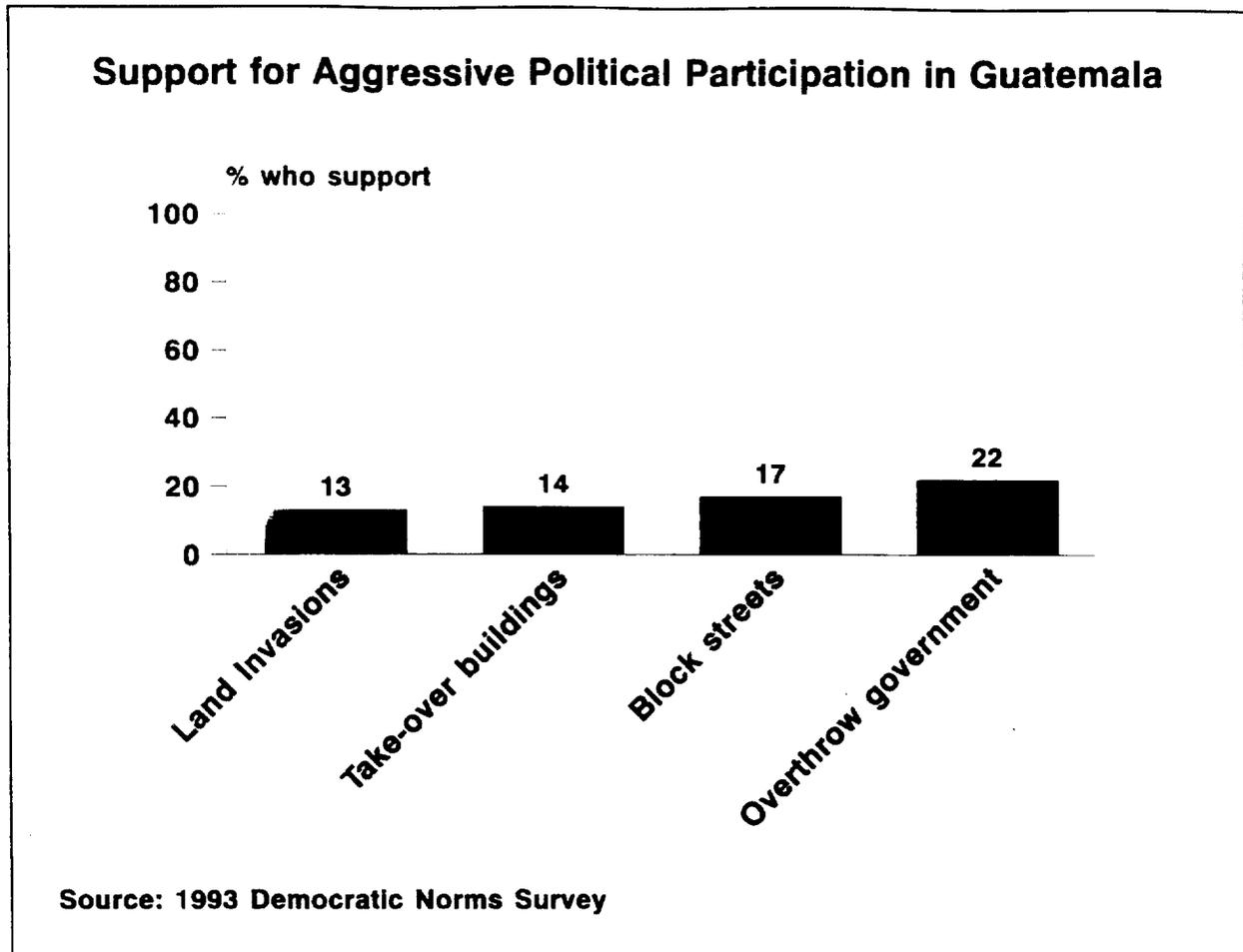


Figure 11

results. Even so, it is disturbing to learn that over one-fifth of Guatemalans would support the violent overthrow of a democratically elected government.

Support for aggressive political participation is not confined to any one socio-economic or ethnic group. We found few differences within the sample, other than to note that land invasions and take-overs of building was supported significantly more by the poor, less-well educated than the rich and well educated. Religion, ethnicity, age and gender had no systematic relationship to aggressive political participation.

Support for Government Repression of Dissent

The flip side of the aggressive political participation question is violence committed by the government. We asked two questions to determine levels of

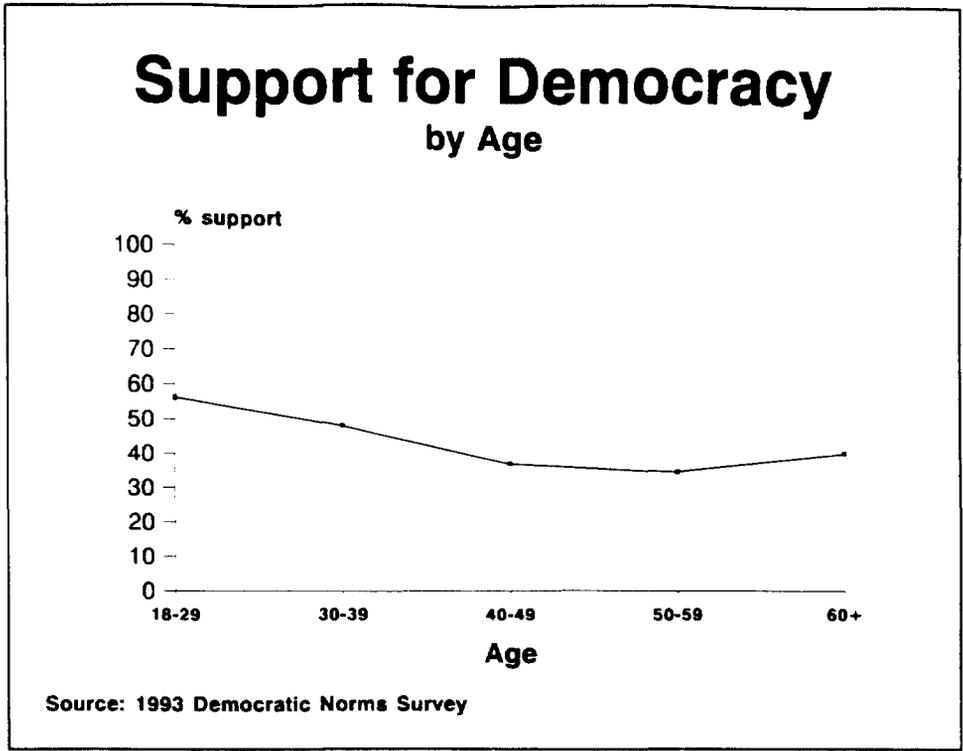


Figure 14

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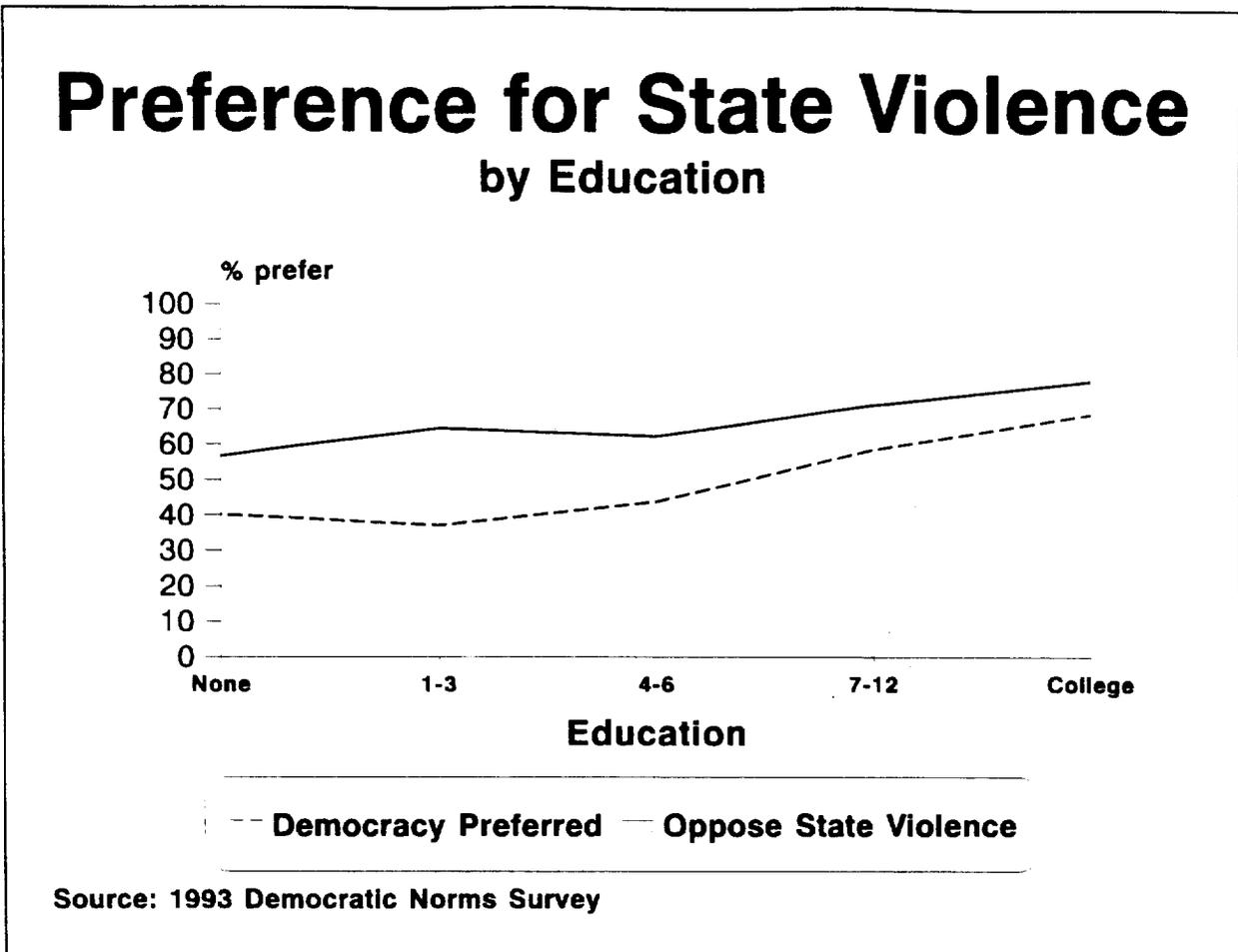


Figure 13

Age also is directly associated with the preference for democracy over authoritarian rule, as can be seen in Figure VI.14. The highest support is found among the youngest respondents in the survey, although there is some tendency for pattern to reverse itself among the oldest respondents. The difference is statistically significant ($<.01$).

Finally, there is also a directly relationship between system support and support for democratic liberties and these two variables. That is, as expected from our previous analysis, system support is associated with lowered support for democracy while support for democracy is associated with lower use of state violence. We do not show these two relationships here because of the close theoretical linkage between the independent and dependent variables.

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We believe that these findings are important because they reveal a very positive aspect of Guatemalan political participation that could serve as the basis on which to build a stronger democracy. Although as we have already seen many Guatemalans lack trust in their system of government, that attitude has not prevented them from participation in community associations. Indeed, it may well be that frustration with national political institutions has led Guatemalans to become more reliant upon community institutions in which they may feel more trust. Efforts to build democracy in Guatemala might well find fertile terrain at the local level.

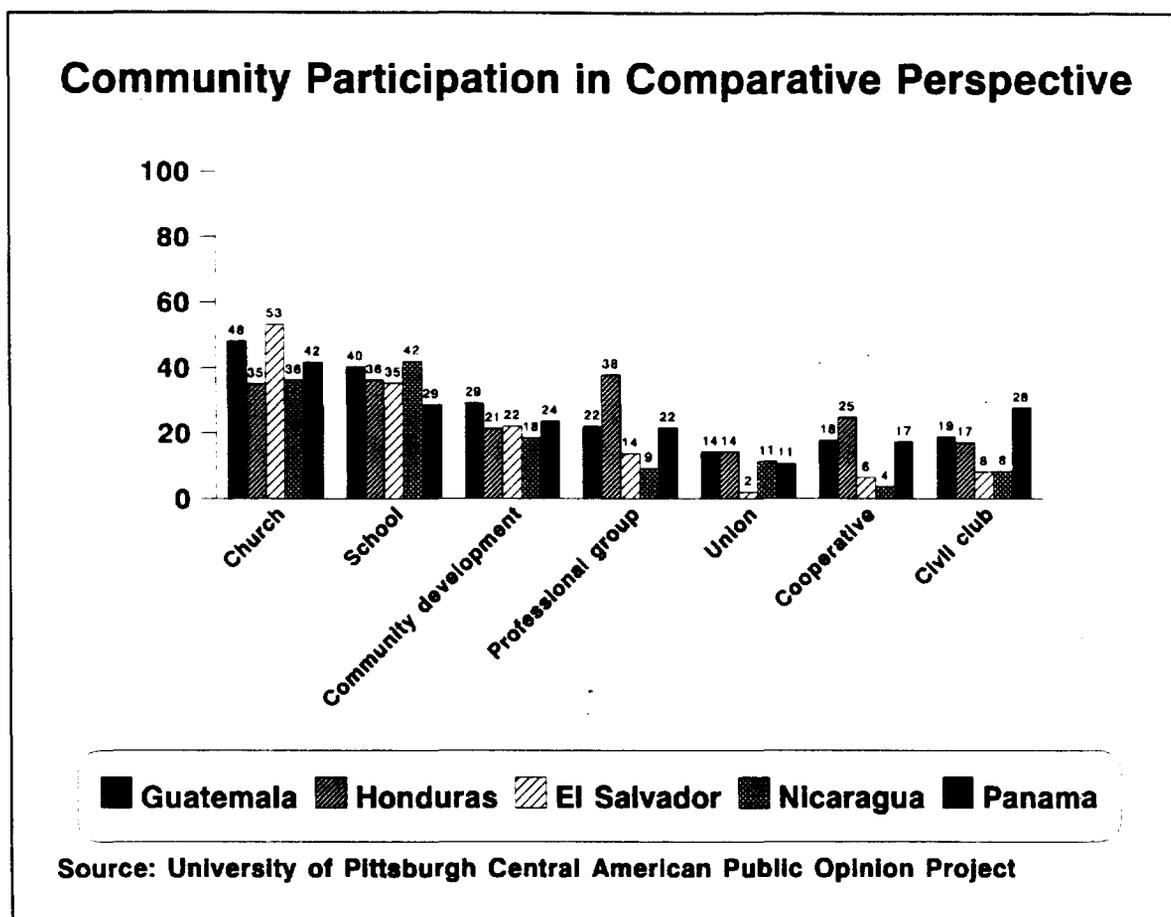


Figure 1

Participation in organizations is not the same thing as direct involvement in community problem solving. Individuals may join organizations merely to socialize or because they feel community pressure to do so. Perhaps a better test of the impact communal participation is to look at the extent to which individuals volunteer their time, labor and even money to help solve local problems. Figure VII.2 shows the data for Central America. Differences among the countries are statistically significant ($< .001$). The first set of bars show the proportion of the respondents who have

VII. Conventional Political Participation

Guatemala in Comparative Perspective

Most Latin American countries whether they formally have been unitary or federal states have operated with a strong central authority and relatively weaker local authorities. In fact, the process of consolidation of state authority in the 19th and early 20th centuries focussed on the assertion of national over regional or local interests. However, most countries have maintained some level of local government with some (often very minimal) political and administrative functions. Guatemala is no exception. Therefore, in looking at the entire political process, it is important to examine participation not only at the national level, but at the local level. In this chapter, we examine a variety of channels of participation open to individual Guatemalans, looking at their willingness to use these channels and the relative importance they assign to various levels of government as demonstrated by their forms of participation.

It is worth noting that the sorts of violent forms of political participation we discussed in the previous chapter often are more likely to make headlines. However, the more conventional forms discussed in this chapter are what far more often form the stuff of daily politics in Guatemala and elsewhere in Latin America.¹ Political violence is more clearly a hallmark of the inability of the more conventional forms to effectively channel political concerns and political demands.

Communal Participation

In Figure VII.1 we show the overall pattern of participation in a wide variety of community groups. We have data on five of Central America's six nations. Costa Rica is absent from this data set, but the information from that country should be available by the end of 1993.² The results show that Guatemala's levels of conventional participation are generally quite high compared to its neighbors in the region. In terms of church committees and school related committees, Guatemala ranked second in the region. In terms of community development associations, Guatemala ranked first. It tied for first or second place in professional group associations and unions, and was ranked second in cooperatives and civic clubs. The differences among the five nations in the study are statistically significant ($< .001$).

¹See Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, *Political Participation in Latin America*, Vols. I and II. New York: Holmes and Meir, 1978 and 1979.

² The items were coded with a four-point scale, ranging from "frequent" participation to no participation. We converted this scale to have a 0-100 range, with frequent made equivalent to 100, and no participation equal to 0.

Our last form of conventional participation moves our focus away from community groups and toward public officials. We asked our respondents if they had asked for the help or cooperation of the following officials or institutions in trying to solve community problems: the President of the country, a legislator, the mayor, an agency of the national government. Figure VII.3 shows the results. It is not surprising that the levels of contacting public officials is far lower than the levels of communal participation we observed in figures VII.1 and VII.2 above. Only in Honduras, where respondents were less active in working to solve local community problems were they significantly more active in contacting national public officials. Guatemala ranks at an intermediate level on this set of items.

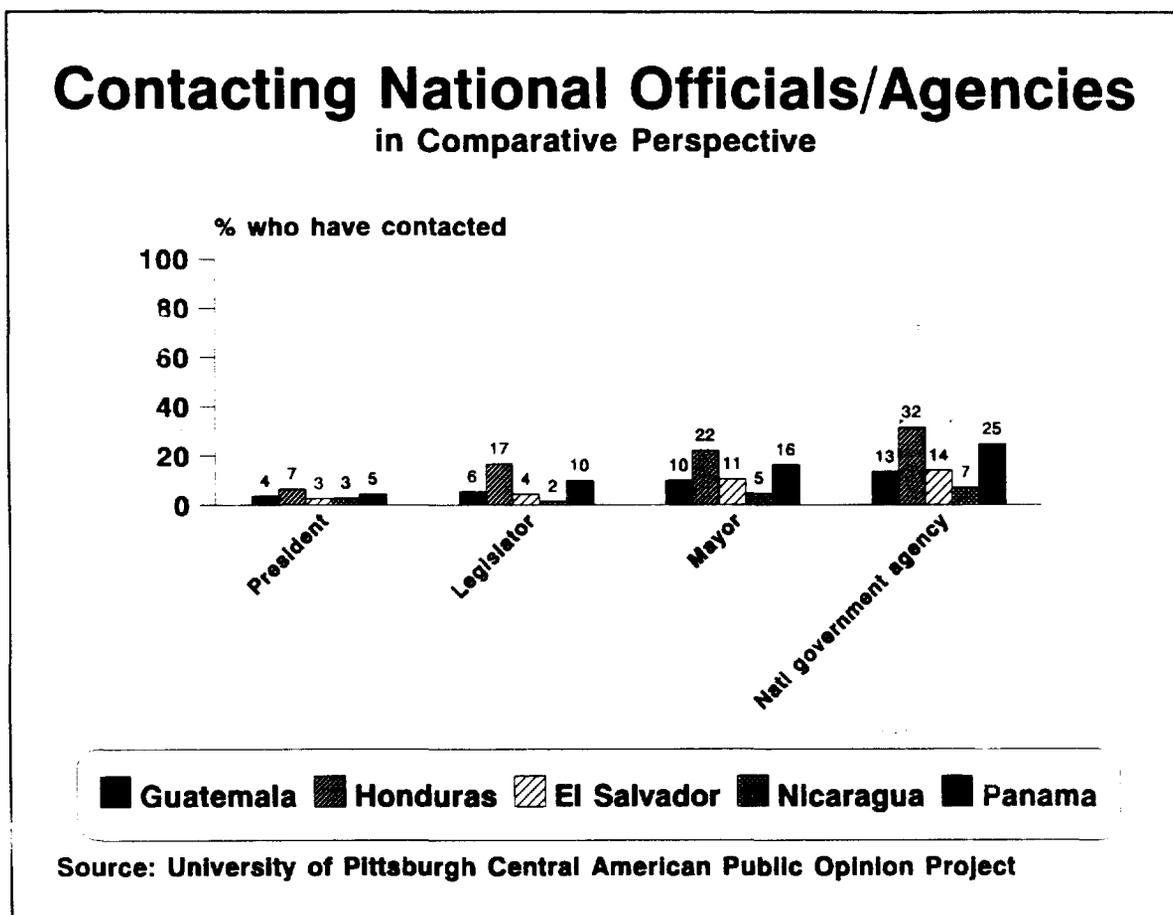


Figure 3

Voting

Prior to the 1980s, competitive, free and fair elections were the exception rather than the rule in Central America. Only Costa Rica had a long history of elections that, by any standard, were a model of electoral probity. As a result, very little was known then about the Central American voter and it was not then possible

attempted to help solve a community problem.³ Here we see that Guatemala is no longer the leader, with Nicaragua and Panama having the highest levels of local problem solving. Yet, its levels are far higher than in Honduras, which is the least participant of any of the five countries.

The remaining bars on the chart refer only to those individuals who have in fact done something to help solve a community problem. Hence, we are comparing here levels of participation only among the active part of the population. Guatemalans are particularly low in terms of donating materials or money, and also somewhat low in organizing groups. Their level of communal work participation and attendance at organized meetings is not very different from the other countries in the region.

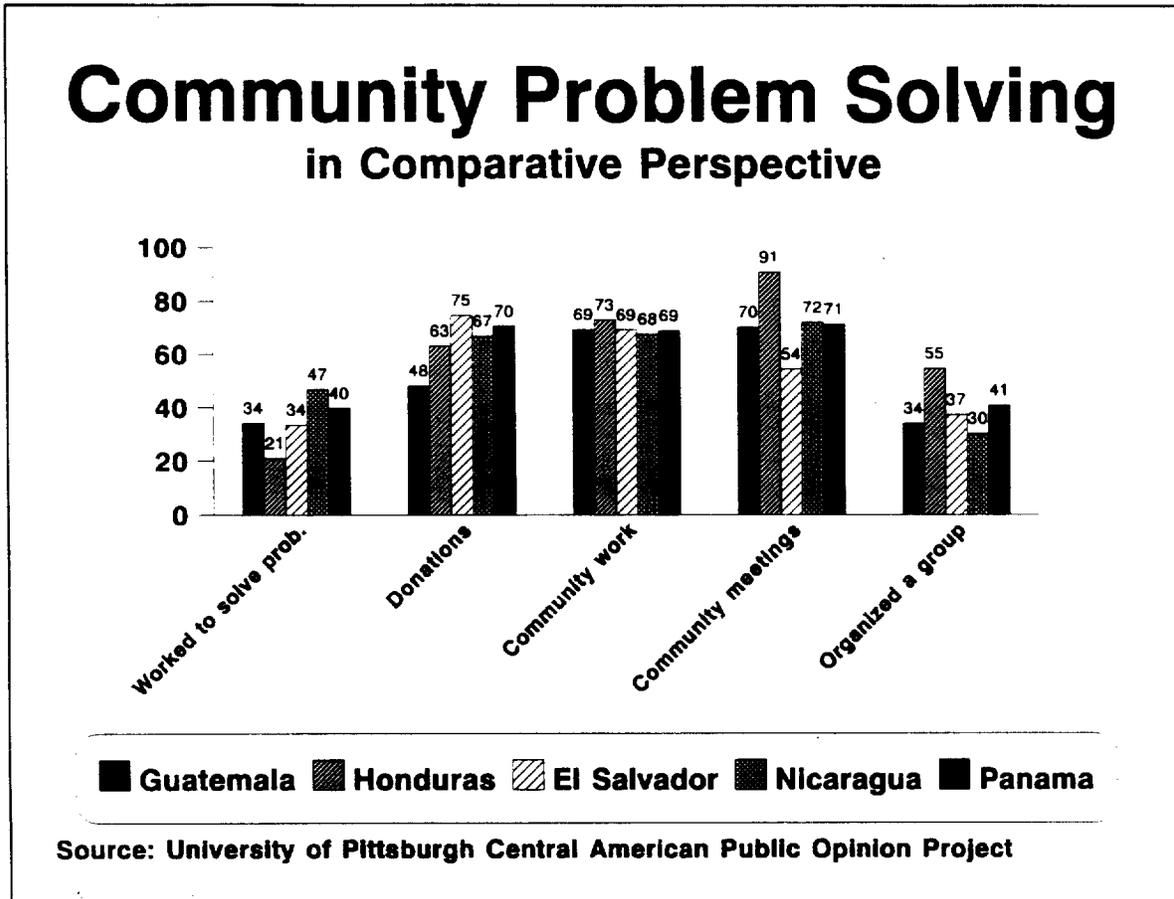


Figure 2

³The responses were scored "yes" and "no," and the coding was done to give 100 points for those who said "yes" and zero points for those who said "no."

yet available. Moreover, the Civil War raging there for most of the decade has resulted in massive deaths and migration, a full account of which is not available. The situation is similarly confused in Nicaragua, where the most recent population census was taken in 1971. The census data for the other countries are more recent (Guatemala, 1981; Honduras, 1988; and Panama, 1990, but the Panamanian census is still being tabulated).

A far more complex issue is that of obtaining accurate data on registration and voting. In Panama, for example, there is probably no way of obtaining an accurate count for the 1989 election, the one that preceded our survey. Three days after that election, the count was halted and the elections annulled by the military government. In Honduras, the registration system was undergoing a major modification during the period prior to the last election, but delays in its implementation meant that on the eve of the election a substitute system had to be developed and utilized.⁶

A further difficulty in comparing our survey data to that of official counts is that the Central America data set is urban in nature. Turnout in rural areas is often lower than in urban areas, in part because of the greater cost (in time and money) involved in reaching a polling place. In a country like Costa Rica, where virtually all rural areas have schools, and schools are utilized as polling places, the problem is far less serious. But remoteness is only one factor limiting voting in rural areas. Education and income levels in the countryside, two variables known to have an impact on turnout, are generally far lower than in the cities.

We also recognized another limitation of survey data, namely that of over reporting. According to voter validation studies conducted by the University of Michigan, survey data over reported voting by 18% in the 1970s in the U.S.⁷

These obstacles present formidable barriers to developing good estimates of turnout against which we can compare the survey data. Table VII.1 provides the best data that we were able to develop. One of the major challenges was to obtain reasonable population estimates and then to calculate from those the voting aged population for the urban areas in which we conducted the surveys. Our survey data theoretically coincides most closely with the percentage of the voting aged population

⁶See Mitchell A. Seligson, "Evaluation of the Strategic Democratic Initiatives Project in Honduras: The Registration System." Washington, D.C.: Development Associates, typescript, 1990.

⁷See John P. Katosh and Michael W. Traugott, "Consequences of Validates and Self-reported Voting Measures," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 45(1981, No. 4):519-535.

to undertake a serious empirical analysis of voting behavior along the classical lines developed by political scientists in the U.S. and Western Europe.

But, times have changed. Regular elections are beginning to become a normal feature of the Central American political landscape. Costa Rica's elections have a long tradition, dating back to the early part of the twentieth century, having been interrupted only once, in 1948. After the 1980 constituent assembly election, Honduras has had democratic presidential elections since 1981, with the Liberal Party winning in that year and again in 1985, to be defeated by the National Party in the 1989 election. Guatemala began a formal transformation to civilian rule in 1984 with the election of a constituent assembly, and since has held competitive presidential elections in 1985 and 1990 and most recently local elections in 1993. In El Salvador elections have gone on throughout much of the 1980s, but it was only in 1989 in which moderate leftist parties participated. It will not be until 1994, however, when the FMLN will be allowed to participate, that fully competitive elections will take place. Nicaragua held free and fair elections in 1984 and again in 1990.⁴ In that latter election the Sandinistas lost control to the UNO opposition coalition. Finally, Panama held competitive elections in 1989, but the military annulled them.⁵

Perhaps the two most basic parameters in any study of voting are turnout of eligible voters and turnout as a percent of registered voters. While at first it might appear that these figures are readily available, in fact, they are not. Indeed, we argue that at best it is only possible to provide approximate turnout figures for any country in the region except Costa Rica, where more accurate totals are available.

In order to have accurate turnout figures, one must have accurate population data. Such data are based on censuses and projections made from those censuses. The most recent Costa Rican census prior to the survey analyzed in this paper dates from 1984. The Costa Rican census bureau, however, regularly makes projections on that base, adding births and immigrants, subtracting deaths and emigrants. This procedure produces highly reliable census data and makes calculation of turnout possible. In the other countries, however, the estimates are far more problematical. In El Salvador, for example, the most recent published population census dates back to 1971, although a new census was conducted in 1992, the results of which are not

⁴The 1984 election was widely evaluated as being free and fair, but the withdrawal of the opposition meant that the Sandinistas faced little serious opposition to their rule. Hence, it was not until 1990 that the elections were free, fair and competitive.

⁵For a more complete discussion of elections in Central America see John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, *Elections and Democracy in Central America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989.

Sources for voting data:

Costa Rica: Data are from the district totals as reported by the Tribunal Supremo de Elecciones, Cómputo de votos y declaratorias de elección, 1990. San José: TSE. A total of 38 districts were included in the sample. Note that the voting districts in some cases cover rural as well as urban areas, whereas the sample is completely urban. As a result, a precise match between the sample and the voting data is not possible. Population estimates for sampled areas come from, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos, *Costa Rica: Cálculo de población (por provincia, cantón y distrito) al 1° de enero de 1990*. San José, 1991.

El Salvador: Population estimates for greater San Salvador are from 1992 CELADE estimates for the election year of 1991. See Ministerio de Planificación y Coordinación del Desarrollo Económico y Social, Dirección General de Población y Desarrollo Territorial, Dirección de Población, *Estimación de la población de El Salvador por departamento y municipio (cifras preliminares)*, San Salvador, mayo, 1992, mimeo. Estimates for the country as a whole are from the 1991 CELADE publication (using 1986 estimates) in order to maintain the continuity of the series for all six countries. However, the preliminary population figures from the 1992 population census of El Salvador shows 5.05 million persons compared to the 5.38 million estimated by CELADE. But the preliminary figures for greater San Salvador for the 1992 census are 1.52 million vs. 1.42 for the CELADE estimates. See "Ministerio de Economía, La Dirección General de Estadística y Censos, "Resultados Preliminares del V Censo de Población y IV de Vivienda 1992," *Prensa Gráfica* January 19, 1993, p. 34. Voting data from Ricardo Córdova Macías, "Procesos electorales y sistema de partidos en El Salvador (1982-1989)," *Documentos de Trabajo*, Series Analisis de la Relaidad Nacional 92-1, FUNDAUNGO, San Salvador, December, 1992.

Guatemala: Tribuno Supremo Electoral, *Memoria de la Elecciones 1990/1991*. Guatemala, 19??; and Tribunal Supremo Electoral, Centro de Asesoría y Promoción Electoral del Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos (CAPEL-IIDH), *Informe Final del Programa de Capacitación electoral 1990*, TSE-CAPEL, Guatemala, Marzo, 1991. Guatemala City population estimates from "Estimaciones de población urban y rural por Departamento y Municipio: 1990-1995," Guatemala: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas.

Honduras: Censo nacional de población y vivienda, 1988: Características generales de la población y de las viviendas por barrios y colonias, San Pedro Sula y Tegucigalpa (Tegucigalpa, Diciembre, 1990); unpublished data, Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones. Note that the number of registered voters in Tegucigalpa is given as larger than the voting aged population. This may be a result of the underestimation of the voting age population, estimates made from the CELADE population estimates or from differences in the way the area included in the population census for Tegucigalpa vs. the voting districts included as part of the city.

Nicaragua: Data for Managua are for the "Region III", which includes Managua and the surrounding areas. No voting data are available for the city itself, but the population of the city of Managua was 903,620, whereas the Region III had a population of 1,067,881. Hence, the city was 84.6 percent of the region. Latin American Studies Association, Commission to Observe the 1990 Nicaraguan Election, "Electoral Democracy Under International Pressure," March 15, 1990, mimeo; "Cómo voto Nicaragua: los resultados electorales, Envío (Managua-UCA) April, 1990, pp. 1-24. Abstention rates of registered voters taken from Castro and Prevost (1992:223); Vanessa Castro and Gary Prevost, *The 1990 Elections in Nicaragua and their Aftermath*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1992.

Panama: OEA (1992:40). Results based on recount. Estimates of turnout vary from 54% to 75%. Our calculations based on data from the Electoral Tribunal and reported by the Comité de Apoyo a los Observadores Internacionales, *Testimonio de un Proceso Electoral* (1990) show 76% turnout rate of registered population in the areas in which we surveyed. It is important to note that the 1989 election was aborted before the full count of the votes was completed, hence the true vote totals are not known. The best estimates are that approximately one-fifth of the votes were not counted.

Table 1. Voting and Population Data for Central America*

Country	Election date/ survey date	Total population (millions) for election year	Voting age population (millions)	Number of votes (millions)	Voting of voting-aged population	Number of registered voters (millions)	% turnout of registered voters	Survey results	Voting compulsory/ not compulsory
<u>Costa Rica:</u> Entire country	1990/ 1990	3.01	1.75	1.38	79%	1.69	82%	--	compulsory
Urban "meseta central"	"	.94	.55	.49	89%	.60	82%	84%	
<u>El Salvador:</u> Entire country	1991/ 1991	5.38	2.62	1.15	44%	2.1	52%	--	compulsory
Greater San Salvador	"	1.42	.68	.33	49%	.45	73%	63%	
<u>Guatemala:</u> Entire country	1990(1st round)/ 1992	9.20	4.43	1.81	41%	3.20	57%	--	compulsory (except illiterates, invalids and 70+ years)
Department of Guatemala	"	1.96 (1990)	.98	.39	40%	.62	63%	70%	"
<u>Honduras:</u> Entire country	1989/ 1991	4.98	2.28	1.80	79%	2.37	76%	--	compulsory
Tegucigalpa	"	.69	.30	.27	87%	.35	75%	83%	"
San Pedro Sula	"	.48	.15	.13	86%	.19	69%	93%	"
<u>Nicaragua:</u> Entire country	1990/ 1991	3.87	2.01	1.51	75%	1.75	86%	--	not compulsory
Managua	"	1.07	.56	.39	71%	.46	85%	79%	"
<u>Panama:</u> Entire country	1989/ 1991	2.37	1.37	.75	55%	1.19	63%	--	not compulsory
Panama City	"	.41	.28	.19	64%	.28	69%	78%	"

* Population data are taken from CELADE (1991). Voting age is 18 for all countries in Central America except Nicaragua, where it is 16. The population projections from CELADE group all those from 15-19 years of age into a single cohort. Interpolation was used to estimate the population of 18 and older (16 and older in Nicaragua). Although different population figures can be obtained from other sources, it was determined that the use of a single, highly respected source for all six countries would help standardize the errors across all of the cases. As better data become available, the estimates made by CELADE will change. For example, a May, 1992 estimate of the 1991 population of El Salvador shows 5.28 million inhabitants, compared to the 5.38 million reported in the 1991 publication (which was based on 1986 estimates) shown in the above table. See MIPLAN (1992). The preliminary estimates of the 1992 population census show 5.047 million.

from the countries outside of Central America are national, whereas the Central America data are urban, that we have overestimated the Central American turnout rates and underestimated the non-Central American rates. In fact, the underestimate for the non-Central American cases is only slight, since the urban and rural differentials are not nearly so great in these developed countries as they are in Central America. Hence, the national-level data for the non-Central American cases reported in Figure 1 probably are close approximations of urban turnout and hence directly comparable to the Central American cases.

Examination of Figure VII.4 reveals that there is a wide distribution in turnout rates. In Central America they range from a low of 63 per cent of voting age respondents in our survey to a high of 90 percent. Guatemala is the second lowest of the six countries. In no Central American case was turnout as low as it was in the U.S., and only Italy, (of all of the 20 countries in the Powell, Jr. study) exceeded the highest turnout rate in Central America.

Intra-Guatemala Comparisons

We will now explore the factors that influence participation within Guatemala. In order to simplify the analysis, we have created an index of participation. First, however, we show all of the forms of communal participation on a single chart so that the reader can see which ones are practiced more frequently and which ones less so. As can be seen, church group participation is highest, followed by school committee (e.g., PTA) participation.

A factor analysis⁹ of the seven types of local participation shown in the above figure revealed two distinct factors: communal participation (Church, School, Community Development Association) and occupation-related participation (professional association, civic association, trade union and cooperative). We formed

although not all were registered voters as will be discussed below. We had to adjust the figures reported here to take account of those respondents who were too young to vote in the election prior to the survey.

⁹A varimax rotation produced two distinct factors. There was, however, a distributed loading on the community development association variable, but it loaded more heavily on the communal participation factor, so we included it there.

that voted rather than the turnout of registered voters. This is because we interviewed from a universes of all households, not just those in which the respondent was registered to vote. For completeness, however, we also provide the best data we could find on the number of registered voters for each country and city in which we conducted our study, as well as the turnout of registered voters in those cities.

How well did we do on the vote variable? Theoretically, our confidence interval was as large as 4.5 percent for Panama and Honduras, where our sample was approximately 500, and as small as 3.3 percent in Guatemala and El Salvador where our sample was approximately 900. In Costa Rica where the percent of the voting aged population that voted was 89 percent, our survey revealed 84 percent, with a confidence interval that would go as high as 87.3 percent. In Tegucigalpa, Honduras we can even closer, with the survey showing 83 percent and the actual turnout 87 percent. Results in San Pedro Sula, Honduras were not as close, exceeding by seven per cent from the actual totals. The survey was also quite close in Managua, Nicaragua, with the lower confidence interval at 75% and the actual vote of 71 percent. In the other samples, our estimates were considerably higher than the actual vote. In Panama City, for example, our lower estimate was 73.5 percent, whereas the vote was 64 percent. In El Salvador, the lower estimate for the survey was a little over 59 percent, whereas the actual vote was 49 percent. Finally, the worst estimate was in Guatemala where the survey dramatically overestimated the vote.

The general pattern we found in these data is for the survey to overestimate the vote. This pattern is consistent with surveys done elsewhere, as a result of the built-in social desirability factor, the likelihood that a respondent will report what is considered to be socially desirable or acceptable behavior. This factor is exacerbated in all of Central America except Nicaragua and Panama, because the vote is compulsory. Individuals admitting to not voting are admitting to a violation (albeit technical) of the voting laws. The only instance where the survey underreported the vote was in urban Costa Rica, although it is of note that the survey does overestimate the national vote totals and in that sense is consistent with the other countries. We suspect that another factor inflating the reported vote totals is sample bias that may have excluded significant numbers of recent urban migrants to new shanty towns not yet recorded on the census maps we used to draw our samples.

We now move on to place the Central America data within an international comparative context. Figure 1 shows a comparison of Central America with the United States, Japan and four European countries.⁸ We assume that since the data

⁸The turnout rates for the non-Central American cases is taken from Powell (1986:38). These data are for the eligible (i.e., voting age) population. The Central American data are from the six surveys. Since the survey was conducted among voting-aged adults in each country, all of the respondents were eligible,

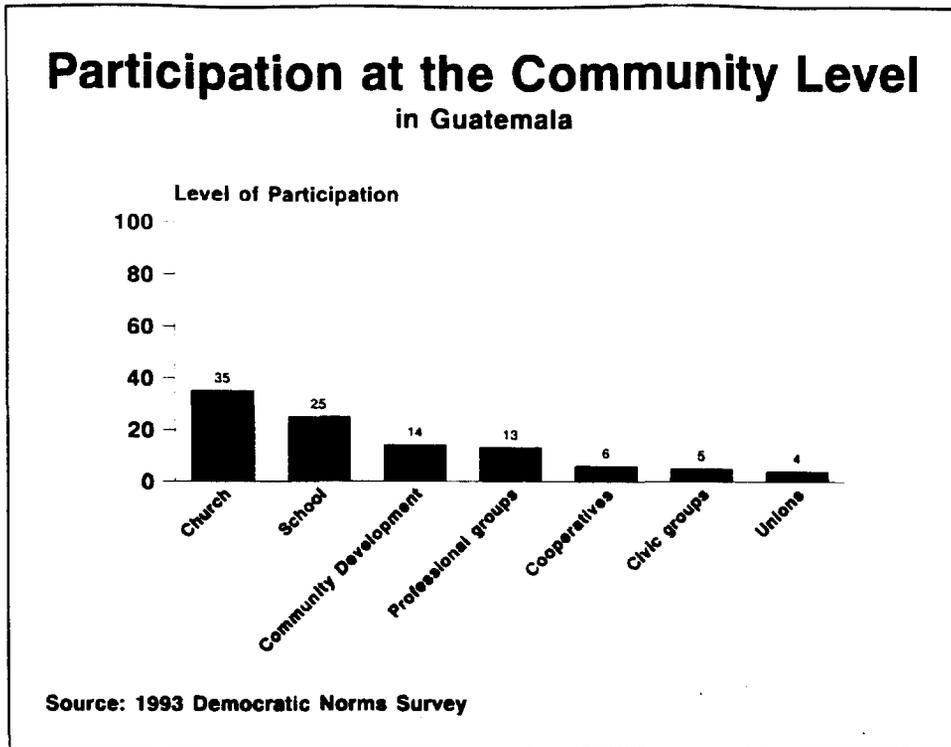


Figure 5

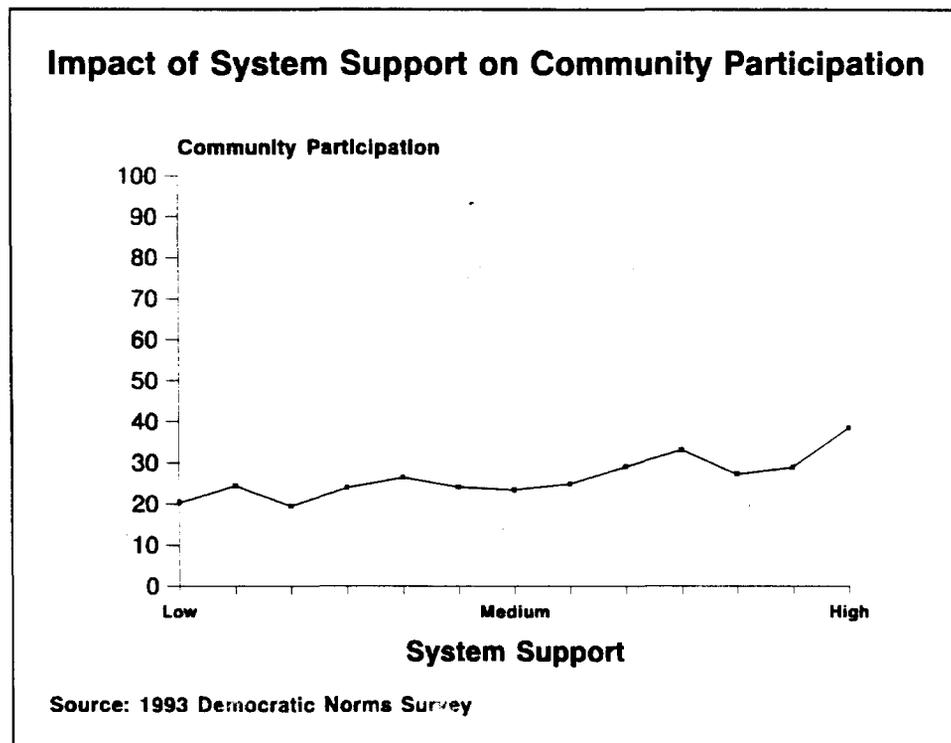


Figure 6

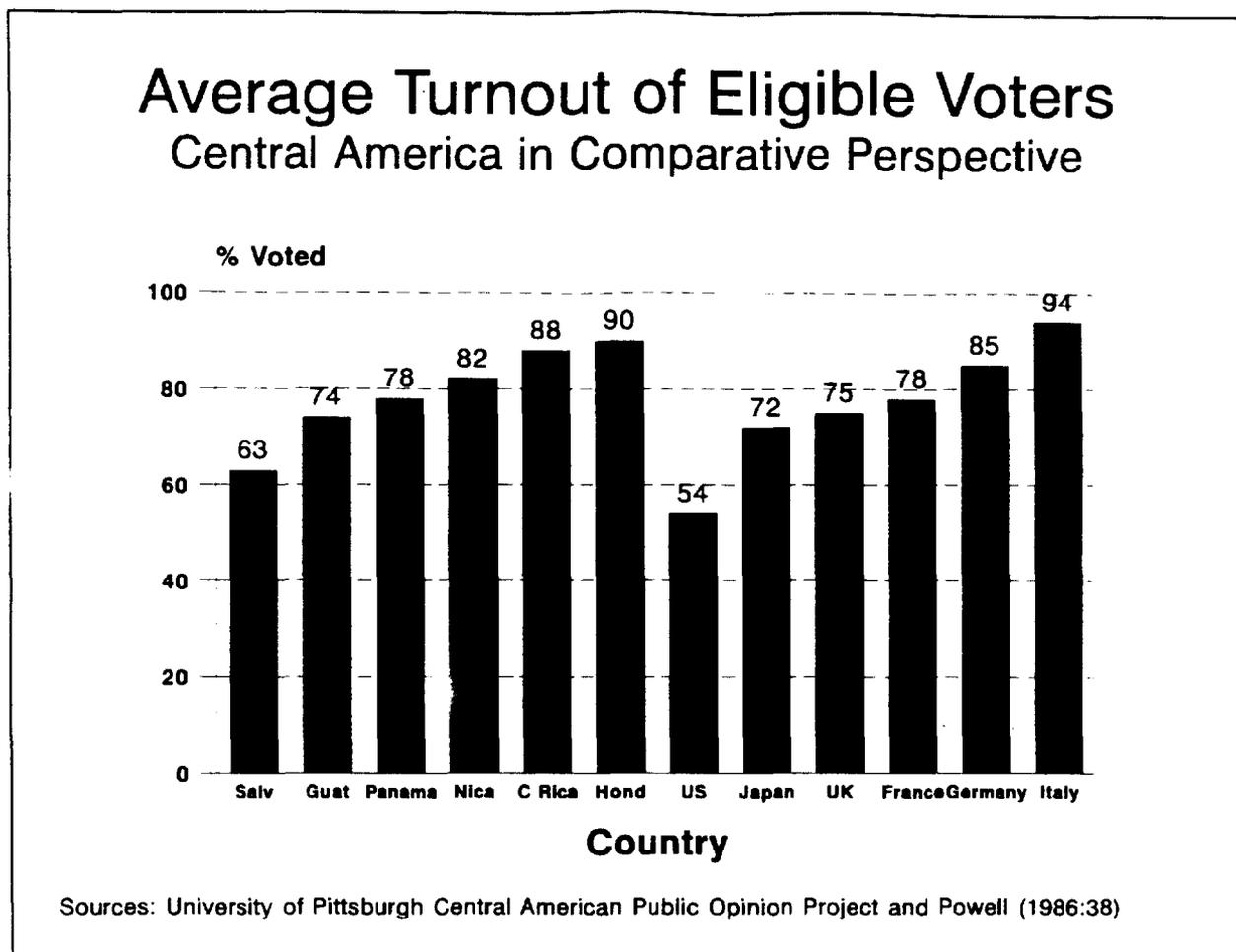


Figure 4

two indexes, one called "communal participation" and the other called "occupation-related participation."

We found that communal participation was not at all related to education, ethnicity, gender, age or urban/rural distinctions. Rather, it was significantly associated with system support and religiosity. Figure VII.5 shows the relationship between system support (defined in terms of the index created in Chapter III) and

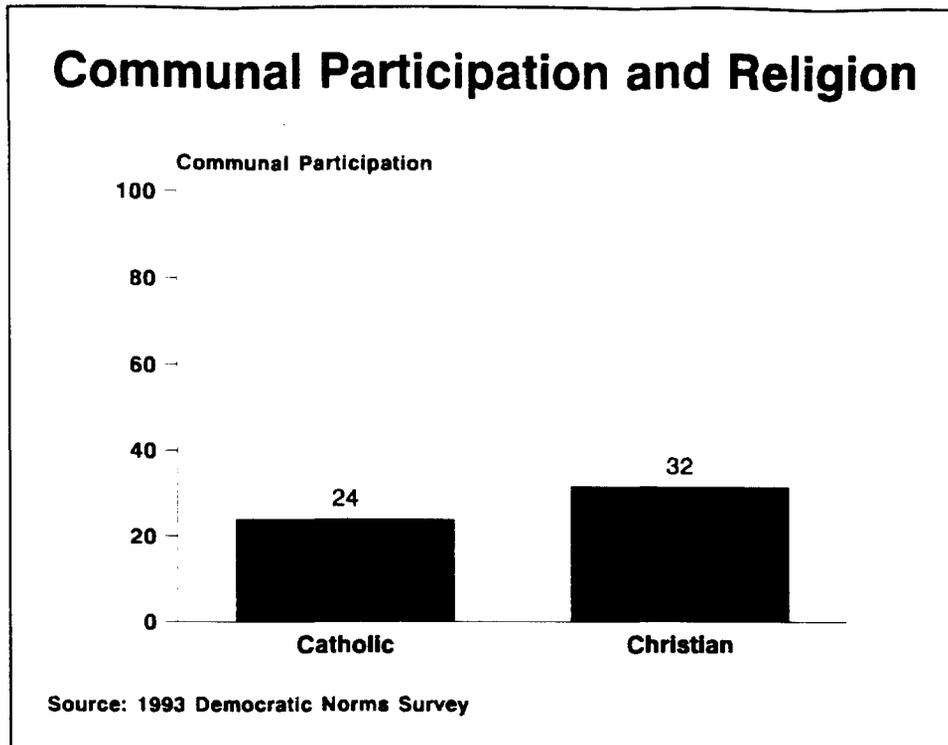


Figure 8

It is fortunate that we created a separate index for occupation-related participation since its correlates are quite different from those of communal participation. Participation in occupation-related groups is significantly ($< .001$) related, in order of importance, to education, gender and ethnicity.¹⁰ Religion and system support play no role. As can be seen in Figure VII.9 below, although there is a steady increase in participation as education increases, the real surge occurs at the highest levels of education.

Gender's relationship to professional participation is shown in Figure VII.10. Although the level of such participation remains low, males are found to have double the level of females (sig. $< .001$). This difference, of course, is in part a function of the higher rate of economic activity among males in Guatemala.

Finally, ethnicity is related to occupation-related participation, but the relationship is complex. Defining Indians by dress, shows that ladinos participate more than Indians, but the difference is not significant for three of the four variables in the occupation-participation index. However, cooperative participation is significantly higher among Indians (sig. $< .001$) than ladinos. When Indians are self-defined, then cooperative participation remains significantly higher among Indians, but

¹⁰The order of importance is determined by the beta weights in the regression equations.

communal participation (Figure VII.6). It can be seen that as support increases, participation increases.

The relationship between religiosity and communal participation is shown in Figure VI.7. The more frequently respondents attend church, the higher their communal participation. This finding is not surprising since church groups form part of the communal participation index. Indeed, when the church committees are removed from the index, the relationship is weakened considerably. We also found that other measures of religiosity, such as frequency of prayer, relate directly to communal participation.

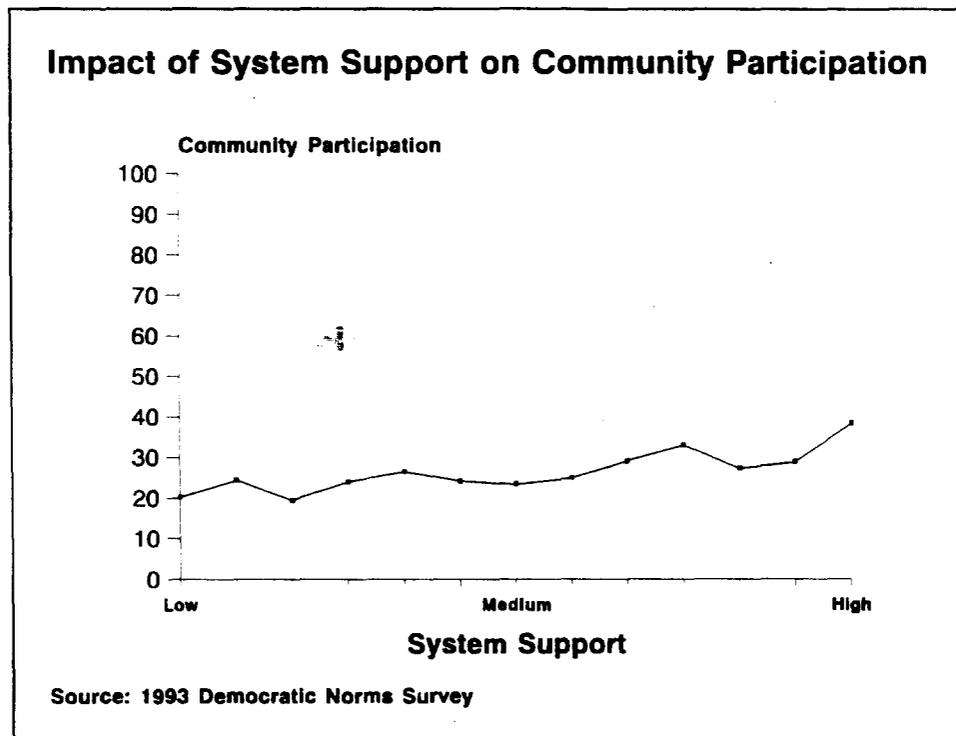


Figure 7

It is quite clear from examining Figure VII.8 that various Christian groups, largely protestant fundamentalist exhibit significantly ($< .001$) higher communal participation than do Catholics. We also found that those with no religion had the lowest level of participation (not shown on figure). These findings speak directly to the debate as to the role of the expansion of non-catholic groups in Guatemala. Apparently these new groups do help stimulate local level participation.

is also higher on the other variables as well, although not significantly so. An examination of occupation-related participation and Indians defined by language spoken produced inconsistent results, with some groups participating at far higher levels than others. We suspect that these differences might be a function of idiosyncratic factors in these small samples and therefore we think it inappropriate to present these findings here.

Contacting Public Officials

One of the most direct forms of political participation is contacting public officials. Of course, in many instances such contacting is for personal rather than communal gain. Nonetheless, it represents an important form of participation. We found that contacting the mayor (Alcalde Municipal) was the most common of this form of contacting, whereas contacting a legislator was the least common. Figure VII.11 shows the results.

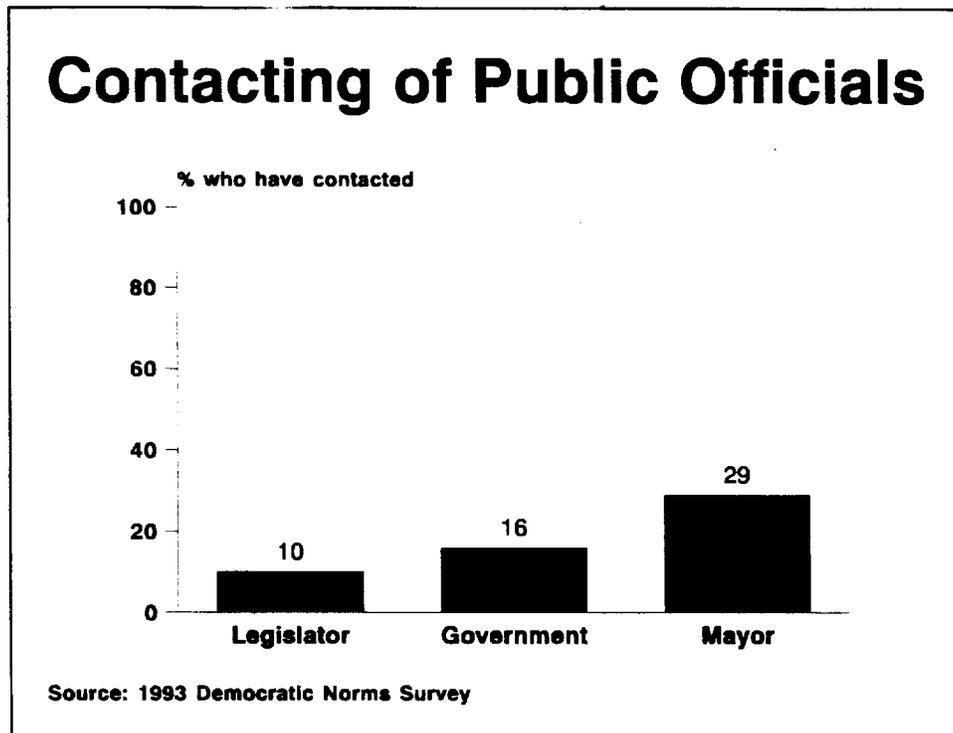


Figure 11

The variables that are related to this form of participation are rather different from that which we have seen before. The small number of respondents who have contacted a legislator showed no significant relationship with any of the demographic or socio-economic variables we have examined in this study, but it was significantly and positively related to system support. Contacting the government produces similar patterns to those which we have already observed. We focus here, therefore, on the mayor, as the variable that was most directly related to several others in our study. Our analysis is based on multiple regression results, such that each of the variables discussed below are significant predictors of contacting the mayor.

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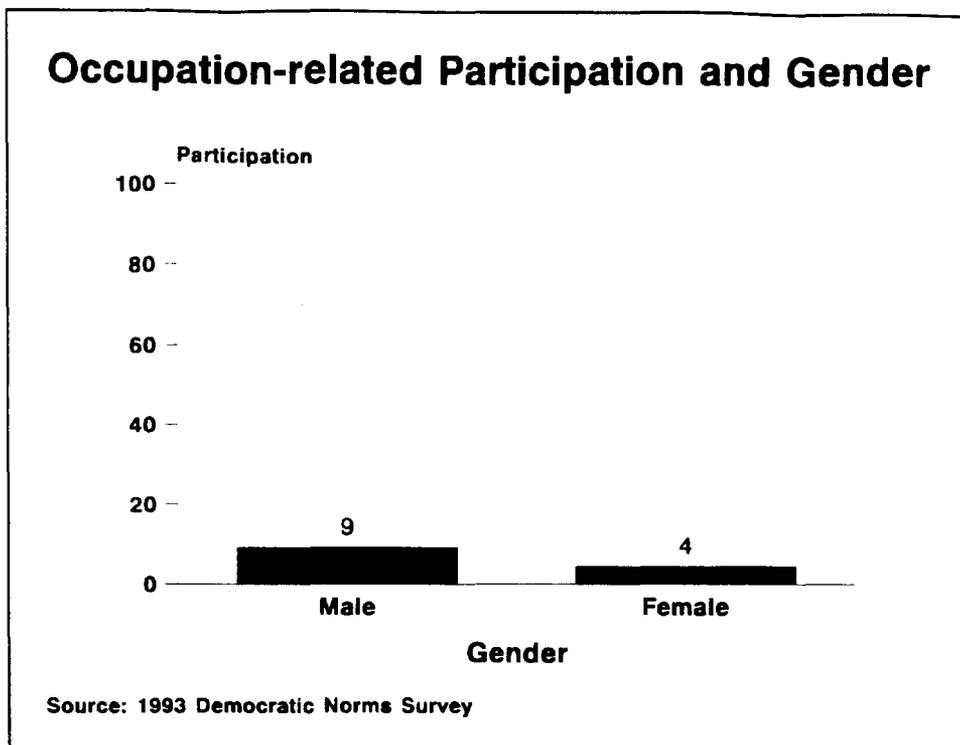


Figure 9

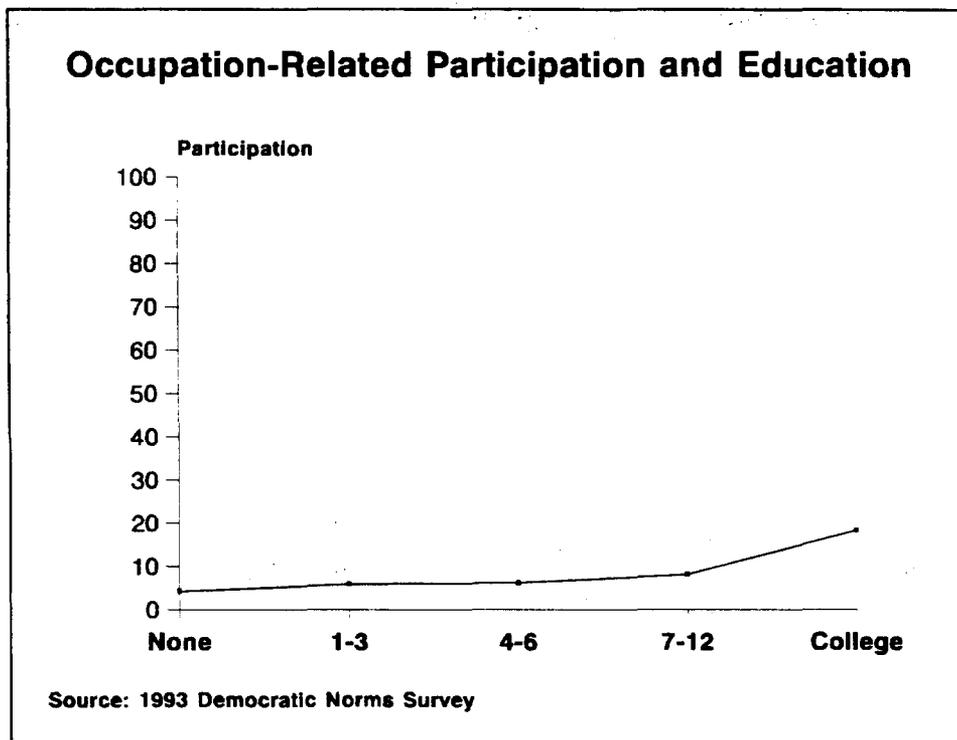


Figure 10

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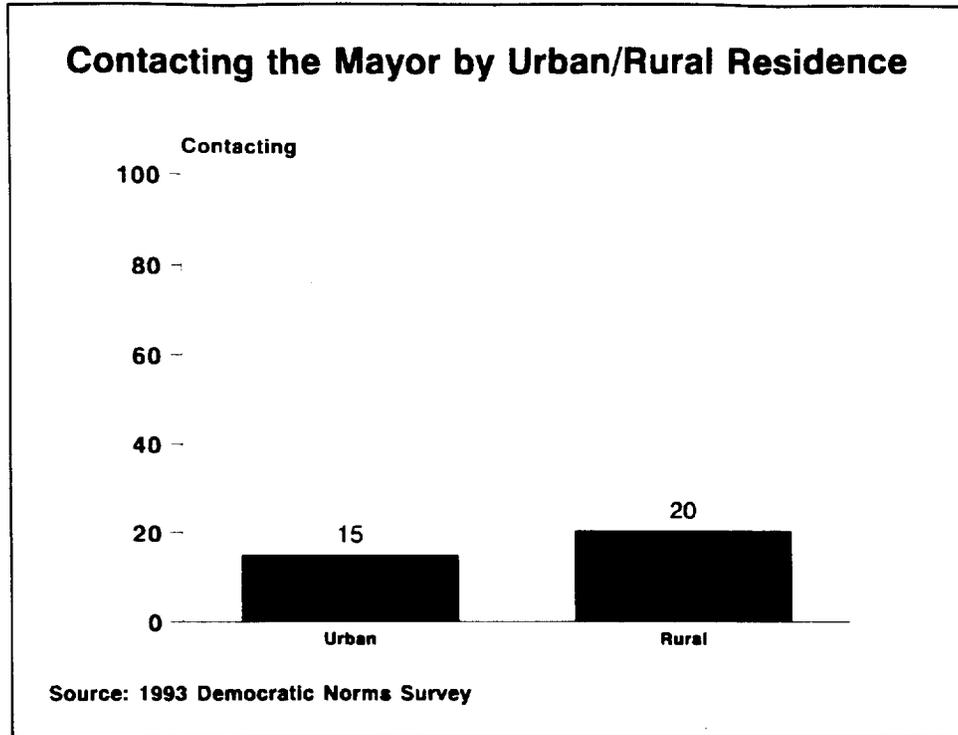


Figure 13

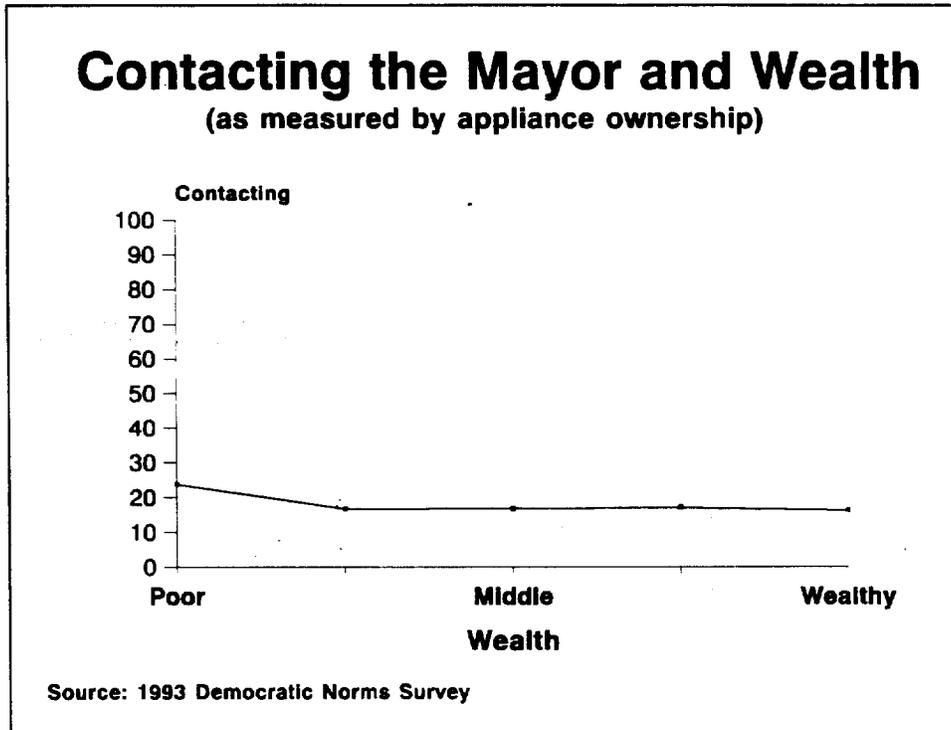


Figure 14

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In Figure VII.12 we see that education has the expected relationship to participation: higher educated respondents are more likely to contact the mayor than less-well educated. We also found that system support is positively and significantly associated with higher levels of contacting of mayors.

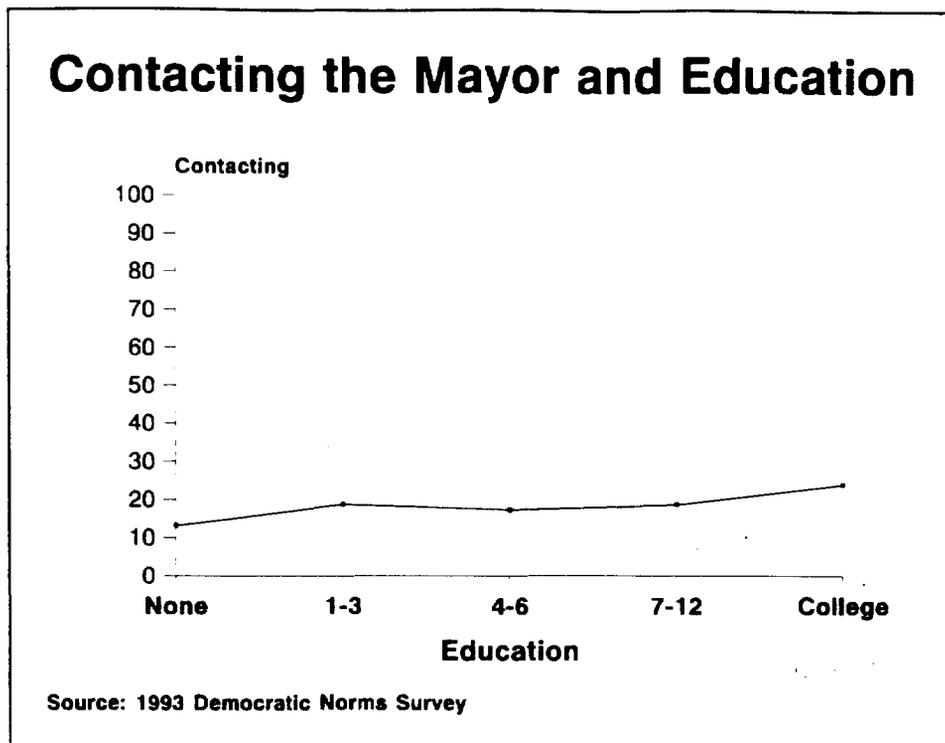


Figure 12

Up until this point in our investigation, rural/urban differences have not made an impact on participation (after we control for other variables such as education), but in contacting the mayor, rural Guatemalans are significantly more active than urban Guatemalans in spite of their lower levels of education (see Figure VII.13).

In light of the above findings, it is not surprising that wealth also turns out to have a negative, significant relationship to contacting of mayors. As we see in Figure VII.14, contacting is highest among the poorest citizens, many of whom live in rural areas. This relationship holds even when education is held constant (in a multiple regression equation).

Finally, we examine the question of ethnicity and contacting the mayor. We found that ethnicity was significantly related to this form of political participation, such that Indians exhibited higher levels of contacting than ladinos. This finding held for each Indian group except K'ekchi (see Figure VII.15).

VIII. Support for Military or Civilian Rule

Comparative Perspectives

We have focused thus far in this report on democratic attitudes. In this chapter we look at the flip side of the equation, support for military rule. It is important to do so since not all individuals who are supportive of democratic liberties are completely hostile to the idea of military rule. Similarly, not all who express little or no support for democratic norms would be supportive of a military take over.

We begin this analysis by first examining direct support for a military coup. We then follow that exploration with a more detailed look at the policy in which citizens of Central America feel more or less comfortable with military rule. In this analysis we exclude Costa Rica which has not had experience with military rule in over 40 years. In that nation, therefore, there are large components of the population for whom questions about military rule would not be very meaningful.

In Figure VIII.1 below we see the responses to the question: "Do you think there is any reason that would justify a coup d'etat that would interrupt the

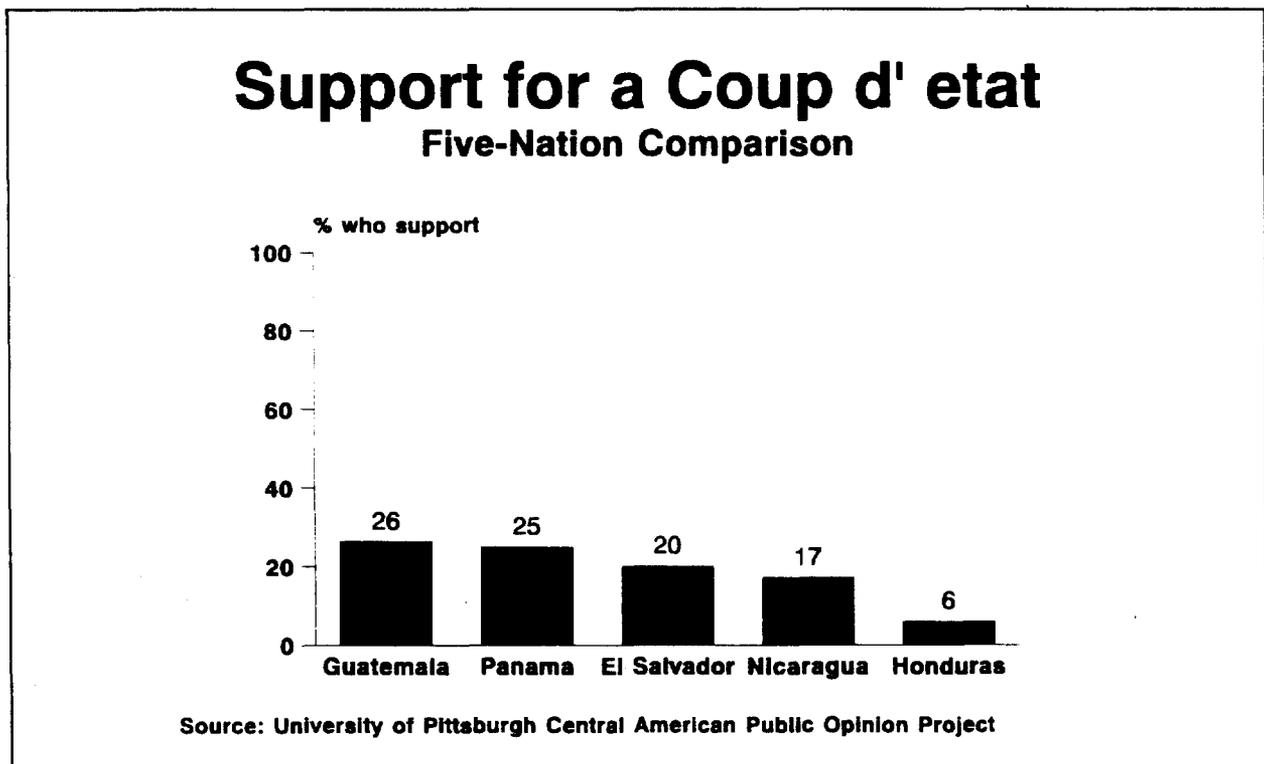


Figure 1

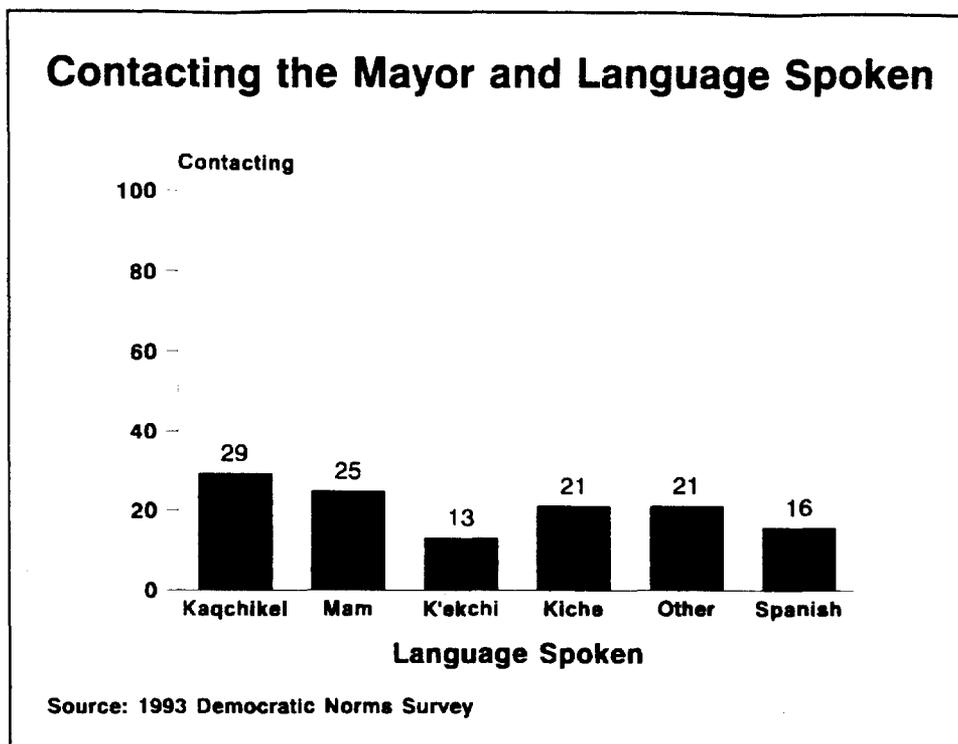


Figure 15

We conclude this exploration of contacting public officials as a form of political participation by noting that the results indicate that there are significant opportunities for stimulating democracy at the local level in Guatemala. We have found that among the poor in rural Guatemala, contacting is greater than among the urban and better off. We have also found that Indians are more likely to contact their mayors than ladinos. In El Salvador, USAID is attempting to stimulate local participation through the Municipalities in Action program. There a study has shown that such a program appears to offer numerous possibilities for stimulating the development of democracy.¹¹

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¹¹Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova Macías, "Considerations for Increasing Participation in Local Democratic Government in El Salvador," report to USAID, July, 1993, typescript.

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TABLE 1
COUNTRY

	Guatemala		Honduras		El Salvador		Nicaragua		Panama	
	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)
Reduce crime										
Hurts	47.4%	144	53.2%	301	69.7%	634	69.1%	357	62.0%	310
Helps	42.1%	128	44.7%	253	27.5%	250	18.6%	96	35.6%	178
DK	10.5%	32	2.1%	12	2.9%	26	12.4%	64	2.4%	12
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Halt Student Strikes										
Hurts	61.2%	186	64.8%	367	65.9%	600	70.2%	363	67.0%	335
Helps	22.7%	69	32.0%	181	30.4%	277	16.6%	86	30.2%	151
DK	16.1%	49	3.2%	18	3.6%	33	13.2%	68	2.8%	14
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Put a halt to guerrillas										
Hurts	44.7%	136	54.9%	311	68.7%	625	66.5%	344	52.2%	261
Helps	40.1%	122	38.0%	215	27.5%	250	19.5%	101	39.6%	198
DK	15.1%	46	7.1%	40	3.8%	35	13.9%	72	8.2%	41
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Prevent takeovers of public buildings by revolutionary groups										
Hurts	50.3%	153	58.5%	331	52.1%	474	64.6%	334	55.2%	276
Helps	28.6%	87	34.8%	197	44.6%	406	21.1%	109	37.2%	186
DK	21.1%	64	6.7%	38	3.3%	30	14.3%	74	7.6%	38
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Remove political extremists from public office										
Hurts	46.7%	142	76.5%	433	47.0%	428	58.8%	304	63.2%	316
Helps	27.0%	82	14.8%	84	45.6%	415	25.1%	130	28.6%	143
DK	26.3%	80	8.7%	49	7.4%	67	16.1%	83	8.2%	41
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Stop strikes of unionized workers										
Hurts	54.6%	166	63.4%	359	57.7%	525	65.2%	337	69.4%	347
Helps	22.4%	68	32.7%	185	37.9%	345	20.9%	108	27.2%	136
DK	23.0%	70	3.9%	22	4.4%	40	13.9%	72	3.4%	17
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Stop lock-out strikes of businesses										
Hurts	56.3%	171	68.6%	388	59.8%	544	67.5%	349	70.0%	350
Helps	21.4%	65	24.7%	140	35.8%	326	18.0%	93	24.6%	123
DK	22.4%	68	6.7%	38	4.4%	40	14.5%	75	5.4%	27
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500

democratic process that our country has been experiencing?" The question was phrased in such a way so that it would likely elicit a positive response only from hard-core supporters of military rule. As can be seen, Guatemala scored higher than any other country, although Panama was nearly as high. At the other extreme was Honduras, in which only a tiny fraction of the population would support a coup. In short, over one-quarter of residents of Guatemala City in 1992 supported military intervention in politics.

We asked a series of eleven distinct items to our Central American sample in an effort to determine in which areas citizens believed that military governments had done a good job. In each area we asked, "From what you know about military governments in this country, do you think that they have helped or hurt...." Table VIII.1 below contains the results. The strongest support for military rule in Guatemala is expressed on the item measuring their ability to stop crime, followed by their ability to stop guerrillas. A similar response on crime is found in Honduras, but in El Salvador the advantage of military rule is seen more in terms of revolutionaries. The weakest support for the efficacy of military rule in Guatemala is on the economic development questions, including unemployment and inflation.

TABLE 1
COUNTRY

	Guatemala		Honduras		El Salvador		Nicaragua		Panama	
	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)
Economic development										
Hurts	60.5%	184	74.0%	419	74.2%	675	63.8%	330	73.8%	369
Helps	22.4%	68	22.6%	128	22.2%	202	23.2%	120	23.8%	119
DK	17.1%	52	3.4%	19	3.6%	33	13.0%	67	2.4%	12
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Reduce Unemployment										
Hurts	64.1%	195	66.6%	377	81.2%	739	65.6%	339	70.8%	354
Helps	20.1%	61	30.0%	170	16.0%	146	21.9%	113	27.0%	135
DK	15.8%	48	3.4%	19	2.7%	25	12.6%	65	2.2%	11
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Reduce Inflation										
Hurts	63.5%	193	71.9%	407	83.8%	763	62.5%	323	80.2%	401
Helps	19.1%	58	24.4%	138	13.0%	118	24.4%	126	16.2%	81
DK	17.4%	53	3.7%	21	3.2%	29	13.2%	68	3.6%	18
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Make better laws										
Hurts	52.6%	160	72.3%	409	65.8%	599	66.2%	342	75.4%	377
Helps	32.6%	99	23.9%	135	30.0%	273	19.5%	101	22.6%	113
DK	14.8%	45	3.9%	22	4.2%	38	14.3%	74	2.0%	10
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500

Efficacy of Elected versus Military Rule

We used a series of items similar to the ones shown above for the Central America survey to measure the extent to which Guatemalans believed that military rule is more or less efficacious than elected, civilian rule. The question we asked was: "I am going to read to you a list of problems that we have in the country, so that you can tell me who can solve them better; a civilian government elected by the people or a military government imposed by force." For the sample as a whole, the results appear in Table VIII.2.

As can be seen in the table, most of the items have a narrow range of response; about 10-15 percent of Guatemalans support military rule over civilian rule. Only on the items of controlling political violence and crime, does the proportion of those who support military over civilian rule increase notably.

What is especially noteworthy in these responses is the relatively high proportion of responses that supported the view that neither military nor civilian governments would be effective at dealing with the problems mentioned. On the items concerning political violence, poverty, foreign debt, immorality, inflation, crime and corruption, more Guatemalans opted for the "neither" response than either the military or the civilians. We interpret these results as an indicator of deep alienation. This makes us wonder how strongly civilian government will be supported in Guatemala. Quite clearly, civilian government would need to demonstrate its ability to deal with these important issues to begin to build a favorable consensus regarding the democratic political process.

We next sought to determine the factors that are associated with support for military rule. To do this we formed an overall scale of support for military rule.¹ We find that system support is positively associated with support for military rule, as is shown in Figure VIII.3 below. This might come as a surprise to some, but if the discussion of system support presented earlier in this report is recalled, it will become clear that support for the system does not necessarily imply support for a democratic system. The relationship between the two variables is not particularly strong, however, as is indicated by the very gentle slope of the line in the figure.

¹The nine items had an Alpha reliability coefficient of .85. In order to focus exclusively on those who believe that the military is more efficacious than civilian government, we recoded the items so as to assign one point if the respondent preferred the military option, and zero points if he/she did not. The items were then summed and transformed into a 0-100 range.

Intra-national Comparisons in Guatemala

Support for a Coup

In Guatemala in the 1993 survey we changed somewhat the overall item regarding support for a coup. We asked: "Do you think that sometimes there could be a sufficient reason for the military to take over the government by force, or do you think that there never is sufficient reason for that?" Support for a coup was much higher than in 1992. We cannot say if this increase was because of that changed wording or because of the political atmosphere prevailing on the eve of the Serrano coup. For the country as a whole, the results are presented in Figure VIII.2 below. As can be seen, a plurality opposes a coup, but over one-third support it. If one discounts the non-responses, then support for a coup totals 44 percent of the population. An exploration of the predictors of attitudes toward a coup did not produce any significant relationships (in a multiple regression equation), and hence in order to determine more fully the factors that are related to support for military rule, we turn to our more specific measures.

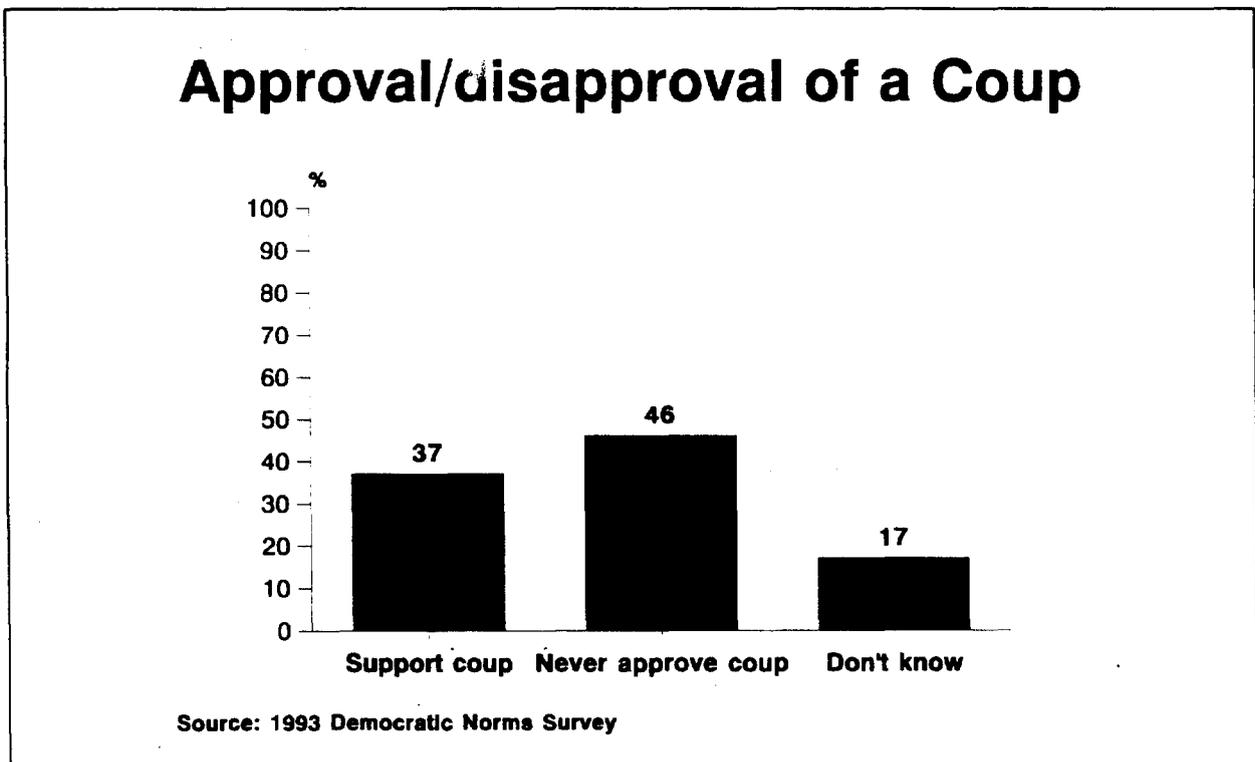


Figure 2

Immorality

Elected	
%.....	27.8%
Military	
%.....	11.3%
Neither	
%.....	45.2%
DK	
%.....	15.7%

Inflation

Elected	
%.....	36.2%
Military	
%.....	10.4%
Neither	
%.....	39.3%
DK	
%.....	14.0%

Crime

Elected	
%.....	29.2%
Military	
%.....	23.1%
Neither	
%.....	35.3%
DK	
%.....	12.4%

Corruption

Elected	
%.....	24.2%
Military	
%.....	13.7%
Neither	
%.....	47.1%
DK	
%.....	15.0%

Table VIII.2. Efficacy of Civilian versus Military Rule

<u>Unemployment</u>	
Elected	
%.....	47.5%
Military	
%.....	10.9%
Neither	
%.....	29.4%
DK	
%.....	12.2%
<u>Abuses of workers and peasants</u>	
Elected	
%.....	41.2%
Military	
%.....	13.3%
Neither	
%.....	32.4%
DK	
%.....	13.2%
<u>Political violence</u>	
Elected	
%.....	32.9%
Military	
%.....	18.1%
Neither	
%.....	34.7%
DK	
%.....	14.2%
<u>Poverty</u>	
Elected	
%.....	34.3%
Military	
%.....	8.3%
Neither	
%.....	43.6%
DK	
%.....	13.8%
<u>Foreign debts</u>	
Elected	
%.....	36.7%
Military	
%.....	9.0%
Neither	
%.....	39.0%
DK	
%.....	15.4%

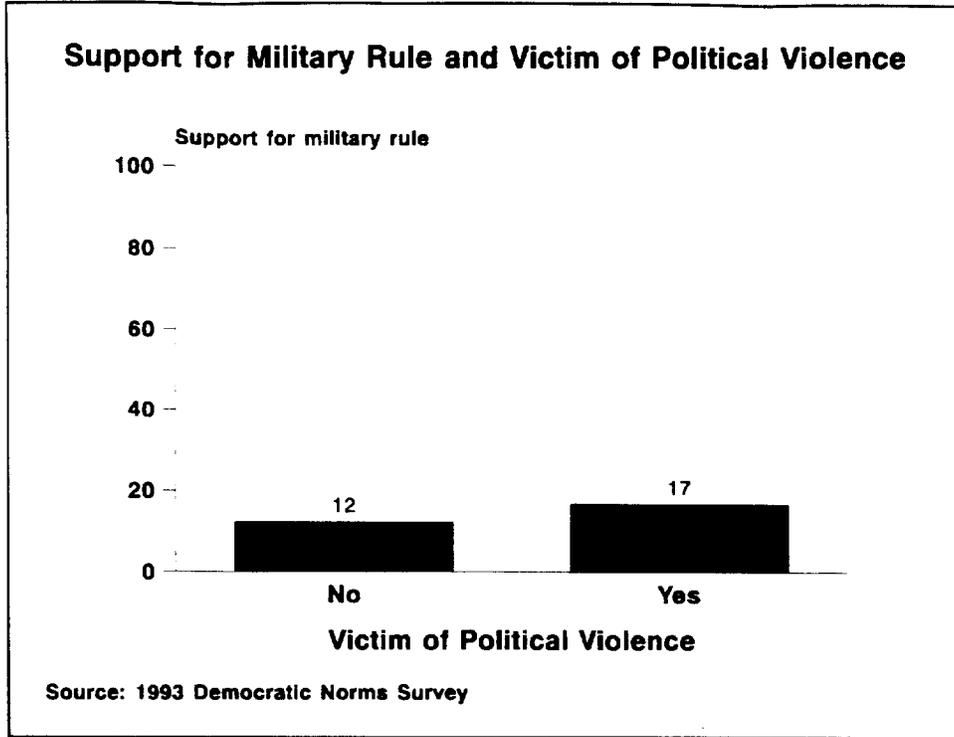


Figure 4

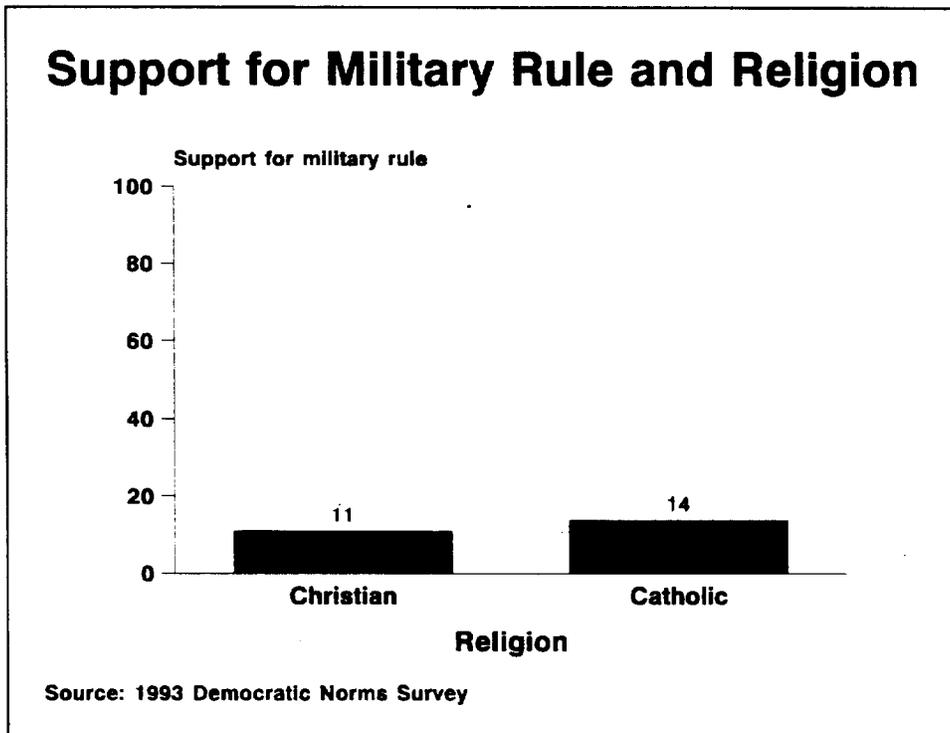


Figure 5

12

A second variable related to support for military rule is whether or not the respondent or member of the respondent's family has suffered from political violence. As we see in Figure VIII.4 below, those who have so suffered are more supportive of the military than those who have not. Once again this finding might surprise some readers. But recall that military rule is seen by Guatemalans as being more effective in controlling violence, both political and criminal. As a result, those who have suffered from such violence might be more supportive of military rule unless, of course, they blame the military for the violence in the first place. No doubt some of the victims of military violence do indeed blame the military, but the majoritarian tendency in the sample was to side with the military.

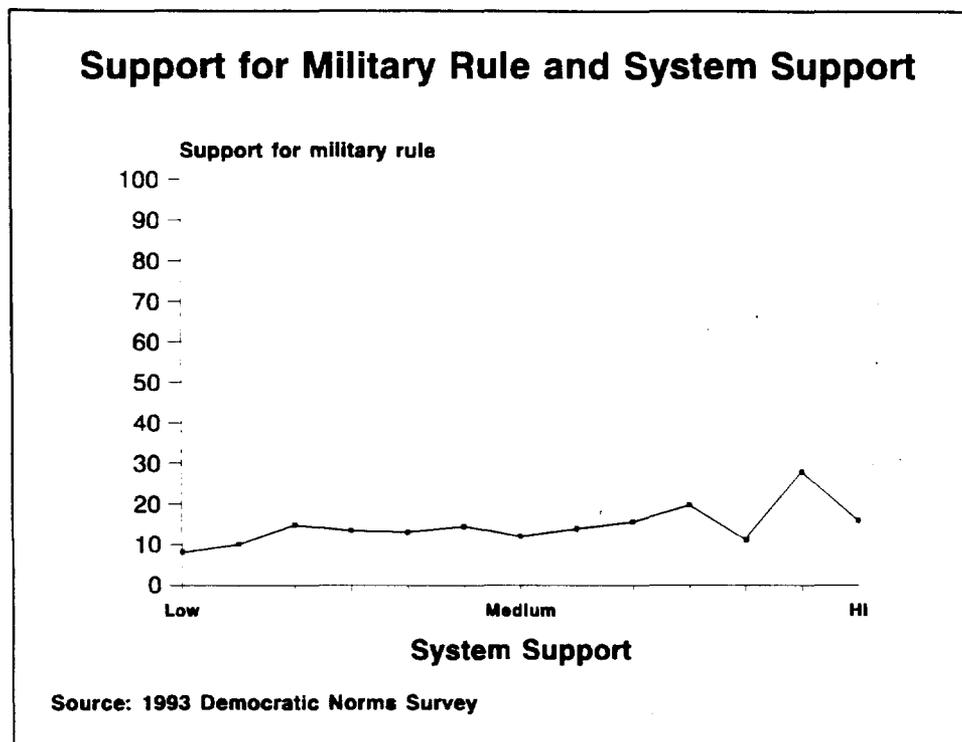


Figure 3

The final item that produced a significant relationship with support for military rule was religion. As shown in Figure VIII.5, Catholics were more supportive than Protestants. Catholics are more likely to represent a more traditional set of attitudes than Protestants in the Guatemalan context. This may be part of the explanation for the difference.

Even though there were no other variables (in the multiple regression equation) that proved to have a significant relationship with support for military rule, we did find that wealth was nearly significant, and when looked at in the bi-variate situation, was significant (.02). Figure VIII.6 shows that poorer Guatemalans expressed higher support for military rule than the wealthier.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

We have examined the results of two sets of national surveys, a cross-national study of attitudes toward the political process in principal (most often capital) cities in the six countries in Central America undertaken in 1992, and a national (urban and rural) study of the same basic set of attitudes for Guatemala undertaken in 1993. We have used the former survey to provide a basis for cross national comparisons in order to better understand the results of the latter survey. In this chapter, we shall present the conclusions drawn from the analysis of these two surveys. Based on these conclusions, we shall make suggestions regarding programmatic implications for the strengthening of democratic institutions in Guatemala.

We need to begin this analysis by noting that in historical terms, Guatemala has only a very limited experience with democracy. Except for two brief periods, 1944-1954, and 1984 to the present, Guatemala's politics has been dominated by the military, governing by the use of authoritarian means, although sometimes disguised in democratic forms, for example, the use of fraudulent elections to legitimate their rule. In this respect, there is little on which to base the development of a democratic set of political beliefs. In turn, this means that any efforts to build democracy needs to directly address the issues of generating an appropriate value structure at the same time as it addresses the strengthening of democratic institutions.

System Support

The first important set of attitudes are those regarding system support, defined as the legitimacy accorded by respondents to the political system in general and its component institutions. Attitudes covered under this rubric include the overall acceptance and support of the system of government, acceptance and support of political institutions such as the legislature, the courts, the military and the principal agents for the protection of citizens' rights. System support is the attitudinal underpinning of a stable political order, one able to manage conflict within the confines of its political institutions. Reviewing the principal conclusions on this set of variables, drawn from the two surveys, we may note the following:

- o Guatemala sat in the middle for most elements of system support when compared with other countries in Central America (1992 survey)
- o Examining system support in the 1993 survey, the highest support on an institution by institution basis was expressed for the human rights procurator, the lowest for congress and the political parties. At a conceptual level, respondents expressed an almost universal patriotic pride as Guatemalans, but felt that their political system did not defend human rights;
- o Taking a set of questions to determine an overall score for system support, the mean was 40, indicating support that was only "lukewarm"

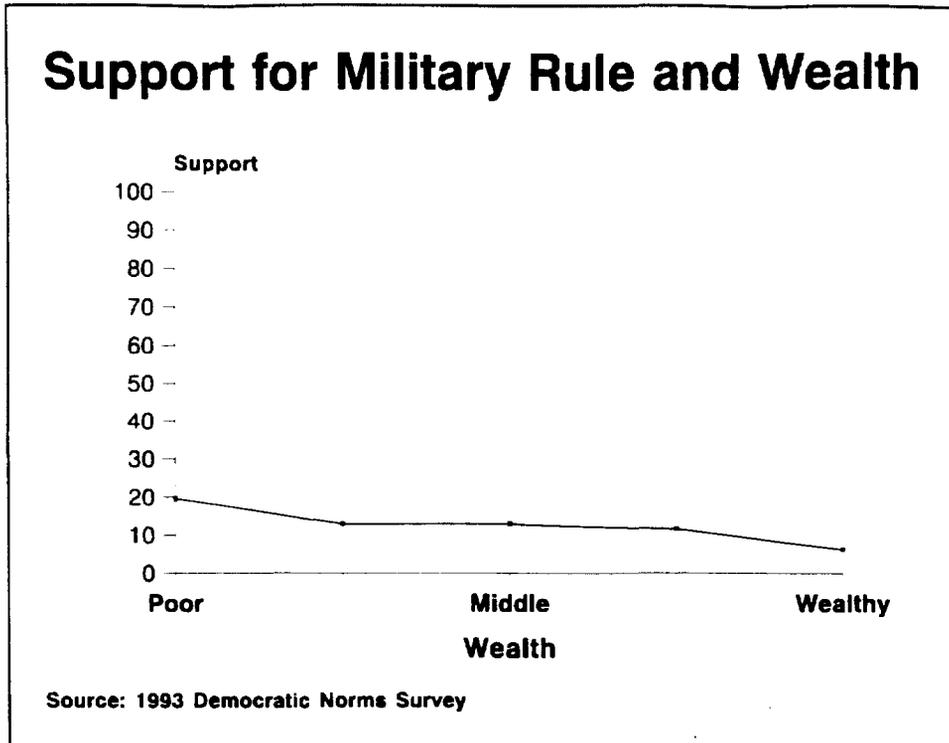


Figure 6

modes of participation (legal demonstrations, communal decision-making and election campaigns);

- o The majority of Guatemalans in the 1993 survey are more concerned about the protection of their own liberties than they are about the rights of other Guatemalans to express their dissent;
- o Looking at an index of democratic liberties, males are more likely than females to support democratic liberties;
- o Higher levels of education are associated with higher levels of support for democratic liberties;
- o Indigenous peoples express higher support for democratic liberties than do ladinos, above all with respect to the right to dissent.
- o Examining this variable more closely, K'iche' are more likely to express support for democratic liberties than other groups, looking at the data from the broad national sample. Looking at the data from the special sample of indigenous peoples, both Mam and K'iche' score higher on their support of democratic liberties than do other indigenous groups;
- o Indigenous peoples, especially the K'iche,' are less likely to be supportive of the Guatemalan political system while at the same time being more supportive of democratic liberties, above all the right to dissent;
- o Education was the strongest predictor of increasing support for democratic liberties. Higher education is associated with higher levels of support for democratic liberties. Gender was second with women lower than men in their support of democratic liberties. Ethnicity, defined in terms of use of Indian garb, was the next best predictor of democratic liberties and being a K'iche' increased the likelihood of support of democratic liberties. We need to note that we have undertaken an additional survey of speakers of the four major indigenous language groups, K'iche', Mam, Kaqchikel and Q'ekchi. Analysis of this data set will provide additional insights into the relationship between ethnicity and political values.

In summary, Guatemalans as whole demonstrate low levels of support in comparison to elsewhere in Central America for democratic attitudes regarding both the right to participate and the right to dissent. They are more concerned about their individual range of political action than the rights of other Guatemalans. Education was the strongest predictor of higher levels of support of democratic liberties, suggesting that education may serve as a route for the formation of such beliefs.

toward political institutions and the political system as a whole;

- o Higher levels of education are associated with lower levels of system support. Guatemala City is associated with lower levels of system support, probably as a function of higher educational levels;
- o System support is highest among the poorest segments of the population, lowest among the wealthier segments;
- o The indigenous population (as measured by form of dress) expresses lower system support than the ladino population, despite the fact that lower education is associated with higher system support;
- o Measuring indigenosity by language spoken, only K'iche speakers stand out as having dramatically lower system support than other indigenous peoples and than ladinos;
- o Examining the relative strength of various factors in explaining system support, the single most important factor is ethnicity, followed by wealth and trailed by education.

To sum up our findings regarding system support, Guatemalans demonstrate only a modest level of support for their system of government. The most important elements that are associated with system support are the ethnic background, wealth and education of the respondents. K'iche' speakers are the least likely to support the political system. The poorest and the most educated are also likely to be the least supportive of the political system.

Support For Democratic Liberties

System support, that is to say, support for a stable political order, does not guarantee democracy. Loyalty to the system may very well serve to bind individuals to an authoritarian order as well as it can bind individuals to the support of a democratic order. We have look at an additional set of values that focus on the acceptance of democracy within the context of a stable political order. Support for democracy can be couched in terms of belief in a system of widespread political participation (extensive cultures) and/or support for the right of minority dissent (inclusive cultures). Both elements are necessary for a full-fledged democratic order, one that assures the maximum liberty to participate in the making of rational and effective choice and one that tolerates a full range of democratic dissent. Among the respondents in the surveys, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding their views of both the exclusive and inclusive as aspects of democratic culture:

- o Guatemalans in comparison with other Central American countries (1992 survey) have little tolerance for the right to dissent and for conventional

democratic principals. Democracy, in essence, is a system to contain political violence and channel dispute resolution in to peaceful channels, within the context of the freedom to express and tolerate dissident viewpoints. Violence, as we noted in Chapter II, has been a hallmark of Guatemalan history. Repression has been a tool of authoritarian regimes throughout Guatemala's political history. Violence has been a tool as well for political change. The future of Guatemalan democracy must include the ability to limit and control violence and to open up the possibility of peaceful expression of alternative viewpoints. The attitudes of the Guatemalans surveyed regarding political resulted in the following observations and conclusions:

- o Around 17% of those interviewed report being victims of what can be defined as political violence;
- o Higher levels of education are associated with a greater likelihood of being a victim of political violence;
- o The vast majority of Guatemalans believe that they live in a society with a high level of political violence (1992 study);
- o The three most commonly cited causes of political violence are inequality of land distribution, followed by the gap between rich and poor and lastly by the differences between indigenous peoples and ladinos;
- o The higher the educational level the more likely that an individual will feel that the income gap is a cause of political violence;
- o Higher levels of support for democratic liberties are found among those who believe that political violence has social causes. Conversely, lower levels of system support are found among those who believe that political violence has social causes;
- o The greater one believes in the ability of the police, the army and the courts to defend the right to life in Guatemala, the greater support for the system one has, but the lower the support for democratic liberties. Stated in other terms, faith in the police, the army and the courts goes with support for the political system. A lack of faith in these institutions goes with support for basic democratic liberties. (These institutions are seen largely as agents of repression and not as agents to protect citizens' rights.);
- o Surprisingly high levels of Guatemalans (from 13-22%) support violent political measures such as land seizures, building takeovers and coups. The greatest support level is for coups (22%);
- o Takeovers of land and buildings are more likely to be supported by the

The Interrelationship of System Support and Democratic Norms

The prospective for democratic development is a function of the relationship between support of the overall political system and the support for democratic participation and democratic liberties. We have examined each of sets of attitudes separately. Combining these attitudes by means of a typology, we can identify four different regime types: stable democracies, unstable democracies, oligarchic regimes and democratic breakdown regimes. This typology begins with the assumption that regimes being analyzed are all at least formally democratic, having, at a minimum, competitive regular elections with widespread political participation. As is clear from the historical context, Guatemala is a recent arrival to the category of a formal democratic order (the last eight years). In the context of this typology, looking at the distribution of attitudes among respondents in the 1992 and 1993 surveys, we have drawn the following conclusions:

Looking in comparative perspective (based on the 1992 survey):

- o Guatemala is the Central American country with the lowest proportion of its citizens supporting stable democracy;
- o Guatemala is the Central American country with the highest proportion of its citizens whose attitudes support "democratic breakdown";
- o Guatemala is the country with the fewest individuals who support democracy overall (are in either the stable or unstable democracy cells).

Looking at the 1993 data:

- o The most important difference in the distribution of overall attitudes toward democracy is according to ethnicity: Indigenous peoples have twice as high a proportion of their respondents in the stable democratic cell as do ladinos. (K'iche' are to be found in the unstable democratic cell because of their low level of system support);
- o With the exception of the K'iche' the largest concentration of Guatemalans are in the democratic breakdown cell.

Guatemala's democracy, drawing out the implications of this analysis, is set on an extremely weak attitudinal base. The events in May suggest that mobilization in support of democracy is possible, under certain circumstances. However, it is clear that the attitudinal base needs to be strengthened to make such crises less likely in the future.

Political Violence In Guatemala

Violent solutions to political disagreements represent the breakdown of

poor and less well educated;

- o A large majority of those interviewed opposed the use of state violence as a means to stop political violence;
- o Only a slim majority supported democracy over the use of the 'mano dura'.
- o The higher the educational level the more likely that the individual will oppose state violence and oppose the mano dura;
- o The younger a respondent is, the more likely to oppose state violence and chose democratic participation over the mano dura;
- o System support is related to more support for state violence and the mano dura, while support for democratic liberties is associated with more opposition to state violence and more support for democracy over the mano dura.

The conclusions reached regarding this data suggest two broad areas of concern. One area relates to the means of preserving public order. Reflecting historical patterns, the police, the military and the courts, who in a democracy represent forces of order who can assure the peaceful resolution of conflict, are viewed as agents of state violence and repression. The other area of concern is the degree to which Guatemalans accept the notion of the use of force, and above all the maximum force expressed in a coup, as appropriate means of effecting political change.

In a more positive vein, a high portion of those interviewed do not endorse state violence as the means to controlling political violence. Perhaps the failure of military action to win a victory over the guerrillas may condition this set of responses.

Conventional Political Participation

The forms of political participation most closely associated with stable democracy are such activities as voting, petitioning officials either informally or formally, and organizing at the community level or through interest groups to promote a specific set of policies. Our data allow us to draw the following conclusions regarding these forms of participation:

From the 1992 survey:

- o Guatemala demonstrates a high level of community participation, second highest in the region;

- o With respect to respondent involvement in community problem solving, Guatemala ranks in the middle;
- o Guatemala ranks in the middle among the countries in the region on the levels of contacting public officials;
- o Guatemala has the second lowest voting turnout rate of all countries in the region;

From the 1993 Survey

- o Communal participation was related only to levels of system support and religiosity. Higher levels of communal participation were associated with higher levels of system support; The more frequently respondents attended church, the higher their communal participation;
- o Participation in occupation-related groups is related to education, gender and ethnicity. Males are more likely to participate than females. Better educated individuals are more likely to participate than lesser educated individuals. Ladinos are more likely to participate than indigenous peoples except in the case of cooperatives;
- o Contacting the mayor (as opposed to other levels of government) was the most common form of communication with public officials. Higher educated respondents are more likely to contact the mayors. Rural Guatemalans are also more likely to do so than urban Guatemalans. Indigenous peoples are more likely to contact their mayors than ladinos;
- o There are significant opportunities for stimulating democracy at the local level.

In sum, the Guatemalans in our study whether they are in urban or rural areas are most comfortable with participating at the community level. Formally, the current Constitution encourages that sort of participation. What may be needed is an expansion of the opportunities and the skills to undertake such participation.

Support for Military or Civilian Rule

We have examined the role of state violence in preserving an existing political order. We have also examined the overall possibilities for the maintenance or breakdown of the Guatemalan democratic order. Finally, we need to turn to the option, always present in Guatemalan history, between military and civilian control of the political order. Our data allow us to reach the following conclusions regarding the choice between military or civilian control of government and the political process:

From the 1992 Survey:

I. Introduction

Recent political events in Guatemala the coup and the public reaction that restored democracy, suggest the role that public opinion can play in maintaining a democratic order. As those events emphasized, an effective and sustainable democratic order needs to draw its strength from a significant portion of the population who are participant within the national society to the extent that they are aware of the existence of a nation-state, aware of the institutions of democratic government, possess the necessary tolerance of dissent and willingness to act within the democratic process. Thus, a critical component of democratic development is the presence of an appropriate set of democratic values and attitudes.

This study describes the current state of democratic values in Guatemala, both those values that are the building blocks of a stable political order, and those values and attitudes necessary to assure that the existing political order is a democratic one. In this introductory chapter, we shall describe the background to the study's development, and the broad outline of the methodology used and deal as well with issues related to the reliability and validity of the data collected. In Chapter II, we will explore the historical context of the study, examining in broad outline the march of relevant aspects of Guatemalan political development. Chapters III-VIII describe the results of the analysis of the survey data collected, placing them in an appropriate comparative perspective. Chapter IX contains the conclusions that can be drawn from the data.

Background

Guatemala over the past several years, like virtually all countries in Latin America, has been undergoing a process of political transformation moving toward popular sovereignty and responsible governance. In some countries such as Chile which emerged from a military dictatorship in 1990, the process has proceeded at a rapid pace, building on a past in which democratic rule had earlier established itself as an acceptable, even desirable form of government. In effect, that return to democracy could build on the fact that ample opportunity existed for the development of what we might call a democratic political culture prior to the onset of authoritarian rule.

In Guatemala the democratic tradition is far thinner than it is in Chile. Prior to the present period, Guatemala enjoyed only a relatively brief period, from 1944-1954, of free and fair elections and responsive government. Hence, public experience with and memory of democracy is very limited. One cannot expect that democratic values, that have taken decades or even centuries to evolve in other countries, could be established full-blown in Guatemala after only a very few years of elected, civilian rule. Moreover, in Guatemala several military men have been elected to office, and have proceeded to institute brutal, dictatorial regimes. Therefore, in the popular mind there

is room for considerable confusion between democratic governments and elected governments.

Guatemala's problems in establishing democracy are further complicated by the fact that deep racial cleavages have long divided the country. Only in Guatemala among all the countries in Central America is fully one-third of the population comprised of indigenous peoples, substantial proportions of which reside in and around the nation's capital and major urban centers.

Since the early days of contact between European and indigenous populations, Indian communities have been subject to continual repression, sometimes terminating in outright massacres. Many ladinos, in turn, believe that the indigenous population is not loyal to nor supportive of the dominant culture. Both indigenous peoples and ladinos are distrustful of each other.

A further difficulty limiting democratic political culture is related directly to the indigenous population itself. The basic elements of democracy such as minority rule and majority rights may also be missing or limited among many of the Mayan populations. Indeed, although the anthropological evidence is incomplete and contradictory, there are numerous indications of authoritarian political practices among the indigenous populations of Guatemala. In short, winning the allegiance of this population to any political system, let alone a democratic one constructed by the ladino population, presents a major challenge.

But, the problems are not limited to the above-mentioned factors. In the country as a whole, economic issues are likely to be far more important than questions of style of governance. Faced with overwhelming poverty, high infant mortality, high levels of illiteracy and other indicators of a bleak economic and social situation, any regime, irrespective of form, that can deliver to the population improvements in economic welfare is likely to win the support of that population.

Finally, one cannot ignore the military and the economic elites. Military men no doubt view civilian governments with much suspicion, fearing that their own privileged position in society could be threatened. Indeed, there is the added concern that civilian governments could seek to punish those in the military who have been accused of human rights violations. Economic elites fear an erosion of their own position, knowing that in terms of votes alone, they stand very little chance of resisting challenges to their economic privileges.

In Guatemala, then, it is not obvious that large sectors of the population, neither rich nor poor, Ladino or Indian, would hold any deep-seated allegiance to democratic norms. Yet, it is a reality that popular, free and fair elections are now regularly being held and that when called to support a democratic government during the recent coup

attempt, a broad cross section of Guatemalans expressed themselves in favor of democracy.

The question at this juncture is to determine the level of legitimization of democratic practice in Guatemala, and, beyond that, to determine trends in that process of legitimization.

Prior Research

A major handicap in the study of support for a democratic political culture in Guatemala is the limited baseline data available. In fact, a rapid review of the literature reveals only a very limited set of instances in which any attempts were made prior to the past few years to do any serious public opinion research, particularly research that touched the opinions of those outside the capital city.¹

Normally, one could expect to consult public opinion survey data to see how attitudes have shifted over the years. But social science in Guatemala has, for three reasons, not developed that data base. First, social scientists here have long been a target of persecution by the military. Countless social scientists have been killed, while others have fled the country and now live in exile in Costa Rica, the United States and elsewhere. Second, public opinion research involves asking questions, and asking questions for many years in Guatemala was a dangerous undertaking. As a result, social science tended toward the theoretical, since obtaining empirical data simply was too dangerous. Third, the social science community as a whole associated survey research with U.S.-style social science, an enterprise that was rejected because of a generally misplaced belief that a covert relationship existed between North American academics and the U.S. intelligence community.

The establishment of elected government has meant a rapid expansion in public opinion polling. The first studies were conducted in connection with the elections themselves. These studies made little or no attempt to measure underlying attitudes. There are other, more serious, surveys being conducted in Guatemala. Several studies focus on nutrition, demography, ethnolinguistics, etc. The only extensive study of democratic political culture of which we are aware, is the one conducted by the University of Pittsburgh Central American Public Opinion Project in March, 1992.

¹. One early example was a survey on attitudes toward political participation in San Antonio Sacatepéquez and Cobán in the early 1950s. This survey noted, as expected, important differences between ladinos and indigenous peoples regarding both knowledge and attitudes concerning politics. See, Kalman H. Silvert, *The Conflict Society*. New Orleans: Hauser Press, 1961, pp.35-46.

Hence, in a real sense, we are starting with an almost blank slate. The Pittsburgh project is useful for establishing the reliability of key questionnaire items and some parameters for urban areas, but does not provide a solid basis upon which to draw national conclusions because of its geographic and linguistic limitations. Thus, this project will establish the needed baseline data that can be used to monitor the evolution of a civic culture of democracy in Guatemala.

How quickly might we expect that culture to change? There is no easy answer to that question. Previous research has shown that much depends on national political developments. We know, for example, that values in Italy and Germany evolved rapidly during the 1950s and 1960s, as Ronald Inglehart has shown in his volume, Culture Shift.² Seligson has shown, using data from Costa Rica, that once established, the legitimacy of a system does not rapidly erode and is quite resistant to failures in performance, such as those brought on by economic crises.³

But, we also know that the values that have developed in Guatemala have evolved over the centuries. It will require significant changes in the performance of the system in terms of respect for human rights and civil liberties, along with important improvements in the quality of life of the poor, for those changes to substantially affect attitudes. The establishment of the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, along with 21 regional offices, is an important step in this direction. The growing sense of openness in the media is another. But, it is not at all clear that these changes are being perceived in rural (especially indigenous) areas; indeed, it is not at all clear that conditions have improved in these areas. Therefore, a key element in the design of this study is to assure a national sample that adequately represents rural and especially indigenous populations. This requirement is reflected in the sample design as well as in items included in the instrument.

The Need for A National Sample

To meet the need to represent the full range of opinions and attitudes within Guatemala, nothing short of a national sample that reflects the views of all Guatemalans, rich and poor, urban and rural, Indian and Ladino, male and female, will do. A concern with a truly national sample is important because it fulfills a need and because it represents an important innovation in survey research within the country. It may be the case that there has never been a national sample of public opinion in Guatemala. The great majority of surveys in Guatemala are marketing surveys. Since rural Guatemalans earn little and consume less, they are not a high priority for

²Inglehart, Culture Shift. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

³Mitchell A. Seligson and Edward N. Muller, "Economic Crisis and System Support: Costa Rica, 1978-1985." International Studies Quarterly. 1990.

marketing firms. Election studies similarly designed to test the "voter market" exclude many rural areas since voter turnout in those areas is often substantially lower than in urban areas. From the point of view of candidates who use the polls to guide their election strategies, the widely dispersed rural populations are too difficult to reach. Therefore, the cost involved in inclusion of rural Guatemala in all types of marketing studies is seen as not being justified by the benefits.

A further complexity that limits sample frames in Guatemala is that of the variety of languages spoken. According to the National Bilingual Education Program of the Ministry of Education, there are between 20 and 30 indigenous languages spoken in Guatemala, including two non-Mayan languages. Some 11 of the Mayan languages have distinct dialect variants.⁴ Studies have, of course, been conducted among the populations of many if not all of these languages, but the task of conducting a study that would incorporate them all has been daunting. In fact, those surveys that claim to be national in scope merely use a single survey instrument prepared in Spanish and claim to use bilingual interviewers who do on-the-spot translations.⁵ Since studies have shown that monolingual speakers of Mayan languages are far more likely to be female than male, these studies systematically exclude Indian females.

The concentration of large portions of the population into a relatively small number of indigenous languages, coupled with widespread bilingualism among these populations presents the opportunity for a reasonable compromise between a "perfect" but enormously expensive sample and a study that would exclude monolingual natives altogether.

The great bulk of the native population speak one of only four languages. The early 1980 figures show that of the 2.9 million Mayan language speakers, 2.3 million, or 79 percent are concentrated in these four languages:

K'iche'	930,000
Mam	644,000
Kaqchikel	405,000
Q'eqchi'	361,000

A clear division point emerges after these four languages are taken into consideration, because the next most popular language, Q'anjob'al, is spoken only by

⁴Michael Richards and Julia Becker Richards, Languages and Communities Encompassed by Guatemala's National Bilingual Education Program. Guatemala: Ministerio de Educación, División de Socio Educativo Rural, Programa Nacional de Educación Bilingüe, 1990, p. 5.

⁵Based on a conversation with the director of one major international polling organization.

112,000 natives, and from there on down, the numbers drop rapidly. Hence, from the point of view of cost-effectiveness, it makes sense to attempt to include the speakers of the four major languages, knowing that even the next most popular language is spoken by only 1 percent of the population and that all remaining Mayan languages together comprise some 8 percent of the population.

Excluding these minority languages does not mean that 8 percent of the population is being excluded from the sample. In fact, a large proportion of speakers of all Mayan languages are to at least some extent bilingual. For example, among the four major languages, only one, Q'eqchi', has a large proportion of entirely monolingual speakers. The bilingual education project found that 49.6 percent of the Q'eqchi' speakers they surveyed were monolingual. However, this is a gross overestimate of the total monolingualism among Q'eqchi' speakers because their data is based upon the location of bilingual schools, none of which were located in county seats (cabeceras cantonales). The schools were all located in villages (aldeas). Bilingualism is extremely common among those in urban and semi-urban environments in Guatemala. Hence, a survey of all Q'eqchi' speakers would unquestionably produce a far higher proportion of bilingual speakers, although there is no data that would allow us to establish precise figures.

The other three major Mayan languages were found to have no more than 13 percent monolingual speakers. Again, these data are based on village studies, and therefore the bilingual proportion of the total Mayan language population is much higher. Furthermore, the rapid spread of radio and television throughout Guatemala coupled with the continued decline of the relative size of the Indian population has, no doubt, further increased the speed of bilingualism in recent years.

It is safe to speculate that bilingualism among the speakers of the minority languages could be no higher than it is among the Q'eqchi' (i.e., less than half of all speakers) and probably is a lot lower. The speakers of these minority languages live in relatively small and compact regions according to the linguistic maps prepared by the Bilingual Education program and may well have greater contact with Spanish speakers. For example, the speakers of Xinka, Poqomam, Chorti', Itza and Mopan are completely surrounded by speakers of Spanish and must, no doubt, deal with Spanish speakers on a regular basis. Hence, at most, the exclusion of these minority languages may result in the exclusion of some 4 percent of the population. The actual percentages will emerge from the sample design procedures described below.

Summarizing this discussion, cost-benefit analysis suggests that the preparation of the questionnaire in Spanish plus the four major Mayan languages enumerated above would allow the sample to include not less than 96 percent of the population and, in all likelihood, closer to 98 or 99 percent. This was the procedure followed in the development of the study's instruments. Other issues related to sample design and

related considerations, including the weighting of the sample, are presented in the appendices to this report.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire designed for this study is based upon prior research in Central America, South America, the U.S. and Western Europe that has attempted to tap mass attitudes toward democracy. The immediate antecedent of this study was a comprehensive examination of attitudes in each of the five Central American countries plus Panama, stimulated by the onset of democracy in these countries. The study, referred to as the University of Pittsburgh Central American Public Opinion Project, received support from the Mellon Foundation and the Tinker Foundation and the North-South Center. The project was conducted in collaboration with research institutes and universities throughout Central America as well as colleagues in several U.S. universities.

The Guatemalan component of this six country survey was conducted in March, 1992, with the field work the responsibility of Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales (ASIES). That survey was urban in nature since resource limitations prevented it from being extended to rural areas in which Mayan language translations would have been needed. The total sample size was 900.

Initial analysis of the Guatemalan data confirmed that, at least insofar as urban populations are concerned, the questionnaire utilized was largely successful. However, it also became clear that a number of items needed refinement and some were best dropped. In addition, with the involvement of graduate students at the University of Pittsburgh, new items (some used in Uruguay) were included to get a better measure of respondent support for democratic versus authoritarian rule. Finally, Development Associates' PARTICIPA project in Chile had also developed a questionnaire that included some items that appeared to be good measures of attitudes toward the judiciary, an institution of considerable interest to USAID/Guatemala.

The instrument used in this survey was refined during April and May, 1992, with the collaboration of University of Pittsburgh graduate students. Development Associates in collaboration with ASIES set up a series of focus groups of native speakers of the four major Mayan languages that translated and tested the viability of the questionnaire in those four languages. The experiment resulted in the development of four indigenous language instruments. A copy of the spanish language version of the instrument is included as an appendix.

Data Reliability

A major concern in all self-report data is the reliability of the data. Reliability refers to the degree that the data represents a consistent and accurate picture of the

responses of those interviewed to the questions asked. The reliability of this survey was enhanced by a series of procedures: training of interviewers and their supervision assured that agreed upon procedures were followed; all responses were reviewed for internal consistency, and response patterns for appropriate sub-samples (Spanish speaking urban residents) have been compared to similar responses in the March, 1992, University of Pittsburgh/ASIES survey to check for consistency over time.

A significant concern in the conduct of this survey or any other public opinion survey is its timing. Although certainly not by design, the survey took place a week before the period of the events that constituted the auto-golpe by President Serrano, his subsequent removal from office and replacement by Ramiro de León Carpio. However, it is hard to imagine that given the survey instrument's focus on basic attitudes and values, this timing will affect the quality of most of the answers received. In point of fact, comparisons between the 1993 and the 1992 survey suggest a certain consistency of patterns that suggests the fundamental nature of the attitudinal measures being used.

A key question which we shall return to in the conclusion, a question of significant interest in the design of development programs, is how and through what means the values and attitudes presented can be altered.

In the next chapter, we shall examine in greater detail the nature of Guatemalan political development in the twentieth century. We shall also present the events of the period in late May and June of 1993, which constituted the process of transition to the current government. As indicated above, the following chapters present the results of the survey and the conclusions that can be drawn from the data we have gathered.

II. The Political Context of the Study

Historical Antecedents of Guatemalan Democracy

To understand the current Guatemalan political culture it is necessary to remember that historically Guatemala lacks a democratic tradition. In fact, prior to 1984, the country's political history starting in 1821, the year of independence from the Spanish crown, has been marked by caudillismo, coup d'états, transitional governments and military dictatorships.

During the first half of the 20th century, the most significant governments were the dictatorships of Manuel Estrada Cabrera (1898-1920) and Jorge Ubico (1931-1944). These regimes were characterized by heavy-handed personalistic control and the suppression of political liberties and free expression of ideas. Both dictatorships were overthrown thanks to social movements autocratically controlled by groups drawn largely from the capital city. Estrada Cabrera was obliged to resign, removed from his position by Congress, after various anti-Cabrera protests led by artisans and by the political ruling class of the period.

The beginning of a more profound political change in the country must be necessarily be linked to the so-called "October Revolution" in 1944. The result of that revolution was the emergence of a democratically oriented government, legitimated by a majority of those who were politically participant in the effective Guatemalan nation [i.e. the majority of ladinos located in Guatemala City and other major urban areas and those in control of rural areas (the land owning families)]. This was not a radical transformation of the system of power rather a limited expansion of the effective nation, the body politic, complimented by the access to government of progressive forces. Nevertheless, this meant that for the first time various important marginal groups began to participate in national politics, notably university students, workers and ladino peasants (Gonzalez, R: 29).

In the presidential elections held at the end of 1944, after three transitional governments that followed the toppling of the Ubico dictatorship, Juan Jose Arevalo won a landslide victory (86% of the total vote). During his presidential administration, there were important reforms in the structure of political and judicial institutions. The right of women and the illiterate to vote was recognized; the right of political parties and other types of interest groups to organize and operate was guaranteed as was the notion of the representation of minority groups, the autonomy of municipalities and ideological diversity. In addition, laws protecting the right of labor to organize were promulgated and a social security system established. Reflecting a greater emphasis on social concerns, for the first time in the history of Guatemala, the National Budget was dominated by spending for education, health and welfare.

In institutional terms, the promulgation of the Constitution of 1945 laid the groundwork for the establishment of a democratic society, recognizing the right of political association and the right to form labor unions.¹ Clearly, this was a period of institutional creation and reform, a period that would be looked upon as the foundation for a Guatemalan democratic order in decades to come.

Colonel Jacobo Arbenz succeeded Arevalo as president in a democratic election where Arbenz secured 65% of the votes (Torres Rivas: 152). The so-called "second government of the revolution" focused its objectives on securing a national development less dependent on foreign interests and sustained by a dynamic internal market. During his government, Arbenz gave impetus to the construction of a modern communications network and the redistribution of agricultural holdings (Polo, 58). This last action was the immediate cause that led to the overthrow of Arbenz in 1954 by a counter-revolution, supported by the United States, which initiated a period of military governments.

The changes promoted by the government of Jacobo Arbenz resulted in a polarization of Guatemalan society that has lasted over the past four decades. In 1954, this polarization translated into a confrontation between social forces over the fate of the Arbenz government. Left-leaning portions of the middle class along with representatives of the working class lined up to support Arbenz. Large property holders, both national and foreign, along with sectors of the middle class who saw the president's reforms as "socialistic" lined up to oppose Arbenz. The confrontation led to a political crisis.

In mid-June of 1954, counter revolutionary forces led by Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas entered the country from various points within Honduras, overthrew the Arbenz regime and initiated a counter-revolutionary period that was also referred to as "the era of liberation".

The ease with which the counter-revolution succeeded in destroying a democratically elected order was ample evidence of the weakness of the Guatemalan commitment to democracy. It was also a demonstration of the extent of the effective nation, the body politic, of Guatemala--only a very small proportion of the total population was politically involved in support for the Arbenz government or support for the counter-revolution. The rest were essentially silent because they were ladinos located in rural areas who had little real participation in politics or were indigenous peoples who were not, at the same, included with the body politic or saw themselves as part of the Guatemalan nation. The expansion of the effective nation as evident by the political culture of present day Guatemalans is AN important contribution to, the

¹. For a detailed analysis of the 1945 constitution see Kalman H. Silvert, A Study of Government: Guatemala, ISHI: Philadelphia, 19__.

probability of democracy in Guatemala, a discussion we shall return to in the conclusions.

As Edelberto Torres Rivas indicates, the most important aspects of the period from 1944 to 1954 was the opportunity that was created for popular mobilization, through the growth of worker-peasant organizations and the access that was opened to the middle classes to participate in political life and public administration. In effect, although the effective nation was not broad enough to preserve these openings in the short-run in the face of the counter-revolution, the period had shown the way for greater participation in the future.

In the interval between 1954 and 1984, politics were characterized by instability and repeated accusations of electoral fraud on the part of the governments, most of which were military in character, that ran the country. As Torres Rivas notes, the identifying characteristic of all of the governments that came into power after July of 1954 were that they were counter-revolutionary and used political violence as the basis of control. (Torres, 162). Nevertheless, the social mobilization generated by ten years of democratic experience, meant an important advance in the consciousness of the population.

Starting in 1954, the de facto government headed by Castillo Armas eliminated many of the important advances of the democratic period. The agrarian reform was reversed as were the measures that regulated labor relations. Only official political organizations and labor unions were permitted. Congress was dissolved and the Constitution of 1945 abolished. The most powerful labor unions were eliminated. Labor leaders were dismissed from their positions, and new unions set up free of "communist influence" as part of a "free labor movement", limited in terms of their sphere of action to strictly economic issues (wages etc.). Castillo Armas sought to ratify the legitimacy of the takeover through a plebiscite in October of 1954, where he secured 98% of the votes cast. (Torres Rivas, 162)

Castillo Armas was assassinated in 1957. The motive for the crime was never discovered. Suspicions were raised that he was eliminated by ultra-conservative elements, because he did not reverse some measures of the revolutionary governments. After an aborted electoral process at the end of 1957, General Miguel Ydigoras was elected President in January of 1958. Ydigoras tried to reinstate a tutelary democratic order (Torres Rivas, 166). As part of this attempt at democracy, a free Congress had been elected which included representatives of opposition parties. The regime ended in another military coup, led by Ydigoras' Minister of Defense, Enrique Peralta Azurdia, in 1963, labelled by its protagonists "Operation Honesty". To some observers, Peralta's coup was directed at assuring that Juan Jose Arevalo did not get elected once more as President of the Republic.

It is worth noting that during the Ydigoras administration, various young officers of the Army organized an uprising which led to the initiation of guerrilla activities in the country. The movement, led by Marco Antonio Yon Sosa and Luis Turcios Lima, lacked an ideological component and was fundamentally aimed at eliminating the alleged corruption of the Ydigoris regime as well as its support of the US government's efforts to overthrow Fidel Castro in Cuba.

The de facto government of Peralta Azurdia abolished the constitution of 1956, suspended political parties, declared illegal all labor union activity and frequently governed through a state of siege. Peralta's military dictatorship was obliged by external forces to call elections in 1966. The winner of those elections was Julio César Méndez Montenegro whose term in office was known as "the third government of the revolution" (Torres Rivas, 169). Although Menendez Montenegro and his vice-president, Clemente Marroquin, were civilians, they were severely circumscribed in their radius of political action by the military. Military leaders, using as a basis their fight with the guerrilla movement, established formal limits to the president's power in a document signed by Méndez Montenegro at the start of his term.

General Arana Osorio was elected president in 1970. General Kjell Eugenio Laugerud succeeded Osorio (1974-1978) to be followed in office by General Fernando Romeo Lucas Garcia (1978-1982). Both Laugerud and his successor were elected in what were considered to be fraudulent electoral processes. These military governments, particularly the ones in the latter part of the 1970s, were characterized by an absence of both civil liberties and the effective exercise of democracy. They repressed any form of organized opposition. Moreover, in the context of eliminating the guerrillas, the state together with para-military groups used violence as the principal means of expressing their demands and eliminating their enemies.

In institutional terms, the official political parties governed the country, while opposition parties had little if any representation in Congress. Leaders of opposition parties were persecuted. Electoral laws were twisted to cover the fraudulent electoral practices of authoritarian governments. As a result of these controls, the Congress, the judiciary and the Public Ministry, all were dominated by official parties linked to the military and the most powerful economic groups within the society.

Labor unions, which had a brief respite from political pressure under Méndez Montenegro were sharply repressed under the government of Lucas Garcia as was the case with other organizations that represented a variety of social interests and concerns. The leadership of all of these organizations suffered under a wave of assassinations, kidnapping and disappearances.

In 1982, after another attempt at imposing the election of the Army's official candidate, General Anibal Guevara, through an electoral fraud, a movement consisting

of a combination of young officers of the armed forces and leaders of opposition political parties organized a coup. The coup of March 23, 1982 resulted in the formation of government junta which became a platform for a member of the junta, General Efraín Ríos Montt, to declare himself president.

It is important to bear in mind that the 1982 coup as well as the subsequent initiation of a formal democratic process was influenced by external as well as internal factors. On the one hand, there was a great deal of pressure from the international community to improve the human rights situation within the country and to initiate a democratic process. The pressures came above all from the European Community and the United States as well as from international non-governmental human rights organizations. The Guatemalan government began to feel pressure to end its isolation from the world political system, an isolation that had begun as a result of the Carter administration's human rights policies.

Internally, the economic situation continually deteriorated from the 60's on due in part to the corruption of the military governments and the lack of government economic policy that were planned in accordance with the existing national reality. At a political level, the coming to power of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and the consequent installation of a populist regime put in evidence the authoritarian character of the Guatemalan government. The Sandinista victory also had an impact on the guerrilla movement in Guatemala. At the start of 1982, despite open and indiscriminate state repression, the military had not succeeded in stopping the insurgents who controlled important portions of the nation's territory. In addition, there was increased and more aggressive activity by various organizations and groups within the body politic looking for an opening for democracy.

Thus, the 1982 coup can be seen as the starting point of a new era for Guatemalan politics. The viability of the system of political domination that had characterized Guatemala since the 1954 coup was no longer viable.

Recent Political Development

After the 1982 coup, there were discussions of the possibilities of democratic elections. However, but it was not until the August 8, 1983 coup which brought to power the de facto government of General Oscar Mejía Victores that elections were called for a Constituent Constitutional Assembly. Those elections saw the return of opposition political parties, and the free election of deputies to the assembly. That assembly drafted the present Political Constitution of the Republic which came into force in May of 1985.

The 1985 Political Constitution of the Republic has as its principles the importance of human life, of liberty, of equality, of the sovereignty of the people, respect for local cultures, community participation in development, decentralization of

political authority and municipal autonomy (ASIES, 1990:4). The constitution places emphasis on the role of the state as protector and promoter of human dignity and as promoter of the common good. As one commentator noted, "For the first time in Guatemalan constitutional history, the organization of power and judicial and political structure of the state are put into second place, putting a priority on persons and their rights with respect to public power." (De León, 1989: 19).

Important innovations incorporated in the constitution included an emphasis on the independence of the three branches of government, executive, legislative and judicial as well as a spelling out of the rights of the individual. The constitution guaranteed a electoral system which permitted complete liberty of political organization and called for the direct election of municipal authorities. Decentralization was promoted by the establishment of development regions and the creation of regional development councils. This had the potential for expanding the opportunities for meaningful democratic participation. The administrative decentralization was to be reinforced by a budgetary decentralization since the constitution assigned 8% of the General Budget of Ordinary State Revenues to municipalities. (von Hoegen, 1991:28).

Specific rights protected by the constitution included the right of petition on political matters, the right to meet and to demonstrate, the right to associate and the free expression of thought. The constitution also established the primacy of international law over internal law. To assist in the preservation of citizens' rights, the constitution provided for the creation of the Court of Constitutionality to defend the constitution, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal to supervise the electoral process and the Procurator of Human Rights to exercise vigilance and moral suasion with respect to human rights.

Using the new constitution as a basis, elections were called in December, 1985. There resulted in the election of the Christian Democrat, Vinicio Cerezo. The assumption of power of a civilian did not resolve the problems of democracy in Guatemala. The two military governments that had come out of the coups of 1982 and 1983 left behind enormous economic problems. The new government also could not mend the international image of the country and end its international isolation because the violations of human rights continued.²

The military governments had left behind a legacy of a society divided, fearful, and without a tradition of democratic practice which would have facilitated an opening toward democracy. Those governments had also been unwilling to reform in the least the rigid social and economic structure of the county which continued to show a high level of inequality and exclusion of the majority of the population.

². The extent of the violations were documented by a United Nations report in February, 1986.

It is important to underscore that the democratic opening was a concession by the military, overwhelmed by the internal and external pressures discussed above. It was not the result of a popular uprising or of intense popular pressure rather a need for accommodation on the part of the military to the existing political situation. This meant that the military still retained a great deal of maneuvering room with respect to the civilian government. However, the opening generated a good deal of expectations in the populace with respect to the end of repression, violations of human rights and restoration of social tranquility. In addition, there was a hope that the arrival of a civilian government would bring an end to corruption, and the beginning of an economic resurgence which would result in a broad based improvement of living standards.

The context in which the first civilian government took office was a complex one. On the one hand, there was a great deal of popular support as well as support from abroad. On the other hand, the economic, social and political crisis did not facilitate the possibilities for action. Within this context, the civilian government had the burden of demonstrating that a democratically elected government could provide a better alternative than a populist revolutionary government such as the Nicaraguan one or a military government.

The Cerezo administration (1986-1991) faced various attacks aimed at destabilizing the government and various attempted coup d'états. Many political commentators felt that the greatest achievement of the government was its ability to survive until the end of its term. Nevertheless, the government suffered a considerable erosion of support in the last years of the presidential term. Critical decisions were postponed because of their political cost. The result was a lack of concrete achievements. At the end of the presidential term, the government was widely viewed as corrupt and inefficient in its management of public spending.

On a more positive note, Cerezo was credited with fostering a foreign policy in Central America that contributed to the resolution of conflicts in the region. To this can be added the achievement of passing the mandate of government onto another democratically elected administration in January of 1991, that of Jorge Serrano.³

The new government came to power with certain limitations. The government's political party was weak, without much in the way of popular support and without a clearly defined political program. Congress was dominated by opposition parties. In its favor, the government was received with a far lower level of expectations than had been the case with the previous administration.

³. This was the first time in the 170 years of Guatemalan independence that a civilian president received the mandate from another civilian president.

The first year of Serrano's government was characterized by relative stability, in part a result of the breathing space associated with a new administration. Various accommodations had to be made. Serrano was obliged to share power with a Congress dominated by the opposition. The resultant process of negotiation often reflected narrow party interests rather than a broad concern for national goals. In positive terms, the government was able to achieve a stabilization of the national economy although at the cost of a deterioration of the living standards of a large portion of the population. Thus, the government also faced demands of groups seeking to redress the structural imbalances in the system, demands it did not meet.

The government was incapable of ending the continuing violations of human rights, although there were some positive changes taking place. The president was able to make some changes in the upper echelons of the military, placing in key command positions officers willing to enter into a peace dialogue with the guerrillas. But at the same time his position on the peace dialogue and relations with the guerrillas moved more toward those of the military as his administration advanced.

Towards the end of 1991, the president's political problems began to increase. Serrano was not able to hold on to the coalition that had won him victory in the second round of the presidential election. He began to be accused by a portion of the media of being excessively authoritarian in his actions. He failed to reach an understanding with the labor unions about a "Social Pact".

The government made little head way, despite its promises, in combating corruption and punishing ex-officials involved in corruption. This was due in part to the strength of the Christian Democrats in Congress who were concerned about protecting their fellow party members. As important, Serrano's government, despite having made the decision to reduce presidential expenses, operated along lines similar to the previous administration. Rumors of corruption began to surface. In effect, the government did not take the firm stand against corruption that the public expected.

Things worsened in 1992. Serrano became more autocratic, more hostile to and more in conflict with the press. Accusations of corruption increased. A climate of political tension existed between the president and various groups intent on reducing corruption, increasing political accountability and supporting the dialogue with the guerrillas which had reached a stalemate. In addition, during the course of the year, controversies arose over the actions and decisions of both the Court of Constitutionality and the Public Ministry as well as a result of alliances formed between the President and the Congress.

In general terms, positions hardened, both those of the president and the Army, as was evident in the aggressive attitudes of the military and the president towards their critics. These included fights both with the Procurator of Human Rights and ex-officials of government.

The case of relations with Belize caused even greater problems for the Serrano administration than did the internal conflicts. Opposition to his actions to move toward a reconciliation with Belize came from the media as well as from leading scholars. Support by the Constitutional Court and the Congress of the president's actions only generated additional discontent among the public and additional disrespect for the institutions that supported this unpopular policy.

Legislation approved by Congress which was dominated by an alliance of UCN, DCG and the government's party, MAS, favored the most economically powerful sectors of society. Examples included the repeal of the Economic Compensation for Time in Service Law, approval of the Program of Economic Modernization and the elimination of the subsidy for transport. Salary raises for deputies, the rejection of impeachment processes against members of Congress, the politization of the election of justices of the Supreme Court and the rapid approval of presidential legislative initiatives, virtually without debate, reduced the credibility of the Congress in the eyes of the general public.

A consequence of the loss of faith in the Congress was a loss of faith in political parties (as we shall see reflected in the data in the next chapter). The Catholic Church served more effectively than did the political parties to bring together various interests and present coherent positions to the government.

While 1992 was touted by the president as a year of social investment, little was done to develop and fund social programs. The lack of a peace agreement with the guerrillas and the continuing concerns over human rights violations indicated the hardening of positions by the president and the Army mentioned earlier. The government's approach to the indigenous question, reflected above all in its essentially negative reaction to the Nobel Peace prize awarded to Rigoberto Menchu, placed all its efforts at establishing a better international image for Guatemala in question. Concerns regarding Guatemala's approach to human rights remained a sticking point in relations between Guatemala, and the United States as well as with other countries including the European Community members. Little was done as well in moving to combat corruption, particularly after the impeachment by Congress of the Procurator General of the Nation.

The Political Environment of the Study

1993 was ushered in with an abundance of confrontations and general discontent with the President. During the first quarter of the year, public attention focused on President Serrano's new peace proposal to the URNG, which urged the insurgents to endorse a peace agreement within a period of 90 days. However, the proposal did not elicit the outcome hoped for by the President. The stalling of the peace dialogue, combined with other internal events, fostered a climate of political instability. By May of 1993, the country showed signs of being ungovernable, viewed

from the perspective of the questionable legitimacy of its institutions, and the loss of political support for the government. It was evident that the process of democratization was not on track. The wear and tear on figures of authority was affecting the democratic institutions themselves. Popular discontent was growing. During the first two weeks of May, tensions seemed to intensify.

Two noteworthy events which contributed to the political atmosphere during the period prior to the study were: the abrogation of the parliamentary agreement known as the "triple alliance" in the Congress of the Republic, and the magnitude of the electoral victory of the MAS in the municipal elections of May 9, 1993.

On the one hand, the rupture of the alliance in the Congress represented an obstacle to Serrano's authoritarian style of government and obliged him to play a game of give-and-take in the Legislature in order to be able to govern. It became evident that the corruption of the Executive-Legislative relationship that Serrano had initiated during his first two years in office, through payoffs and other inducements, was now going to backfire against him. The lack of parliamentary support increased the possibility of a political judgement against him based on accusations of corruption and abuse of authority. The events in Venezuela (the impeachment of Carlos Andres Perez for corruption) had a considerable influence on the political environment in Guatemala City.

On the other hand, the jubilant attitude of Serrano and other members of the at-that-time official party, as a consequence of the results of the municipal elections, demonstrated that they were interpreting this victory rather liberally and unrealistically. Figures provided by the Central Elections Board indicated that between 60 and 65 percent of the electorate failed to vote, which shows a decided lack of popular support of the victory. Analyzing the results at the municipal level, it can be seen that the perspective of the government with respect to the popular support they enjoyed was clearly in error. It should also be remembered that pre-election activities were called into question on charges of manipulation, the use of resources such as the 8% for municipalities, and taking advantage of the prestige of the presidency to promote the party.

Other problems, generated by an increase in the costs of electricity and criticism of Serrano for the so-called "Summit of Thought", created an atmosphere of generalized noncompliance. Also to be noted is the intensification of the confrontation between President Serrano and the then Attorney General for Human Rights, based on the latter's lodging of an appeal against the raising of electricity rates.

Constant and open confrontations demonstrated the President's minimal capacity for accepting criticism or listening to other opinions. The deterioration of the situation accelerated, rooted in student dissent, again showing opposition to open dialogue on the part of the government, which responded to the protests by

marshalling forces, including the army, to the streets.

The student disturbances, in reaction to the rejection on the part of some educational centers of the so-called student transportation card, were situations which had gotten out of hand, ones which would have been manageable, had it not been for the open authoritarianism of, and the breakdown of credibility being suffered by the President and, in general, the entire Executive Branch.

Going beyond the weaknesses and mistakes of the Serrano Government, it is important to point out that other factors and other agents in Guatemalan society were also contributing to the deterioration of the democratic process, since it is impossible to deny the dissatisfaction of the public with other State powers.

Very concrete facts, such as the politization of the Public Ministry, the politization of the election of the Supreme Court in the Congress, the feeling of insecurity on the part of the general citizenry, the limited independence of the different powers - evidenced above all by the passage of unpopular laws by the "triple alliance" in the Congress - and the continued violation of human rights, etc., caused the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches alike to be accused of impunity, based on immunity, corruption, special privileges, abuse of power and incompetence. By May of 1993, there was an overt lack of credibility in the authorities of the country, and a lack of ability on the part of the powers of state to generate consensus.

Besides what was happening to the three powers of the State, the country's political parties were also suffering damage. It was obvious that their function as intermediaries between social needs and the government had broken down, and that the public was far from feeling adequately represented by them. It was also true that their actions in Congress contributed to the deterioration of their public image.

In addition to the deficiencies of the political parties, the erosion of the democratic process is also due to social fragmentation within Guatemala; in recent years a number of organizations have proliferated precisely to fill the void left by the political parties. However, social organizations in general have been falling part, thanks to the absence of clear leadership and many of the same problems being suffered by the political parties, such as a lack of internal democracy and of an ample social base.

The factionalization of Guatemalan society probably allowed Serrano more leeway in his actions. The prevailing sectarianism in Guatemala, as evidenced above all by a tangible lack of desire for dialogue and negotiation, as well as little flexibility among various sectors, provided a channel for the deterioration of the process of democratization and contributed to the lack of governability. That lack of governability was, at the time this study was conducted, probably the most relevant characteristic of the Guatemalan political environment.

The Coup and the Return to Democracy

On May 25, 1993, President Serrano Elias announced to the country his decision to temporarily suspend various articles of the Constitution of the Republic, dissolve Congress and the Supreme Court, replace the members of the Court of Constitutionality, the Procurator General of the Nation and suspend various constitutional guarantees. As a result of this auto-coup, Guatemala between May 25 and June 5 went through one of the most important political phenomena in its history. Jorge Serrano and his Vice-President, Gustavo Espina, were removed from their offices thanks to a popular movement, limited in its scope to the capital, that made possible the election of Ramiro de Leon Carpio, then Procurator of Human Rights, as the new president.

The institutional crisis of May-June 1993 and the public reaction to the "auto-golpe" was visible evidence of a shift, at least in the capital, of popular support for the democratic order. Across a broad spectrum of economic and political interests, important groups and prominent individuals demonstrated their rejection of the seizure of power by Serrano and his supporters. The result was the return of power to democratic institutions. The events of this period underscored the respect that existed for organizations such as the office of the Procurator of Human Rights and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal as well as the relatively low level of respect for many of the political parties and the Congress. The role played by the Army demonstrated that it could no longer be considered a single bloc. While early on, the armed forces demonstrated support for the auto-golpe, fissures within the upper ranks of the military limited the role that it could play in determining the outcome.

It is important to note that the popular movement that ended the auto-golpe was essentially limited to the capital which, as can be seen from past political history, represents the normal state of affairs in Guatemala.

In Conclusion

Reviewing the history contained within this chapter, certain themes stand out. Historically, except for two brief periods, 1944-1954 and 1984 to the present, Guatemala's political history has been one of personalistic, militaristic authoritarianism. In the period from 1954 until 1984, the military dominated politics. Repression was the tool used to control dissent and manage the political order. Change resulted from a use of force. The past eight years of democratic development have been a process of moving slowly toward the construction of democratic institutions and a democratic consensus. Human rights violations remain a concern, but at the very least there is an institutional presence to express that concern. A variety of political parties exist as does a Congress which serves as a forum of expression for those parties. However, the party structure and the Congress are weak, with a reputation for corruption. The one critical test of democratic commitment in the past eight years, the reaction to the

auto-golpe of May, 1993, demonstrates that at least at the level of the historically active political arena, the capital city, there is a strong sentiment and a willingness to defend the existing democratic order, however imperfect.

It is the task of this study to relate these historical manifestations to the underlying attitudes and orientations of a national sample of Guatemalans with a view towards better understanding the terms of democratic development in Guatemala. The balance of this work attempts to do just that.

III. System Support

The Logic of the Comparisons

There are three central goals of this analysis of public opinion data in Guatemala. First, we want to be able to examine the levels of support for democracy for the country as a whole. Second, we want to be able to compare important subsets of the population (Indian versus ladino, women versus men, young versus old, etc.). Third, we want to be able to detect changes in attitudes, both for the nation as a whole and for relevant subgroups. The third goal will form the basis for the second (and possible subsequent) studies. As previously noted, a follow-up study is planned for 1995, at which time comparisons will be made with the 1993 data.

The second goal will comprise the bulk of the analysis of this report, as we attempt to compare and contrast a variety of key subgroups of the Guatemalan population. It is the first goal, that of examining the levels of support for democracy for Guatemala as a whole, that requires this explanatory note.

In order to make some statement about the level of democracy, it is necessary to compare Guatemala against some standard. We could use the United States as that standard, but we think that would be inappropriate. After all, Guatemala is a small, poor, nation inside the Latin American political tradition that has only recently inaugurated democracy whereas the U.S. is a large, rich, nation within a distinct Anglo-Saxon political tradition with one of the longest democratic heritages of any nation. It may well be that ultimately Guatemalan views and North American views will converge on a common point, but it is equally likely that the distinctiveness of Guatemala's own traditions and history will result in permanent differences between the two countries over the long term.¹

We feel that a much more appropriate standard for comparison are the other Spanish speaking countries of Central America: Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua,

¹José Medina Echavarría commented on the nature of liberalism in Latin America in the late 19th and 20th centuries by pointing to the historical differences between the Latin (French and Spanish) emphasis on the rights of the individual, above all of the aristocracy, and Anglo-Saxon concerns which focussed on increasing participation of all classes in the democratic process. This was an important difference in the character of democratic development in Latin America that only recently has begun to work itself out. See, Jose Medina Echavarría, Consideraciones Sociologicas sobre el desarrollo economico. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1964; Aspecto Sociales del desarrollo economico; Editorial. Universitario: Santiago, 1973; Discurso sobre politico y planeación. Siglo XXI: Mexico, 1972.

Costa Rica and Panama. While important differences in the details of their history cannot be ignored,² there is far more that binds these countries together than there is that sets them apart. The availability of a data set in which identical questions were asked to over 4,000 urban residents in these countries in 1991-92, allows us to make these comparisons. The data come from the University of Pittsburgh Central American Public Opinion Project.³ The project received support from several sources.⁴

The 1993 study of public opinion in Guatemala, hereafter known as the "Guatemalan Democracy Study, 1993," had to differ in a variety of ways from the prior survey work. Specifically, the language of the questionnaire had to be simplified

²Héctor Pérez-Brignoli, A Brief History of Central America. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

³ The sample sizes varied for each country (Guatemala, 904; El Salvador, 910; Honduras, 566; Nicaragua, 704; Costa Rica, 597; Panama, 500). These differences partly reflect the different sizes of the populations studied, but are mainly the product of differences in the resources available to the study team in each country. Country sample designs were of area probability design. In each country, the most recent population census data were used to stratify the urban areas into lower, middle and upper socio-economic status (SES). The sample size assigned to each stratum was based upon these SES estimates. Within each stratum, census maps were used to select, at random, an appropriate number of political subdivisions (e.g., districts) and, within each subdivision, the census maps were used to select an appropriate number of segments from which to draw the interviews.

⁴That project, conceived in 1989, was designed to tap the opinion of Central Americans on a variety of issues. The study received funding support from a wide variety of sources: The Andrew Mellon Foundation, the Tinker Foundation, Inc., the Howard Heinz Endowment, the University of Pittsburgh Central Research Small Grant Fund and the Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos (IDELA). The collaborating institutions in Central America were: Guatemala-- Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales (ASIES); El Salvador--Centro de Investigación y Acción Social (CINAS) and the Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos (IDELA); Honduras--Centro de Estudio y Promoción del Desarrollo (CEPROD) and the Centro de Documentación de Honduras (CEDOH); Nicaragua--Centro de Estudios Internacionales (CEI), and the Escuela de Sociología, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA); Costa Rica--Universidad de Costa Rica; Panama--Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos "Justo Arosemena" (CELA). Collaborating doctoral students in Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh were Ricardo Córdova (El Salvador), Annabelle Conroy (Honduras), Orlando Pérez (Panama), and Andrew Stein (Nicaragua).

and the response formats reduced in complexity. Two factors required those changes. First, the Guatemalan sample was the first other than Costa Rica that was to be national in nature. As a result significant numbers of rural and poorly educated respondents were to be included in the sample. Second, the presence of significant numbers of bi-lingual Indians in the Guatemalan sample, added a complexity to the project that encouraged us to simplify the questionnaire as much as possible.

The major change in the questionnaire, for those items that were repeated from the University of Pittsburgh study of 1991-92, was the elimination of seven and ten-point response scales and their replacement with three and four-point response formats. For example, if the original item requested that the respondent give his/her opinion with reference to a scale that ranged from a low of one, indicating strong disagreement to a high of ten indicating strong agreement, the revised items used in the Guatemala Democracy Study, 1993, might have had the respondent select from four options, labeled "strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree."⁵

In light of these changes in the 1993 survey, we decided to make all comparative references to the other Central American countries by using the 1992 Guatemala survey, which did use wording and coding identical to the other five countries included in the study. Since the six-nation study was urban, limited in most cases to the capital city of the nation, we limit our comparisons to the Guatemala City portion of the sample and compare it to the other capital cities of Central America. Only in the case of Honduras, in which Tegucigalpa is considered the political capital and San Pedro Sula the economic capital did we include more than one city in the sample compared with Guatemala City.

The task of comparison, then, becomes a two-stage process. First, we will compare the opinions of the residents of Guatemala City to the other capital cities of Central America. We then compare various sub-sets of the Guatemalan population, using Guatemala City as the point of comparison. In that way, should we detect

⁵ It is possible to adjust the coding formats of one or the other survey to make them *numerically* equivalent, but doing so does not make them qualitatively equivalent. For example, we found that using the seven-point format on the item, "To what degree are you proud of the Guatemalan system of government," produced responses that averaged around 4, or the middle-point on the scale. When we changed the format in the 1993 survey to read, "Do you feel very proud, somewhat proud or not at all proud of being Guatemalan," 85 percent said "very proud." Of course, in this case, we changed both the coding format of the item as well as the content (substituting pride in the government for pride in being a Guatemalan).

higher or lower values on any given variable than we found in Guatemala City, we will also know how these values compare to the other countries in the region.

The Scoring Methodology

The original data set utilized a number of different measuring devices to tap respondent opinion. In some cases a 7-point scale was utilized, in others 10-points were used and in still others 4 and 5-point scales were used. Part of the reason for this variation had to do with the nature of the item being asked, while part had to do with comparability with similar items asked in prior studies of opinion in Central America.

We felt it was important not to confuse the reader with a different scoring method for each set of items in the study. Moreover, when comparisons are made using multiple regression analysis, the use of a single metric for all items allows us to compare the relative contribution of each item to the equation both within Guatemala and among the six countries in the region without having to resort to the complexity of standard scores. As a result, we opted to convert all items to a common 0-100 scale, with 0 always representing the low end of the continuum and 100 the high end.⁶ We followed this same procedure when we created summated scales that combined two or more items in the study.

System Support in Comparative Perspective

In Guatemala we are concerned with the promotion of a system which is both democratic and stable. System stability has long been thought to be directly linked to popular perceptions of the legitimacy of the system. Illegitimate systems, ones that do not have the support of the populace, can only endure over the long haul through the use of repression. When repression no longer can be used effectively, or if opposition elements are willing to risk even extremely grave sanctions, illegitimate regimes will eventually fall. Hence, the failure of the Tiananmen Square protestors to bring about changes in the Chinese system can be attributed to either of two causes: (1) the level of coercion that state was willing to apply exceeded the willingness of the protestors and their supporters to bear it; or (2) system legitimacy was greater among the mass public than it appeared from observing the protestors alone. In contrast, the rapid demise of the communist governments of Eastern Europe suggest

⁶The arithmetic conversion of scales was performed by subtracting 1 from each item and then dividing by one less than the total number of points in the original scale and, finally, multiplying the result by 100. For example, a scale that ranged from a low of 1 to a high of 7 would first be reduced by subtracting 1 from each score, giving a range of 0-6. Then by dividing by 6 the lowest score would remain a 0, but the highest would be 1. Multiplying by 100 would make the maximum equivalent to 100.

rather strongly that once repressive forces are weakened (in this case by the removal of the threat of Soviet intervention on behalf of those governments), illegitimate regimes will quickly crumble.

But what of democratic systems? Since almost all of Latin America is today democratic (in structure at least), we want to know what forces have, in the past, been responsible for their downfall? In most cases, military coups have been the main actors responsible. Certainly this has been the case in the vast majority of democratic breakdowns in Latin America. Democratic systems provide a wide variety of mechanisms for the popular expression of discontent and numerous obstacles to the widespread use of official repression. Hence, even when citizens are discontented with government performance, they tend to wait until the next election to seek a change in incumbents. But there are some instances in which popular sentiment seems to have been at least partly responsible for democratic breakdowns. The best known case is the demise of the Weimar Republic, where the voters made their choice. In Latin America, it would be easy to suggest that the Fujimori "auto-golpe," which extinguished democratic rule in Peru in 1992, emerged out of a popular revulsion over the inability of the democratic system to deal effectively with Sendero Luminoso terrorism. According to several reports, President Alberto K. Fujimori remains among the most popular heads of state in all of Latin America.⁷ Similarly, the repeated attempts to overthrow the elected government of Venezuela have been supported, according to the polls, by the vast majority of its citizens. But in Guatemala, the effort in 1993 to overthrow democracy via an "auto-golpe" resulted in the complete failure of the attempt. Our survey of democratic norms was conducted on the eve of that failed effort.

Hence, while authoritarian regimes survived based on some combination of legitimacy and repression, democracies tend to rely primarily on legitimacy alone.⁸ According to Lipset's classical work, systems that are legitimate survive even in the face of difficult times. In Central America, by the mid 1980s all six countries were regularly holding free and fair elections.⁹ The survival of these democracies, each of which are facing very difficult economic times, depends upon continued popular support. One need only think of the ballot box ouster in 1990 of the Sandinistas in

⁷James Brooke, "Fujimori Sees a Peaceful, and a Prosperous, Peru," *New York Times*, April 6, 1993, A3. According to the article, Fujimori's approval ratings are between 62 and 67 percent.

⁸This is not to say that democracies does not use coercion, but that its use is very limited.

⁹Participation by leftist parties was highly restricted in El Salvador up until the peace accords implemented in 1992-93. In Guatemala such participation still remains restricted.

Nicaragua, to see how critical such support can be. In that case, the inability of the system to cope effectively with the severe economic crises and the protracted Contra war, caused voters to turn against the system.¹⁰

Until recently, efforts to measure legitimacy have been hampered by reliance on the Trust in Government scale devised by the University of Michigan.¹¹ That scale, it has turned out, depended too heavily on a measurement of dissatisfaction with the performance of incumbents rather than of generalized dissatisfaction with the system of government. The development of the Political-Support Alienation Scale, now tested in studies of Germany, Israel, the United States, Mexico, Costa Rica, Peru and elsewhere, has provided a much more powerful analytical tool for measuring legitimacy.¹² The scale has been shown to be reliable and valid. It is based upon a distinction made by Easton, relying upon Parsons, by defining legitimacy in terms of system support, or diffuse support vs. specific support (support for incumbents)¹³.

General System Support

We begin this exploration of comparative levels of system support by looking first at the most general of all of the items in the series: pride. We asked the respondents. "To what extent do you feel proud to live under the political system of Guatemala?" (or the other countries of the region). Figure III.1 shows the results. As

¹⁰See Vanessa Castro and Gary Prevost, The 1990 Elections in Nicaragua and their Aftermath. Lanham, MD.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1992. Since the ouster of the Sandinistas involved a dramatic shift in the entire system of government, from socialist to capitalist, from Soviet/Cuba alignment to realignment with the U.S., it is appropriate to think of this election as having changed the system rather than merely the personnel of government.

¹¹Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government," *American Political Science Review* 68 (September 1974):951-972

¹²For a review of this evidence see Mitchell A. Seligson, "On the Measurement of Diffuse Support: Some Evidence from Mexico," *Social Indicators Research* 12 (January 1983):1-24, and Edward N. Muller, Thomas O. Jukam and Mitchell A. Seligson "Diffuse Political Support and Antisystem Political Behavior: A Comparative Analysis," *American Journal of Political Science* 26 (May 1982): 240-264. The present discussion draws on that evidence.

¹³David Easton, "A Re-assessment of the Concept of Political Support," *British Journal of Political Science* 5 (October 1975):435-457; Talcott Parsons, 'Some Highlights of the General Theory of Action,' in R. Young, ed. *Approaches to the Study of Politics*, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press).

we can see, with the major exception of Costa Rica, levels of pride in Central America are nearly identical. Only Costa Rica, with the longest democratic tradition and the highest standard of living of any of the countries in Central America stands out from the other countries, with a statistically significant ($< .001$) difference from the other countries. Guatemala does not appear much different from the remainder of her neighbors.

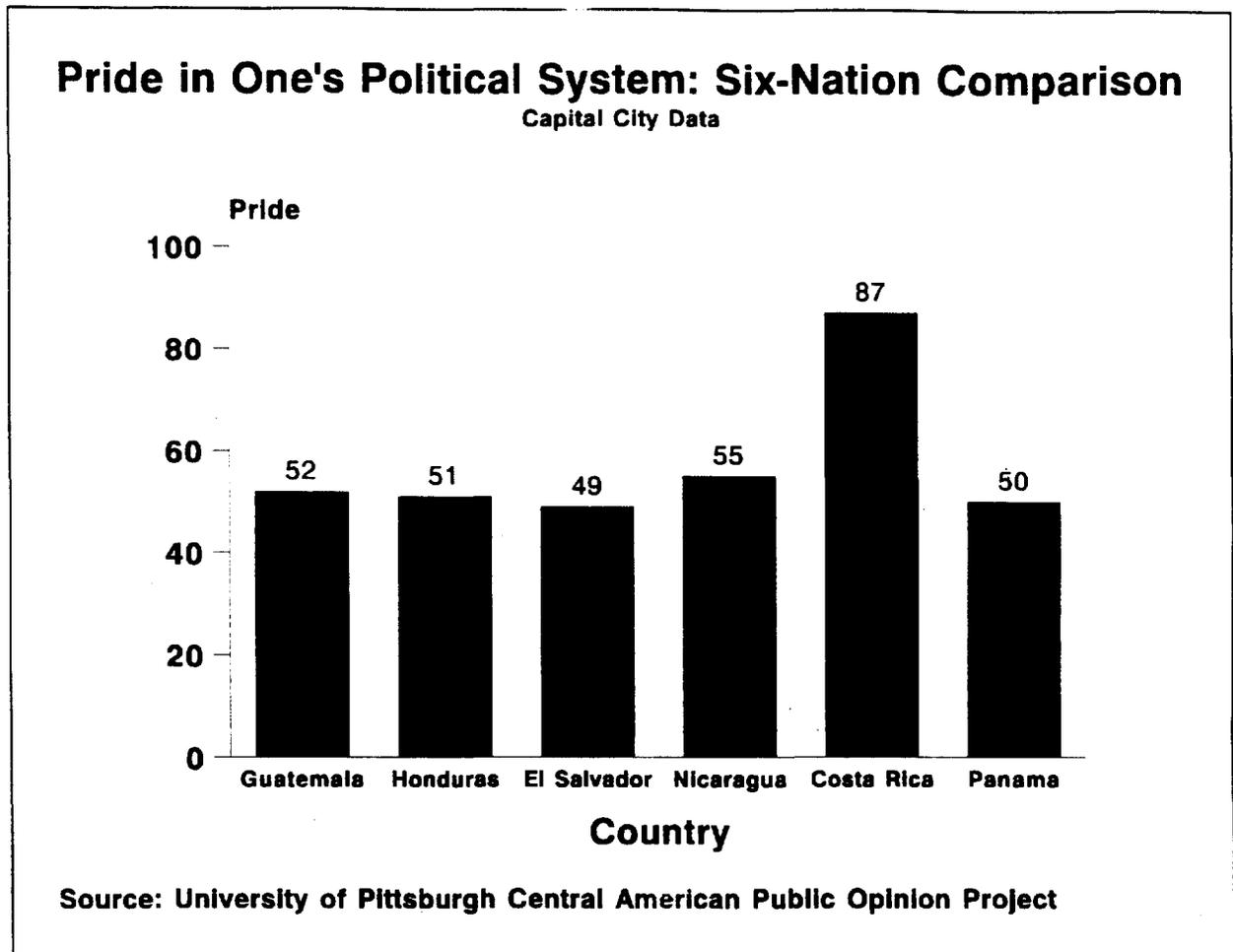


Figure 1

The second general item in this series on system support asked, "To what extent should one support the Guatemalan system of government?" As is seen in Figure III.2 below, a pattern very similar to that developed on the pride item emerges; once again Costa Rica stands out from the other countries, with citizens expressing much higher (sig. $< .001$) levels of pride than in the other countries. Guatemala's levels of support among its capital city residents is statistically indistinguishable from the samples from Honduras, El Salvador and Panama. Only Nicaraguans express a bit more support than do the other nations.

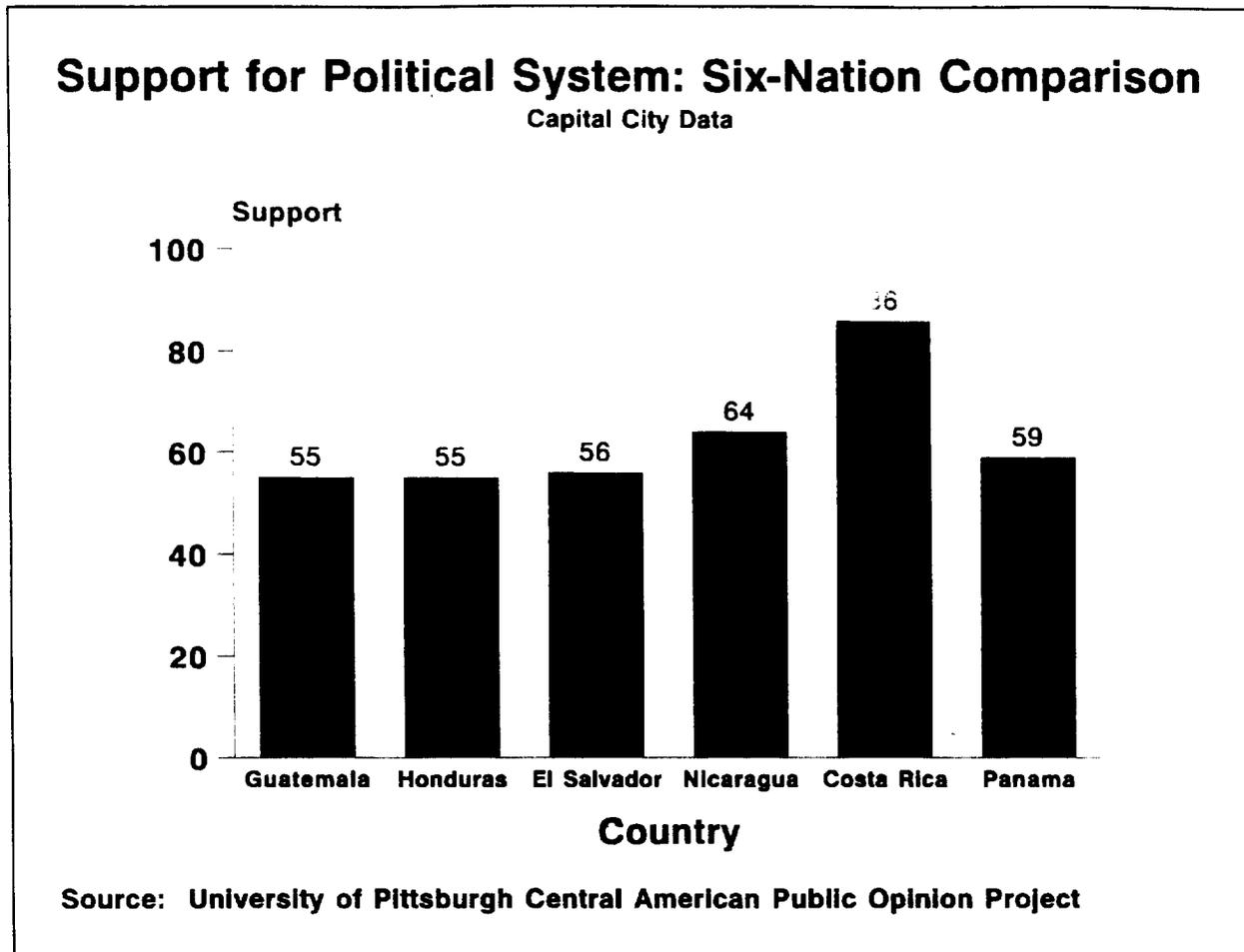


Figure 2

The third, general measure of system support is given by the responses to the question, "To what extent do you have respect for the political institutions of Guatemala?" In contrast to the "pride" and "support" items, this measure shows statistically significant differences among the countries (sig. < .001). As shown in Figure III.3 below, Costa Rica still leads the other countries in the region, but this time Nicaragua is not far behind. Somewhat surprisingly, Hondurans have the lowest level of respect for their political institutions. Guatemala City residents appear, once again, to be neither particularly high nor particularly low in this system support measure.

The fourth and final general indicator of system support measures protection of basic rights. We asked: "To what extent do you think that the basic rights of citizens are well protected by the Guatemalan political system." We learned from our interviewers that many respondents interpreted this question to be referring to human rights, a concept we very much had in mind when we formulated the question. When we asked it again in Guatemala in 1993, we changed the item to refer directly to

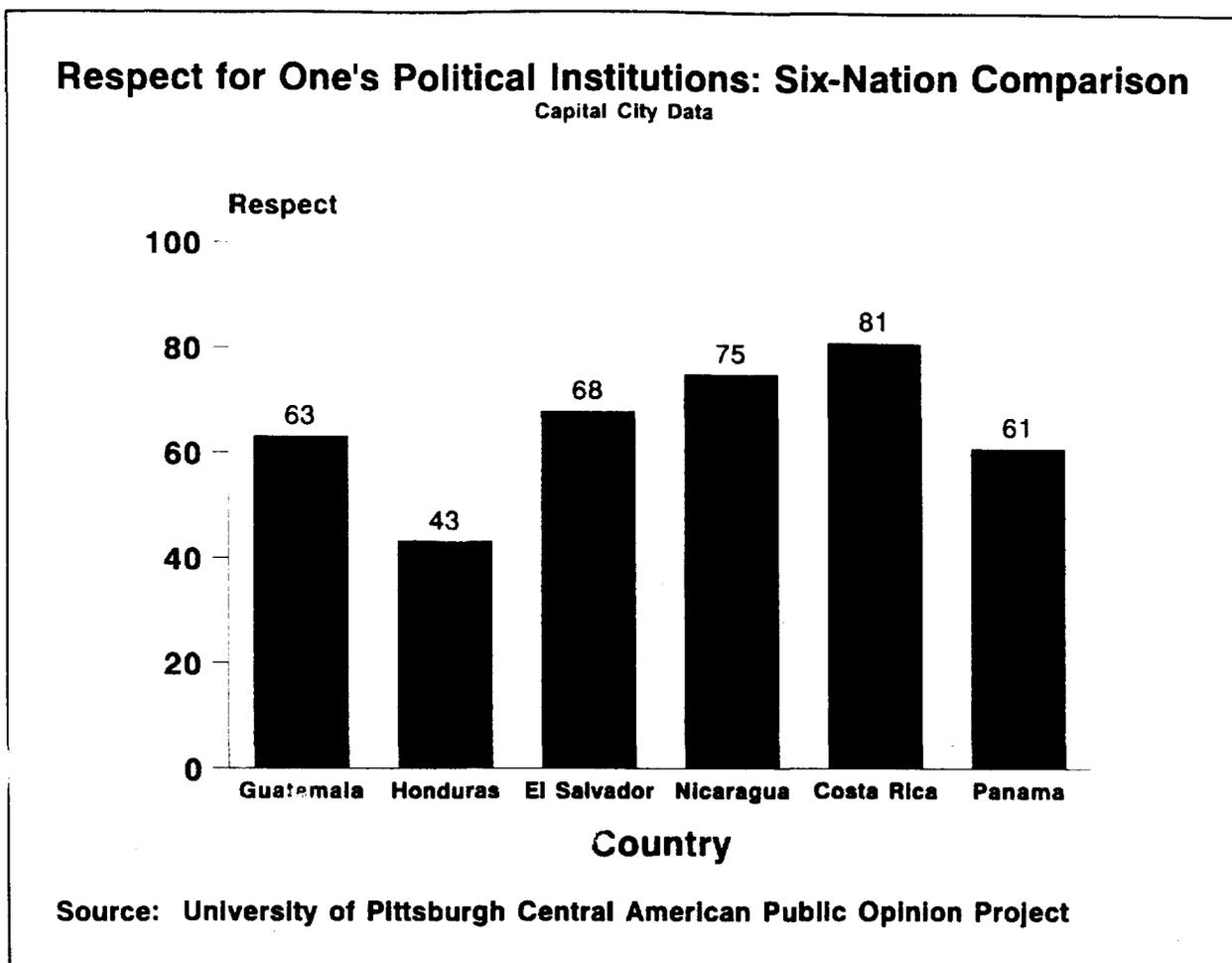


Figure 3

human rights. But in the six-nation study, the text read "basic rights." Figure III.4 contains the results. Once again Guatemala is found in the middle of the pack, with Costa Rica at the high end and Honduras, once again surprisingly, at the low end. These findings for Honduras are troubling and reflect a different picture from that which we have been given in many media accounts of the country. But since this report focuses on Guatemala, we will leave it to others to examine the implications for these findings for Honduras.

Support for Specific Institutions

We now move on to examine a series of specific institutions that are crucial for the functioning of any democracy: the courts, the legislature and the election tribunal. We start with the courts first, the institution that throughout Central America has the lowest support rating of any of these three institution, averaging, for the six countries, 42 on our scale of 0-100. The comparative results are shown in Figure III.5. We asked our 4,000 Central American respondents: "To what degree do the courts in

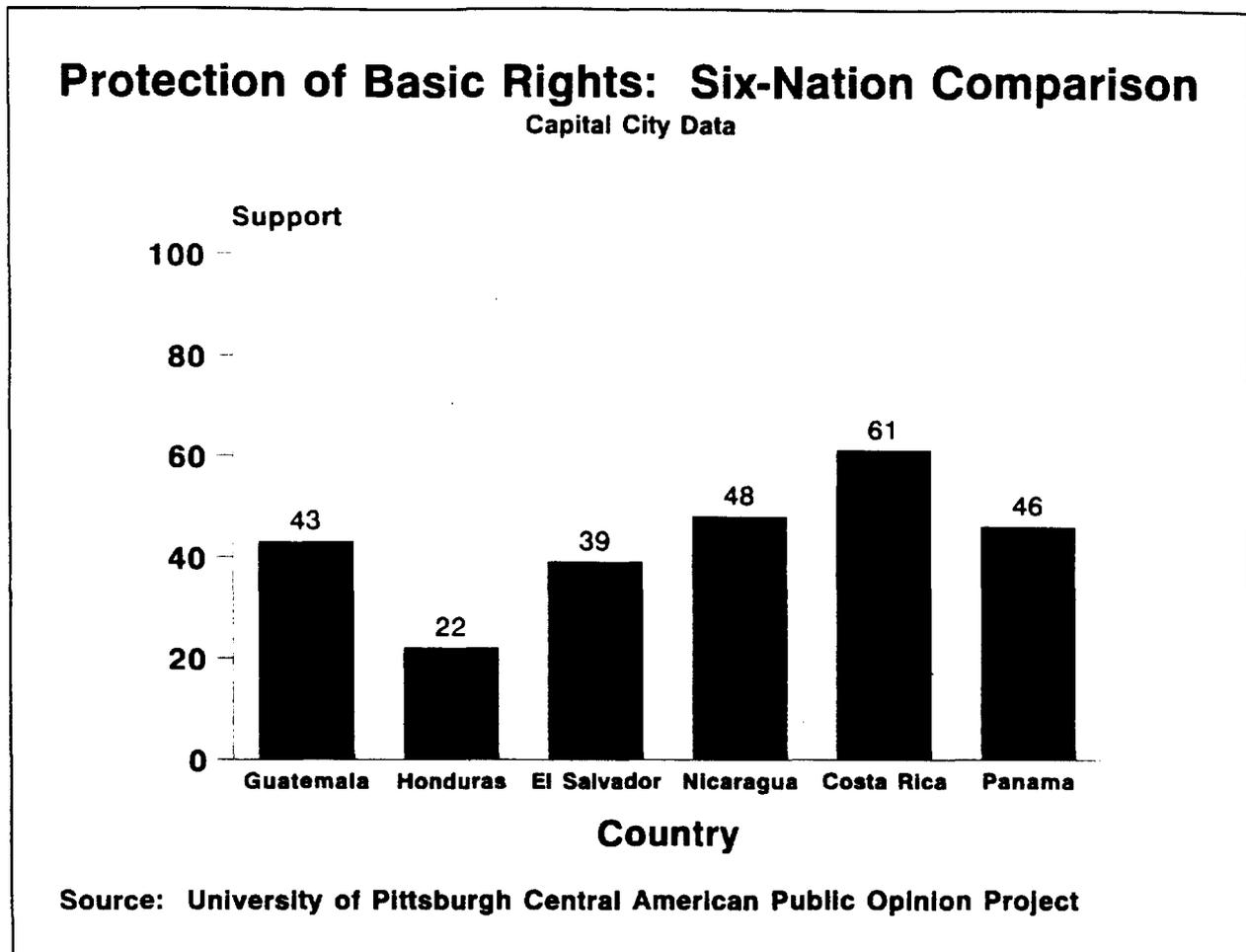


Figure 4

country (e.g. Guatemala) guarantee a fair trial?" It is in El Salvador, not surprisingly, where the courts have the lowest level of support. The 12 years of civil war in that country and the inability of the court system to prosecute the most horrendous violation of human rights apparently has had its impact on citizen confidence in the judiciary. Panama, too, with the Noriega dictatorship fresh in its mind, has citizens with little confidence in the judiciary. In Guatemala, the courts have a somewhat higher standing among the public, with the strongest support found in Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Honduras, which had done so poorly in other respects, apparently has a court system that is more widely trusted by its citizens than are some of its other institutions.

The legislatures of Central America have long been subservient to the executive branch. During the long years of dictatorial rule either they did not function at all or were virtually powerless. Nonetheless, they have a somewhat higher rating than do the courts, with an average of 46 on our scale of 0-100. We did not ask this question in Costa Rica, and therefore do not have comparable data for that country. As can

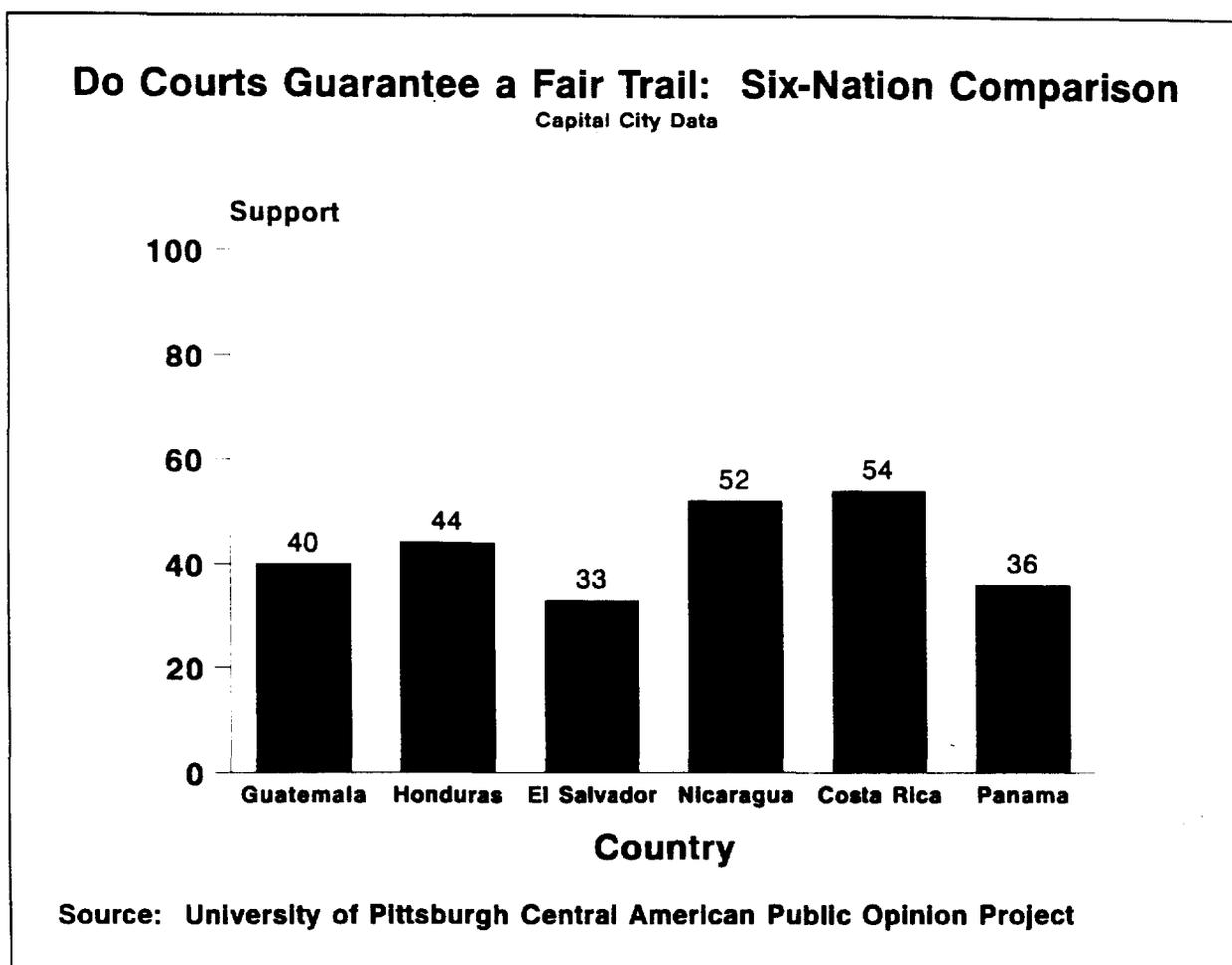


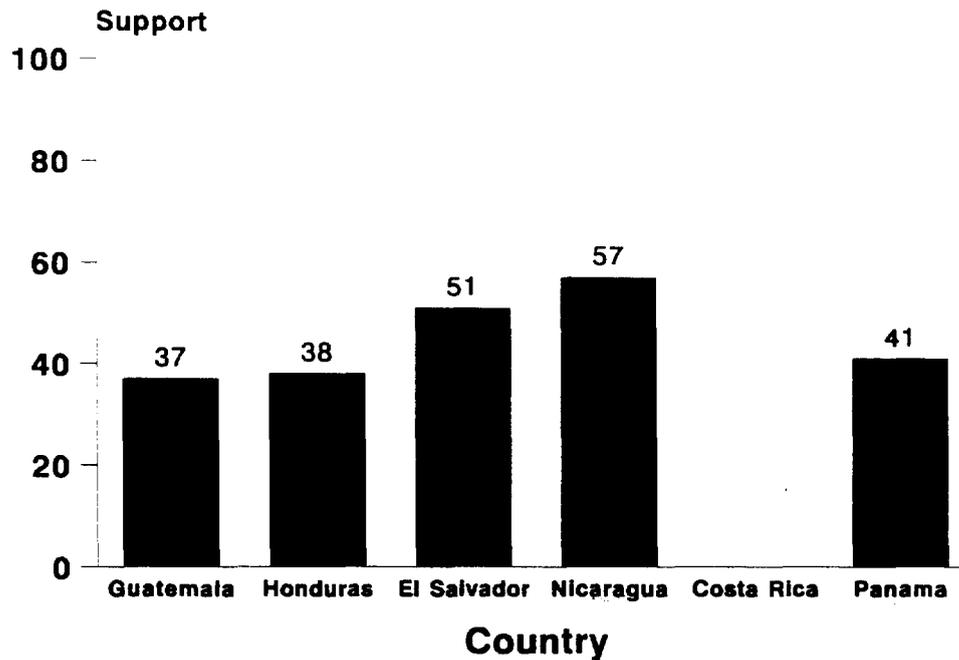
Figure 5

be seen in Figure III.6 below, the legislature of Nicaragua has the highest level of support, followed by El Salvador and Panama. At the bottom of the list, tying for last, are Guatemala and Honduras. The differences between Nicaragua and El Salvador, on the one hand, and the other countries on the other, are statistically significant (sig. < .001).

The final democratic institution to be examined is that of the electoral tribunal. Throughout Central America, elections are supervised by such tribunals, although the specific responsibilities of each tribunal varies from country to country. In every case they are the primary institutions charged with the responsibility of insuring the integrity of voting and the vote count, and hence play a key role in the democratic process. The question asked was: "To what degree do you trust the Supreme Electoral Tribunal?" We found that for Central America as a whole, trust in this body was higher than it was for any other institution studied. This question was not asked in Costa Rica. As is shown in Figure III.7 below, confidence in the tribunal in Guatemala is higher than it is for any country except Nicaragua, although the gap

Trust in the Legislature: Six-Nation Comparison

Capital City Data



Source: University of Pittsburgh Central American Public Opinion Project

Figure 6

between Guatemala and Nicaragua is quite large.

Support for the Military

The role of the military in politics seems to be receding throughout Central America. However, as recent events in both Guatemala and Nicaragua have shown, as an institution, the military still plays a critical role. We, therefore, wanted to measure support for the military as an institution. We asked: "To what extent do you have trust in the Armed Forces?" Costa Rica has no army and we did not ask this question there. The results are presented in Figure III.8. Hondurans have very low trust in their military, whereas Guatemalans, Salvadorans and Nicaraguans have significantly more trust.

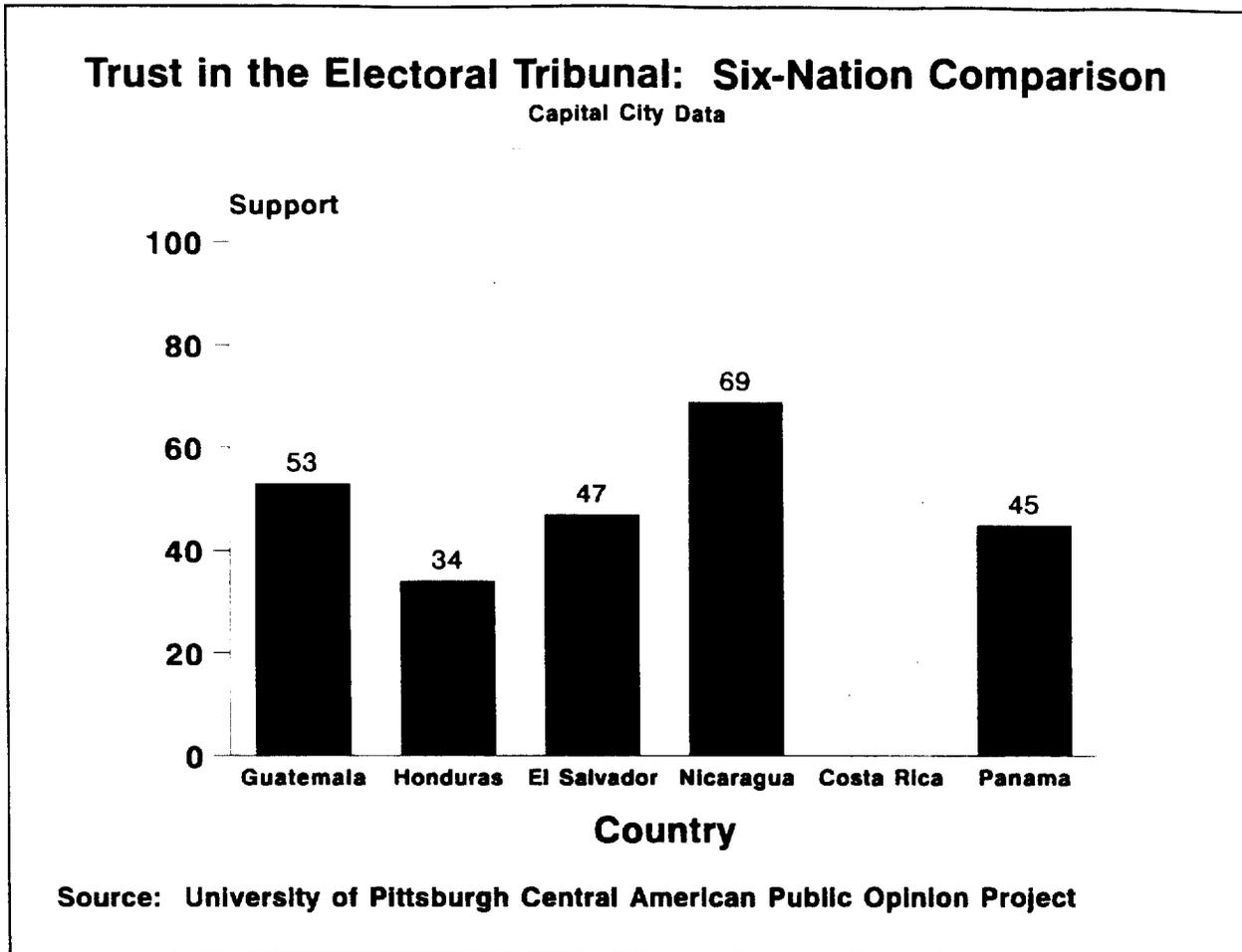


Figure 7

Levels of System Support within Guatemala

We have examined eight distinct indicators of system support in comparative perspective. Our task now turns to a comparison of various subsets of the Guatemalan population. To do this we need to utilize the 1993 Democratic Values Survey since it is the only one that is a national probability sample of the entire Guatemalan population.

The overall picture is presented in Figure III.9 below. There is a clear hierarchy of support for the different institutions in Guatemala. The greatest support is found on the "pride" item, but it should be noted that this item is different from the one utilized in the other Central American countries or the one used in the 1992 Guatemala survey. In this application of the survey we were asking not about pride in the political system, but pride in "being Guatemalan." In many ways it is a measure of nationalism, and it is clear from the overwhelmingly positive responses, Guatemalans are quite proud of their country. When it comes to support for the

political system, not surprisingly support is lower. Even so, one component of that system, the Human Rights Ombudsman, stands out as having the highest level of support of any of the remaining items in the study. It is of considerable note, of course, that within days of the administration of this questionnaire, the Human Rights Ombudsman, Ramiro de León Carpio, was selected by the Congress of Guatemala to assume the presidential sash after the failed "auto golpe" of President Jorge Serrano.

The Supreme Electoral Tribunal, Courts and public offices have a surprisingly high level of support. Lower support was expressed for the Army, the Congress, and respect for human rights. At the very bottom, however, were the political parties, with support at extremely low levels. These attitudes may well reflect both an appraisal of the political situation and a political preference. The Guatemalan government's lack of respect for human rights has been well documented. Thus, it is not surprising that few consider basic rights are being protected. Support for both the electoral tribunal and the human rights ombudsman may represent the opposite direction -- a hope that these two institutions and their leaders (now the two top executives of the country) may increase basic rights.

Low levels of support for the Congress and political parties may also go hand in hand -- reflecting the weakness of both institutions and the high level of personalism associated with Guatemalan politics.

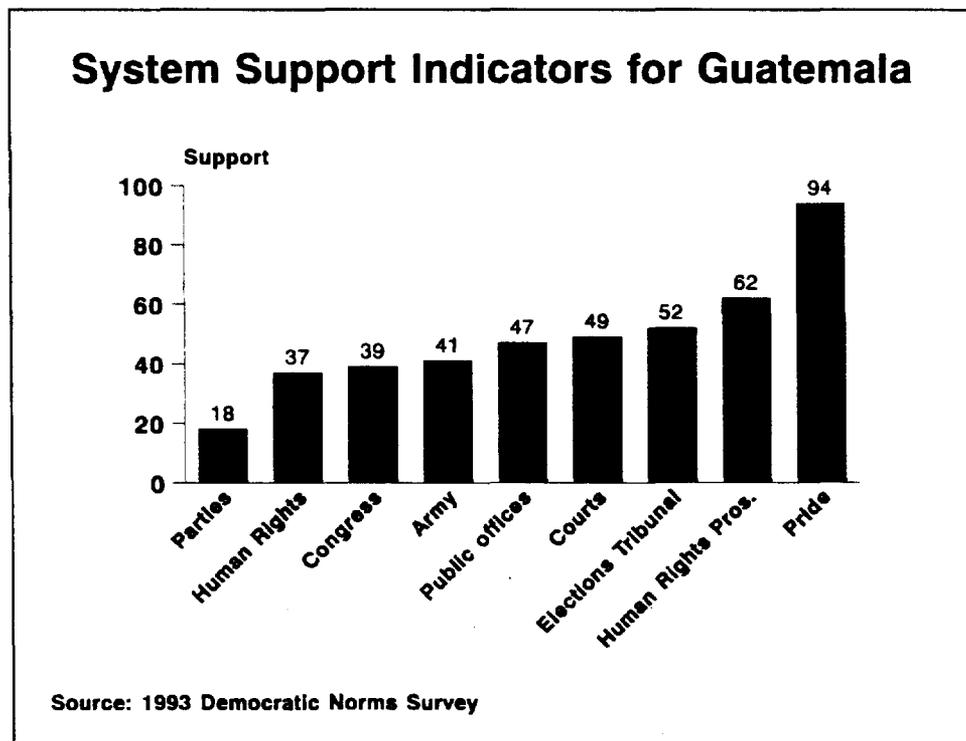


Figure 8

It would be possible to continue to conduct this examination on a variable-by-variable basis, commenting on, for example, support for the legislature vs. support for the courts. We believe, however, that it would be more appropriate at this point in the analysis to concern ourselves with the overall concept of system support so as not to lose sight of the "forest because of the trees" in the analysis.

In order to analyze the single concept of system support, we first examined the relationship of each of the variables analyzed above to see if they relate to each other in a systematic way and therefore can be formally considered to form part of a single dimension called "system support". Since our focus is on democratic institutions, we exclude from this list of variables the one question on support for the army. The item measuring "support for the political system" was excluded from the 1993 survey. That left us with six items. We found, however, that the item measuring pride, which was reworded for the 1993 administration to focus on pride of being a Guatemalan rather than pride in the political system, did not provide sufficient discrimination among the respondents to be included here.¹⁴ In the 1993 administration of the scale we added a new item, "trust in the political parties." We found that we could form a reliable scale with these six items: courts, congress, electoral tribunal, public offices,¹⁵ human rights and political parties.¹⁶ We summed these six items into an overall scale that ranges from a low of 0 to a high of 100.¹⁷ The overall mean for the entire sample was 40 on this scale.

System Support, Age and Gender

We first explore the relationship between system support and two basic demographic variables, age and gender. There are numerous theories in the social sciences that suggest that these two variables can be very important in determining attitudes. In Guatemala, however, system support is not a function of either. We did find that males had a somewhat higher level of system support than females (41 vs 39), but the difference was not statistically significant. Age showed no significant linear relationship to system support.

¹⁴When we included the "pride" item, in which most respondents said that they were "very proud," reliability dropped to .75. For that reason, and the limited variance, we excluded the item from the scale.

¹⁵This item is the equivalent of "public institutions" analyzed above in the Central America data set. In order to make the object of the question more concrete for less well educated Guatemalans, we changed the wording to "public offices."

¹⁶The Alpha reliability index for the seven items was .78.

¹⁷We summed each item, which ranged from 0 to 100 and then divided by 6.

System Support and Education

Education has been viewed as a central mechanism for the socialization of populations in democratic norms. Less is known about the relationship between education and system support, but expectations are that increased education should be associated with higher system support. Such a relationship is found in Panama and Costa Rica. In Guatemala, however, the reverse is the case: those with lower education have higher system support (sig. < .001). As can be seen in Figure III.9 below, system support peaks among those with one to three years of education, and then declines steadily thereafter. The lowest level of support is found among those with the highest level of education.

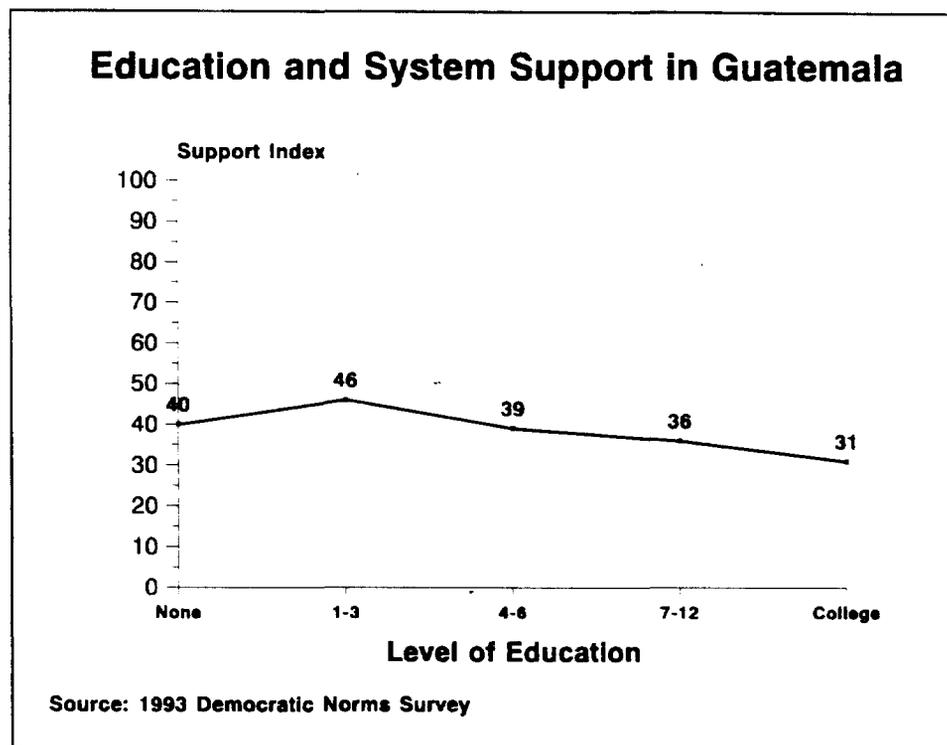


Figure 9

Residents of Guatemala City are, as a group, more highly educated than the residents of other areas of Guatemala. It is not surprising, therefore, that support for the system of government in Guatemala is lowest in Guatemala City. Highest system support is found in the North-eastern region of the country. Figure III.10 below shows the relationship between education, system support and geographic region of Guatemala.

Wealth and System Support

Since we have found that education is negatively associated with support for the system in Guatemala, and since education and wealth are generally positively associated with each other, we can hypothesize that wealth should also be negatively associated with system support. That is, we should find that wealthier Guatemalans are less supportive of their system of government than poorer Guatemalans.

In this study we have measured wealth in two ways. First, we used the conventional format of requesting the respondent to disclose their monthly income, and the total household income. We have found in our previous work in Central America that such a measure normally does not work very well. Perhaps it is because respondents are reluctant to tell interviewers about their income or perhaps it is because many Central Americans work in agriculture and their crop sales and home consumption are not easily translated into monthly cash income. A further problem is that students and housewives often earn little or no income and therefore we have a considerable amount of missing data on this item. We nonetheless correlated the income data with system support and, not surprisingly, did not find a statistically significant relationship.

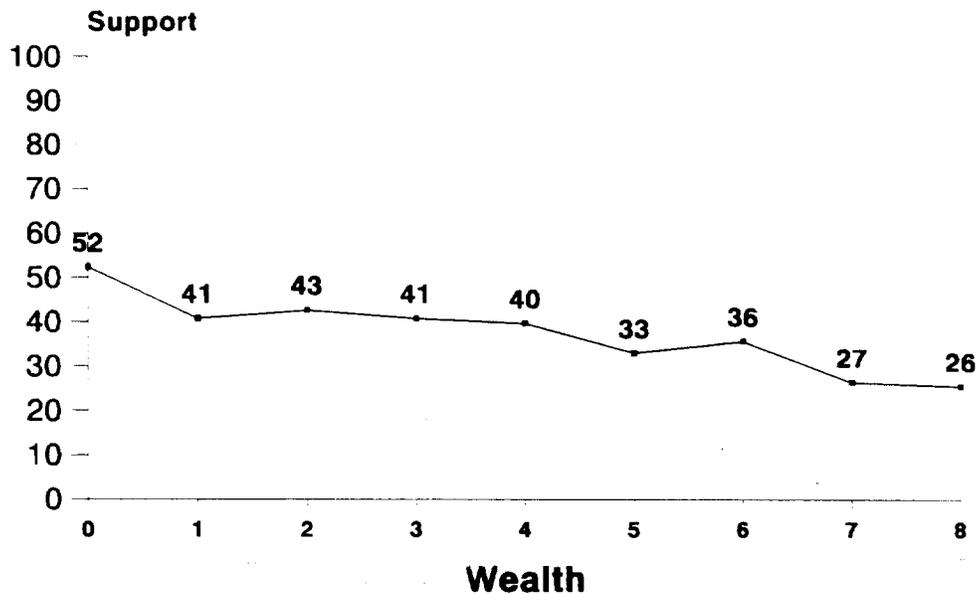
We have been more successful using an index based upon the presence of key appliances in the home, as well as the condition of the home. We constructed an index based upon the presence of the following appliances in the home: radio, TV, refrigerator, washing machine, car or tractor, telephone.¹⁸ We found that this index of wealth was significantly correlated ($r = .17$, sig. $< .001$) with system support. Figure III.11 shows the association between wealth, as measured by ownership of these appliances and system support. Among the poorest 6.7 percent of the population, those who have none of these appliances, system support is the highest, whereas among the 1.7 percent of the sample who own all of the appliances, support is the lowest.

Ethnicity and System Support

¹⁸The index was created by assigning a score of 1 to any respondent whose home had the appliance, and a score of zero to those who did not. The scores were then added. The questionnaire distinguished between black and white and color TV. We combined the two types of TVs, scoring 0 for no TV, 1 for a black-and-white, 2 for a color and 3 for both. The overall scale was not especially reliable ($\text{Alpha} = .56$). Factor analysis of the items demonstrated, however, that there were two dimensions in the scale, the first comprising radio and TV, and the second comprising washing machine, car or tractor and telephone. Refrigerator had distributed loadings, but loaded more heavily on the second factor. We found that both factors were associated with system support, although the second was more closely associated than the first. To avoid adding this complexity to the analysis, we decided to maintain a single appliance index.

Wealth and System Support

(as measured by appliances in the home)



Source: 1993 Democratic Norms Survey

Figure 10

In Guatemala there is perhaps no more socially relevant characteristic than ethnicity. It is the one country in Central America with a large concentration of indigenous population. Unfortunately, there are no universally accepted definitions of ethnic identity in Guatemala, and consequently it is difficult to select the measure that most clearly distinguishes the Indian population from the non-Indian population. In the questionnaire we used several distinct methods. We determined the respondent's use of language (Spanish vs. Indian languages), we asked the respondents to self-identify (Indian vs. "ladino"), we noted the language in which the interview was conducted, and, finally, we noted if the respondent was dressed in Indian or Western clothes. A clear pattern emerged in the analysis: the Indigenous population expressed lower system support than did the ladino population, this despite the fact that, as we have already shown, lower education (characteristic of Indians in Guatemala) is associated with higher system support. Respondents in our sample who dressed in indigenous clothing averaged 2.8 years of formal schooling compared to 4.8 years for those in Western dress.

The analysis of the linkage between ethnicity and system support is complex, and we need to take it one step at a time so as to avoid misleading generalizations.

We first examined the question of self-identification. In our sample, 36 percent identified as Indian, 56 percent as ladino and 8 percent did not specify an identification. We found that those who identified as Indians expressed a somewhat lower level of system support than did the ladino population, but the difference was not dramatic.

We then examined the question of Indian versus Western dress. In our sample, 11 percent of the respondents wore Indian garb. Among those who did, we found a sharply lower level of system support, statistically significant at $< .001$. We present these results in Figure III.12 below.

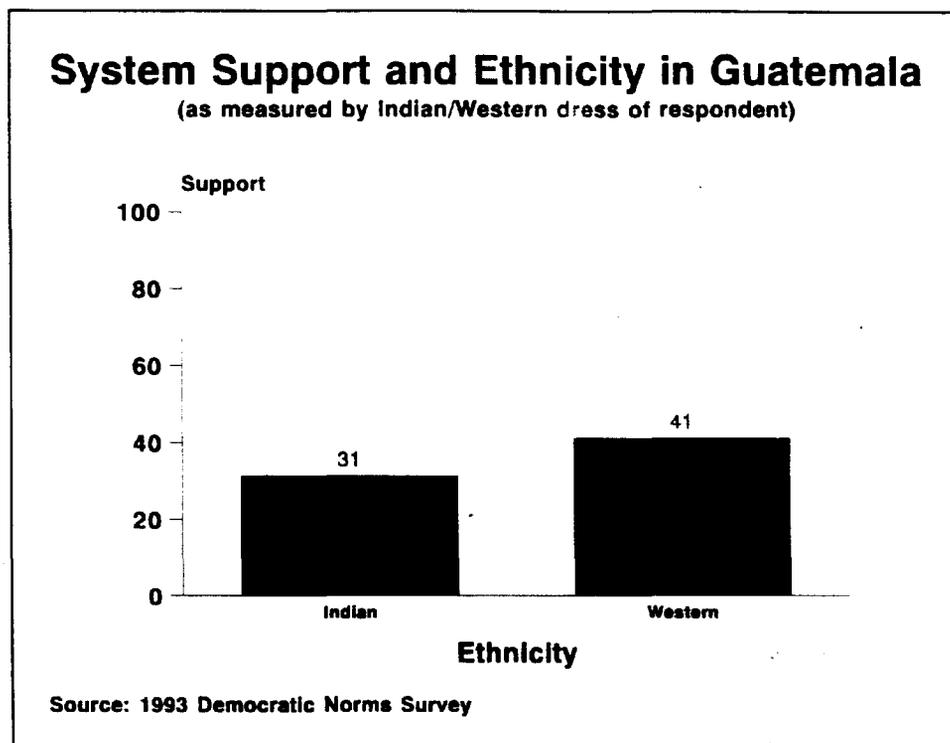


Figure 11

Indian dress sharply marks the individual as unmistakably Indian. But we know that it is far more common to see women dressed in Indian clothing than men. In fact, in our sample, of those who wore Indian garb, only 18 percent were men. Therefore, we can assume that there are many men in the sample who were Indian by any definition but who did not dress in Indian clothes. We also found that even though males in Indian garb were somewhat more supportive of the system than

females in garb (index of 34 versus 30), both Indian males and females expressed lower system support.

We then examined system support by the individual Indigenous languages spoken by our sample of Guatemalans to see if there was any variation among the groups. For the sample as a whole, 25 percent of the respondents spoke an Indigenous language, although most of those were bilingual in Spanish. We examined levels of system support for each of the languages in our study. This analysis reveals that there are sharp differences in the levels of system support among the various Indian language groups. Only Kiche speakers stand out as having dramatically lower support. Indeed, the other Indian language groups show support that does not significantly vary from that expressed by the mono-lingual Spanish speakers. It should be noted, however, that the Kiche speakers constituted the largest group of Indian language speakers in our sample. According to the National Bilingual Education Project, this is the largest group of Indians in Guatemala, comprising some 930,000 people.¹⁹

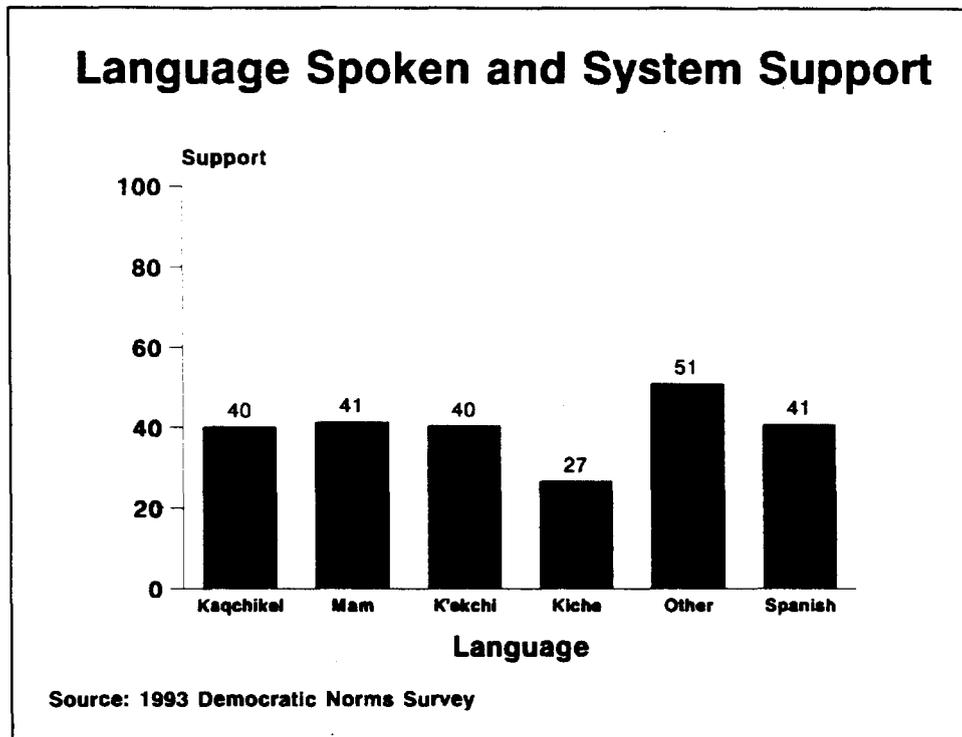


Figure 12

¹⁹See Michael Richards and Julia Becker Richards, Languages and Communities Encompassed by Guatemala's National Bilingual Education Program. Guatemala: Ministerio de Educación, División de Socio Educativo Rural, Programa Nacional de Educación Bilingüe, 1990, p. 9.

Thus far our exploration of system support within Guatemala has utilized the combined six-item index of support. Our study did include some additional items related to system support that were not included in the six-item scale. We reported on those at the beginning of this section. The item measuring support for the armed forces was excluded because of its negative correlation, among certain segments of the population, with support for other components of the political system. That is, some people who are negative about the army are positive about the courts, legislature, etc., and therefore the inclusion of this item would have lowered the overall reliability of the system support scale. A second excluded item was support for the Human Rights Ombudsman (El Procurador de los Derechos Humanos). We did not include this item in our overall system support scale because it was the only one directly associated with an individual rather than an institution.

An examination of system support and ethnicity in Guatemala on these two items (see Figure III.13) reveals interesting contrasts. First, and not at all surprisingly, for each group, including the mono-lingual Spanish speakers, the army receives far less support than does the human rights ombudsman. Second, among all of the Indian groups except the Kaqchikel, support for the army is significantly lower than it is among the mono-lingual Spanish speaking population of Guatemala. Third, the Kiche speakers express the lowest support for the Army of any group. Finally, even among the Kiche, whose support is quite low compared to other groups on the general Support index, support for the Human Rights Ombudsman is dramatically higher than it is for the army and only somewhat lower than it is among the mono-lingual Spanish speakers.

We can probe into the ethnicity question a bit further, although the size of our sample makes generalizations from this exploration rather risky. We would like to know if the low support expressed by the Kiche speakers is a generalized phenomenon or one confined to certain geographic areas of Guatemala. In Figure III.14 below, we examine the Kiche speakers in the departments in which our survey found concentrations of these individuals, and contrast their system support scores to mono-lingual Spanish speakers in the same departments. We do not attempt to control here for factors such as education or wealth, but focus exclusively on ethnicity (as defined by language). We can draw two conclusions from this figure. First, although system support among Kiche speakers varies from department to department, it is lower in every department than the national average of mono-lingual Spanish speakers. Therefore, we can conclude that the low support is a characteristic associated with ethnicity and is not an artifact of geography. Notwithstanding that conclusion, system support among Kiche speakers is particularly low in the Departments of Quiché and Totonicapán. Second, in each department (except the composite "other" group), Kiche

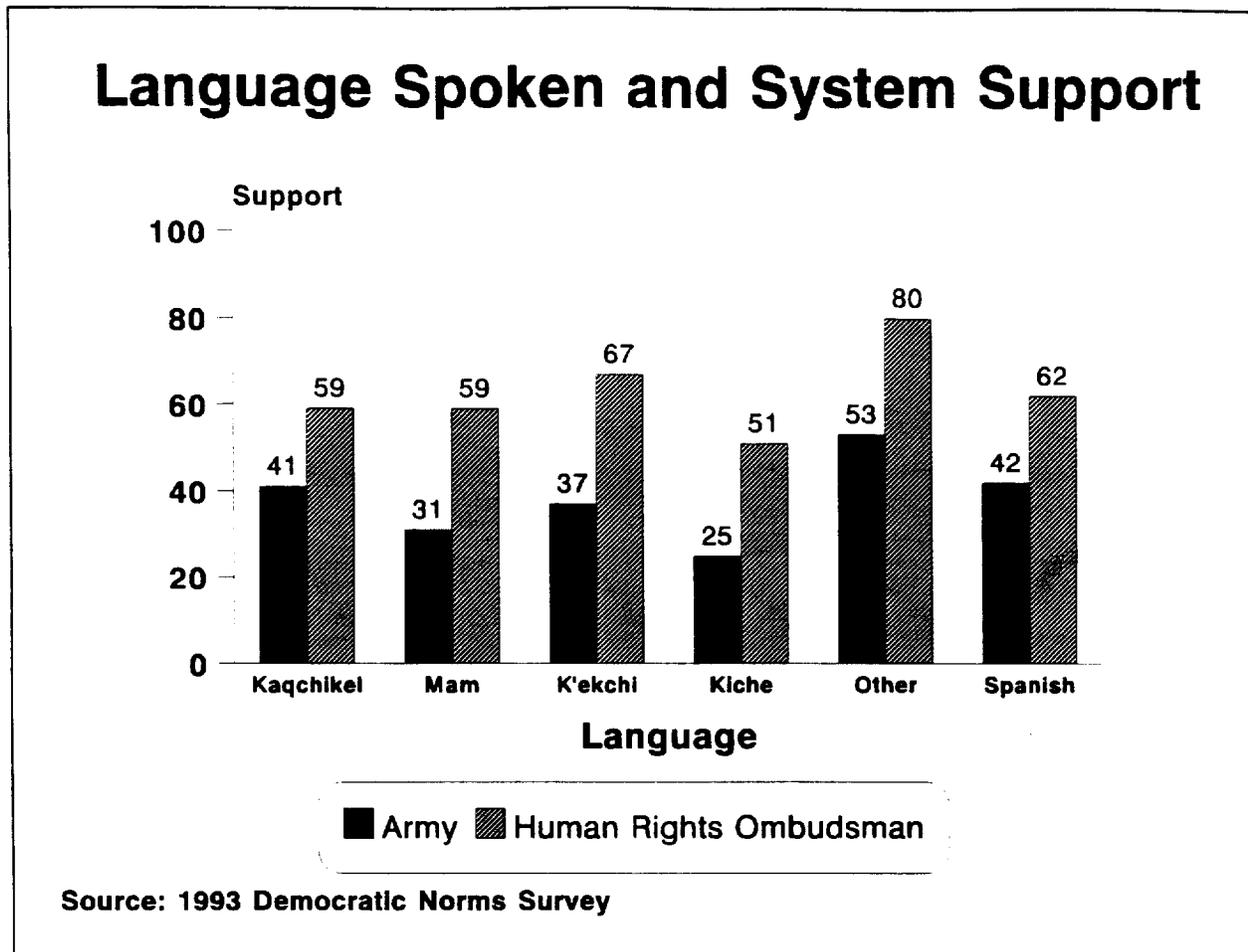


Figure 13

speakers have lower system support scores than mono-lingual Spanish speakers. The difference is not significant in Guatemala City, but our sample of Kiché speakers there is very small ($N = 6$). The sample of monolingual Spanish speakers in Totonicapán is so small ($N = 2$) that we should not draw any conclusions from those findings. Yet, in Quiché and Quetzaltenango, the pattern is clear and the samples sufficiently large for us to conclude that ethnicity is directly associated with lower system support.

Summing Up: Predictors of System Support in Guatemala

We have examined a number of factors that influence system support in Guatemala. But our analysis thus far has not compared the relative strength of each factor in explaining levels of support. To do this we need to utilize multiple regression analysis. We will not burden the reader with the complexities of that analysis, but only point out that the technique allows us to compare the relative importance of each of the factors we have analyzed while controlling for (holding constant) all of the others.

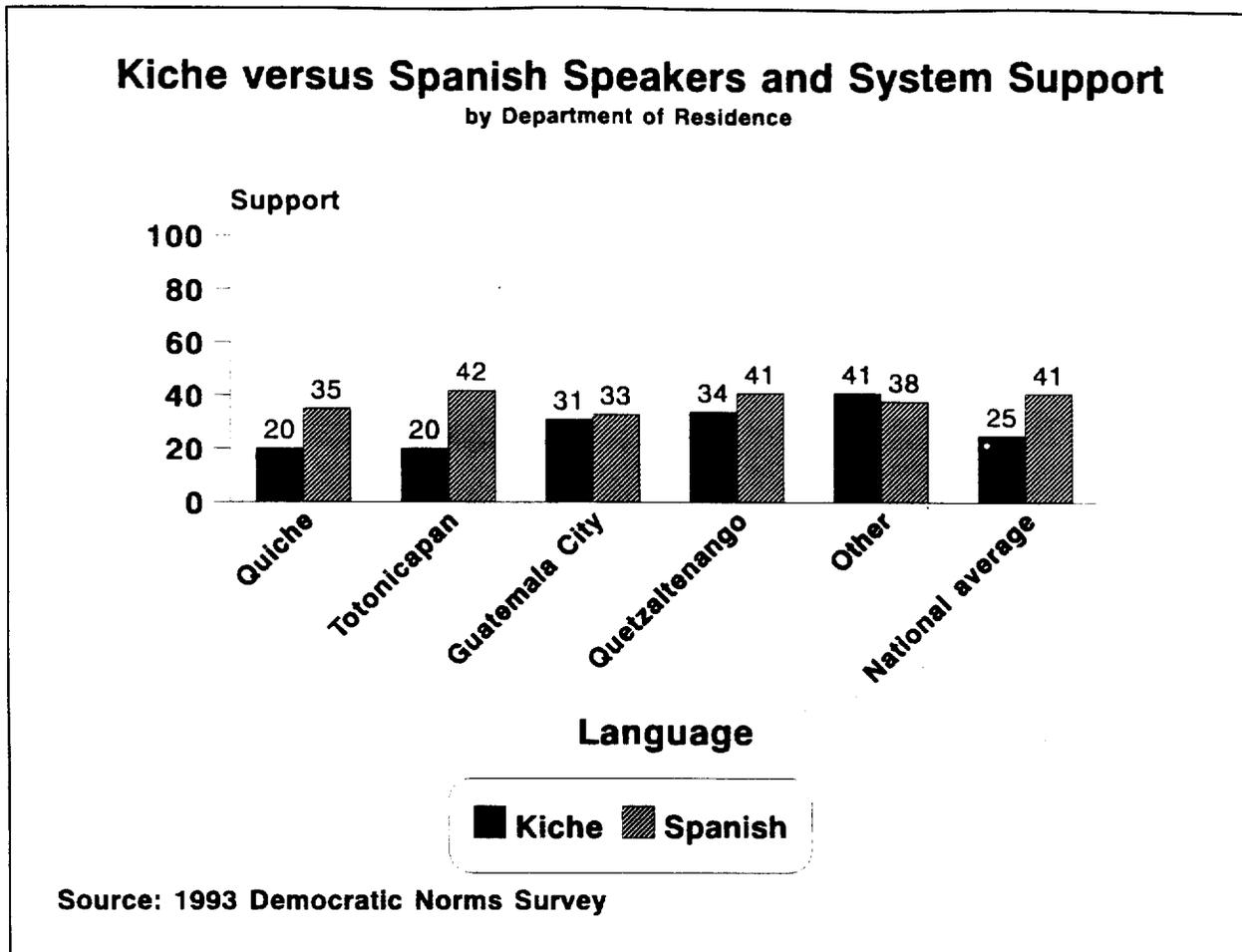


Figure 14

Our analysis finds that the single most important factor in predicting system support is ethnicity, followed by wealth and trailed by education. Each one of these factors is statistically significant (sig. <.01).²⁰ We can visualize this better by referring back to the 100-point scale we have been using throughout this analysis. Holding constant for wealth and education, Kiche Indians have system support levels of 16 points below the ladinos. Holding constant for ethnicity and education, the wealthiest Guatemalans express system support of 15 points below the poorest Guatemalans. Holding constant for ethnicity and wealth, college educated Guatemalans are 10 points below Guatemalans with no education.

²⁰The multiple R = .24. The beta weights are: Indian = .16; Wealth = -.14; Education = -.10. The overall significance of the equation (F test) < .001.

In the next Chapter, we will move from a discussion of system support to a discussion of a critical underpinning for democracy -- attitudinal support for democratic liberties.

43

IV. Support for Democratic Liberties

System support is a critical factor in determining political stability. Nations in which the citizens support their system of government are likely to remain stable for many years. Stable systems, however, are not necessarily democratic ones, as we well know from observing the histories of dictatorships throughout Latin America and the world. Stable democracies are ones that, presumably, are undergirded not only with high levels of system support, but high levels of support for democratic norms, especially support for civil liberties and political tolerance. In this chapter we examine support for democratic liberties in Guatemala, first in comparative perspective, and then within certain key groups of the Guatemalan population. Once again we will make use of the 1992 urban data for the cross-national comparisons and the 1993 Democratic Norms Survey for the intra-national exploration.

Comparative Perspectives

Measurement of Democratic Political Culture

We build our study on a long tradition of empirical research that has two principal, highly influential strands which may be labelled "the civic culture tradition" and the "tolerance tradition." In the civic culture tradition, almost all comparative empirical studies of democracy begin from The Civic Culture (Almond and Verba, 1963). Active (but not extreme) political participation is the vital distinguishing feature of the civic culture, which is differentiated from "parochial" and "subject" cultures largely by greater citizen participation (Almond and Verba, 1963:31-32).¹

The political tolerance tradition has its roots in studies by Stouffer (1955) and McClosky (1964) of U.S. respondents' willingness to extend civil rights to proponents of unpopular causes. In the context of 1950s and 1960s, tolerance towards communists was a central issue of national concern; thus these studies focused on the rights of communists. Replications of these studies later reported increased

¹Also important was a sense of civic competence, and degree of national pride. Numerous critiques of the Civic Culture have noted that while the emphasis on participation was valid, the addition of national pride and civic competence confused things. Some national political cultures exhibit high national pride but not democratic orientations. Civic competence has been shown to be problematical as a component of democratic political culture because of the confusion between citizen expectations and citizen orientations (Baloyra, 1979). Thus what remains of the notion of civic culture, qua democratic culture, is support and encouragement for political participation. The key tests of participatory political culture thus involve, at a minimum, support for the right to organize civic groups, work for political parties, protest, and, of course, vote.

tolerance (Nunn, Crockett and Williams, 1978), but the increases were seen as illusory because by the late 1970s antipathy toward other disliked groups had supplanted that toward communists. Later methodological refinements honed tolerance measures by centering on groups the respondents themselves disliked (i.e., one's "least-liked group").² Sullivan, Pierson and Marcus (1982) argue that tolerance is a critical element in democratic political culture because intolerant attitudes eventually can produce intolerant behavior that may victimize the targets of intolerance (Sullivan, et al., 1982:51).³

In sum, support for the right to participate and tolerance of disliked groups are central pillars of democratic political culture. In *Polyarchy*, Dahl (1971) argued that two key mass attitudes underlie a political culture that supports liberal, representative institutions: support for a system of widespread political participation and support for the right of minority dissent. In other terms, a democratic political culture is one that is both Extensive and Inclusive. Extensive cultures support democratic participation, while inclusive cultures support civil liberties for unpopular groups.

Central to the argument of linking political culture to political democracy is that culture change usually occurs gradually. For example, Inglehart (1988:1205) assumes that "autonomous and reasonably enduring cross-cultural differences exist and that they can have important political consequences." His data from over 200 national surveys in Western Europe lead him to conclude that the differences among political cultures are "remarkably stable." We sought measures of democratic political culture that not only encompassed the Extensive (widespread) participation and Inclusive (tolerance of dissenters) participation dimensions as defined by Dahl, but had already been shown to be stable, even under conditions that produce major variation in more transitory opinions, such as support for a given candidate or policy.

We selected a set of ten items measuring democratic attitudes that had been tested in the United States, Mexico and, most extensively, in Costa Rica. Repeated administration of those items in Costa Rican surveys conducted in 1978, 1980, 1983 and 1985 showed that despite a major economic crisis in the early 1980s, democratic norms varied little (Seligson and Muller, 1987; Seligson and Gómez B., 1989). This is not to say, of course, that the response patterns could not change, especially under such revolutionary conditions as existed in Nicaragua, but these items do seem to

²One well known part of the tolerance tradition (Prothro and Grigg 1960, Budge 1970) focused on communists, but the core of the argument involved inconsistency between support for general procedural norms of democracy and specific applications of those norms to unpopular groups.

³The comparative work, including the cases of Israel and New Zealand, is contained in Sullivan et. al, 1985.

meet the test of measuring an "enduring cultural trait" as specified by Inglehart (1988:1209).

Extensive Participation is measured by three variables: support for participation in civic groups, political parties and protests. We did not ask about support for voting since we expected near unanimity in its favor and therefore little or no variance. We believe, however, that Inclusive Participation is the more stringent test of commitment to democratic norms; one can support a wide variety of participatory forms and still be opposed to the right to participate for unpopular groups. Thus we employed seven questions divided into two batteries: The first three items measures Opposition to the Suppression of Democratic Liberties -- approval or disapproval of the government prohibiting protest marches, meetings of government critics, and censorship of the media.⁴ The last four items comprise a measure of the Right to Dissent, in which we asked about extending to critics of the government the right to vote, organize demonstrations, run for office and speak out.

Comparative Perspectives

Extensive Participation

Figure IV.1 below compares levels of support for conventional modes of political participation: legal demonstrations, communal problem solving, and election campaigns. Although the average scores for all nations are in the positive end of the continuum (i.e. 50 or higher on the scale of 0-100), in comparative perspective Guatemalans do not appear very supportive of these forms of participation. In two of the three forms, participation in community groups and elections campaigns, they give the lowest levels of support of any country in Central America. On the question of support for legal demonstrations, they are slightly above El Salvador, the lowest of the six countries, but substantially lower than Nicaragua, Panama, Honduras and Costa Rica.⁵

⁴The list could have been expanded by including, as did Sullivan *et al.* for example, questions on the rights of dissenters to teach in public schools or, as did Stouffer, questions on book banning. But the strong associations among the items we did use found in our prior surveys in Costa Rica suggested that we would gain little additional understanding of democratic culture by adding additional items. More important, these items have little salience where teachers are appointed by national ministries and school libraries are almost nonexistent.

⁵Note that the Costa Rican data set only included one of the variables. As a result, for this series, a 1987 national probability sample, also conducted by the University of Pittsburgh group, was utilized. The subset of the metropolitan area of the capital city included 304 cases, and is the basis on which the means are

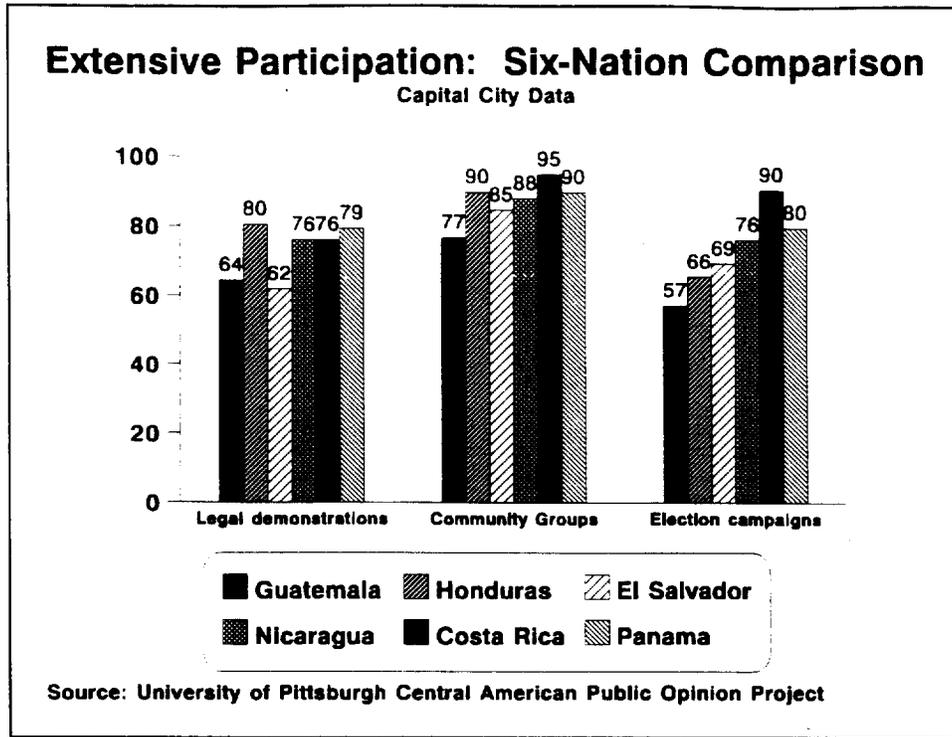


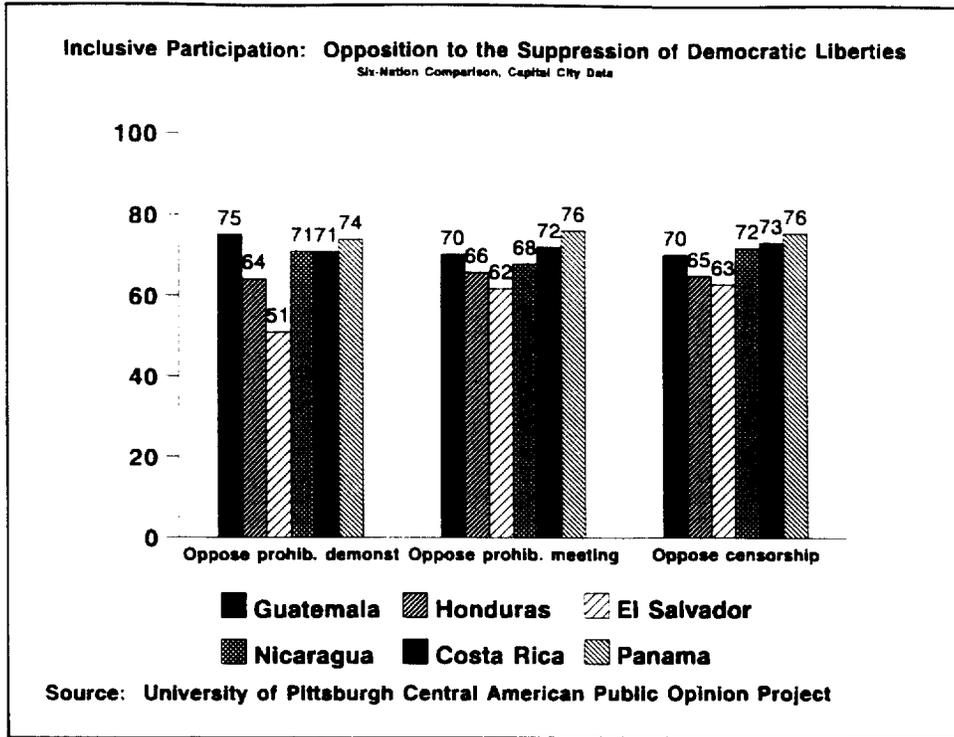
Figure 1

Inclusive Participation:

Opposition to the Suppression of Democratic Liberties

We move on now to a more stringent test of support for democracy. Here we ask the respondents if they would approve or disapprove of the government taking action to restrict civil liberties. The data are shown in Figure IV.2. In this set of variables, the differences among the countries are not as great. Only El Salvador stands out as having relatively low support on these democratic norms, but even in El Salvador's case, all of the averages are in the positive, (i.e., democratic) end of the continuum. Noteworthy is that Guatemalans are especially supportive of these democratic liberties, scoring above all other nations in the opposition to the prohibition of demonstrations.

built in the figure.

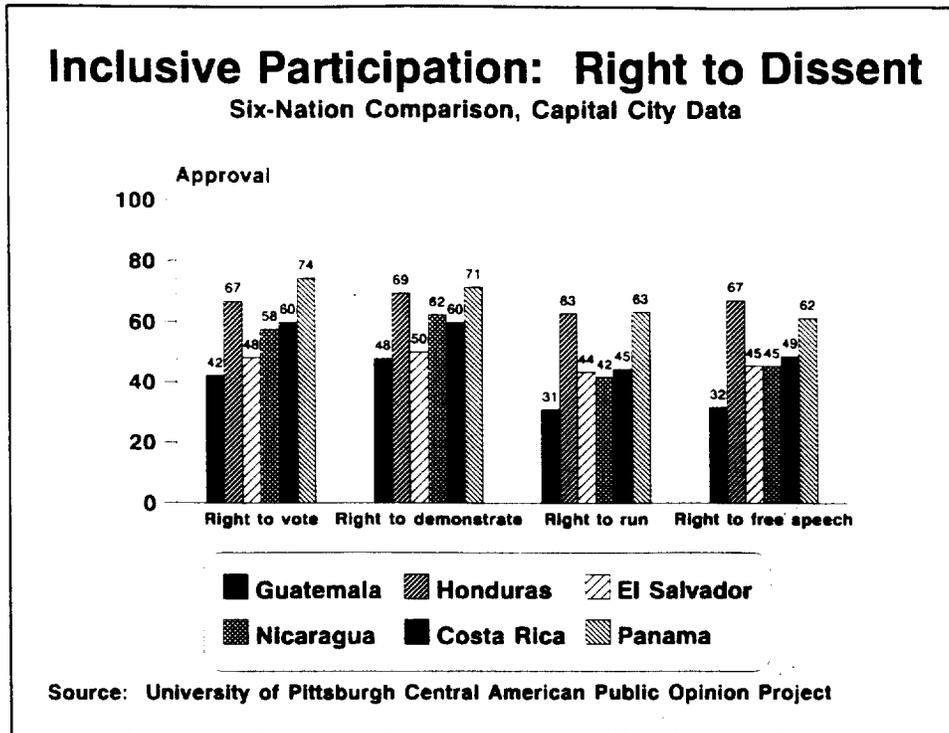


Inclusive Participation: The Right to Dissent

Figure 2

We consider the Right to Dissent items the most stringent test of democratic liberties. In these items we are asking the respondents if they are willing to extend the crucial civil liberties of the right to vote, demonstrate, run for office, and exercise free speech (by making a speech on radio or TV), to those who are critics of their system of government. Not surprisingly, approval of these liberties by our respondents in Central America was, on average, lower than it was for the other, "easier" tests of support for democratic norms.

The comparative results are presented in Figure IV.3. As can be seen, in each of the four items, Guatemalans scored lower than did the citizens of any other nation in Central America. On the right to demonstrate item, the differences were the smallest, with Guatemalans scoring 48 and Salvadorans, the next lowest country, scoring 50. On no item in this series did the average score of the Guatemalans move into the positive range (50 or over), and on the final two items, the right to run for office and the right to free speech, we observe the lowest score for any item for any nation that we have examined thus far. Clearly, Guatemalans have little tolerance for the right to dissent.



On the whole, **Figure 3**

then, this comparison of Guatemala with the rest of Central America has demonstrated that on two of the three series of questions, Guatemalans scored lowest. We now turn our attention to exploring differences in support for democratic norms within the Guatemalan population.

Levels of Support for Democratic Liberties within Guatemala

The overall picture of support for democratic liberties in Guatemala for the country as a whole is presented in Figure IV.4 below. We have grouped the ten items into the three major areas described above: extensive participation, opposition to suppression of democratic liberties, and support for the right to dissent. We can make several observations about these results. First, as we found in our comparative survey, in Guatemala support for extensive participation is *lower* than is support for opposition to the suppression of civil liberties. In most countries, support for civic participation in communal groups, election campaigns and legal demonstrations is higher than is opposition to the suppression of democratic liberties. Second, support for participation in election campaigns, is surprisingly low. Third, for each of the right to dissent items, the average score for Guatemalans as a whole is in the negative end of the continuum, whereas the OSDL and Extensive Participation are firmly in the positive end of the continuum. Quite clearly, the majority of the Guatemalans in our sample are more concerned about the protection of their own liberties, than about the rights of other Guatemalans to express their dissent. This reflects an historical reality

marked by extreme repression of dissent by central authorities (including the military), use of death squads and other direct force as tools of control. This finding also underscores the need for an effort to foster a broader definition of democracy among Guatemalans.

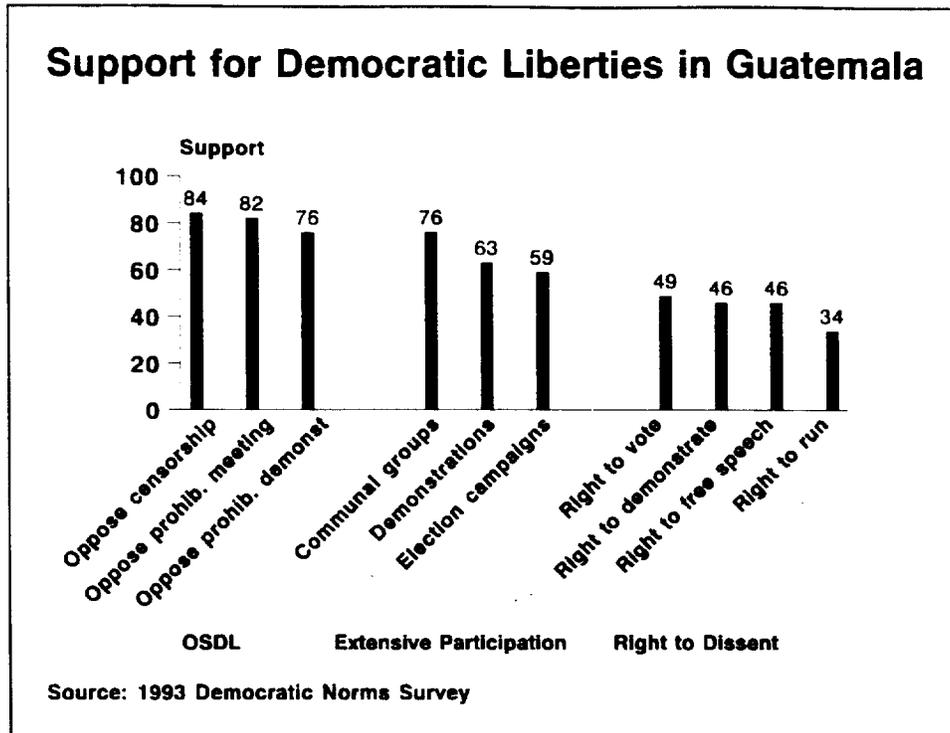


Figure 4

An Index of Support for Democratic Liberties

In order to simplify the analysis of the internal factors that relate to lower or higher support for democratic liberties, we have created a single index combining all ten variables on the three separate sets of measures analyzed above. We determined that the combined scale was reliable ($\text{Alpha} = .75$), and formed three distinct factors corresponding to each of the three main dimensions.⁶ We summed each of the ten variables in the index and divided by 10 so that the index had the same 0-100 range as it did in all of our previous analyses. In the discussion below we use this combined index of democratic liberties.

⁶A varimax rotation factor analysis produced loadings of .66 or higher on each of the variables that loaded on its factor, with no evidence of distributed loadings.

educated population (sig. < .001). The important increase seems to occur sometime in high school.

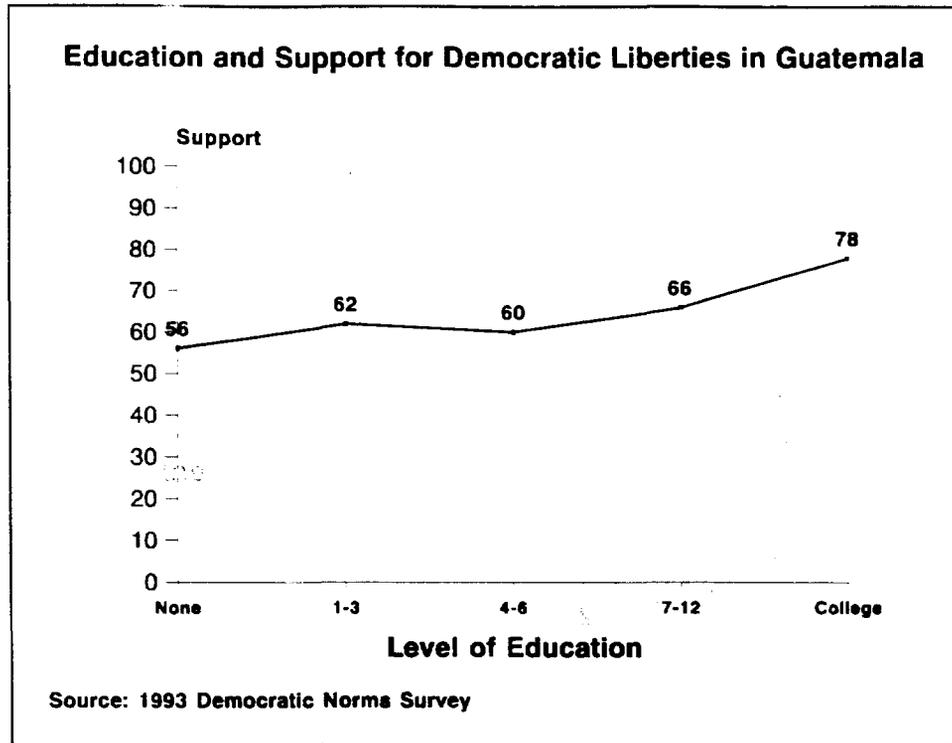


Figure 6

Unlike our examination of system support, there were no major differences among the regions in Guatemala, as is shown in Figure IV.7. The differences among the regions are fairly small (although significant at .01), but not clearly associated with the overall level of education in that area.

Wealth and Support for Democratic Liberties

Wealth has a significant but unusual relationship to support for democratic liberties. We found that both family income ($r = .14$, sig. < .001) and wealth measured by appliances ($r = .08$, sig. = .01) in the home had a significant, positive correlation with support for democratic liberties. As is shown in Figure IV. 8 below, however, the pattern is reversed among the wealthiest Guatemalans. Indeed, among that group support for civil liberties is lower than it is for any other level of wealth in the study. This finding suggests quite strongly that two factors are at work here. First, increased economic means tends to increase one's support for democratic liberties. Beyond a certain level, however, among the very wealthy, support for such freedoms drops off dramatically, perhaps as a result of fears among this group that they might be the target of social unrest should civil liberties be widely exercised in

Gender, Age and Democratic Liberties

We did not find any significant differences in system support that differentiated men from women. In support for democratic liberties, however, we do find some significant (.05), albeit small, differences. As can be see in Figure IV.5 below, males have somewhat higher overall support for democratic liberties than females. One might jump to the conclusion that the greater support for democratic liberties among males is a function of their higher level of education. In fact, as will be shown in the multiple regression analysis below, gender remains a determinant of support for democratic liberties even when controlled for education.

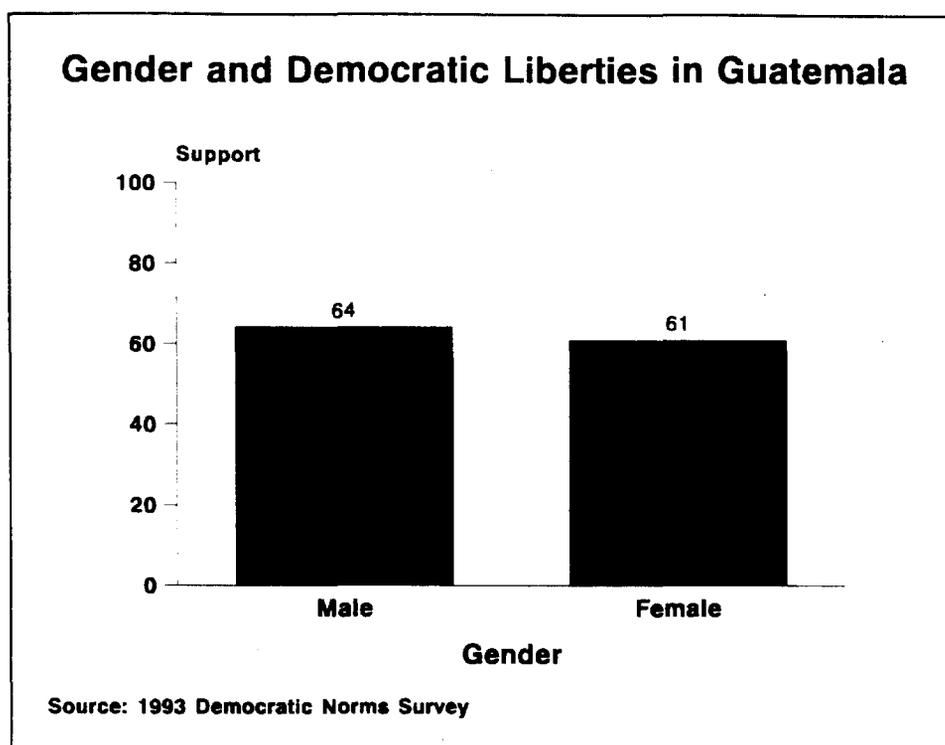


Figure 5

Turning to age as a predictor of democratic liberties, we find that there is no relationship. This parallels our results for system support.

Education and Support for Democratic Liberties

In most studies of support for democratic liberties, especially those that focus on political tolerance, education is found to be an important determinant (Muller, Seligson and Turan, 1987). More highly educated individuals come to appreciate the value of free expression. We find that this is also the case in Guatemala as is shown in Figure IV.6. The lowest levels of support for democratic liberties are found among Guatemala's illiterate population while the highest levels are found among its college-

- o Guatemala had the highest score of all countries in the region on support for a military coup--over one quarter of the residents of Guatemala City in 1992 supported military intervention in politics;

From the 1993 Survey:

- o More than a third of the respondents in May of 1993 on a national level supported a coup;
- o A smaller portion (10-15%) of those responding believed that military rule was more effective than civilian rule in dealing with a wide range of public issues;
- o System support is weakly albeit positively associated with support for military rule;
- o Those who have suffered political violence are more likely to support military rule;
- o Catholics are more supportive of military rule than Protestants or those who profess no religious beliefs;
- o Poorer Guatemalans expressed higher support for military rule than wealthier Guatemalans.

As the data suggest, while the majority of the Guatemalans in our study do not support the idea of a coup, a significant proportion do in fact support a military takeover. This represents a constant danger to the existing democratic order, a danger that argues for increased efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and processes and the attitudinal support of Guatemalans for democracy.

Ethnicity and Support for Democratic Liberties

It will be recalled that we found that system support was lower among the Indians than it was among the ladino population in Guatemala. An examination of support for democratic liberties reveals some very interesting results. First, we note that when we define Indians by their dress, we find that they express *higher* support for democratic liberties than do those in Western dress (66 versus 62), but the difference is rather small for the overall scale of democratic liberties. An examination of one component of the scale, right to dissent, shows systematic and statistically significant differences on the four items that comprise this scale, our most stringent test of support for democracy.⁷ The other components of the scale produce inconsistent results, with those with Indian dress sometimes expressing higher support for democratic liberties than those in Western dress, and vice versa.

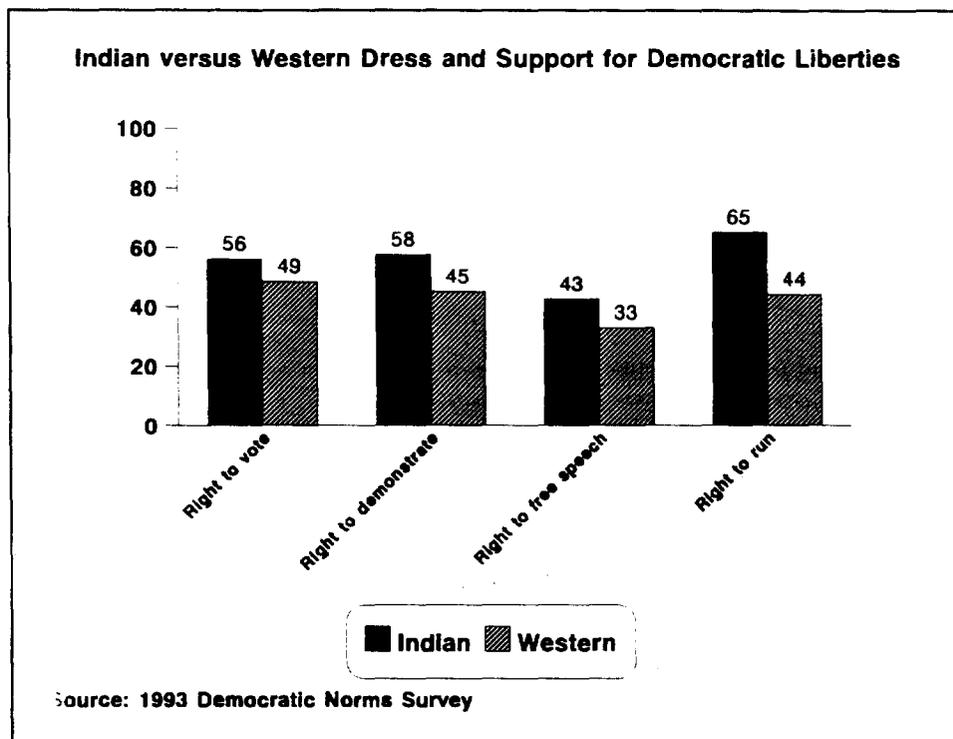


Figure 9

A clearer pattern for the overall scale of support for democratic liberties emerges when we examine the population by the language they speak. Figure IV. 10 below shows that the monolingual Spanish speakers are, as a group, noticeably lower in their support for democratic liberties than are the Mam and Kiche-speaking (monolingual or bilingual) populations. The remaining Indian groups do not distinguish themselves from the mono-lingual Spanish speakers.

⁷The differences are significant at .01 or better on all but the first item, right to vote, in which the difference while substantively notable, is not statistically significant.

Guatemala. We will find, however, that wealth proves to be a far weaker predictor of democratic liberties than education.

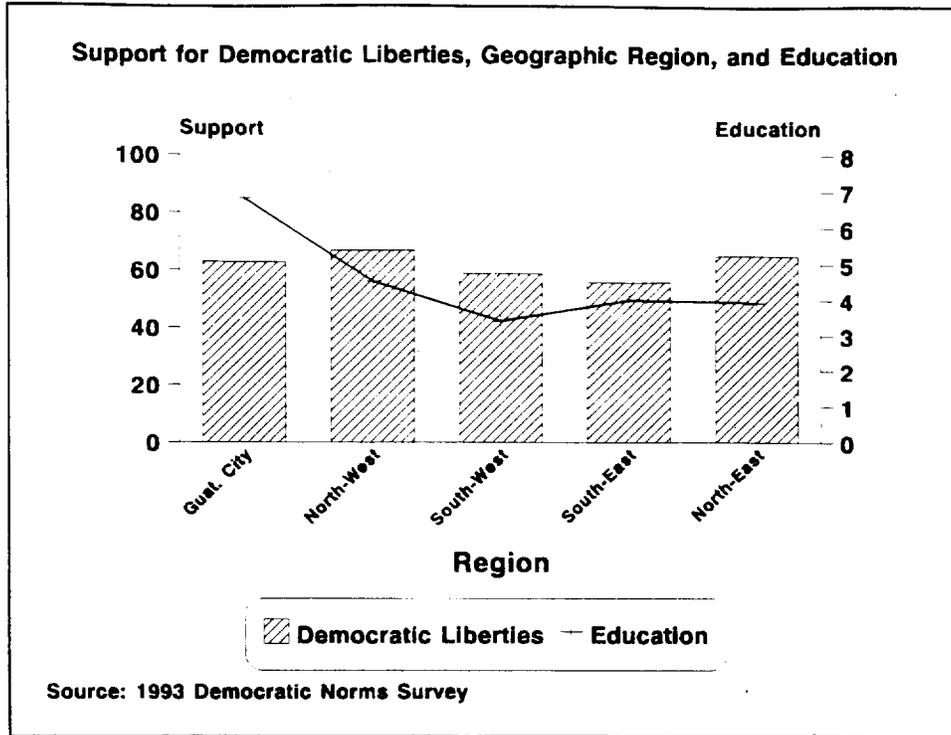


Figure 7

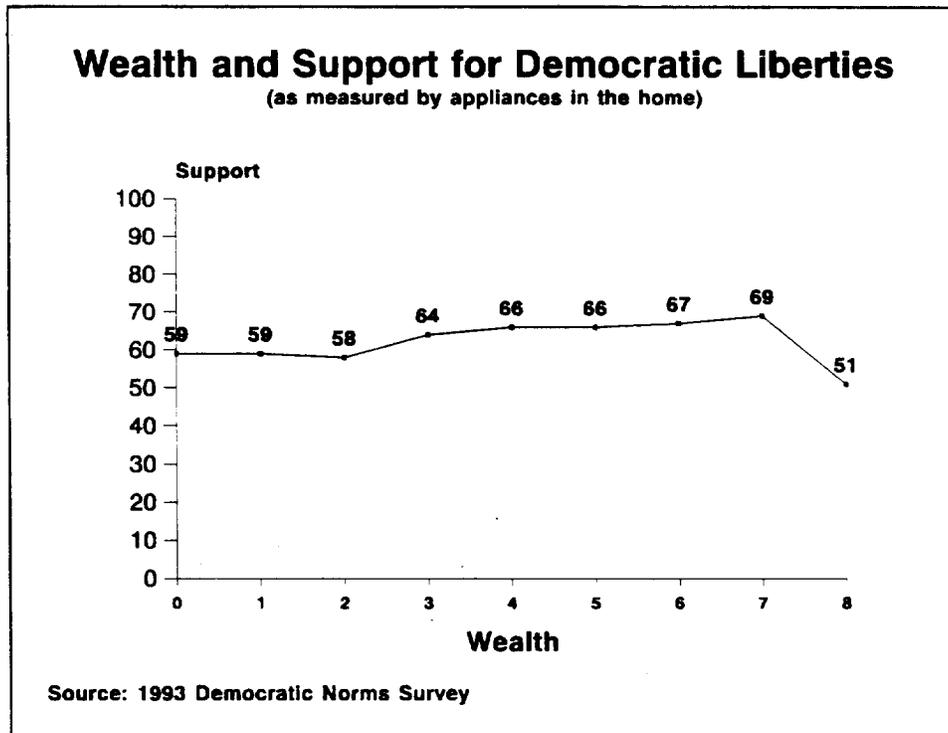


Figure 8

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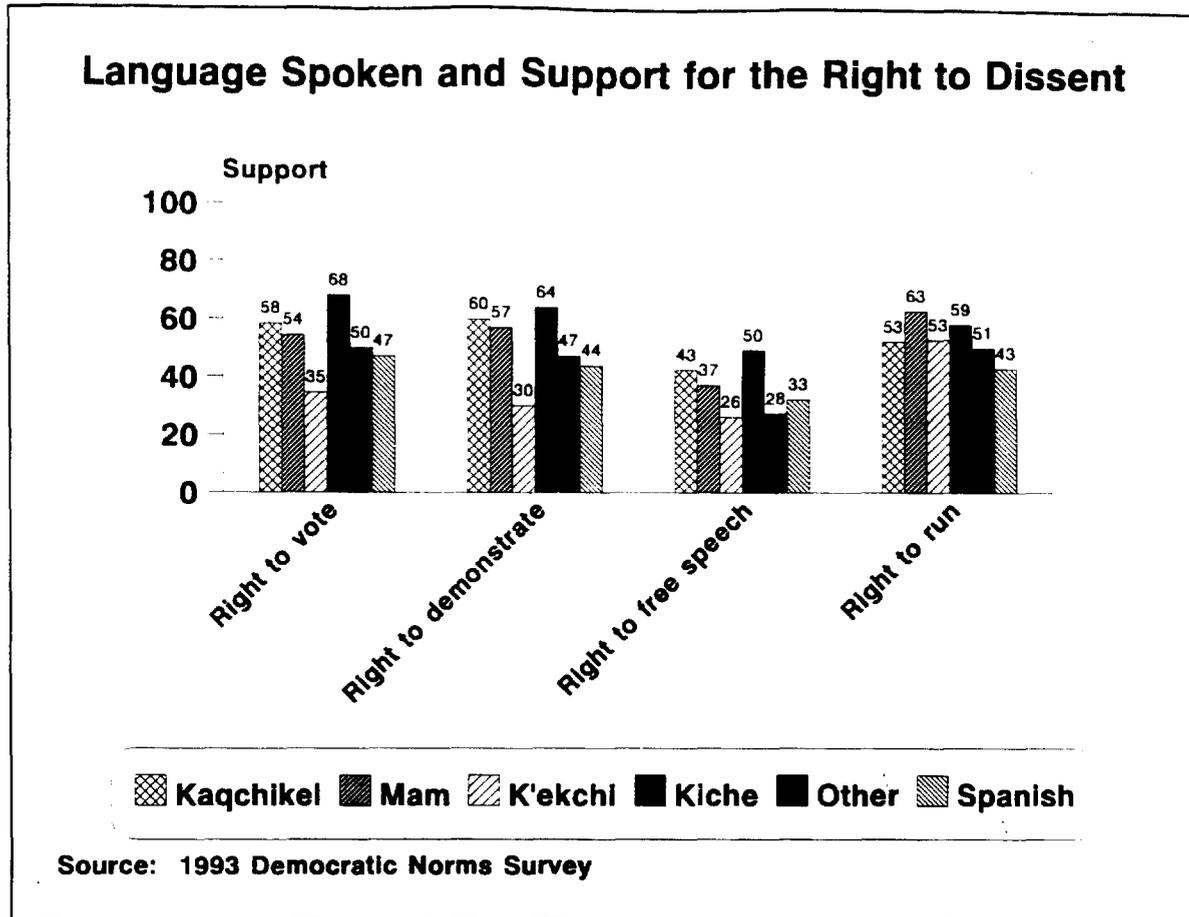


Figure 11

dissent. Apparently, discontent is expressed in part by the felt need to have increased freedom of expression. A second, and perhaps far more important finding emerges from this analysis: in direct contrast to many ladino images of Indians, who are held as being authoritarian in nature and therefore partially responsible for Guatemala's long authoritarian political tradition, Guatemalan Indians appear to value the key civil liberties that underlie stable democracy more than Guatemalan ladinos .

We now take a look at all of the variables that we have examined thus far to see what impact they each have when the other variables are held constant. It is especially important to do so in this chapter since we have discovered that both wealth and education are related to support for democratic liberties, and as we know, wealth and education are normally correlated with each other.⁸ That is to say, people of higher education normally earn more, and we need to know if education and/or wealth each make an independent contribution to predicting support for democratic liberties or if the relationship of either one of these variables is merely spurious.

We ran a multiple regression analysis to predict support for the ten-item support for democratic liberties index. We found that education was the strongest predictor,

⁸Indeed, in our sample the correlation between family income and education of the respondent is .41.

We find these results particularly fascinating because they show that ethnicity appears to be more powerful than education in explaining how some Guatemalans think about democratic liberties. Upon investigation, however, we find that this explanation holds only for the Kiche speaking Indians. The average education for the monolingual Spanish speakers in the sample is 4.7 years, compared to the bilingual Kiche speakers, whose education averaged 3.0 years. The bi-lingual Mam group for whom we have a full set of responses on all support for democracy questions is quite small (N = 20) and averages 5.7, obviously unrepresentative of Indians in general. But once we dismiss the results of the Mam speakers we are still left with an important finding that the Kiche Indians, despite their low level of education are more supportive of democratic norms and less supportive of the political system than are the mono-lingual Spanish speakers.

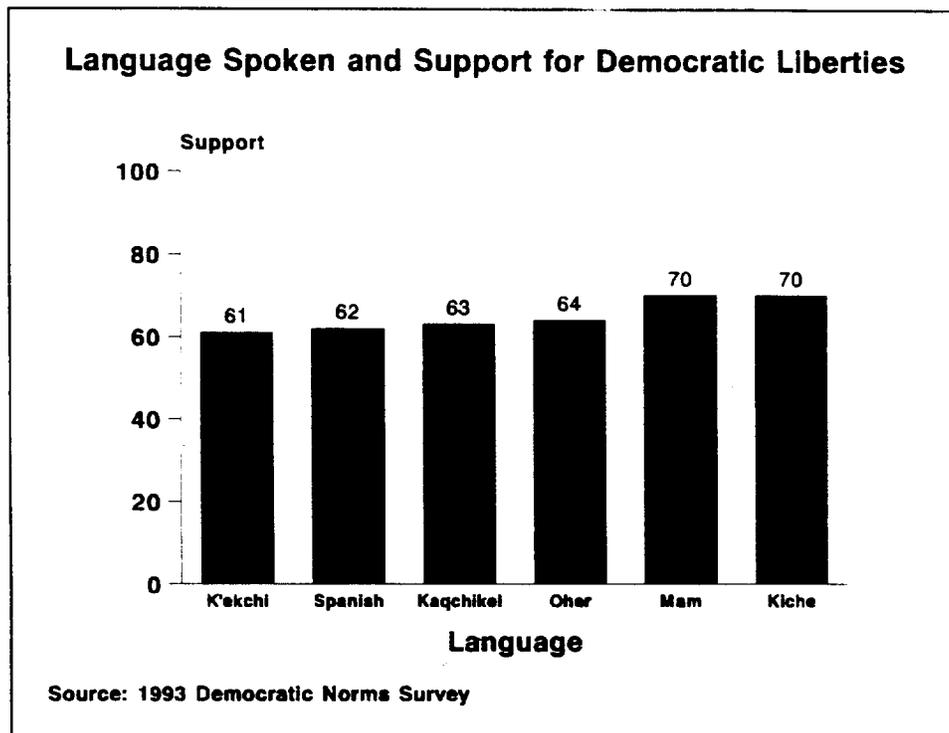


Figure 10

The distinctiveness of the Kiche speakers becomes more obvious when we focus exclusively on the Right to Dissent item, the most stringent test of support for democratic norms. As we see in Figure IV.11 below, the Kiche score notably (and statistically significantly) higher than any other ethnic group in Guatemala on three of the four variables. The Spanish speakers, the extreme right-hand bar on Figure IV.11 score lower than do any of the Indian groups except the K'ekchi on three of the four variables.

Summing up: Predictors of Support for Democratic Liberties in Guatemala

Combining our knowledge of system support with our understanding of support for democratic liberties, one pattern has begun to emerge: Indians, especially the Kiche, are less supportive of the political system than other Guatemalans while at the same time being more supportive of democratic liberties, especially the right to

V. The Interrelationship of System Support and Democratic Norms

We have now studied both the levels of system support and the levels of support for democratic norms. Now we would like to go beyond those numbers and to see if we can predict the impact of those attitudes on democratic stability in Guatemala. We want to do this from two perspectives. First, we want to compare Guatemala to the other countries in Central America. Second, we want to examine the position of some of the critical subgroups we have already identified in the previous two chapters. But first, we briefly explain the relationship between the two sets of attitudes.

Theoretical Background

Much of the research on the impact of culture on democracy has two serious limitations. First, the research ignores the question of system stability and focuses exclusively on its content. That is, those who argue for a cultural explanation of democracy often forget that it is of little interest to determine that a particular culture or combination of attitudes favorably predisposes a political system to democracy if the system is so unstable that it breaks down.¹ An extreme case would be a society populated entirely by anarchists, in which each individual would be willing to grant to all others any and all freedoms. If they have their way, the anarchist would dissolve government and leave the territory without a functioning political system. Under such extreme circumstances, issues of democracy become moot since rule by the many (democracy) becomes rule by the individual (anarchy). While few such extreme cases can be found to some measure in the real world, the breakdown of the state in Somalia and the emergence of ubiquitous clan warfare is a case that brings home the importance of system stability and the potential irrelevance of democracy (or any other form of governance). We have other illustrations, the most significant of which are the breakup of the Soviet Union and the question of political authority in Russia and the newly independent states. It is not surprising, therefore, that one of few exceptions to the neglect of the stability question in studies of political culture was a recent survey conducted by Finifter in the waning days of the Soviet Union, a nation whose stability was very much in question as the survey was being conducted and

¹See Jeffrey W. Hahn, "Continuity and Change in Russian Political Culture," *British Journal of Political Science* 21 (October 1991):393-421. See also James L. Gibson, Raymond M. Duch and Kent L. Tedin, "Democratic Values and the transformation of the Soviet Union," *Journal of Politics* 54 (May 1992):329-371.

with each year of education increasing support for democratic liberties by 1.2 points on our scale when all other factors are held constant. Gender was the second most important factor predicting support for democracy, with women 4 points lower than men, when all other factors are held constant. Finally, ethnicity, defined in terms of wearing Indian garb, produced a 7 point increase in support for democratic liberties, again, with all other variables held constant. When we separate out the Kiche Indians from the others, then the impact on support for civil liberties is even greater. In this equation, being a Kiche Indian increases support for democratic liberties by 10 points, with other Indian groups having no significant impact in the equation. In this equation, gender also drops to insignificance. Wealth, which earlier had proven to be a predictor of support for democratic liberties, was found, as suspected, to have been a spurious variable, making no significant impact when education is included in either model. But, we need to recall that wealth has a non-linear relationship with tolerance.

In the next chapter, we will relate attitudes toward system support and attitudes toward democratic norms to provide a fuller picture of the way Guatemalans view the possibilities for stable democracy.

needed for the system to remain democratic. Systems with this combination of attitude, are likely to experience a deepening of democracy.

Table V.1
Theoretical Relationship Between
Tolerance and System Support
in Institutionally Democratic Polities

		Tolerance	
		High	Low
System support	High	Stable (deepening) Democracy	Oligarchy
	Low	Unstable Democracy	Democratic Breakdown

When system support remains high, but tolerance is low, then the system should remain stable (because of the high support), but democratic rule ultimately might be placed in jeopardy. Such systems would tend to move toward oligarchical rule in which democratic rights would be restricted.

Low support is the situation characterized by the lower two cells in the chart, and should be directly linked to unstable situations. Instability, however, does not necessarily translate into the ultimate reduction of civil liberties, since the instability could serve to force the system to deepen its democracy, especially when the values tend toward political tolerance. One could easily interpret the instability associated with the Martin Luther King years in the United States as ones that led directly to the deepening of democracy in that country. Hence, in the situation of low support and high tolerance, it is difficult to predict if the instability will result in greater democratization or a protracted period of instability characterized perhaps by considerable violence. On the other hand, in situations of low support and low tolerance, democratic breakdown seems to be the obvious eventual outcome. Presumably, over time, the system that would replace it would be autocratic.

It is important to keep in mind two caveats that apply to this scheme. First, note that the relationships discussed here only apply to systems that are already

has now ceased to exist.² Unfortunately, the prevailing trend in studies of nations that are democratizing is to focus on democracy to the exclusion of stability. In this chapter we hope to remedy that deficiency by focusing directly on system support, a variable long thought to impact directly on system stability. As Dahl has recently said, "No satisfactory explanation of why polyarchy exists in some countries and not in others can ignore the pivotal role of beliefs.... countries vary a great deal in the extent to which activists (and others) believe in the legitimacy of polyarchy."³

A second significant shortcoming of much of the political culture research is that it tends to focus on variables far removed from the core values of democracy. One 1990 survey of the political culture of a city in the former Soviet Union explicitly recognized the importance of such core values, especially political tolerance, but then proceeded to measure political efficacy, political trust and other variables not directly measuring democracy.⁴

Theoretical Interrelationship of System Support and Tolerance

How do system support and tolerance relate, and what impact is there on democratic stability of the different combinations of these two variables?⁵ Reducing complexity to the simple, dichotomous case, support can be either high or low, and likewise tolerance can be either high or low. The following chart represents, for this dichotomous situation, all of the theoretically possible combinations of system support and tolerance.

Let us review each cell, one-by-one. Systems that are populated by individuals who have high system support and high political tolerance are those we would predict would be most stable. This prediction is based on the simple logic that high support is needed in non-coercive environments for the system to be stable, and tolerance is

²Ada W. Finifter and Ellen Mickiewicz, "Redefining the Political System of the USSR: Mass Support for Political Change," *American Political Science Review* 86 (December 1992):857-874.

³Robert A. Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989:260-261.

⁴Hahn, "Continuity and Change in Russian Political Culture," pp 406-407. In contrast, the Gibson, Duch and Tedin study cited above, does directly measure political tolerance.

⁵This framework was first presented in Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova Macías, *Perspectivas para una democracia estable en El Salvador* (San Salvador: IDELA, 1993).

An examination of Table V.2 makes it very clear why, from the perspective of the political culture literature, Costa Rica has been so stable. All but seven percent of the urban population are in the "high" support zone. Moreover, the cell with the largest proportion of respondents, the majority of the entire sample, are those in the stable democracy cell. Yet, over two-fifths of the respondents are in the oligarchy, or restricted democracy cell based on their low levels of tolerance. Before commenting on these findings further, we should compare the Costa Rican case to the other five countries in the region. This is done in Table V.3.

Our focus is on Guatemala in comparative perspective. The results are disturbing. Guatemala has the following key characteristics: 1) It is the country in Central America with the lowest proportion of its citizens in the "stable democracy" cell, 2) It is the country in Central America with the highest proportion of its citizens in the "democratic breakdown" cell, and 3) it is the country that has the lowest percentage of its citizens in either the stable or unstable democracy cells (see shaded center column in Table V.3). The "auto-golpe" that occurred within days of the completion of the 1993 survey seems to support the findings of this table.

We should comment briefly on the other countries in the region. The Costa Rican case stands apart from the others, with its high proportion of citizens in the stable democracy cell. In sharp contrast, less than one-quarter of urban Salvadorans possess the combination of attitudes needed to sustain stable democracy. More troubling for El Salvador is that next to Guatemala, it has the largest proportion

Table V.3. Joint Distribution of System Support and Tolerance in Central America (Capital Cities)					
Country	Stable Democracy	Unstable Democracy	Sum of Democracy Cells	Oligarchy	Democratic Breakdown
Costa Rica	52%	3%	55%	41%	4%
Panama	37%	36%	73%	16%	12%
Nicaragua	37%	18%	55%	33%	12%
Honduras	30%	42%	72%	5%	22%
El Salvador	23%	23%	46%	31%	24%
Guatemala	18%	15%	33%	39%	29%

Percents do not always total 100 owing to rounding.

Source: University of Pittsburgh Central America Public Opinion Project

institutionally democratic. That is, they are systems in which competitive, regular elections are held and widespread participation is allowed. These same attitudes in authoritarian systems would have entirely different implications. For example, low system support and high tolerance might produce the breakdown of an authoritarian regime and its replacement by a democracy. Second, the assumption being made is that over the long run, attitudes of the mass public make a difference in regime type. Attitudes and system type may remain incongruent for many years. Indeed, as Seligson and Booth have shown for the case of Nicaragua, that is what may well have occurred. But the Nicaraguan case we studied was one in which the extant system was authoritarian (i.e., Somoza's Nicaragua) and repression had long been used to maintain an authoritarian regime, perhaps in spite of the tolerant attitudes of the citizens.⁶

It is now time to put together the two variables that have been the focus of our discussion by examining the joint distribution of the two variables. To do this, both variables are dichotomized into "high" and "low."⁷ The results for Costa Rica alone, or paradigmatic case of democratic stability in Central America, are presented in Table V.2 below, with all six countries being presented in Table V.3.

Table V.2.
Empirical Relationship Between
Tolerance and System Support
in Costa Rica

		Tolerance	
		High	Low
System support	High	Stable (deepening) Democracy 52%	Oligarchy 41%
	Low	Unstable Democracy 3%	Democratic Breakdown 4%

⁶Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "Political Culture and Regime Type: Evidence from Nicaragua and Costa Rica," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 55, No. 3, August, 1993, pp. 777-792.

⁷Since both variables ranged from 0 to 100, dichotomization was done by dividing the scale at 50. Doing so approximately divides the entire Central American sample into 50% high and 50% low for both support and tolerance.

presumably be supportive of both democratic *and* undemocratic means to achieve their political objectives.

An examination of Figures V.1 through V.3 reveals quite clearly the implications for democracy of the typology developed in this paper. Figure V.1 shows that although approval of participation in legal demonstrations is quite high in all countries, it is highest among those who are in the stable or unstable democracy cells.⁸ This is precisely what the theory would predict. Far less approval is shown in each of the six countries among those who fall into the oligarchy or breakdown cells.

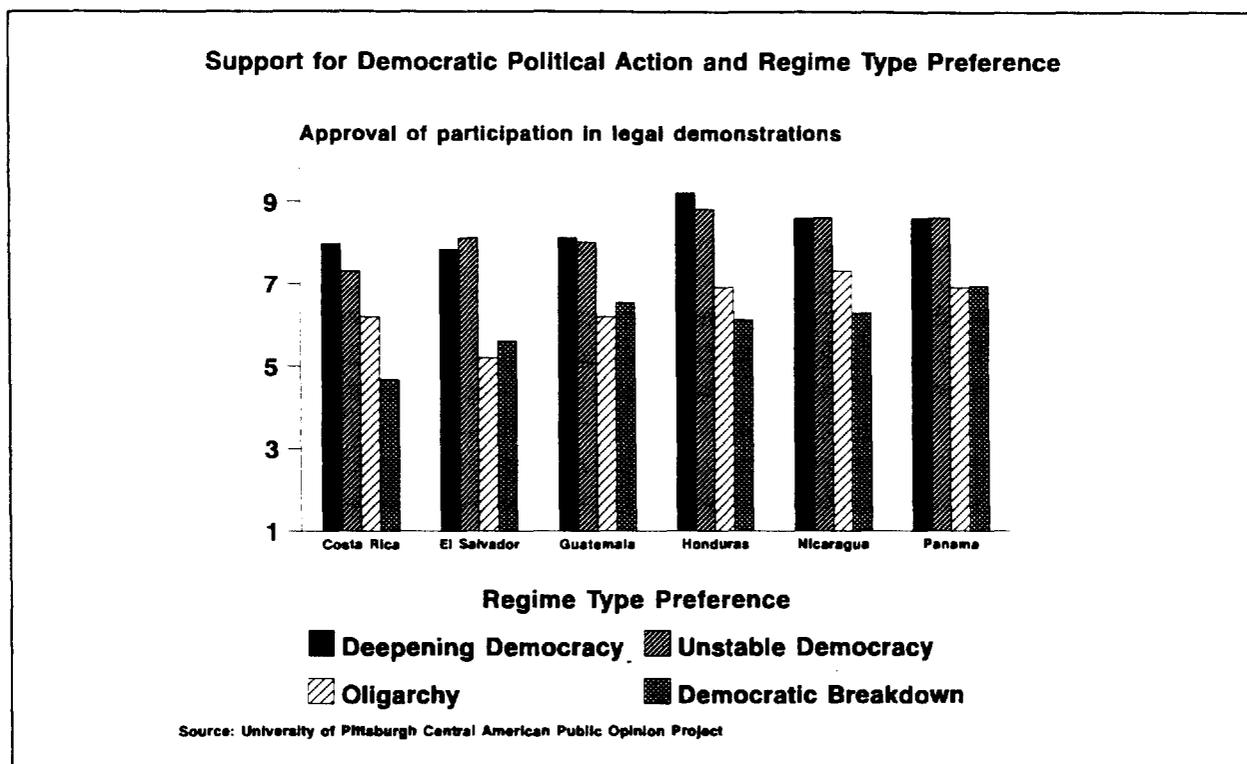


Figure 1

A similar pattern is found when we examine approval of participation in election campaigns.⁹ In each country for which there is data (the question was not asked in

⁸The actual question read: To what extent (on a ten-point scale) do you approve or disapprove of people participating in a demonstration that has been legally permitted.

⁹The actual question was: To what extent do you approve or disapprove (on a ten point scale) people working in election campaigns for a political party or candidate?

of any of the six countries in the breakdown cell. Further, the largest concentration of its population are found in the oligarchy cell. Of the six countries, Guatemala and El Salvador would seem to have the darkest possibilities for maintenance of stable democracy. These findings coincide with most expert opinion on Central America, which has long viewed the decades of guerrilla warfare and ethnic violence in Guatemala and the problems of overpopulation and land distribution in El Salvador as significant barriers to stable democracy. El Salvador's situation seems especially complex, given that the population is almost evenly divided among the four cells. This may produce extreme fragmentation as the country attempts to reconstruct itself after the decade of civil war.

Honduras and Panama have somewhat similar profiles. The great bulk of their populations are concentrated in the two democracy cells, with Panama having a slightly larger proportion in the stable democracy cell, and Honduras a larger proportion in the unstable democracy cell. Neither country is likely to end up with an oligarchical system, but the low levels of system support in Honduras may drive it towards breakdown or toward further democratization.

Nicaragua is unique among these six cases. The largest proportion of its population is found in the stable democracy cell, yet, this amounts to only somewhat more than one-third of the citizens. Like Costa Rica, its second largest concentration is in the oligarchy cell. Comparatively low proportions of the population are in the unstable cells (unstable democracy and democratic breakdown). This distribution may well reflect the fact that Nicaraguans have had their revolution and are now seeking stability, democratic or otherwise.

These projections have been made based on the theoretical impact of the relationship between system support and political tolerance. There is no way of knowing at this juncture if these predictions will be fulfilled. Obviously, numerous factors will influence the long-term deepening, erosion or stagnation of democracy in each Central American country. Moreover, the impact of public preferences on regime type remains an area of much speculation. Nonetheless, it is possible to attempt to answer a relevant but more restricted question with this data, namely, what is the relationship between the four regime preference categories outlined in this chapter and political behavior, democratic or otherwise, in each country? It seems reasonable to hypothesize that those who support stable democracy should be more supportive of conventional democratic participation and less supportive of violent political participation. Similarly, those whose attitudes favor oligarchy or democratic breakdown could be expected to be less supportive of democratic participation, yet because those who fall into the oligarchy or breakdown cells are also low in their levels of tolerance, they may also have low support for violent political participation. The unstable democracy cell is the greatest puzzle, since this cell is populated by individuals with low system support and high levels of tolerance, and would therefore

discouraged individuals from approving that path as a means to achieve their political objectives. Honduras, however, which up until now has had a relatively peaceful political landscape, is populated by individuals who seem far more willing to embark upon aggressive political participation, with the unstable democracy cell, representing the largest proportion of the entire sample (42%), being far more supportive of these kinds of actions than any other group in any other country in the survey. These potential activists are seconded only by the unstable democracy cell in Nicaragua, where comparatively high levels of support for violent actions are also found. It is notable that in both Honduras and Nicaragua, support for violent political participation is also relatively high even in the stable democracy cell.

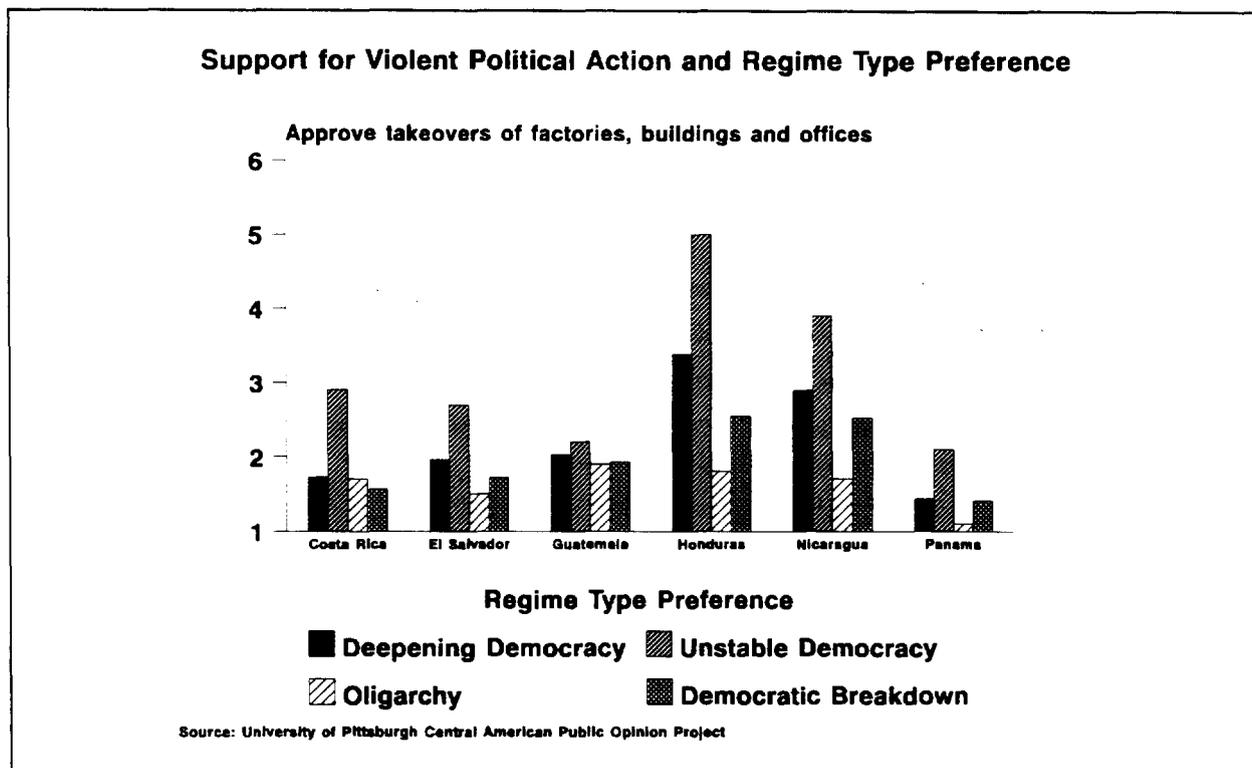


Figure 3

Ethnicity and the Stability of Democracy in Guatemala

Now let us turn to an examination of the Guatemalan data set alone. Here we once again utilize the 1993 democratic norms survey. We anticipated differences between the 1992 cross-national study and the 1993 study because the later was national in nature and the former only urban. As we have seen before, the urban samples differ from the national results. Moreover, since the scoring method of the 1993 differed from that of the 1992 six-nation study, the percents in each cell vary considerably. Examining the sample as a whole, we see that the pattern of the 1993

Costa Rica), the two democracy cells show higher approval of this form of democratic participation. Also for every case, the lowest approval is found among those in the democratic breakdown cell.

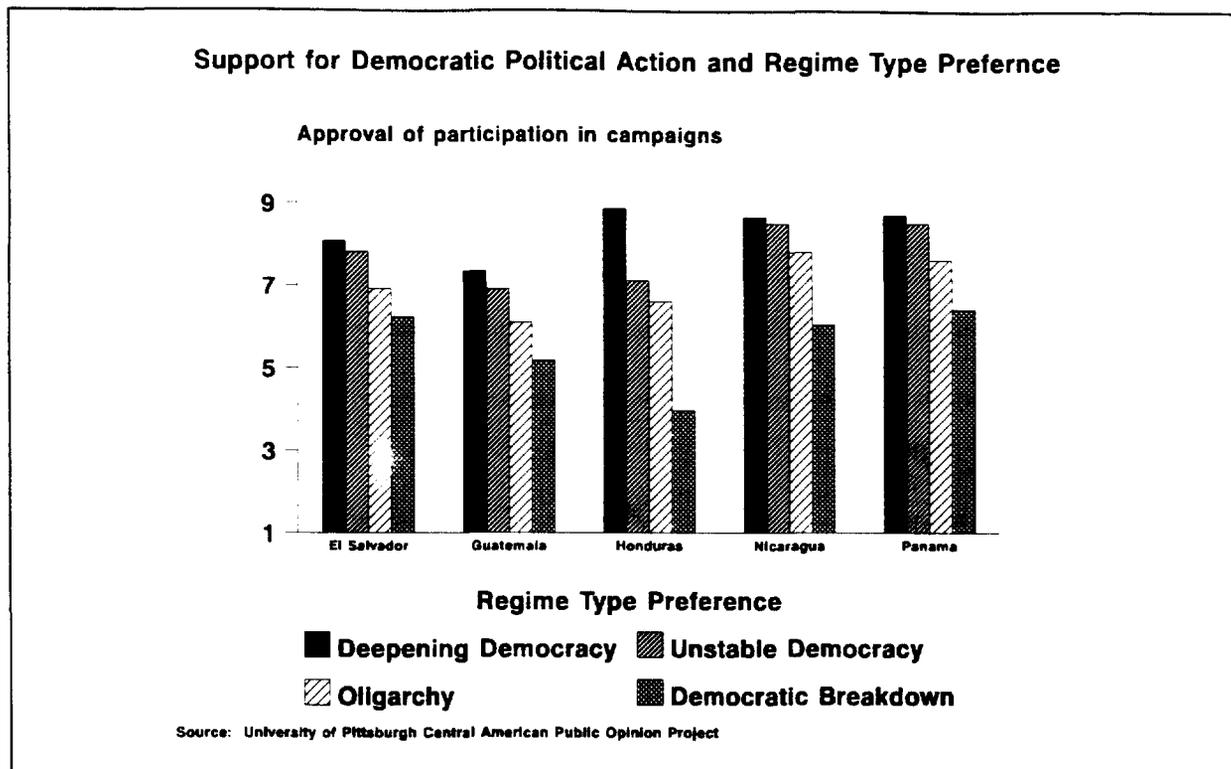


Figure 2

Finally, what of support for violent political participation; the willingness of citizens to approve the use of force to achieve their objectives? Figure V.3 shows the results.¹⁰ There are two patterns of note there. First, the unstable democracy cell stands out as being far more willing to approve violent behavior for political purposes. This is not surprising given their low system support and high tolerance. Even in Costa Rica, the small proportion of respondents who are in the unstable democracy cell are far more willing than any of their compatriots to support such violence. The second pattern that emerges is that levels of support for such actions is higher in both Honduras and Nicaragua than it is in the other countries. Neither El Salvador nor Guatemala, countries that were shown as having dim prospects for democracy, exhibit any significant support for violent actions. Perhaps the exceptionally high levels of violence in the recent past in both of those countries has

¹⁰The actual question asked was: To what extent (on a ten-point scale) would you approve or disapprove of people taking over factories, offices or other buildings in order to achieve their political objectives?

study is similar to the 1992 study, with the 1992 sample for urban Guatemala showing 33 percent in the two democracy cells, compared to 27 percent for the 1993 national study. Where there is marked variation is the substantially higher proportion of the respondents in the 1993 study is in the breakdown cell. We cannot determine if this is a function of the different scoring method utilized or if it indicates a genuine shift in the direction of breakdown.

The most important conclusion to be drawn from Table V.4 is the notable difference between the Indian and ladino population. We have defined Indians and ladinos in Table V.4 in different ways, based upon dress and language. Irrespective of the manner of definition, Indians have a twice as high a proportion of their respondents in the stable democracy cell as do non-Indians. In addition, Indians as defined by dress, have a far higher percentage of respondents in the unstable democracy cell than do the ladinos. Kiche Indians once again stand out, with none of them in the stable democracy cell, but nearly half in the unstable democracy cell. This indicates their greater support for democratic norms, but their lower support for the system of government. Finally, it is notable that for all sub-groups of the study, with the exception of the Kiche, the largest concentration of Guatemalans can be found in the breakdown cell.

Table V.4. Joint Distribution of System Support and Support for Right to Dissent in Guatemala					
Sample	Stable Democracy	Unstable Democracy	Sum of Democracy Cells	Oligarchy	Democratic Breakdown
Entire country	6%	21%	27%	22%	52%
Indians (defined by language)	10%	18%	28%	22%	52%
Kiche Indians	0%	49%	49%	9%	42%
Indians (defined by dress)	10%	31%	41%	12%	47%
Non-Indians (defined by Western Dress)	5%	21%	26%	22%	52%
Monolingual Spanish speakers	5%	20%	25%	23%	53%

*Percents do not always total 100 owing to rounding.
Source: 1993 Democratic Norms Survey*

discouraged individuals from approving that path as a means to achieve their political objectives. Honduras, however, which up until now has had a relatively peaceful political landscape, is populated by individuals who seem far more willing to embark upon aggressive political participation, with the unstable democracy cell, representing the largest proportion of the entire sample (42%), being far more supportive of these kinds of actions than any other group in any other country in the survey. These potential activist are seconded only by the unstable democracy cell in Nicaragua, where comparatively high levels of support for violent actions are also found. It is notable that in both Honduras and Nicaragua, support for violent political participation is also relatively high even in the stable democracy cell.

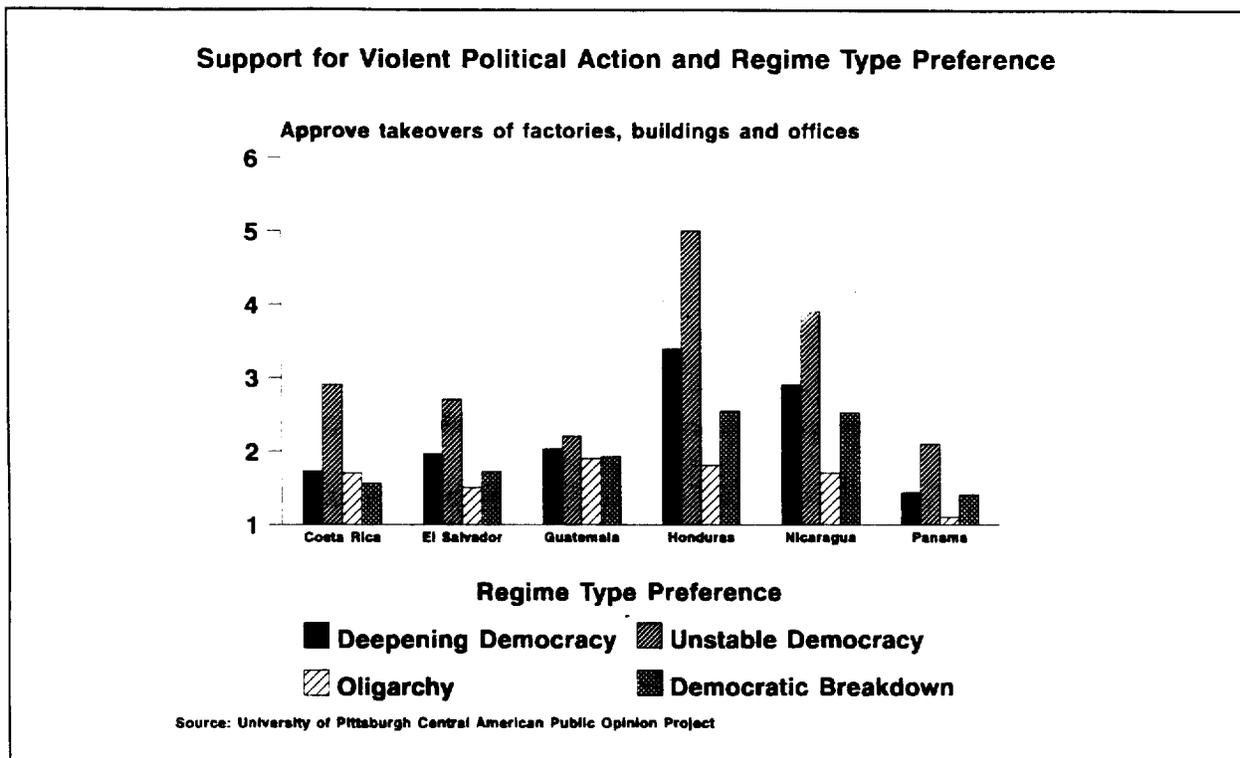


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metropolitan region of Guatemala City and the North Eastern region were above the national average, the other areas below.

We then asked if "a family member has disappeared or has sought refuge in another country because of political violence." We found that 8.6 per cent of our sample had suffered from this kind of violence, with the highest levels in the North West, as is shown in Figure VI.1. Victims of violence seem to be dispersed throughout the ladino and Indian communities, with little or no difference detected by the survey in the level by ethnic group. It is possible that this result is in part a function of the limitations on our sample. We were not able to enter the regions of the country in which the military maintained a travel ban. It is possible that had we interviewed in these areas we would have detected considerably greater violence there. But we suspect that the sensitivity of the item may be responsible for less than candid responses among those who were most likely to have been victims of violence. Gender also had no relationship to victimization. Education, however, is related to victimization, with the highest educated respondents being somewhat more likely to have suffered from the violence. These findings are shown in Figure VI.2. Indeed, among the tiny proportion of the sample that reports having post-graduate education, 60 percent report having been a victim of violence, but the sample of this group is too small to make any generalizations.

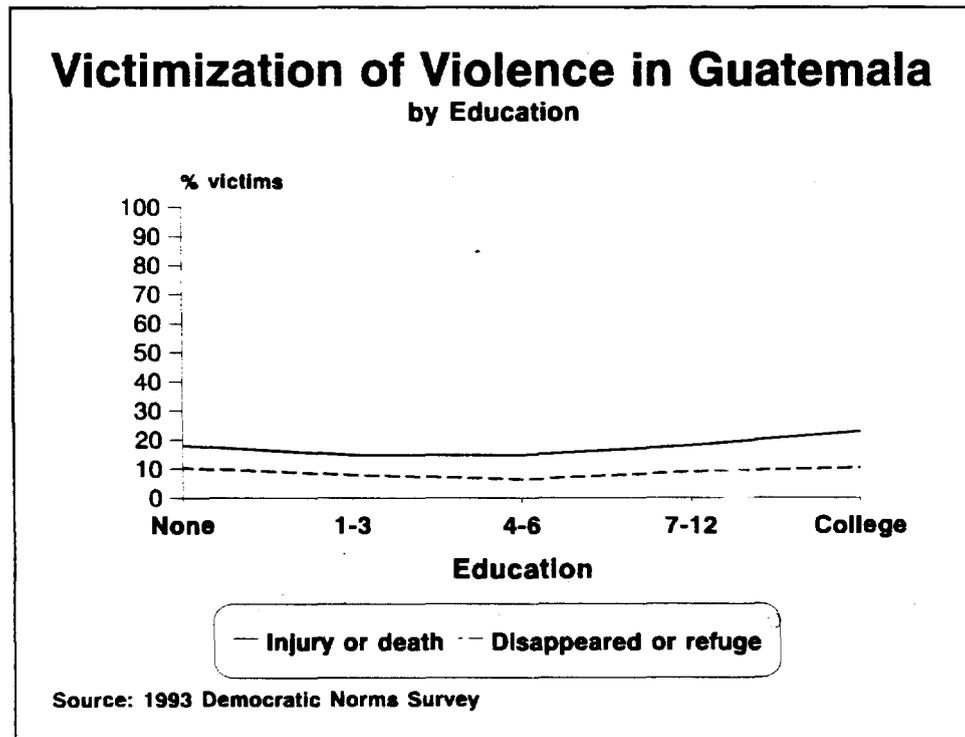


Figure 2

VI. Political Violence in Guatemala

The previous chapter discussed the combination of attitudes that could lead to democratic breakdown in Guatemala. One of the most destructive factors in the maintenance of stable democracy is political violence. Violent solutions to political disagreements represent the breakdown of democratic principles, in which peaceful mechanisms of dispute resolution are shunted aside and praetorian politics comes to the fore.

Violence has been an unfortunate legacy of Guatemala's history. While much has been written about that history, our interest in this analysis is to examine its impact on the prospects for democracy.

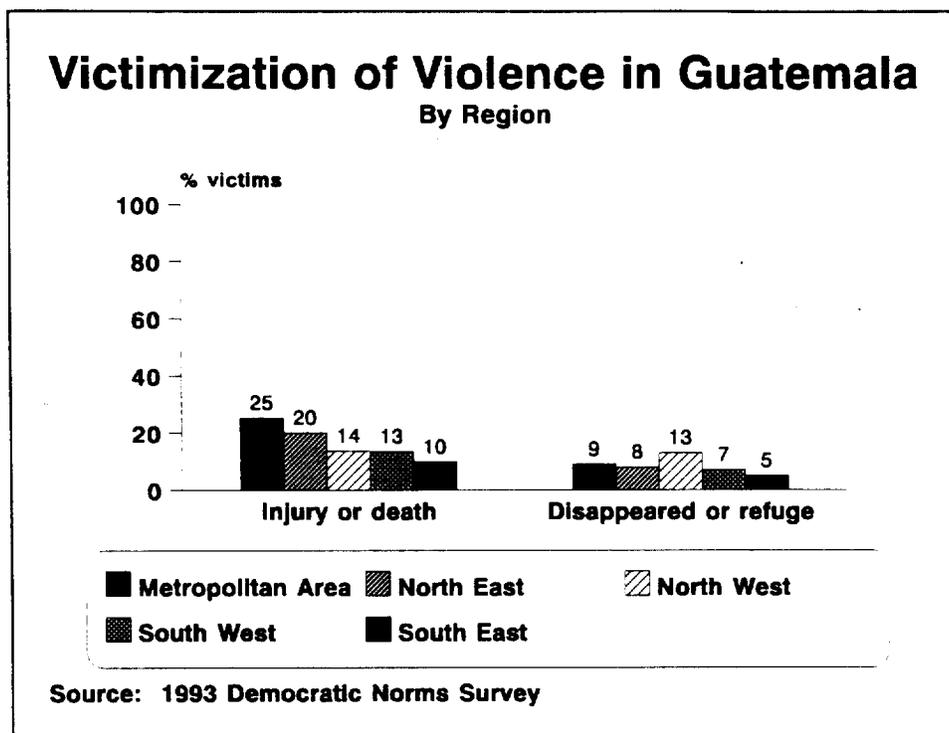


Figure 1

Victimization of Violence

We need to establish first the levels of political violence suffered by the respondents to our survey. Figure VI.1 reports on the answers to two of the questions in the instrument. We first asked, "Let's talk a bit about kidnapping, murders, bombings and massacres. That is what is called political violence. Have you or a member of your family suffered some of these kinds of political violence? For the country as a whole, 16.7 percent of the population replied in the affirmative. The

Nicaragua and the U.S. invasion of Panama), the proportion of the population that sees inequality as a cause of violence is somewhat lower than it is in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

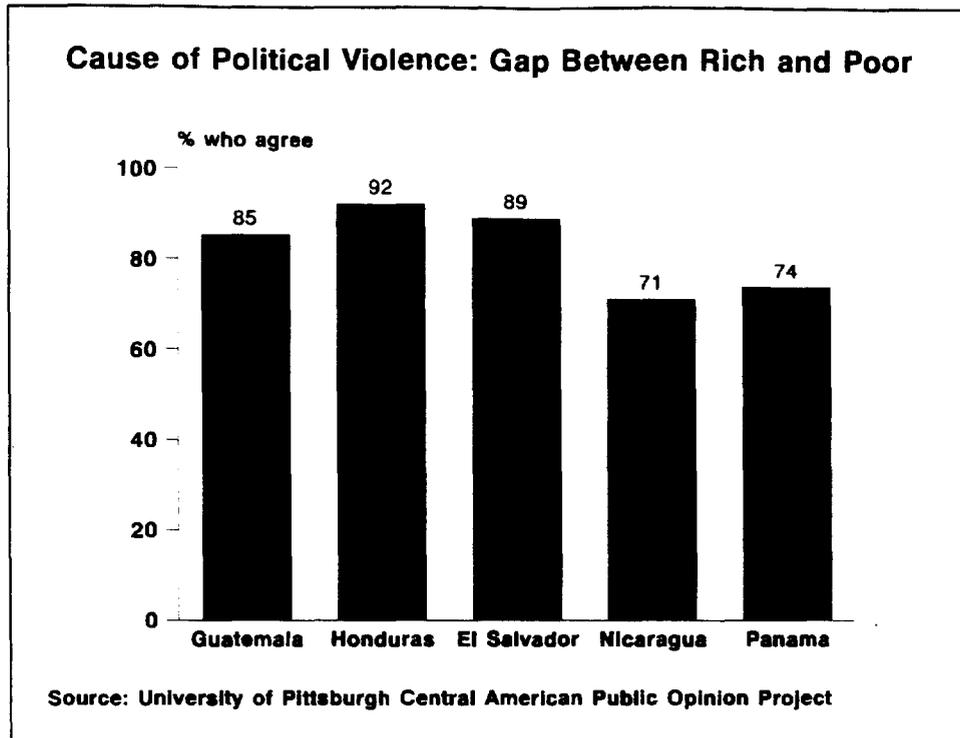


Figure 4

For Guatemala as a whole, we can compare various perceived causes of violence.³ Figure VI.5 shows how three commonly mentioned causes were ranked by our respondents. As can be seen, land inequality was listed even more commonly than income inequality as a cause of violence. Differences between Indians and ladinos was the third most commonly noted cause, but even in this case it was mentioned by over half the sample.

Although most Guatemalans are in agreement that these are the major causes of political violence in the country, there are some notable differences based on education. For example, Figure VI.6 below shows that the higher the education, the more the respondent believes that the income gap is a cause for violence.

³Note that differences in question wording to not allow direct comparison between the Central America survey results and the 1993 Democratic Norms survey.

Perceptions of Violence in Guatemala

Compared to its neighbors, Guatemala has suffered an extraordinary amount of violence. Only El Salvador, which fought a 12 year civil war, has been more violent. Figure VI.3 below shows the popular perception of the degree of political violence coincides quite well with reality.¹ Within Guatemala, our 1993 survey does not find significant differences in perception by sex, age, wealth or ethnicity.

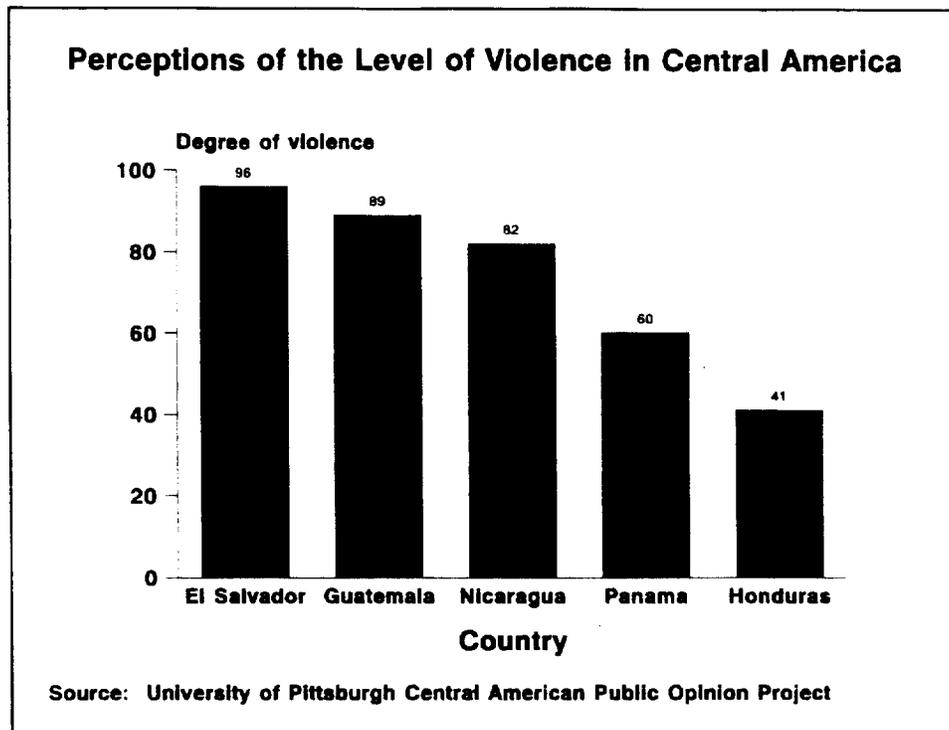


Figure 3

Throughout Central America there is widespread agreement that inequalities between rich and poor are a major cause of political violence. Figure VI.3 shows the results for the region. Certainly popular perception fits in with the most current research on the subject.² Not surprisingly, however, in both Nicaragua and Panama, where the violence has been directly linked to international factors (the contra war in

¹. The item read, "Do you believe that there is a lot, a little or no political violence in (country)?"

²See Edward N. Muller and Mitchell A. Seligson "Insurgency and Inequality," *American Political Science Review*, 1987.

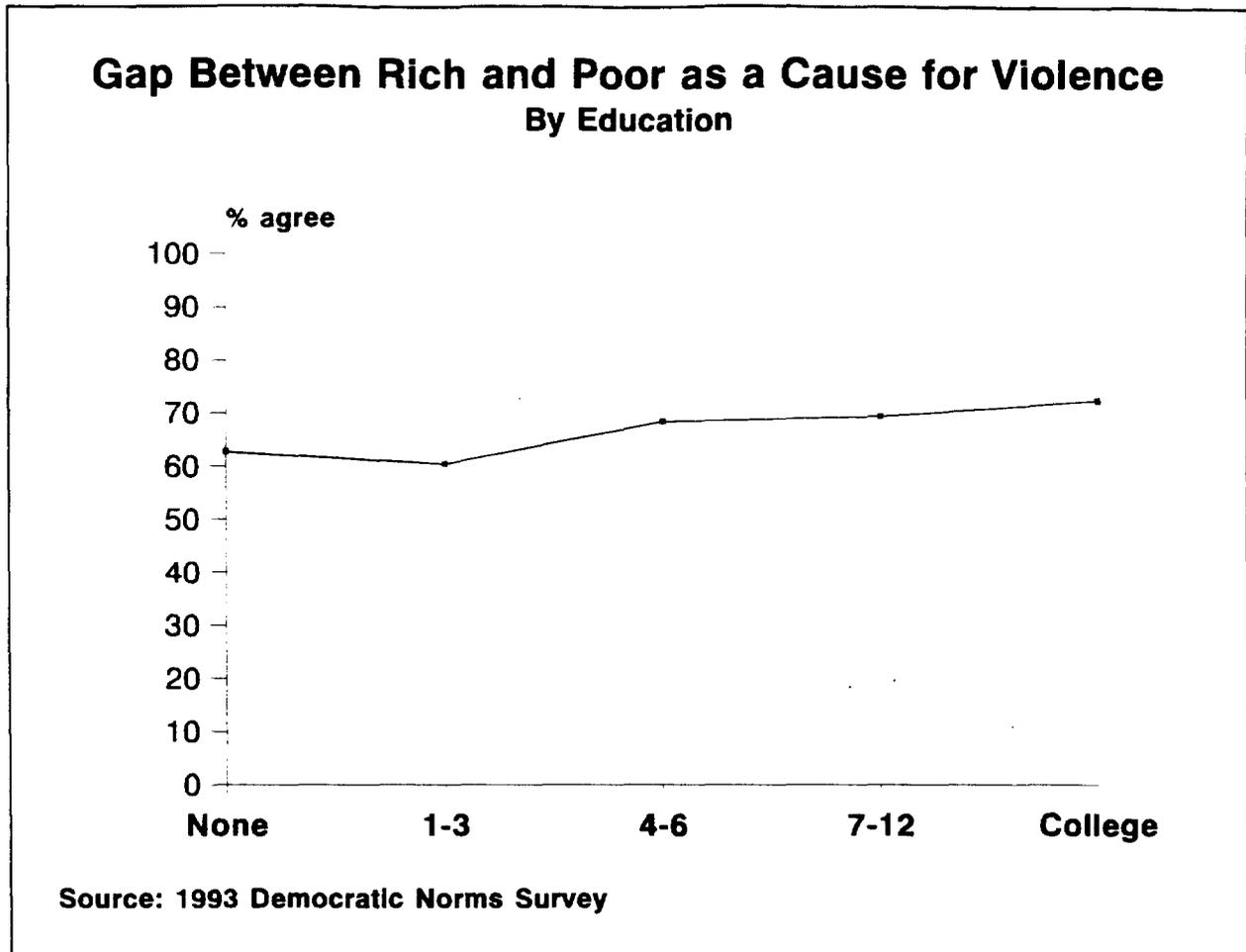


Figure 6

Guatemalan system of government. Presumably, these individuals hold that system at least partially responsible for these social ills and the resultant violence.

In democratic societies, citizens have defenses against violence. The key institutional defenses are the police and the court system. In Latin America, where the army often plays a police role, the army can defend citizens against violence. But armies and police forces in Latin America have often been major perpetrators of violence against their own citizens. How do Guatemalans feel about these three key institutions?

We asked our respondents the following question: "I am going to name various organizations in order for you to tell me if they defend the right to life. Tell me please if you believe that the right to life of the inhabitants of this country are respected and defended by.... the police, the army, judges. The responses are displayed in Figure

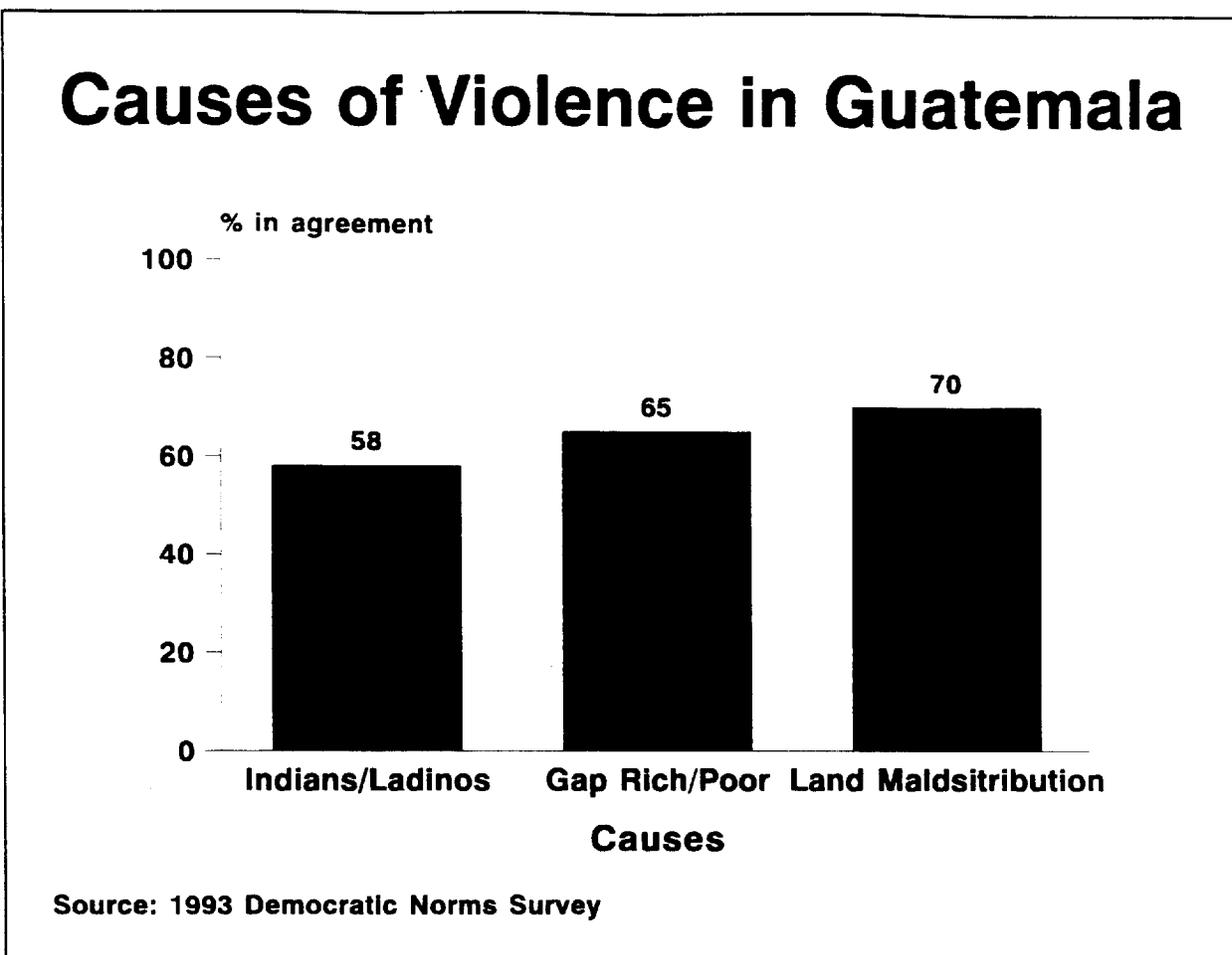


Figure 5

Even more notable is the systematic difference in the levels of support for democratic liberties and the respondent's views of the causes of violence. As can be seen in Figure VI.7 below, for each of the possible causes mentioned, support for democratic liberties, measured by the Right to Dissent scale, is higher (sig. <.01) among those who agree that the given cause does produce violence. The same findings (not shown) emerge for the overall scale of Support for Democratic Liberties.

Institutional Defenses Against Violence

In contrast to the findings showing that democratic liberties are higher among those who believe that social problems is a cause for violence, system support is *lower* among those who think this way, as is shown in Figure VI.8 below. The differences are statistically significant (<.01) on all but the rich/poor item. Thus, those who believe that social ills (inequality and discrimination) cause violence, are more educated, more supportive of civil liberties and less supportive of the

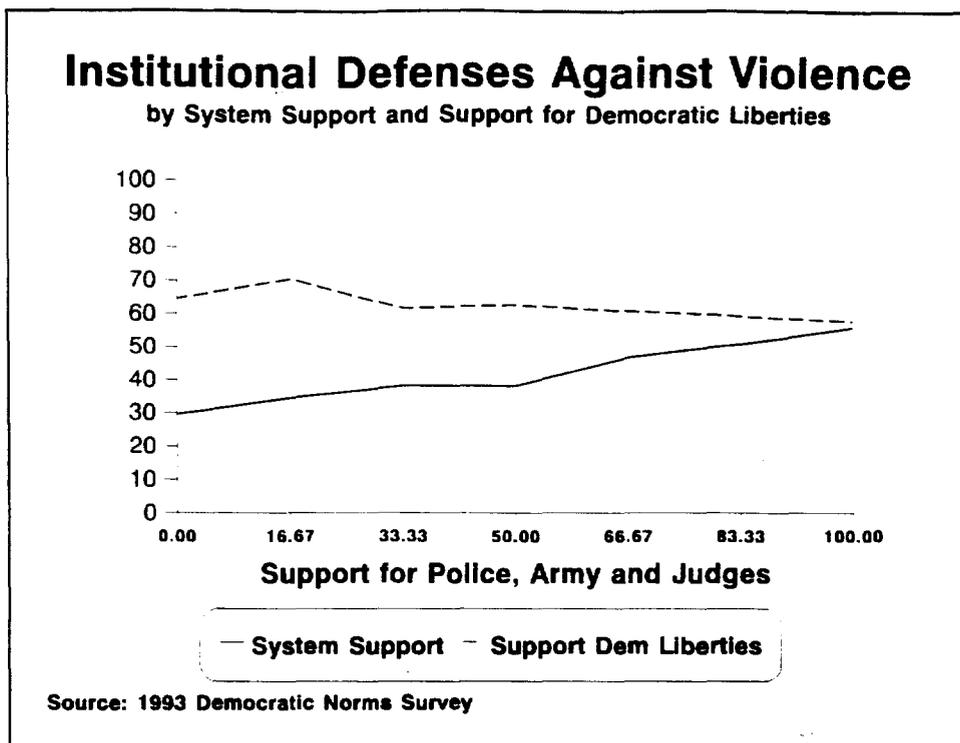


Figure 8

VI. 9. Belief in these institutions hovers around the middle point on the scale, with the police and army slightly below and judges slightly above.

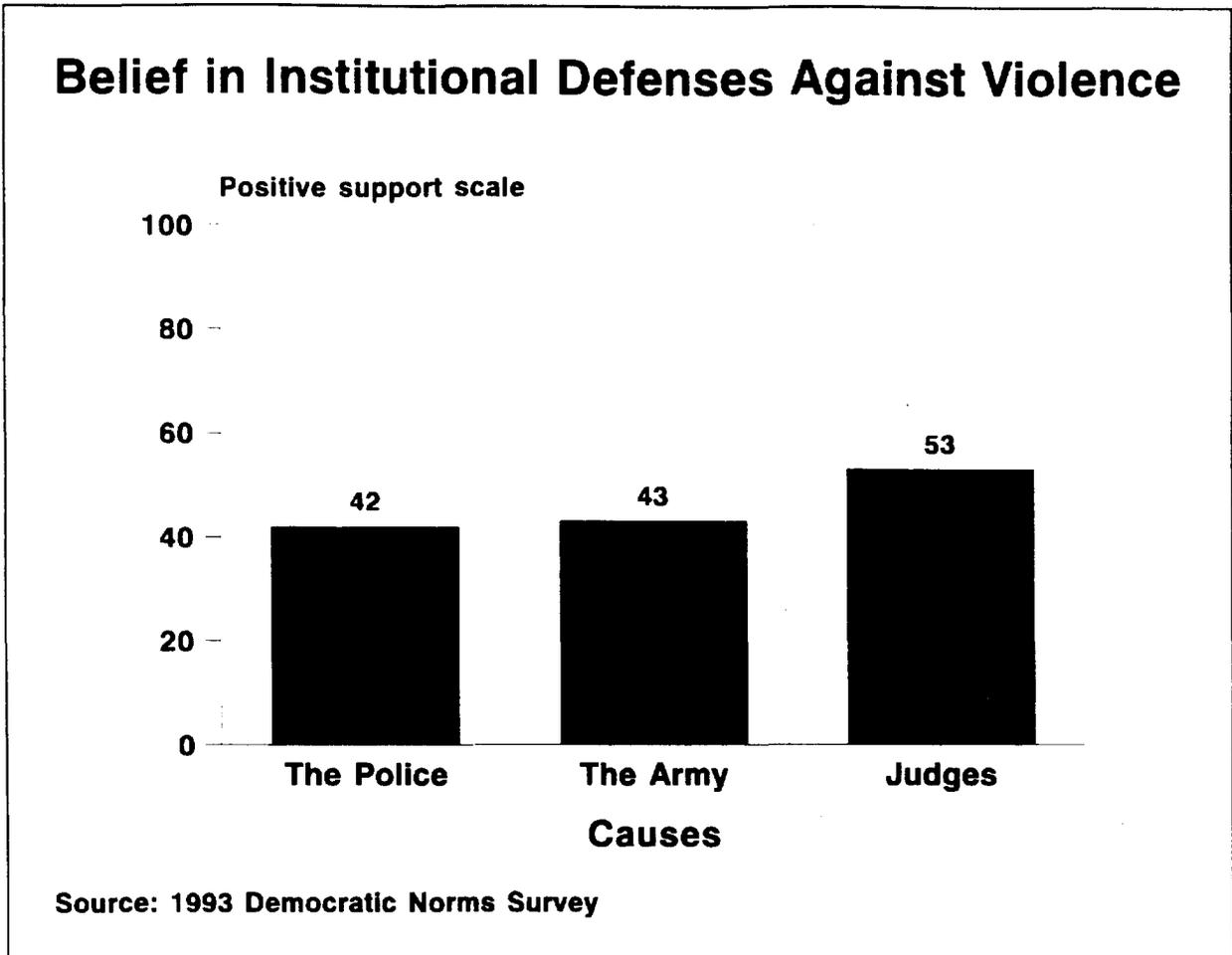
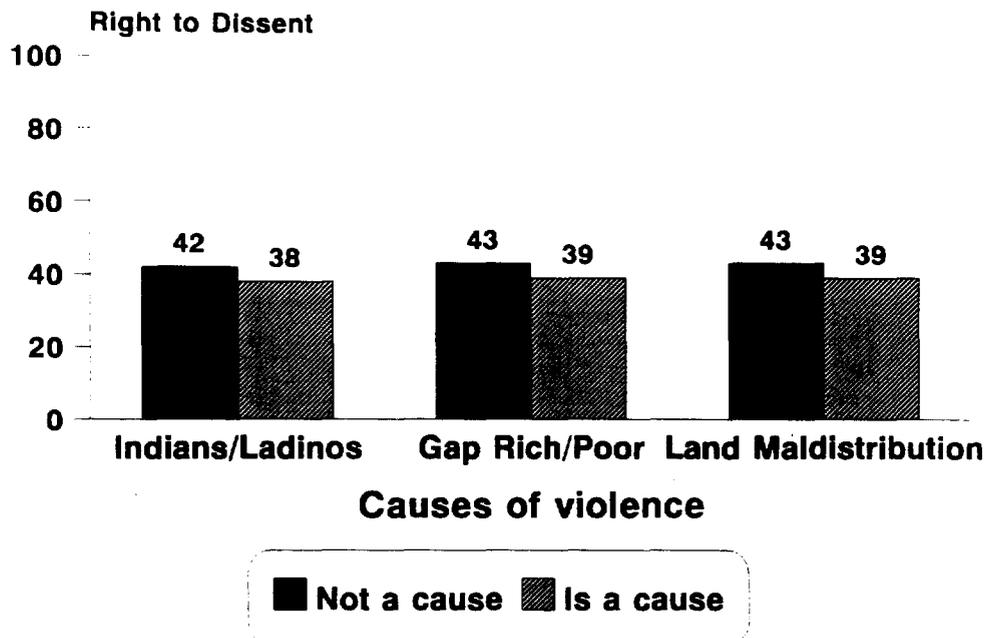


Figure 7

We can observe a close positive relationship between support for these institutions that can defend citizens against violence and our measure of System Support (Figure VI.10). Furthermore, there is also a negative relationship between Support for Democratic Liberties and belief in these institutions. Both are statistically significant ($< .001$). These results show that the greater one believes in the ability of the police, army and courts to defend the right to life in Guatemala, the greater support for the system one has but the lower support for democratic liberties. One can think of this finding in another way: those who support civil liberties are less likely to believe that the right to life is being protected by key institutions. Again this may reflect the experience of respondents as well as the historical experience of Guatemala.

Causes of Violence in Guatemala by System Support



Source: 1993 Democratic Norms Survey

Figure 10

a far smaller proportion of the sample to admit to supporting such acts. But an even greater surprise is that approval of "overthrowing violently a government elected by the people" was higher than it was for less drastic forms of civil disobedience. One would have assumed that support for such a drastic measure would have been lower than for other forms of protest, but apparently in Guatemala the more gradual, nuanced, "ramping-up" strategy of civil disobedience has not emerged. Rather, there is evidence here of an "all-or-nothing" strategy. Indeed, when these four items are included in a factor analysis to determine if they form part of a single dimension, the overthrowing an elected government item proves to be distinct from the others.⁴ Of course, given the history of Guatemala, perhaps one should not be surprised by these

⁴The four items do form a single factor, but the loadings on the overthrow item are .5, compared to about .8 for the other items.

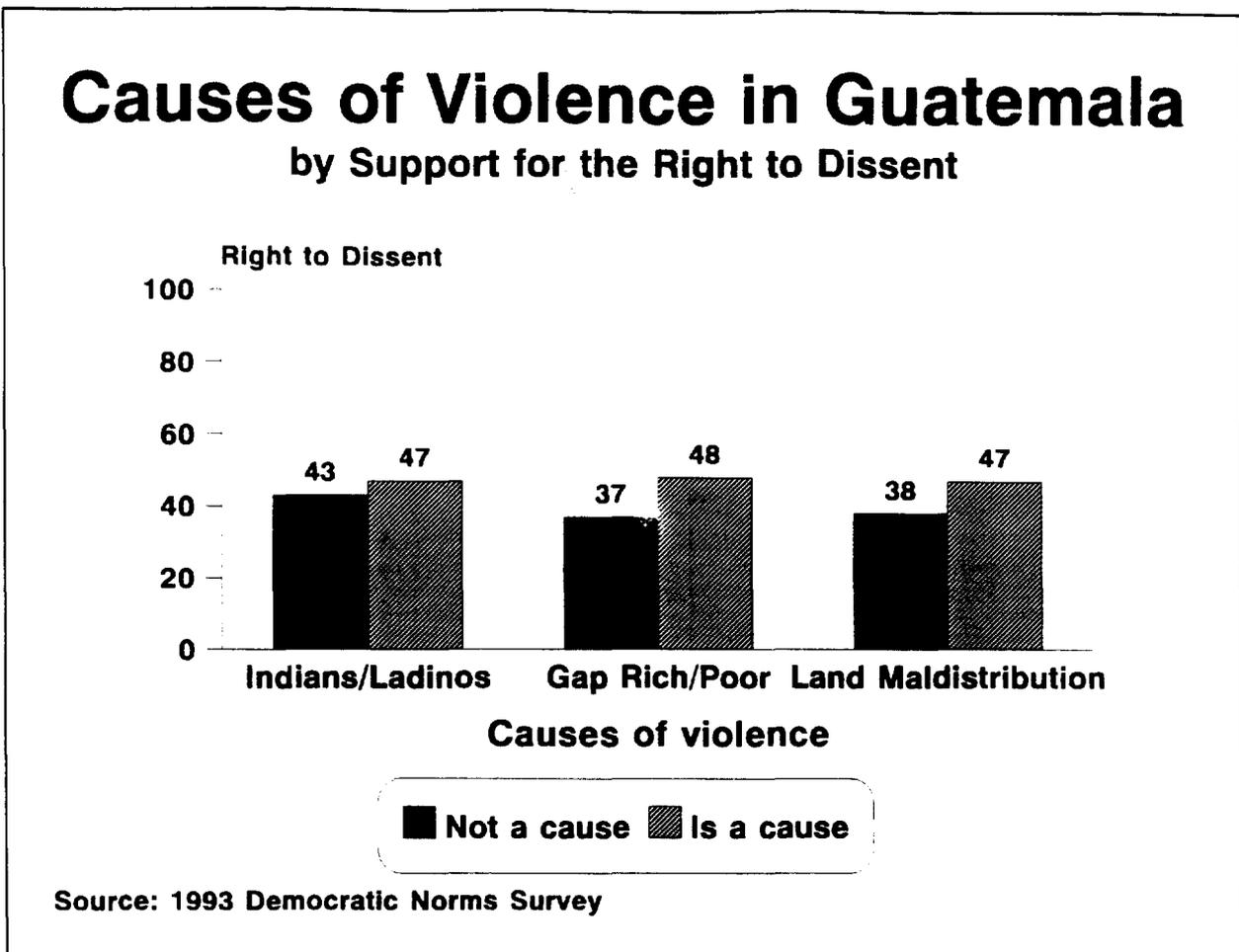
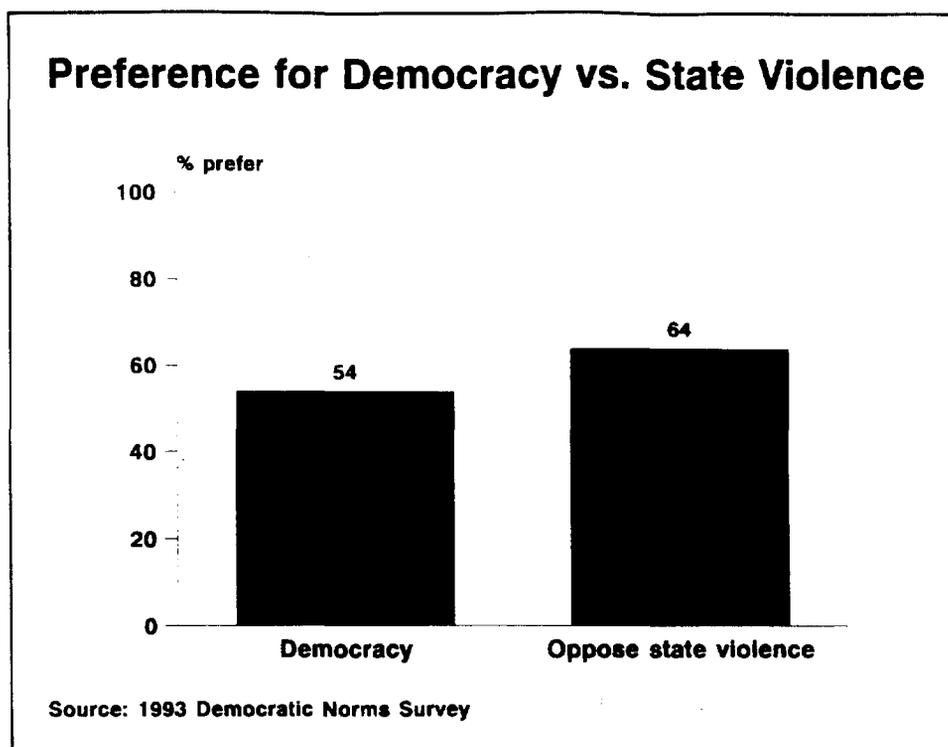


Figure 9

Support for Aggressive Political Participation

In countries in which the basic rules of the game have not been fully accepted by all citizens, people sometimes resort to illegal acts such as blocking streets, land invasions, taking over of public buildings, or even trying to overthrow elected regimes. We wanted to find out how much approval there was for such acts in Guatemala. We should note that since such acts are illegal, we suspect that support is frequently understated. For this series of questions the respondent had two options: approve, disapprove, but interviewers coded as "indifferent" those who were uncertain which option to pick but who still wanted to give an opinion. Since that group varied little from question to question (from 9-11 percent of the sample), we focus here exclusively on those who approve of such aggressive acts.

Figure VI.11 presents two surprises. First, we were surprised that support for aggressive political participation was as high as it turned out to be. We had expected



support
for a
hard

Figure 12

line to be taken by the government. First, we asked, "Do you think that in our country what is needed is a dictatorial government (*gobierno de mano dura*), or that problems can be resolved by everyone participating?" Our second question was: "Some people say that to stop political violence, the only way is to also use official violence. Are you in agreement, somewhat in agreement or in disagreement with this view?"

Figure VI.12 shows that approximately two-third of the respondents opposed the used of state violence as a means to stop political violence. Somewhat less support for democracy was shown in the response to the question on dictatorship versus democracy. In that item, a slim majority of Guatemalans preferred democratic participation over the "mano dura." When, however, those who did not respond are included in the tabulation, the situation is reversed and a slight majority favors the "mano dura."

Both of these variables are closely linked to education. As can be seen in Figure VI.13, the higher the education of the respondent, the more likely he/she will be to select the democratic alternative. This is an encouraging sign since education levels have been increasing in Guatemala in recent years and are likely to continue to increase in the years to come. Among those with college education in Guatemala, 78 percent oppose state violence and 68 percent prefer democracy over authoritarian rule.

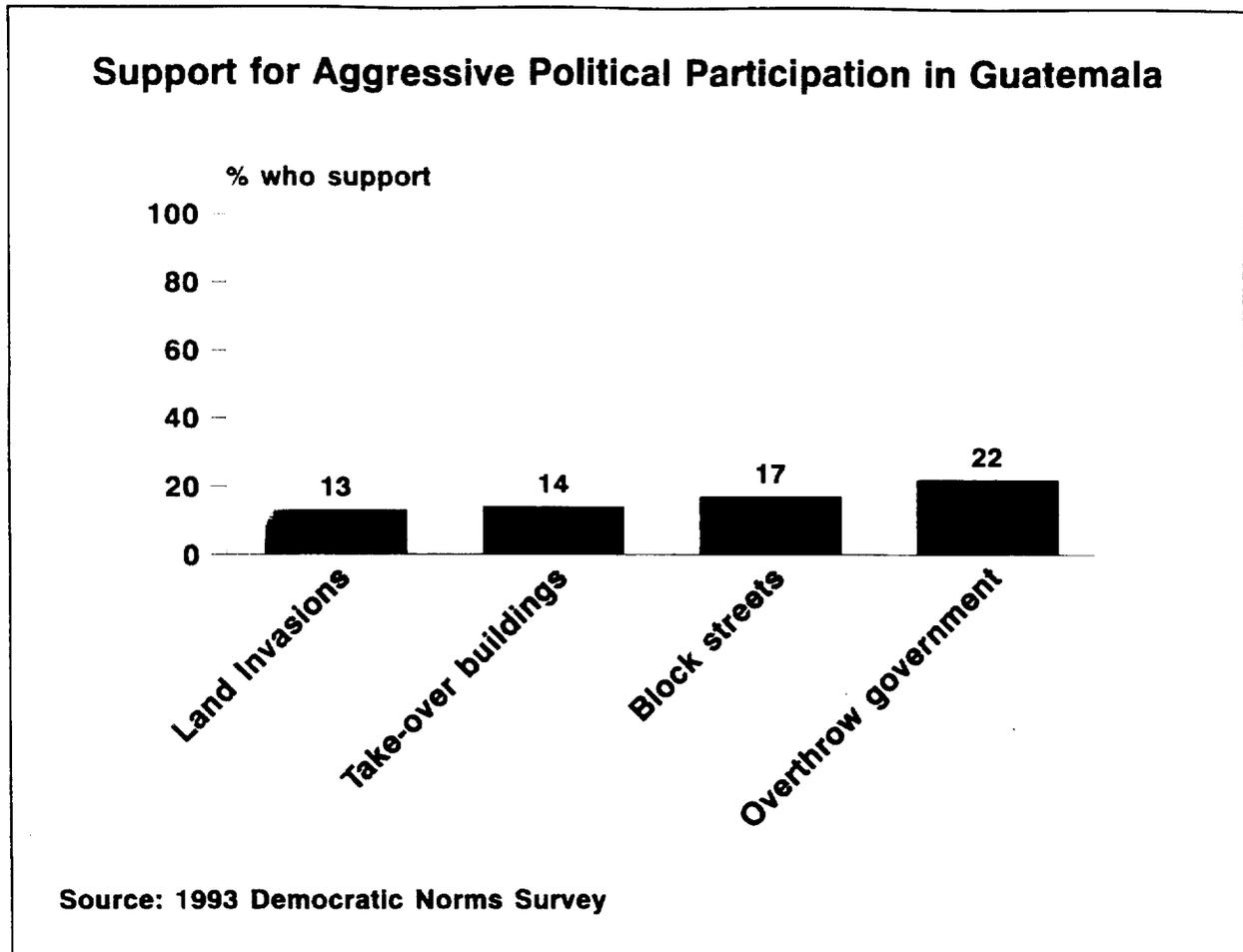


Figure 11

results. Even so, it is disturbing to learn that over one-fifth of Guatemalans would support the violent overthrow of a democratically elected government.

Support for aggressive political participation is not confined to any one socio-economic or ethnic group. We found few differences within the sample, other than to note that land invasions and take-overs of building was supported significantly more by the poor, less-well educated than the rich and well educated. Religion, ethnicity, age and gender had no systematic relationship to aggressive political participation.

Support for Government Repression of Dissent

The flip side of the aggressive political participation question is violence committed by the government. We asked two questions to determine levels of

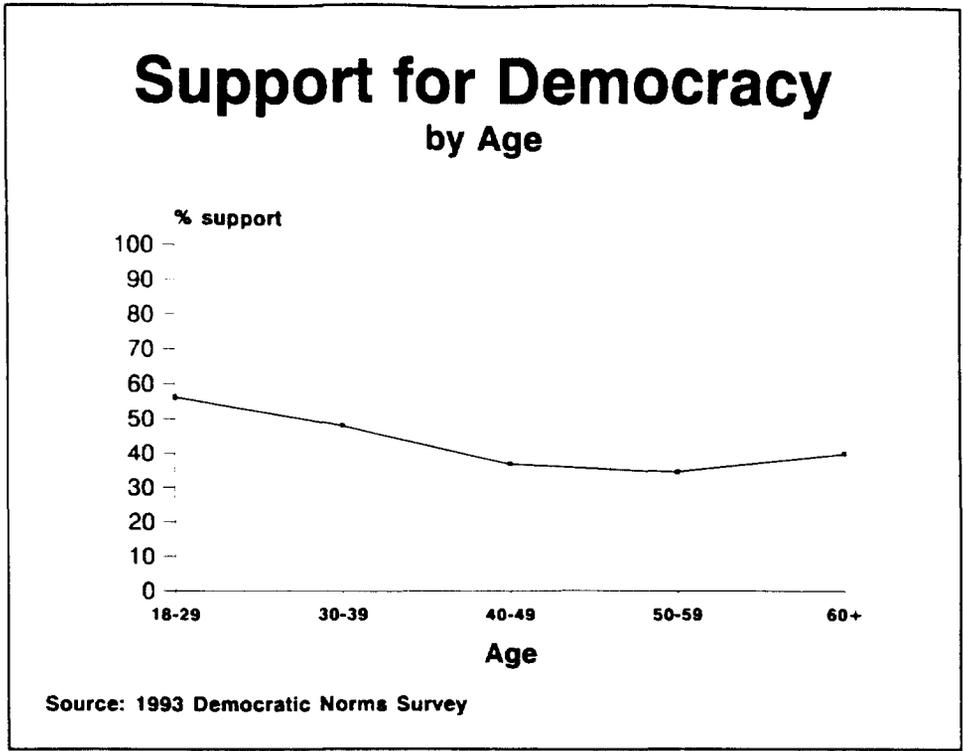


Figure 14

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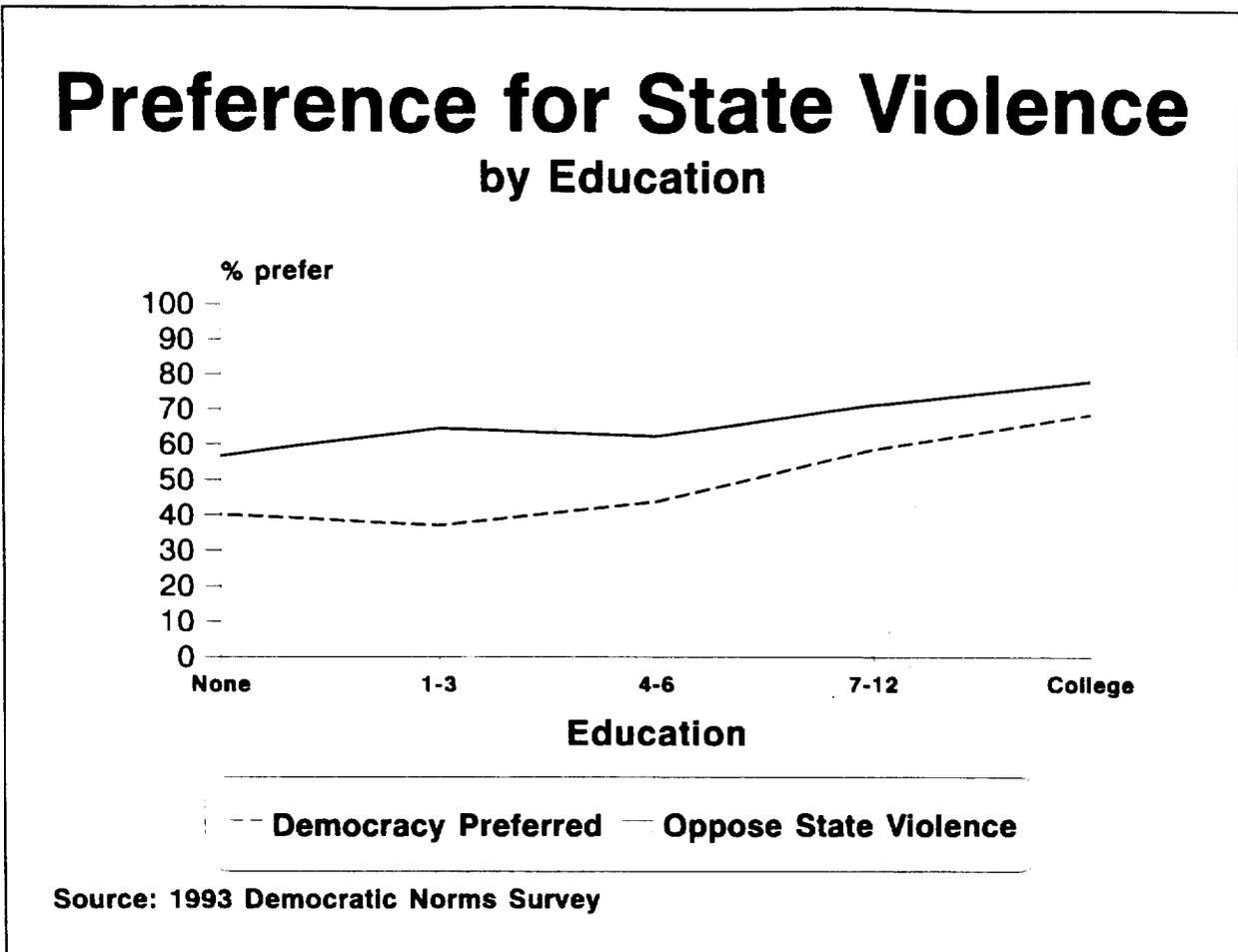


Figure 13

Age also is directly associated with the preference for democracy over authoritarian rule, as can be seen in Figure VI.14. The highest support is found among the youngest respondents in the survey, although there is some tendency for pattern to reverse itself among the oldest respondents. The difference is statistically significant ($<.01$).

Finally, there is also a directly relationship between system support and support for democratic liberties and these two variables. That is, as expected from our previous analysis, system support is associated with lowered support for democracy while support for democracy is associated with lower use of state violence. We do not show these two relationships here because of the close theoretical linkage between the independent and dependent variables.

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We believe that these findings are important because they reveal a very positive aspect of Guatemalan political participation that could serve as the basis on which to build a stronger democracy. Although as we have already seen many Guatemalans lack trust in their system of government, that attitude has not prevented them from participation in community associations. Indeed, it may well be that frustration with national political institutions has led Guatemalans to become more reliant upon community institutions in which they may feel more trust. Efforts to build democracy in Guatemala might well find fertile terrain at the local level.

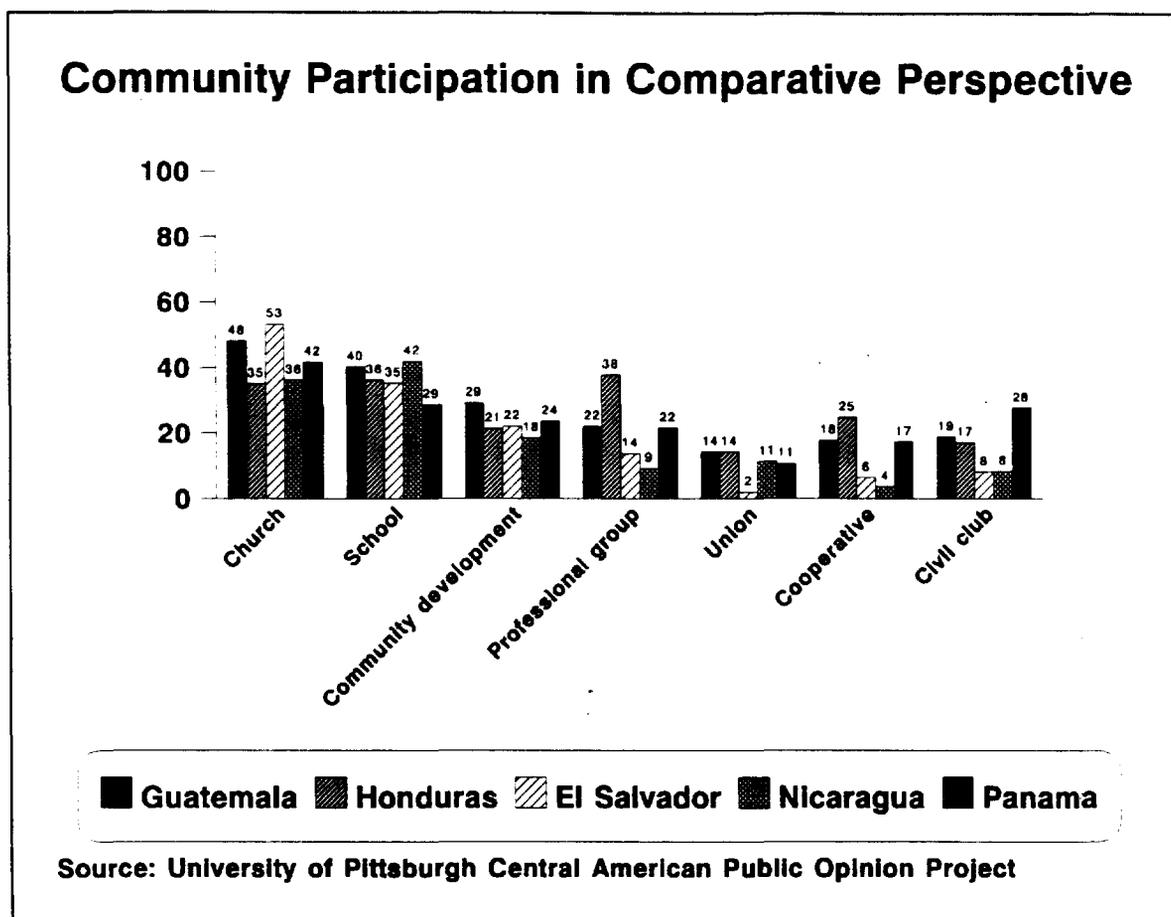


Figure 1

Participation in organizations is not the same thing as direct involvement in community problem solving. Individuals may join organizations merely to socialize or because they feel community pressure to do so. Perhaps a better test of the impact communal participation is to look at the extent to which individuals volunteer their time, labor and even money to help solve local problems. Figure VII.2 shows the data for Central America. Differences among the countries are statistically significant ($< .001$). The first set of bars show the proportion of the respondents who have

VII. Conventional Political Participation

Guatemala in Comparative Perspective

Most Latin American countries whether they formally have been unitary or federal states have operated with a strong central authority and relatively weaker local authorities. In fact, the process of consolidation of state authority in the 19th and early 20th centuries focussed on the assertion of national over regional or local interests. However, most countries have maintained some level of local government with some (often very minimal) political and administrative functions. Guatemala is no exception. Therefore, in looking at the entire political process, it is important to examine participation not only at the national level, but at the local level. In this chapter, we examine a variety of channels of participation open to individual Guatemalans, looking at their willingness to use these channels and the relative importance they assign to various levels of government as demonstrated by their forms of participation.

It is worth noting that the sorts of violent forms of political participation we discussed in the previous chapter often are more likely to make headlines. However, the more conventional forms discussed in this chapter are what far more often form the stuff of daily politics in Guatemala and elsewhere in Latin America.¹ Political violence is more clearly a hallmark of the inability of the more conventional forms to effectively channel political concerns and political demands.

Communal Participation

In Figure VII.1 we show the overall pattern of participation in a wide variety of community groups. We have data on five of Central America's six nations. Costa Rica is absent from this data set, but the information from that country should be available by the end of 1993.² The results show that Guatemala's levels of conventional participation are generally quite high compared to its neighbors in the region. In terms of church committees and school related committees, Guatemala ranked second in the region. In terms of community development associations, Guatemala ranked first. It tied for first or second place in professional group associations and unions, and was ranked second in cooperatives and civic clubs. The differences among the five nations in the study are statistically significant ($< .001$).

¹See Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, *Political Participation in Latin America*, Vols. I and II. New York: Holmes and Meir, 1978 and 1979.

² The items were coded with a four-point scale, ranging from "frequent" participation to no participation. We converted this scale to have a 0-100 range, with frequent made equivalent to 100, and no participation equal to 0.

Our last form of conventional participation moves our focus away from community groups and toward public officials. We asked our respondents if they had asked for the help or cooperation of the following officials or institutions in trying to solve community problems: the President of the country, a legislator, the mayor, an agency of the national government. Figure VII.3 shows the results. It is not surprising that the levels of contacting public officials is far lower than the levels of communal participation we observed in figures VII.1 and VII.2 above. Only in Honduras, where respondents were less active in working to solve local community problems were they significantly more active in contacting national public officials. Guatemala ranks at an intermediate level on this set of items.

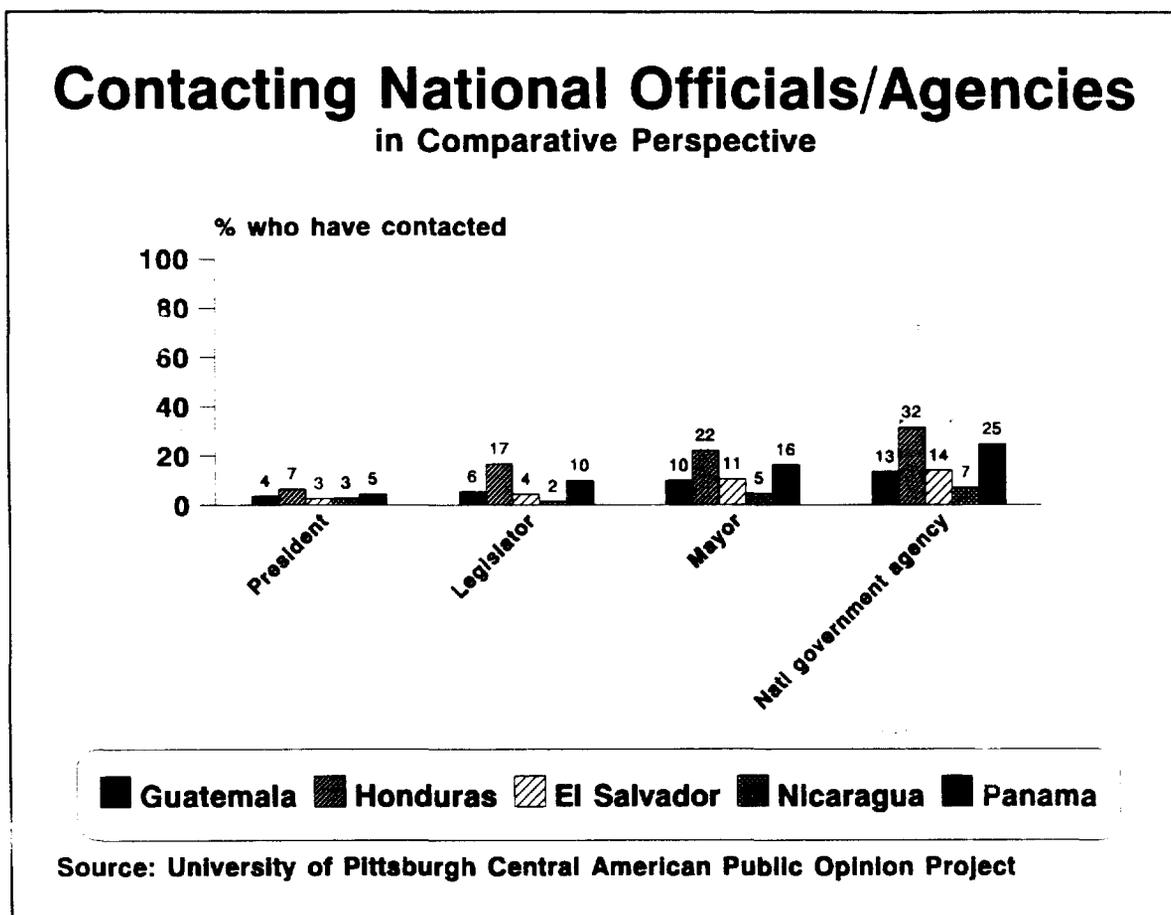


Figure 3

Voting

Prior to the 1980s, competitive, free and fair elections were the exception rather than the rule in Central America. Only Costa Rica had a long history of elections that, by any standard, were a model of electoral probity. As a result, very little was known then about the Central American voter and it was not then possible

attempted to help solve a community problem.³ Here we see that Guatemala is no longer the leader, with Nicaragua and Panama having the highest levels of local problem solving. Yet, its levels are far higher than in Honduras, which is the least participant of any of the five countries.

The remaining bars on the chart refer only to those individuals who have in fact done something to help solve a community problem. Hence, we are comparing here levels of participation only among the active part of the population. Guatemalans are particularly low in terms of donating materials or money, and also somewhat low in organizing groups. Their level of communal work participation and attendance at organized meetings is not very different from the other countries in the region.

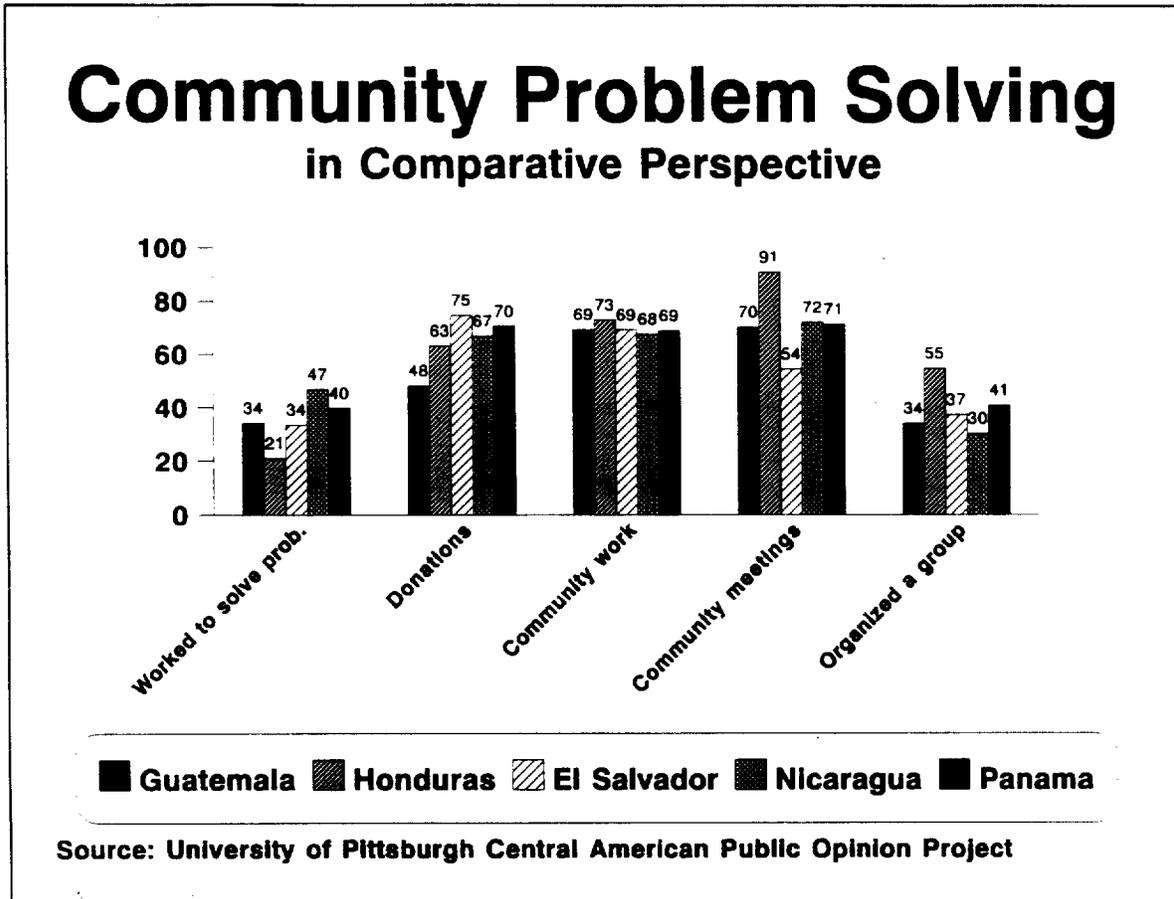


Figure 2

³The responses were scored "yes" and "no," and the coding was done to give 100 points for those who said "yes" and zero points for those who said "no."

yet available. Moreover, the Civil War raging there for most of the decade has resulted in massive deaths and migration, a full account of which is not available. The situation is similarly confused in Nicaragua, where the most recent population census was taken in 1971. The census data for the other countries are more recent (Guatemala, 1981; Honduras, 1988; and Panama, 1990, but the Panamanian census is still being tabulated).

A far more complex issue is that of obtaining accurate data on registration and voting. In Panama, for example, there is probably no way of obtaining an accurate count for the 1989 election, the one that preceded our survey. Three days after that election, the count was halted and the elections annulled by the military government. In Honduras, the registration system was undergoing a major modification during the period prior to the last election, but delays in its implementation meant that on the eve of the election a substitute system had to be developed and utilized.⁶

A further difficulty in comparing our survey data to that of official counts is that the Central America data set is urban in nature. Turnout in rural areas is often lower than in urban areas, in part because of the greater cost (in time and money) involved in reaching a polling place. In a country like Costa Rica, where virtually all rural areas have schools, and schools are utilized as polling places, the problem is far less serious. But remoteness is only one factor limiting voting in rural areas. Education and income levels in the countryside, two variables known to have an impact on turnout, are generally far lower than in the cities.

We also recognized another limitation of survey data, namely that of over reporting. According to voter validation studies conducted by the University of Michigan, survey data over reported voting by 18% in the 1970s in the U.S.⁷

These obstacles present formidable barriers to developing good estimates of turnout against which we can compare the survey data. Table VII.1 provides the best data that we were able to develop. One of the major challenges was to obtain reasonable population estimates and then to calculate from those the voting aged population for the urban areas in which we conducted the surveys. Our survey data theoretically coincides most closely with the percentage of the voting aged population

⁶See Mitchell A. Seligson, "Evaluation of the Strategic Democratic Initiatives Project in Honduras: The Registration System." Washington, D.C.: Development Associates, typescript, 1990.

⁷See John P. Katosh and Michael W. Traugott, "Consequences of Validates and Self-reported Voting Measures," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 45(1981, No. 4):519-535.

to undertake a serious empirical analysis of voting behavior along the classical lines developed by political scientists in the U.S. and Western Europe.

But, times have changed. Regular elections are beginning to become a normal feature of the Central American political landscape. Costa Rica's elections have a long tradition, dating back to the early part of the twentieth century, having been interrupted only once, in 1948. After the 1980 constituent assembly election, Honduras has had democratic presidential elections since 1981, with the Liberal Party winning in that year and again in 1985, to be defeated by the National Party in the 1989 election. Guatemala began a formal transformation to civilian rule in 1984 with the election of a constituent assembly, and since has held competitive presidential elections in 1985 and 1990 and most recently local elections in 1993. In El Salvador elections have gone on throughout much of the 1980s, but it was only in 1989 in which moderate leftist parties participated. It will not be until 1994, however, when the FMLN will be allowed to participate, that fully competitive elections will take place. Nicaragua held free and fair elections in 1984 and again in 1990.⁴ In that latter election the Sandinistas lost control to the UNO opposition coalition. Finally, Panama held competitive elections in 1989, but the military annulled them.⁵

Perhaps the two most basic parameters in any study of voting are turnout of eligible voters and turnout as a percent of registered voters. While at first it might appear that these figures are readily available, in fact, they are not. Indeed, we argue that at best it is only possible to provide approximate turnout figures for any country in the region except Costa Rica, where more accurate totals are available.

In order to have accurate turnout figures, one must have accurate population data. Such data are based on censuses and projections made from those censuses. The most recent Costa Rican census prior to the survey analyzed in this paper dates from 1984. The Costa Rican census bureau, however, regularly makes projections on that base, adding births and immigrants, subtracting deaths and emigrants. This procedure produces highly reliable census data and makes calculation of turnout possible. In the other countries, however, the estimates are far more problematical. In El Salvador, for example, the most recent published population census dates back to 1971, although a new census was conducted in 1992, the results of which are not

⁴The 1984 election was widely evaluated as being free and fair, but the withdrawal of the opposition meant that the Sandinistas faced little serious opposition to their rule. Hence, it was not until 1990 that the elections were free, fair and competitive.

⁵For a more complete discussion of elections in Central America see John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, *Elections and Democracy in Central America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989.

Sources for voting data:

Costa Rica: Data are from the district totals as reported by the Tribunal Supremo de Elecciones, *Cómputo de votos y declaratorias de elección, 1990*. San José: TSE. A total of 38 districts were included in the sample. Note that the voting districts in some cases cover rural as well as urban areas, whereas the sample is completely urban. As a result, a precise match between the sample and the voting data is not possible. Population estimates for sampled areas come from, Dirección General de Estadística y Censos, *Costa Rica: Cálculo de población (por provincia, cantón y distrito) al 1° de enero de 1990*. San José, 1991.

El Salvador: Population estimates for greater San Salvador are from 1992 CELADE estimates for the election year of 1991. See Ministerio de Planificación y Coordinación del Desarrollo Económico y Social, Dirección General de Población y Desarrollo Territorial, Dirección de Población, *Estimación de la población de El Salvador por departamento y municipio (cifras preliminares)*, San Salvador, mayo, 1992, mimeo. Estimates for the country as a whole are from the 1991 CELADE publication (using 1986 estimates) in order to maintain the continuity of the series for all six countries. However, the preliminary population figures from the 1992 population census of El Salvador shows 5.05 million persons compared to the 5.38 million estimated by CELADE. But the preliminary figures for greater San Salvador for the 1992 census are 1.52 million vs. 1.42 for the CELADE estimates. See "Ministerio de Economía, La Dirección General de Estadística y Censos, "Resultados Preliminares del V Censo de Población y IV de Vivienda 1992," *Prensa Gráfica* January 19, 1993, p. 34. Voting data from Ricardo Córdova Macías, "Procesos electorales y sistema de partidos en El Salvador (1982-1989)," *Documentos de Trabajo*, Series Analisis de la Relaidad Nacional 92-1, FUNDAUNGO, San Salvador, December, 1992.

Guatemala: Tribuno Supremo Electoral, *Memoria de la Elecciones 1990/1991*. Guatemala, 19??; and Tribunal Supremo Electoral, Centro de Asesoría y Promoción Electoral del Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos (CAPEL-IIDH), *Informe Final del Programa de Capacitación electoral 1990*, TSE-CAPEL, Guatemala, Marzo, 1991. Guatemala City population estimates from "Estimaciones de población urban y rural por Departamento y Municipio: 1990-1995," Guatemala: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas.

Honduras: Censo nacional de población y vivienda, 1988: Características generales de la población y de las viviendas por barrios y colonias, San Pedro Sula y Tegucigalpa (Tegucigalpa, Diciembre, 1990); unpublished data, Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones. Note that the number of registered voters in Tegucigalpa is given as larger than the voting aged population. This may be a result of the underestimation of the voting age population, estimates made from the CELADE population estimates or from differences in the way the area included in the population census for Tegucigalpa vs. the voting districts included as part of the city.

Nicaragua: Data for Managua are for the "Region III", which includes Managua and the surrounding areas. No voting data are available for the city itself, but the population of the city of Managua was 903,620, whereas the Region III had a population of 1,067,881. Hence, the city was 84.6 percent of the region. Latin American Studies Association, Commission to Observe the 1990 Nicaraguan Election, "Electoral Democracy Under International Pressure," March 15, 1990, mimeo; "Cómo voto Nicaragua: los resultados electorales, *Envío* (Managua-UCA) April, 1990, pp. 1-24. Abstention rates of registered voters taken from Castro and Prevost (1992:223); Vanessa Castro and Gary Prevost, *The 1990 Elections in Nicaragua and their Aftermath*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1992.

Panama: OEA (1992:40). Results based on recount. Estimates of turnout vary from 54% to 75%. Our calculations based on data from the Electoral Tribunal and reported by the Comité de Apoyo a los Observadores Internacionales, *Testimonio de un Proceso Electoral* (1990) show 76% turnout rate of registered population in the areas in which we surveyed. It is important to note that the 1989 election was aborted before the full count of the votes was completed, hence the true vote totals are not known. The best estimates are that approximately one-fifth of the votes were not counted.

Table 1. Voting and Population Data for Central America*

Country	Election date/ survey date	Total population (millions) for election year	Voting age population (millions)	Number of votes (millions)	Voting of voting-aged population	Number of registered voters (millions)	% turnout of registered voters	Survey results	Voting compulsory/ not compulsory
<u>Costa Rica:</u> Entire country	1990/ 1990	3.01	1.75	1.38	79%	1.69	82%	--	compulsory
Urban "meseta central"	"	.94	.55	.49	89%	.60	82%	84%	
<u>El Salvador:</u> Entire country	1991/ 1991	5.38	2.62	1.15	44%	2.1	52%	--	compulsory
Greater San Salvador	"	1.42	.68	.33	49%	.45	73%	63%	
<u>Guatemala:</u> Entire country	1990(1st round)/ 1992	9.20	4.43	1.81	41%	3.20	57%	--	compulsory (except illiterates, invalids and 70+ years)
Department of Guatemala	"	1.96 (1990)	.98	.39	40%	.62	63%	70%	"
<u>Honduras:</u> Entire country	1989/ 1991	4.98	2.28	1.80	79%	2.37	76%	--	compulsory
Tegucigalpa	"	.69	.30	.27	87%	.35	75%	83%	"
San Pedro Sula	"	.48	.15	.13	86%	.19	69%	93%	"
<u>Nicaragua:</u> Entire country	1990/ 1991	3.87	2.01	1.51	75%	1.75	86%	--	not compulsory
Managua	"	1.07	.56	.39	71%	.46	85%	79%	"
<u>Panama:</u> Entire country	1989/ 1991	2.37	1.37	.75	55%	1.19	63%	--	not compulsory
Panama City	"	.41	.28	.19	64%	.28	69%	78%	"

* Population data are taken from CELADE (1991). Voting age is 18 for all countries in Central America except Nicaragua, where it is 16. The population projections from CELADE group all those from 15-19 years of age into a single cohort. Interpolation was used to estimate the population of 18 and older (16 and older in Nicaragua). Although different population figures can be obtained from other sources, it was determined that the use of a single, highly respected source for all six countries would help standardize the errors across all of the cases. As better data become available, the estimates made by CELADE will change. For example, a May, 1992 estimate of the 1991 population of El Salvador shows 5.28 million inhabitants, compared to the 5.38 million reported in the 1991 publication (which was based on 1986 estimates) shown in the above table. See MIPLAN (1992). The preliminary estimates of the 1992 population census show 5.047 million.

from the countries outside of Central America are national, whereas the Central America data are urban, that we have overestimated the Central American turnout rates and underestimated the non-Central American rates. In fact, the underestimate for the non-Central American cases is only slight, since the urban and rural differentials are not nearly so great in these developed countries as they are in Central America. Hence, the national-level data for the non-Central American cases reported in Figure 1 probably are close approximations of urban turnout and hence directly comparable to the Central American cases.

Examination of Figure VII.4 reveals that there is a wide distribution in turnout rates. In Central America they range from a low of 63 per cent of voting age respondents in our survey to a high of 90 percent. Guatemala is the second lowest of the six countries. In no Central American case was turnout as low as it was in the U.S., and only Italy, (of all of the 20 countries in the Powell, Jr. study) exceeded the highest turnout rate in Central America.

Intra-Guatemala Comparisons

We will now explore the factors that influence participation within Guatemala. In order to simplify the analysis, we have created an index of participation. First, however, we show all of the forms of communal participation on a single chart so that the reader can see which ones are practiced more frequently and which ones less so. As can be seen, church group participation is highest, followed by school committee (e.g., PTA) participation.

A factor analysis⁹ of the seven types of local participation shown in the above figure revealed two distinct factors: communal participation (Church, School, Community Development Association) and occupation-related participation (professional association, civic association, trade union and cooperative). We formed

although not all were registered voters as will be discussed below. We had to adjust the figures reported here to take account of those respondents who were too young to vote in the election prior to the survey.

⁹A varimax rotation produced two distinct factors. There was, however, a distributed loading on the community development association variable, but it loaded more heavily on the communal participation factor, so we included it there.

that voted rather than the turnout of registered voters. This is because we interviewed from a universes of all households, not just those in which the respondent was registered to vote. For completeness, however, we also provide the best data we could find on the number of registered voters for each country and city in which we conducted our study, as well as the turnout of registered voters in those cities.

How well did we do on the vote variable? Theoretically, our confidence interval was as large as 4.5 percent for Panama and Honduras, where our sample was approximately 500, and as small as 3.3 percent in Guatemala and El Salvador where our sample was approximately 900. In Costa Rica where the percent of the voting aged population that voted was 89 percent, our survey revealed 84 percent, with a confidence interval that would go as high as 87.3 percent. In Tegucigalpa, Honduras we can even closer, with the survey showing 83 percent and the actual turnout 87 percent. Results in San Pedro Sula, Honduras were not as close, exceeding by seven per cent from the actual totals. The survey was also quite close in Managua, Nicaragua, with the lower confidence interval at 75% and the actual vote of 71 percent. In the other samples, our estimates were considerably higher than the actual vote. In Panama City, for example, our lower estimate was 73.5 percent, whereas the vote was 64 percent. In El Salvador, the lower estimate for the survey was a little over 59 percent, whereas the actual vote was 49 percent. Finally, the worst estimate was in Guatemala where the survey dramatically overestimated the vote.

The general pattern we found in these data is for the survey to overestimate the vote. This pattern is consistent with surveys done elsewhere, as a result of the built-in social desirability factor, the likelihood that a respondent will report what is considered to be socially desirable or acceptable behavior. This factor is exacerbated in all of Central America except Nicaragua and Panama, because the vote is compulsory. Individuals admitting to not voting are admitting to a violation (albeit technical) of the voting laws. The only instance where the survey underreported the vote was in urban Costa Rica, although it is of note that the survey does overestimate the national vote totals and in that sense is consistent with the other countries. We suspect that another factor inflating the reported vote totals is sample bias that may have excluded significant numbers of recent urban migrants to new shanty towns not yet recorded on the census maps we used to draw our samples.

We now move on to place the Central America data within an international comparative context. Figure 1 shows a comparison of Central America with the United States, Japan and four European countries.⁸ We assume that since the data

⁸The turnout rates for the non-Central American cases is taken from Powell (1986:38). These data are for the eligible (i.e., voting age) population. The Central American data are from the six surveys. Since the survey was conducted among voting-aged adults in each country, all of the respondents were eligible,

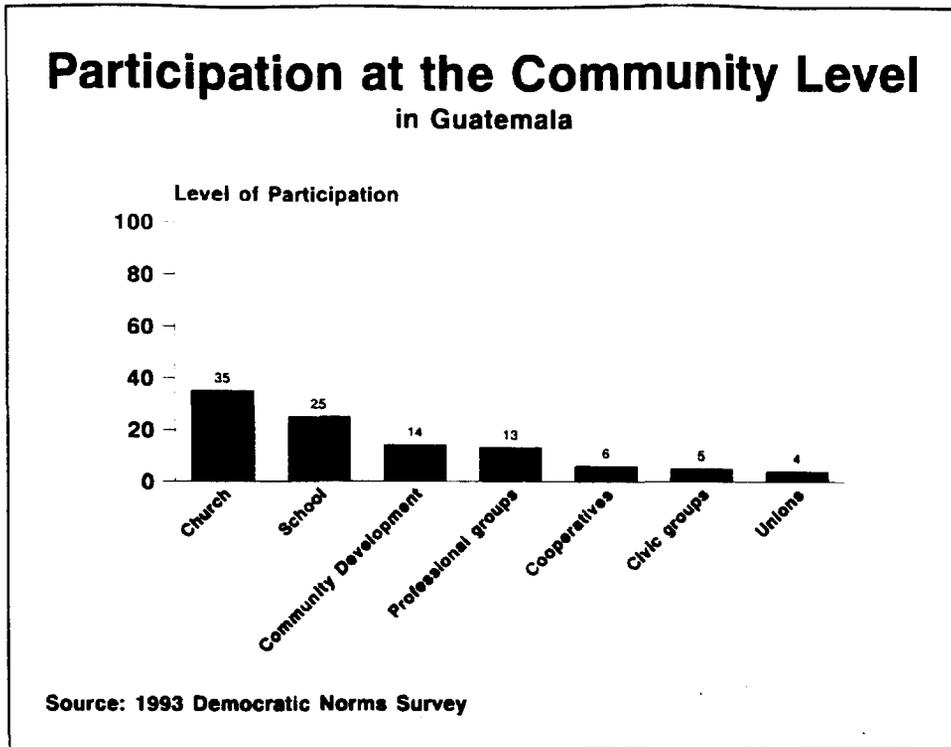


Figure 5

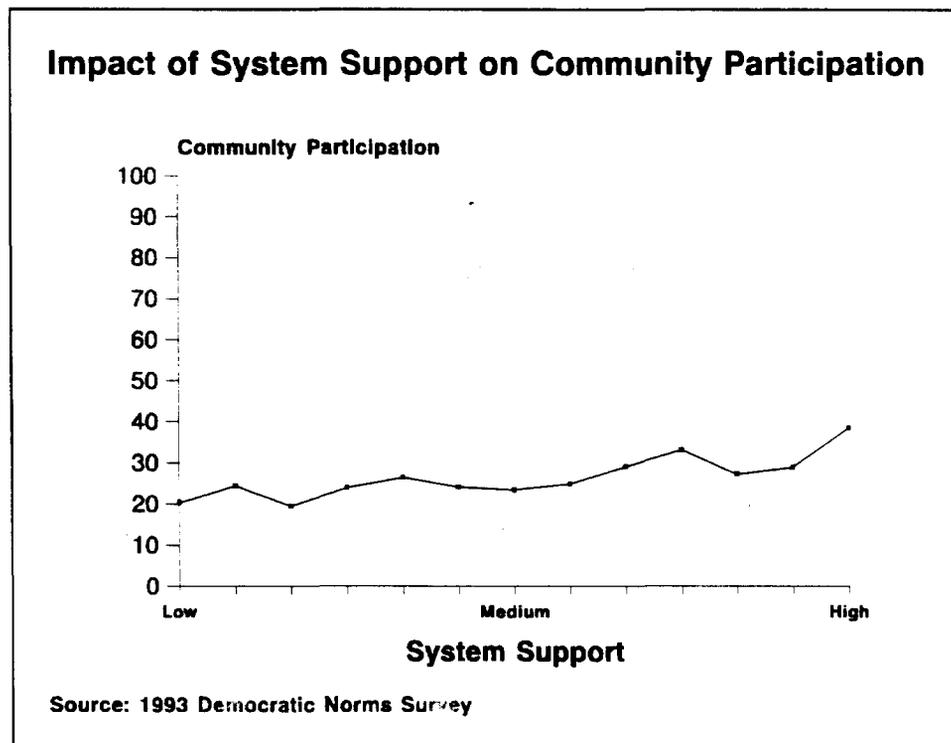


Figure 6

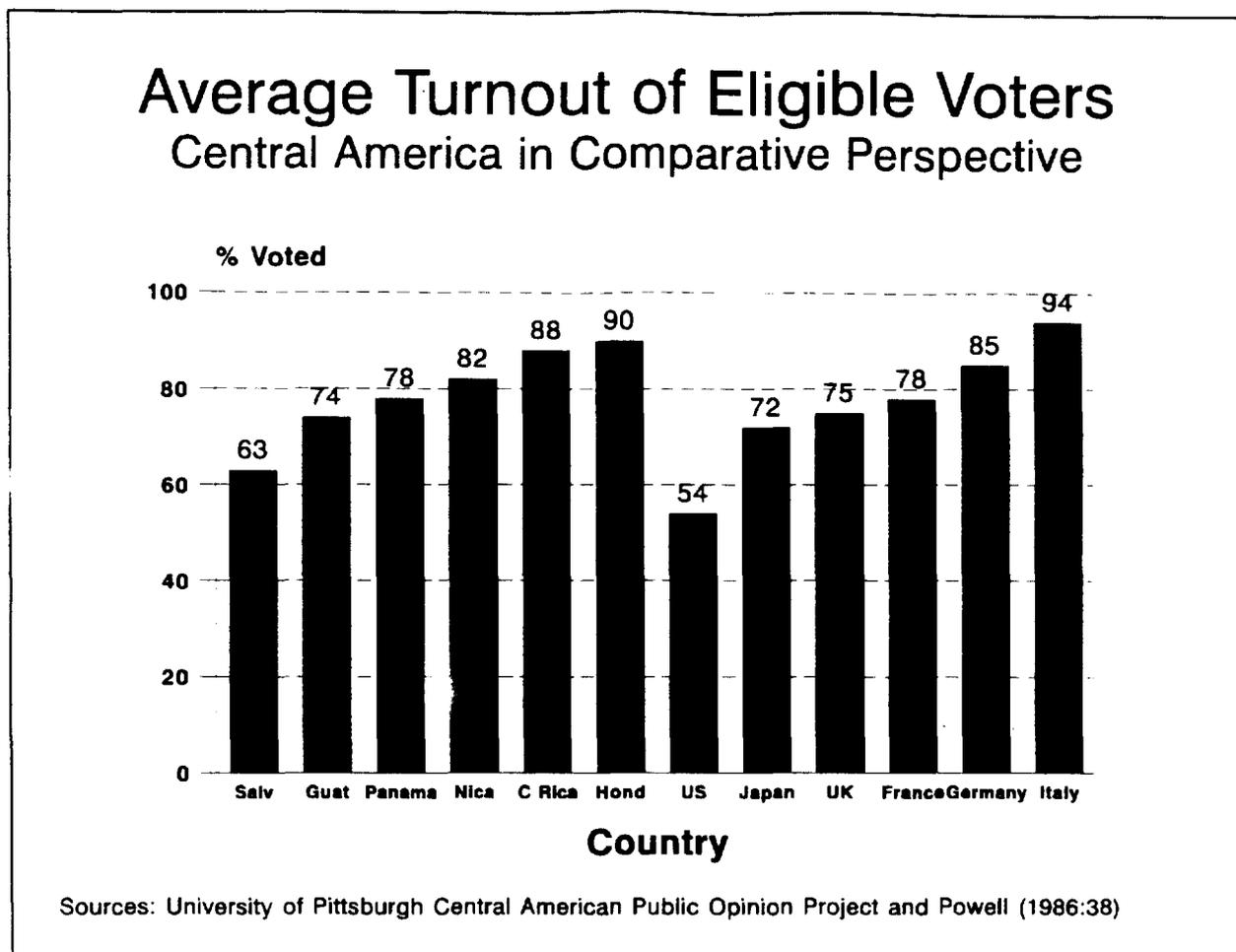


Figure 4

two indexes, one called "communal participation" and the other called "occupation-related participation."

We found that communal participation was not at all related to education, ethnicity, gender, age or urban/rural distinctions. Rather, it was significantly associated with system support and religiosity. Figure VII.5 shows the relationship between system support (defined in terms of the index created in Chapter III) and

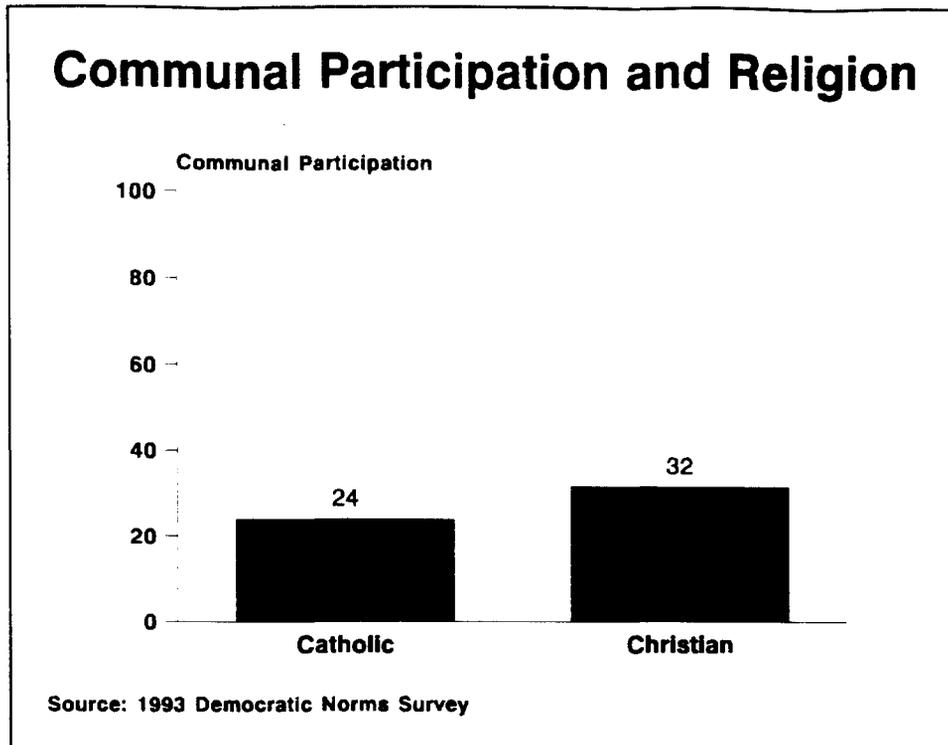


Figure 8

It is fortunate that we created a separate index for occupation-related participation since its correlates are quite different from those of communal participation. Participation in occupation-related groups is significantly ($< .001$) related, in order of importance, to education, gender and ethnicity.¹⁰ Religion and system support play no role. As can be seen in Figure VII.9 below, although there is a steady increase in participation as education increases, the real surge occurs at the highest levels of education.

Gender's relationship to professional participation is shown in Figure VII.10. Although the level of such participation remains low, males are found to have double the level of females (sig. $< .001$). This difference, of course, is in part a function of the higher rate of economic activity among males in Guatemala.

Finally, ethnicity is related to occupation-related participation, but the relationship is complex. Defining Indians by dress, shows that ladinos participate more than Indians, but the difference is not significant for three of the four variables in the occupation-participation index. However, cooperative participation is significantly higher among Indians (sig. $< .001$) than ladinos. When Indians are self-defined, then cooperative participation remains significantly higher among Indians, but

¹⁰The order of importance is determined by the beta weights in the regression equations.

communal participation (Figure VII.6). It can be seen that as support increases, participation increases.

The relationship between religiosity and communal participation is shown in Figure VI.7. The more frequently respondents attend church, the higher their communal participation. This finding is not surprising since church groups form part of the communal participation index. Indeed, when the church committees are removed from the index, the relationship is weakened considerably. We also found that other measures of religiosity, such as frequency of prayer, relate directly to communal participation.

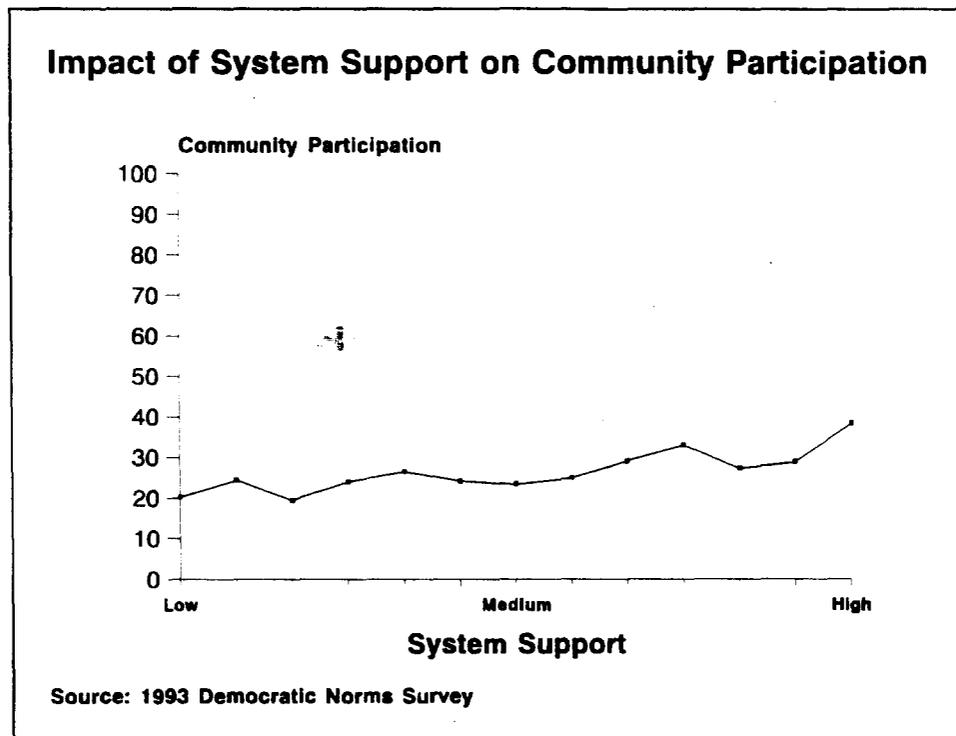


Figure 7

It is quite clear from examining Figure VII.8 that various Christian groups, largely protestant fundamentalist exhibit significantly ($< .001$) higher communal participation than do Catholics. We also found that those with no religion had the lowest level of participation (not shown on figure). These findings speak directly to the debate as to the role of the expansion of non-catholic groups in Guatemala. Apparently these new groups do help stimulate local level participation.

is also higher on the other variables as well, although not significantly so. An examination of occupation-related participation and Indians defined by language spoken produced inconsistent results, with some groups participating at far higher levels than others. We suspect that these differences might be a function of idiosyncratic factors in these small samples and therefore we think it inappropriate to present these findings here.

Contacting Public Officials

One of the most direct forms of political participation is contacting public officials. Of course, in many instances such contacting is for personal rather than communal gain. Nonetheless, it represents an important form of participation. We found that contacting the mayor (Alcalde Municipal) was the most common of this form of contacting, whereas contacting a legislator was the least common. Figure VII.11 shows the results.

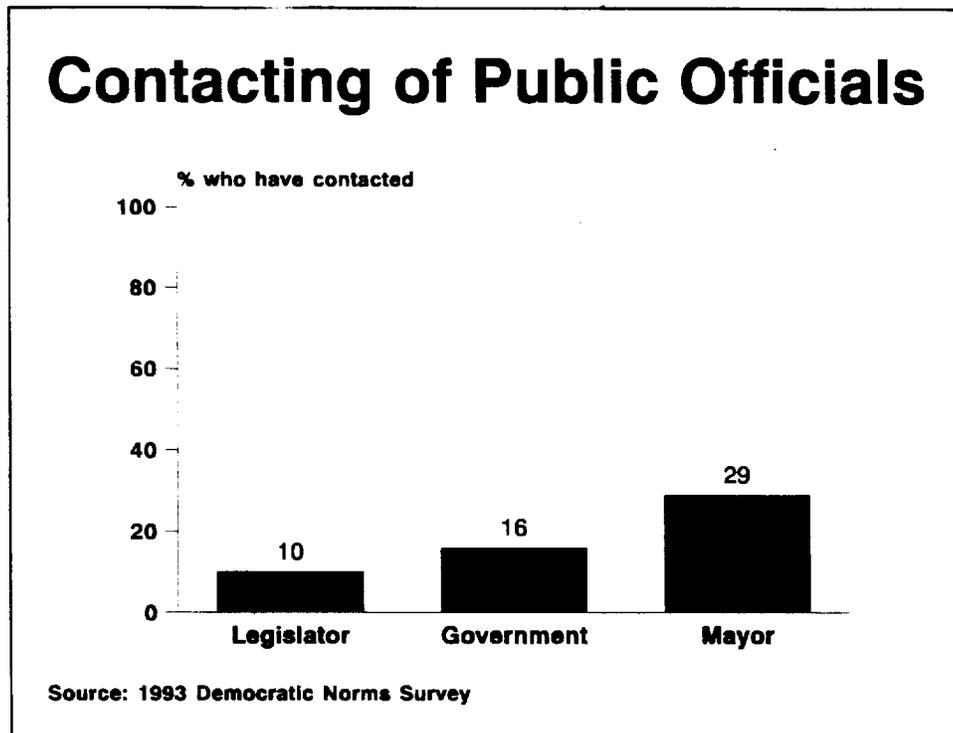


Figure 11

The variables that are related to this form of participation are rather different from that which we have seen before. The small number of respondents who have contacted a legislator showed no significant relationship with any of the demographic or socio-economic variables we have examined in this study, but it was significantly and positively related to system support. Contacting the government produces similar patterns to those which we have already observed. We focus here, therefore, on the mayor, as the variable that was most directly related to several others in our study. Our analysis is based on multiple regression results, such that each of the variables discussed below are significant predictors of contacting the mayor.

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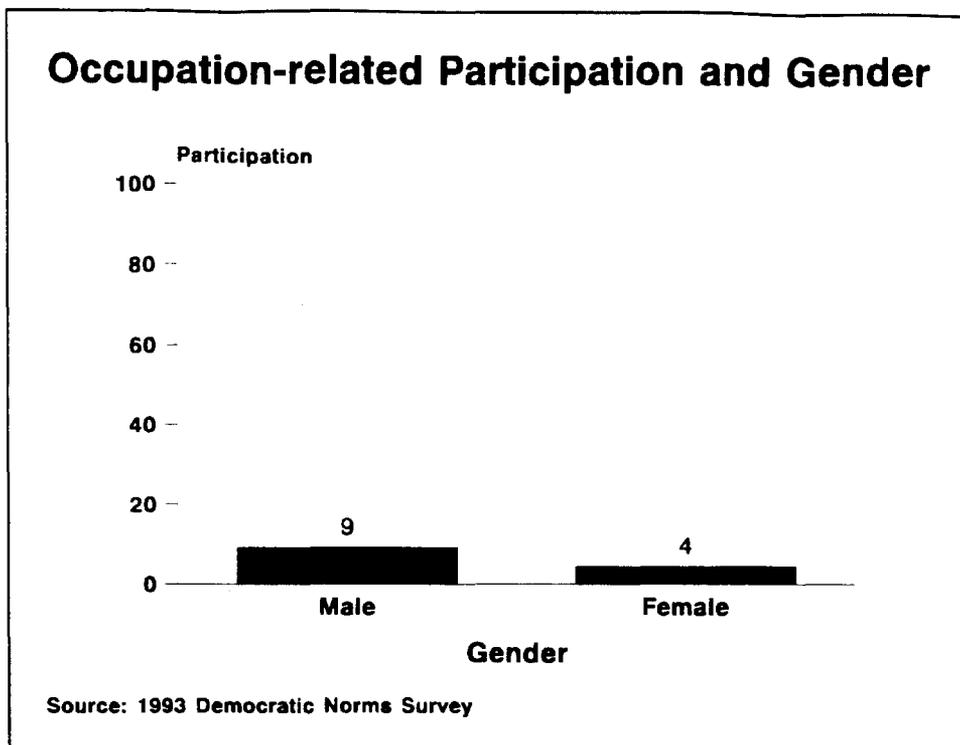


Figure 9

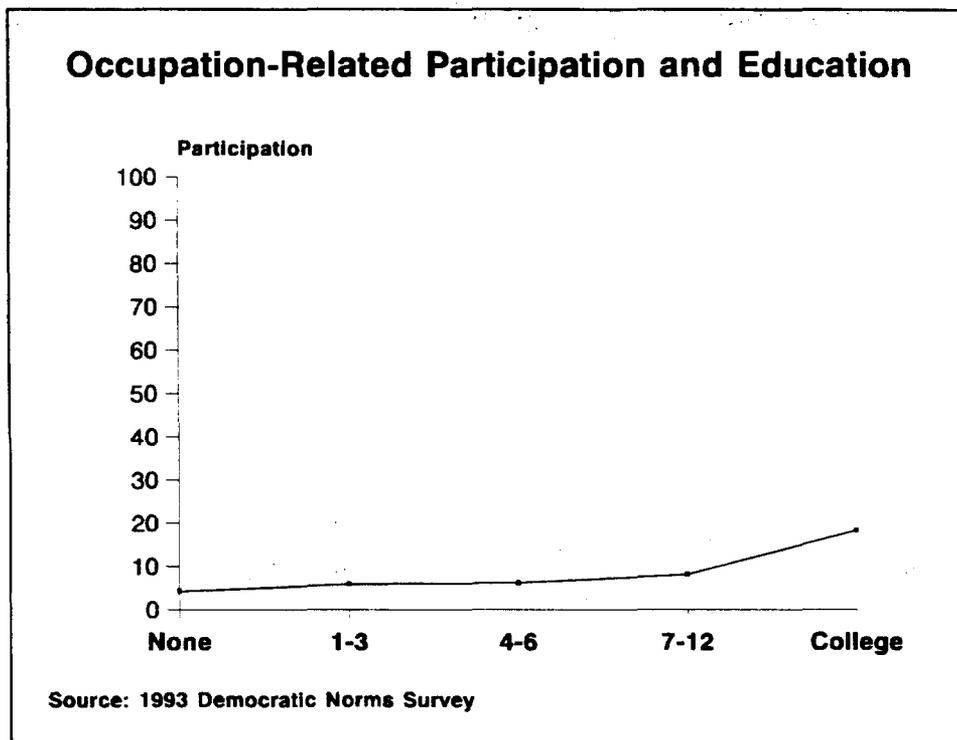


Figure 10

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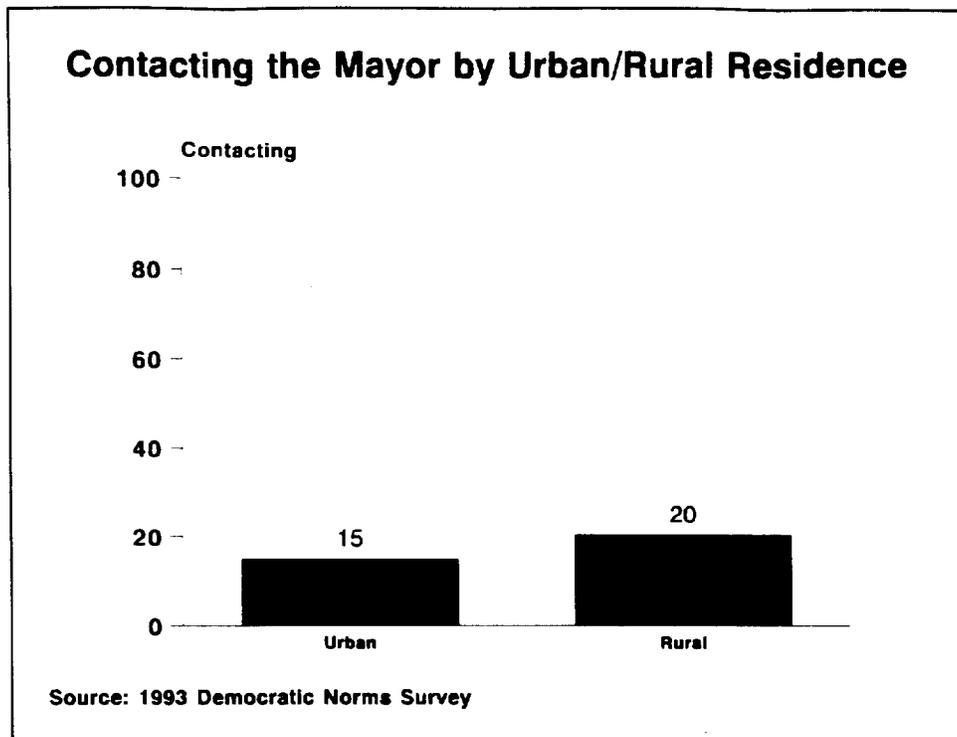


Figure 13

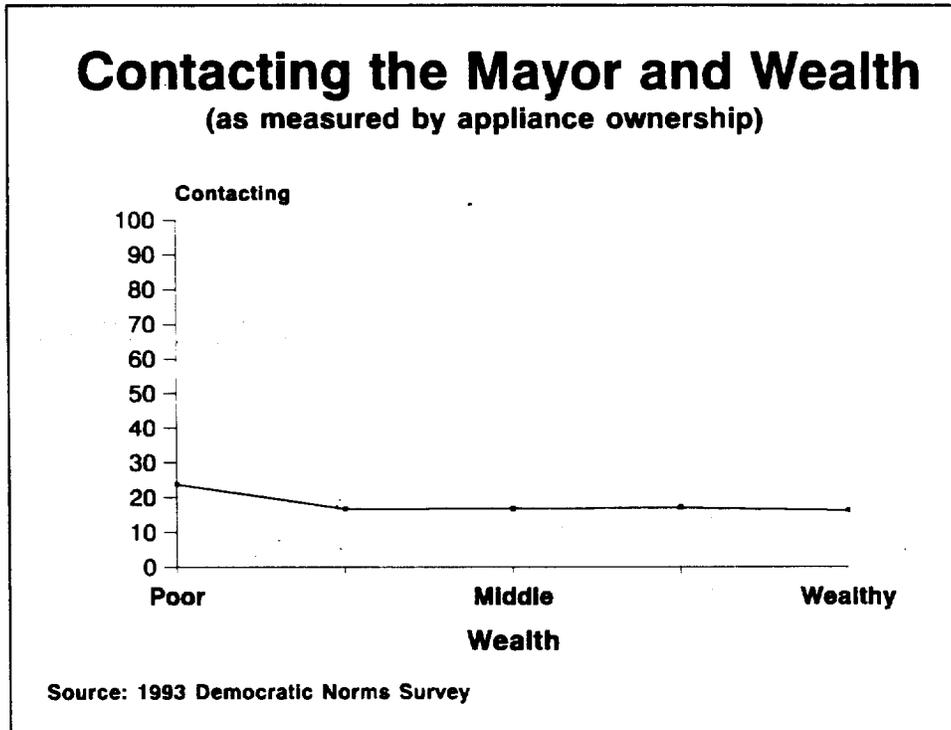


Figure 14

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In Figure VII.12 we see that education has the expected relationship to participation: higher educated respondents are more likely to contact the mayor than less-well educated. We also found that system support is positively and significantly associated with higher levels of contacting of mayors.

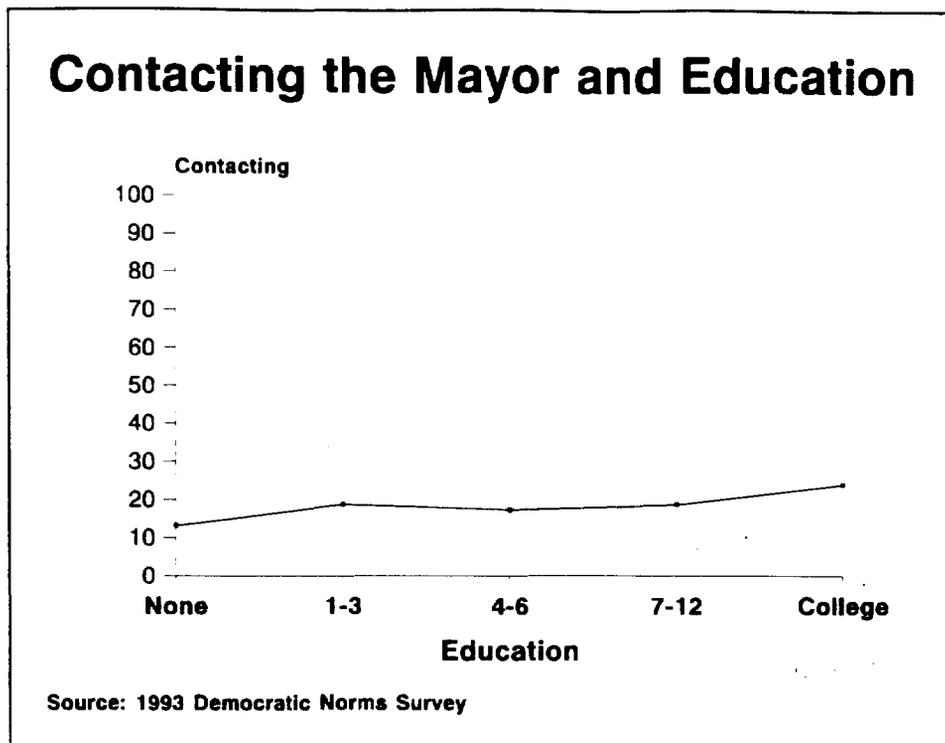


Figure 12

Up until this point in our investigation, rural/urban differences have not made an impact on participation (after we control for other variables such as education), but in contacting the mayor, rural Guatemalans are significantly more active than urban Guatemalans in spite of their lower levels of education (see Figure VII.13).

In light of the above findings, it is not surprising that wealth also turns out to have a negative, significant relationship to contacting of mayors. As we see in Figure VII.14, contacting is highest among the poorest citizens, many of whom live in rural areas. This relationship holds even when education is held constant (in a multiple regression equation).

Finally, we examine the question of ethnicity and contacting the mayor. We found that ethnicity was significantly related to this form of political participation, such that Indians exhibited higher levels of contacting than ladinos. This finding held for each Indian group except K'ekchi (see Figure VII.15).

VIII. Support for Military or Civilian Rule

Comparative Perspectives

We have focused thus far in this report on democratic attitudes. In this chapter we look at the flip side of the equation, support for military rule. It is important to do so since not all individuals who are supportive of democratic liberties are completely hostile to the idea of military rule. Similarly, not all who express little or no support for democratic norms would be supportive of a military take over.

We begin this analysis by first examining direct support for a military coup. We then follow that exploration with a more detailed look at the policy in which citizens of Central America feel more or less comfortable with military rule. In this analysis we exclude Costa Rica which has not had experience with military rule in over 40 years. In that nation, therefore, there are large components of the population for whom questions about military rule would not be very meaningful.

In Figure VIII.1 below we see the responses to the question: "Do you think there is any reason that would justify a coup d'etat that would interrupt the

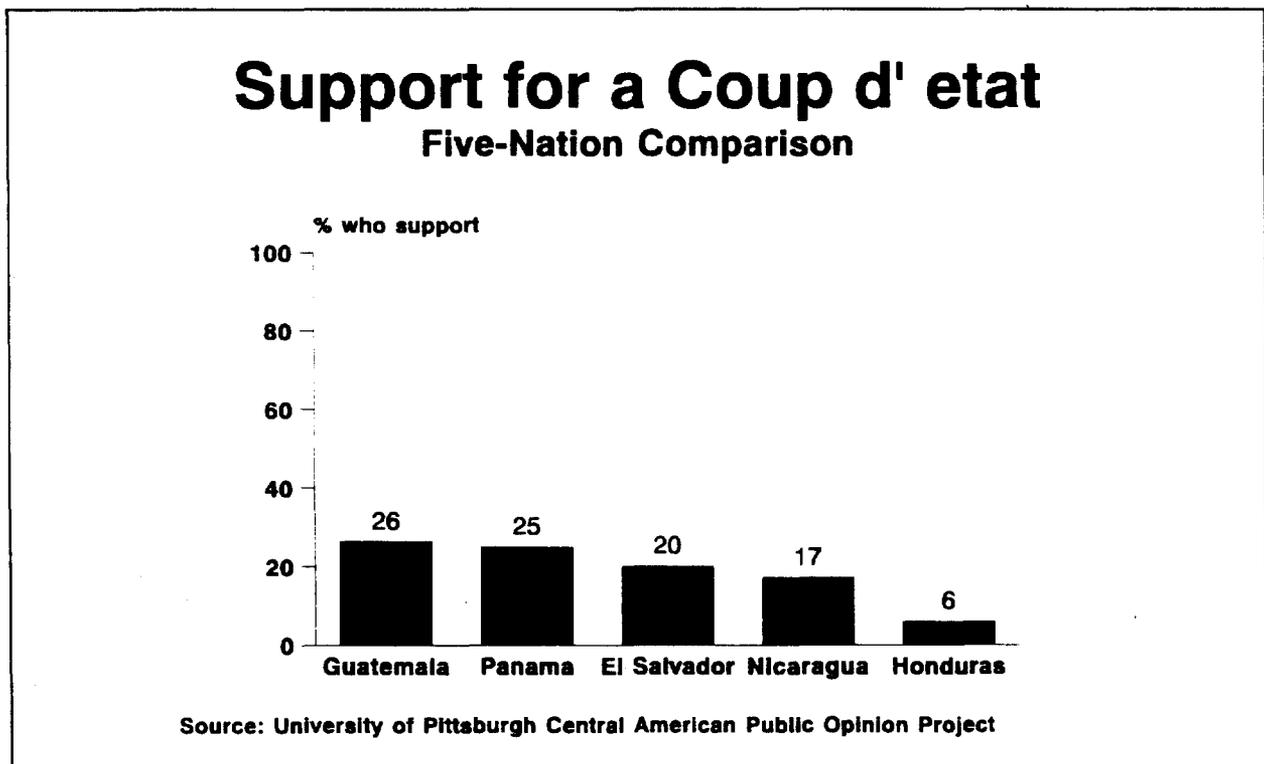


Figure 1

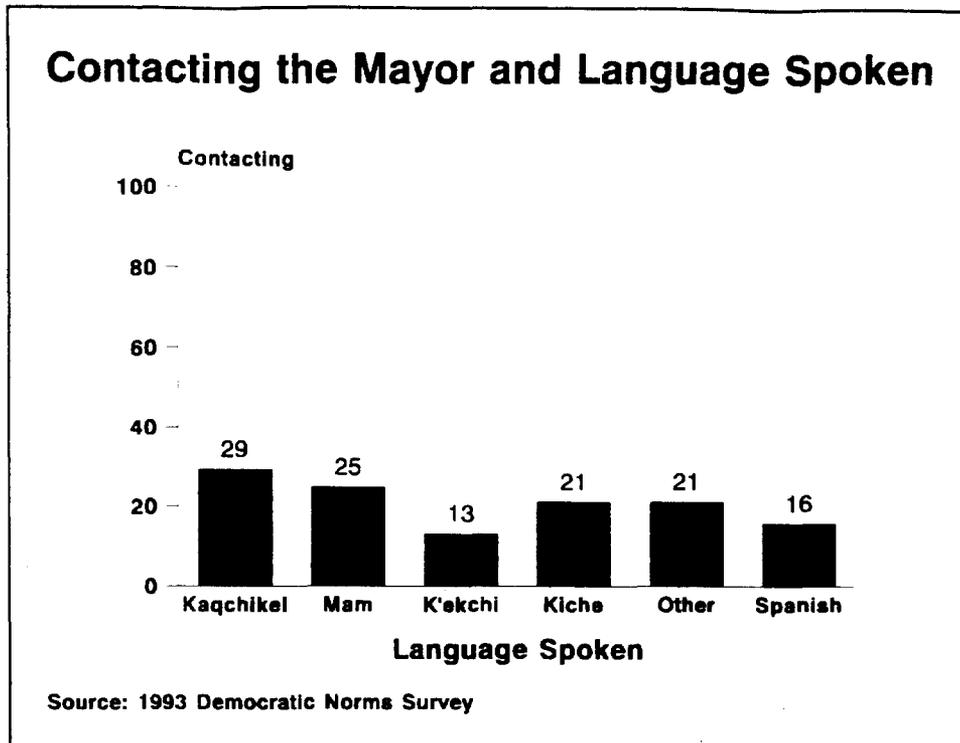


Figure 15

We conclude this exploration of contacting public officials as a form of political participation by noting that the results indicate that there are significant opportunities for stimulating democracy at the local level in Guatemala. We have found that among the poor in rural Guatemala, contacting is greater than among the urban and better off. We have also found that Indians are more likely to contact their mayors than ladinos. In El Salvador, USAID is attempting to stimulate local participation through the Municipalities in Action program. There a study has shown that such a program appears to offer numerous possibilities for stimulating the development of democracy.¹¹

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¹¹Mitchell A. Seligson and Ricardo Córdova Macías, "Considerations for Increasing Participation in Local Democratic Government in El Salvador," report to USAID, July, 1993, typescript.

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TABLE 1
COUNTRY

	Guatemala		Honduras		El Salvador		Nicaragua		Panama	
	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)
Reduce crime										
Hurts	47.4%	144	53.2%	301	69.7%	634	69.1%	357	62.0%	310
Helps	42.1%	128	44.7%	253	27.5%	250	18.6%	96	35.6%	178
DK	10.5%	32	2.1%	12	2.9%	26	12.4%	64	2.4%	12
TOTAL	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Halt Student Strikes										
Hurts	61.2%	186	64.8%	367	65.9%	600	70.2%	363	67.0%	335
Helps	22.7%	69	32.0%	181	30.4%	277	16.6%	86	30.2%	151
DK	16.1%	49	3.2%	18	3.6%	33	13.2%	68	2.8%	14
TOTAL	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Put a halt to guerrillas										
Hurts	44.7%	136	54.9%	311	68.7%	625	66.5%	344	52.2%	261
Helps	40.1%	122	38.0%	215	27.5%	250	19.5%	101	39.6%	198
DK	15.1%	46	7.1%	40	3.8%	35	13.9%	72	8.2%	41
TOTAL	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Prevent takeovers of public buildings by revolutionary groups										
Hurts	50.3%	153	58.5%	331	52.1%	474	64.6%	334	55.2%	276
Helps	28.6%	87	34.8%	197	44.6%	406	21.1%	109	37.2%	186
DK	21.1%	64	6.7%	38	3.3%	30	14.3%	74	7.6%	38
TOTAL	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Remove political extremists from public office										
Hurts	46.7%	142	76.5%	433	47.0%	428	58.8%	304	63.2%	316
Helps	27.0%	82	14.8%	84	45.6%	415	25.1%	130	28.6%	143
DK	26.3%	80	8.7%	49	7.4%	67	16.1%	83	8.2%	41
TOTAL	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Stop strikes of unionized workers										
Hurts	54.6%	166	63.4%	359	57.7%	525	65.2%	337	69.4%	347
Helps	22.4%	68	32.7%	185	37.9%	345	20.9%	108	27.2%	136
DK	23.0%	70	3.9%	22	4.4%	40	13.9%	72	3.4%	17
TOTAL	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Stop lock-out strikes of businesses										
Hurts	56.3%	171	68.6%	388	59.8%	544	67.5%	349	70.0%	350
Helps	21.4%	65	24.7%	140	35.8%	326	18.0%	93	24.6%	123
DK	22.4%	68	6.7%	38	4.4%	40	14.5%	75	5.4%	27
TOTAL	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500

democratic process that our country has been experiencing?" The question was phrased in such a way so that it would likely elicit a positive response only from hard-core supporters of military rule. As can be seen, Guatemala scored higher than any other country, although Panama was nearly as high. At the other extreme was Honduras, in which only a tiny fraction of the population would support a coup. In short, over one-quarter of residents of Guatemala City in 1992 supported military intervention in politics.

We asked a series of eleven distinct items to our Central American sample in an effort to determine in which areas citizens believed that military governments had done a good job. In each area we asked, "From what you know about military governments in this country, do you think that they have helped or hurt...." Table VIII.1 below contains the results. The strongest support for military rule in Guatemala is expressed on the item measuring their ability to stop crime, followed by their ability to stop guerrillas. A similar response on crime is found in Honduras, but in El Salvador the advantage of military rule is seen more in terms of revolutionaries. The weakest support for the efficacy of military rule in Guatemala is on the economic development questions, including unemployment and inflation.

TABLE 1
COUNTRY

	Guatemala		Honduras		El Salvador		Nicaragua		Panama	
	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)
Economic development										
Hurts	60.5%	184	74.0%	419	74.2%	675	63.8%	330	73.8%	369
Helps	22.4%	68	22.6%	128	22.2%	202	23.2%	120	23.8%	119
DK	17.1%	52	3.4%	19	3.6%	33	13.0%	67	2.4%	12
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Reduce Unemployment										
Hurts	64.1%	195	66.6%	377	81.2%	739	65.6%	339	70.8%	354
Helps	20.1%	61	30.0%	170	16.0%	146	21.9%	113	27.0%	135
DK	15.8%	48	3.4%	19	2.7%	25	12.6%	65	2.2%	11
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Reduce Inflation										
Hurts	63.5%	193	71.9%	407	83.8%	763	62.5%	323	80.2%	401
Helps	19.1%	58	24.4%	138	13.0%	118	24.4%	126	16.2%	81
DK	17.4%	53	3.7%	21	3.2%	29	13.2%	68	3.6%	18
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500
Make better laws										
Hurts	52.6%	160	72.3%	409	65.8%	599	66.2%	342	75.4%	377
Helps	32.6%	99	23.9%	135	30.0%	273	19.5%	101	22.6%	113
DK	14.8%	45	3.9%	22	4.2%	38	14.3%	74	2.0%	10
TOTAL . . .	100.0%	304	100.0%	566	100.0%	910	100.0%	517	100.0%	500

Efficacy of Elected versus Military Rule

We used a series of items similar to the ones shown above for the Central America survey to measure the extent to which Guatemalans believed that military rule is more or less efficacious than elected, civilian rule. The question we asked was: "I am going to read to you a list of problems that we have in the country, so that you can tell me who can solve them better; a civilian government elected by the people or a military government imposed by force." For the sample as a whole, the results appear in Table VIII.2.

As can be seen in the table, most of the items have a narrow range of response; about 10-15 percent of Guatemalans support military rule over civilian rule. Only on the items of controlling political violence and crime, does the proportion of those who support military over civilian rule increase notably.

What is especially noteworthy in these responses is the relatively high proportion of responses that supported the view that neither military nor civilian governments would be effective at dealing with the problems mentioned. On the items concerning political violence, poverty, foreign debt, immorality, inflation, crime and corruption, more Guatemalans opted for the "neither" response than either the military or the civilians. We interpret these results as an indicator of deep alienation. This makes us wonder how strongly civilian government will be supported in Guatemala. Quite clearly, civilian government would need to demonstrate its ability to deal with these important issues to begin to build a favorable consensus regarding the democratic political process.

We next sought to determine the factors that are associated with support for military rule. To do this we formed an overall scale of support for military rule.¹ We find that system support is positively associated with support for military rule, as is shown in Figure VIII.3 below. This might come as a surprise to some, but if the discussion of system support presented earlier in this report is recalled, it will become clear that support for the system does not necessarily imply support for a democratic system. The relationship between the two variables is not particularly strong, however, as is indicated by the very gentle slope of the line in the figure.

¹The nine items had an Alpha reliability coefficient of .85. In order to focus exclusively on those who believe that the military is more efficacious than civilian government, we recoded the items so as to assign one point if the respondent preferred the military option, and zero points if he/she did not. The items were then summed and transformed into a 0-100 range.

Intra-national Comparisons in Guatemala

Support for a Coup

In Guatemala in the 1993 survey we changed somewhat the overall item regarding support for a coup. We asked: "Do you think that sometimes there could be a sufficient reason for the military to take over the government by force, or do you think that there never is sufficient reason for that?" Support for a coup was much higher than in 1992. We cannot say if this increase was because of that changed wording or because of the political atmosphere prevailing on the eve of the Serrano coup. For the country as a whole, the results are presented in Figure VIII.2 below. As can be seen, a plurality opposes a coup, but over one-third support it. If one discounts the non-responses, then support for a coup totals 44 percent of the population. An exploration of the predictors of attitudes toward a coup did not produce any significant relationships (in a multiple regression equation), and hence in order to determine more fully the factors that are related to support for military rule, we turn to our more specific measures.

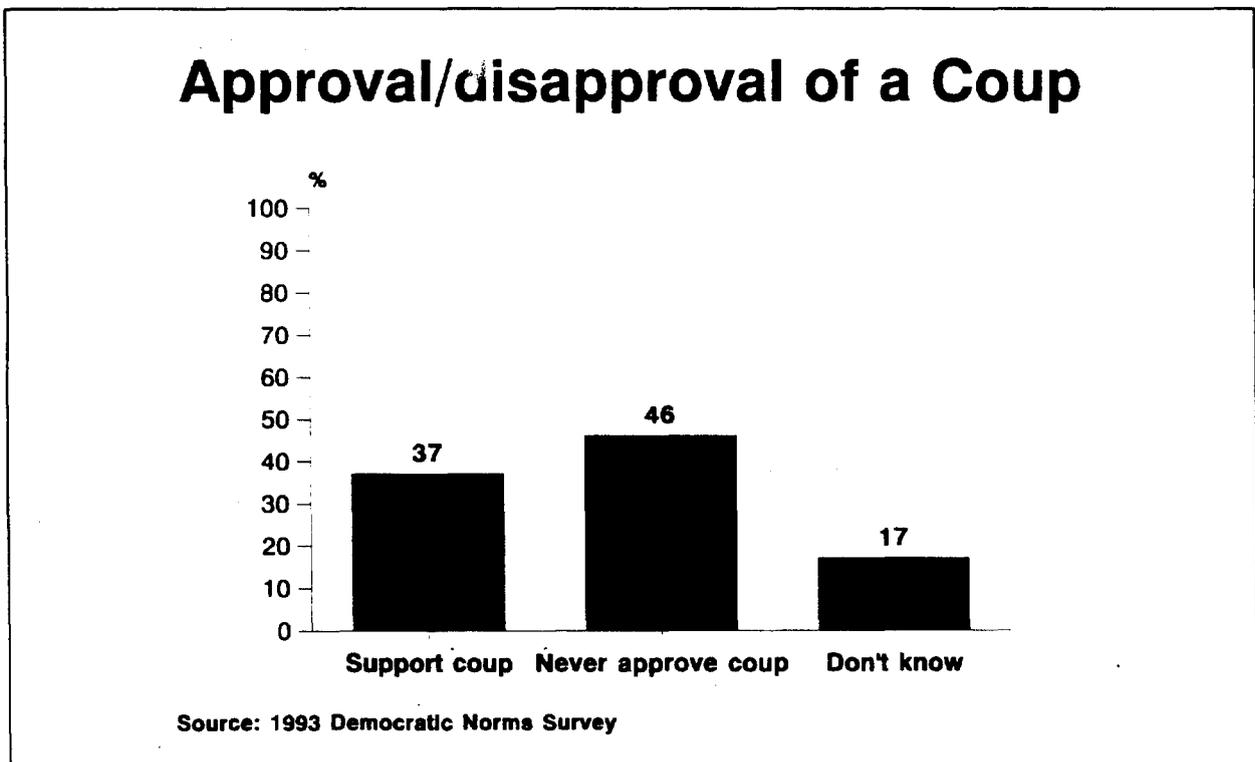


Figure 2

Immorality

Elected	
%.....	27.8%
Military	
%.....	11.3%
Neither	
%.....	45.2%
DK	
%.....	15.7%

Inflation

Elected	
%.....	36.2%
Military	
%.....	10.4%
Neither	
%.....	39.3%
DK	
%.....	14.0%

Crime

Elected	
%.....	29.2%
Military	
%.....	23.1%
Neither	
%.....	35.3%
DK	
%.....	12.4%

Corruption

Elected	
%.....	24.2%
Military	
%.....	13.7%
Neither	
%.....	47.1%
DK	
%.....	15.0%

Table VIII.2. Efficacy of Civilian versus Military Rule

<u>Unemployment</u>	
Elected	
%.....	47.5%
Military	
%.....	10.9%
Neither	
%.....	29.4%
DK	
%.....	12.2%
<u>Abuses of workers and peasants</u>	
Elected	
%.....	41.2%
Military	
%.....	13.3%
Neither	
%.....	32.4%
DK	
%.....	13.2%
<u>Political violence</u>	
Elected	
%.....	32.9%
Military	
%.....	18.1%
Neither	
%.....	34.7%
DK	
%.....	14.2%
<u>Poverty</u>	
Elected	
%.....	34.3%
Military	
%.....	8.3%
Neither	
%.....	43.6%
DK	
%.....	13.8%
<u>Foreign debts</u>	
Elected	
%.....	36.7%
Military	
%.....	9.0%
Neither	
%.....	39.0%
DK	
%.....	15.4%

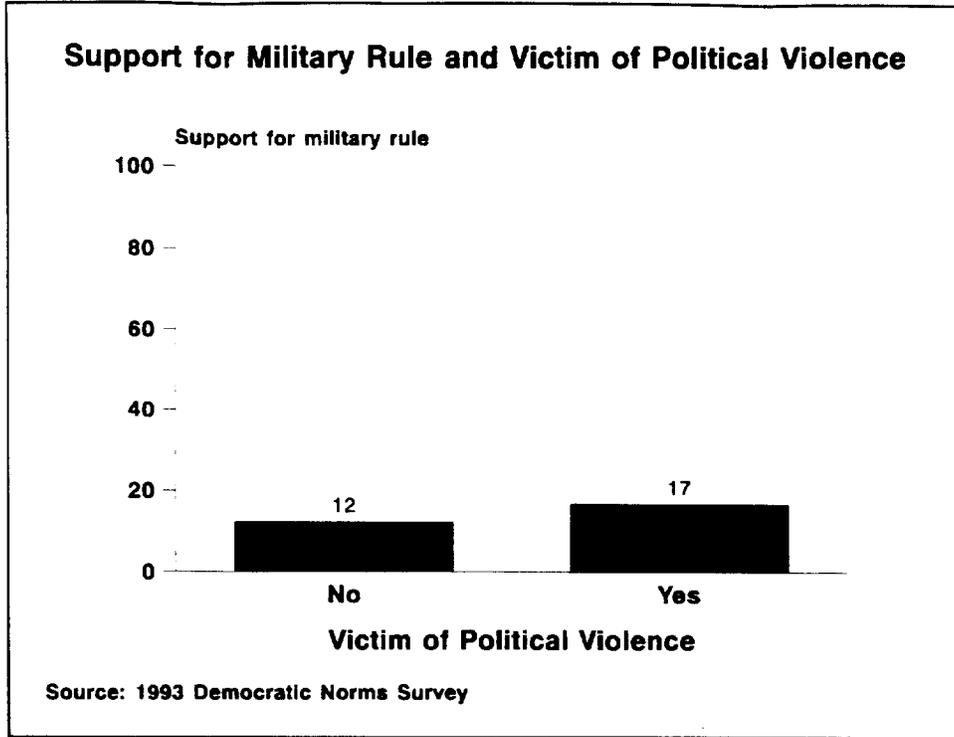


Figure 4

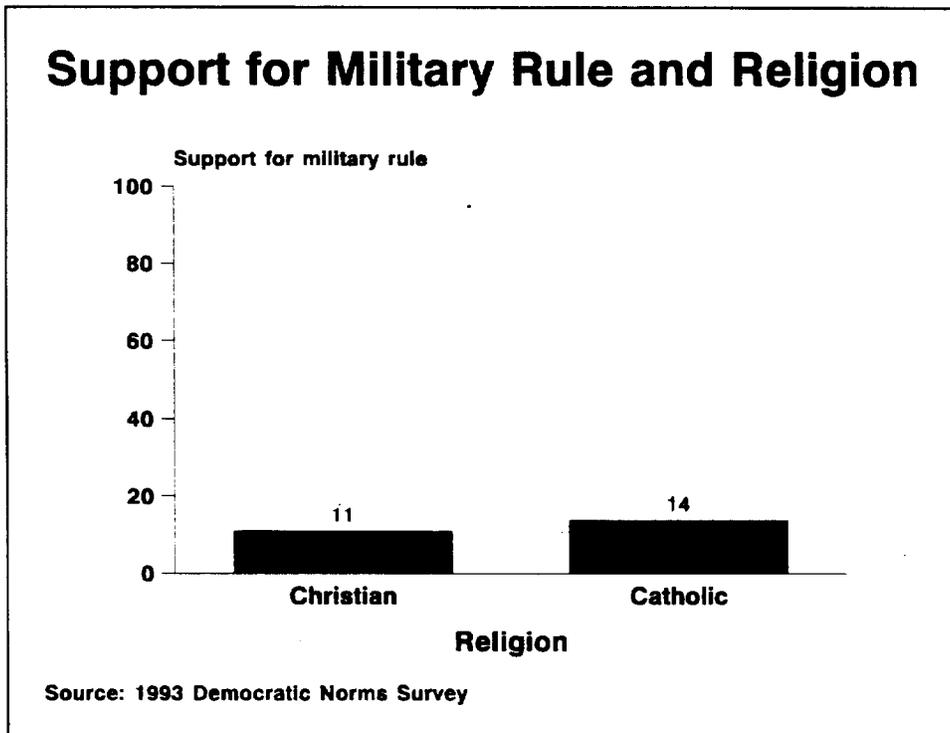


Figure 5

12

A second variable related to support for military rule is whether or not the respondent or member of the respondent's family has suffered from political violence. As we see in Figure VIII.4 below, those who have so suffered are more supportive of the military than those who have not. Once again this finding might surprise some readers. But recall that military rule is seen by Guatemalans as being more effective in controlling violence, both political and criminal. As a result, those who have suffered from such violence might be more supportive of military rule unless, of course, they blame the military for the violence in the first place. No doubt some of the victims of military violence do indeed blame the military, but the majoritarian tendency in the sample was to side with the military.

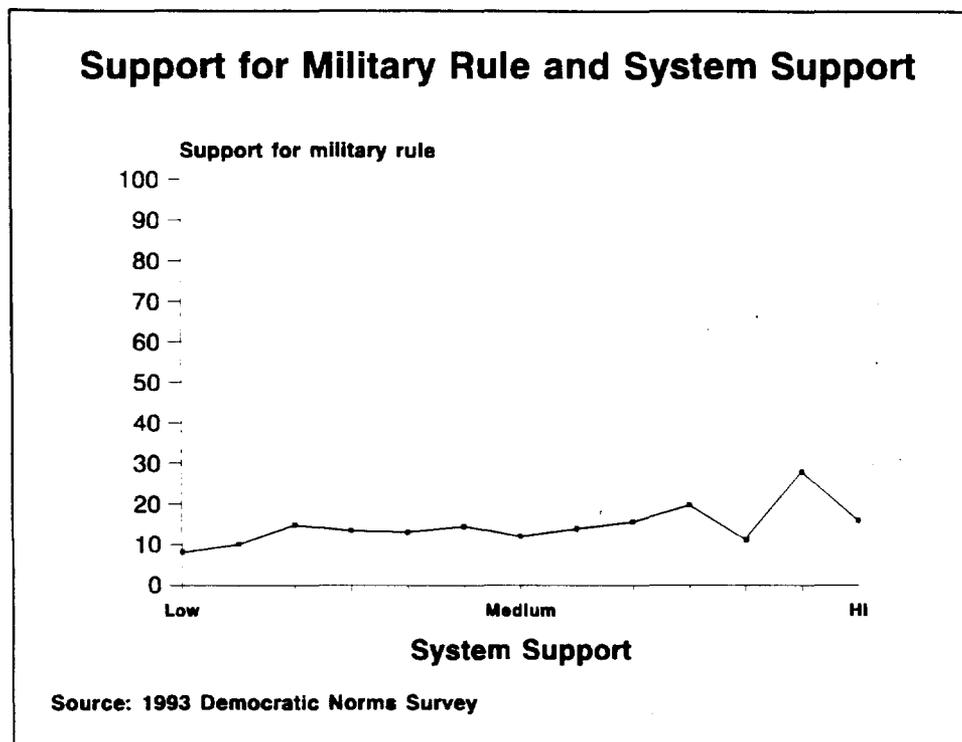


Figure 3

The final item that produced a significant relationship with support for military rule was religion. As shown in Figure VIII.5, Catholics were more supportive than Protestants. Catholics are more likely to represent a more traditional set of attitudes than Protestants in the Guatemalan context. This may be part of the explanation for the difference.

Even though there were no other variables (in the multiple regression equation) that proved to have a significant relationship with support for military rule, we did find that wealth was nearly significant, and when looked at in the bi-variate situation, was significant (.02). Figure VIII.6 shows that poorer Guatemalans expressed higher support for military rule than the wealthier.

IX. CONCLUSIONS

We have examined the results of two sets of national surveys, a cross-national study of attitudes toward the political process in principal (most often capital) cities in the six countries in Central America undertaken in 1992, and a national (urban and rural) study of the same basic set of attitudes for Guatemala undertaken in 1993. We have used the former survey to provide a basis for cross national comparisons in order to better understand the results of the latter survey. In this chapter, we shall present the conclusions drawn from the analysis of these two surveys. Based on these conclusions, we shall make suggestions regarding programmatic implications for the strengthening of democratic institutions in Guatemala.

We need to begin this analysis by noting that in historical terms, Guatemala has only a very limited experience with democracy. Except for two brief periods, 1944-1954, and 1984 to the present, Guatemala's politics has been dominated by the military, governing by the use of authoritarian means, although sometimes disguised in democratic forms, for example, the use of fraudulent elections to legitimate their rule. In this respect, there is little on which to base the development of a democratic set of political beliefs. In turn, this means that any efforts to build democracy needs to directly address the issues of generating an appropriate value structure at the same time as it addresses the strengthening of democratic institutions.

System Support

The first important set of attitudes are those regarding system support, defined as the legitimacy accorded by respondents to the political system in general and its component institutions. Attitudes covered under this rubric include the overall acceptance and support of the system of government, acceptance and support of political institutions such as the legislature, the courts, the military and the principal agents for the protection of citizens' rights. System support is the attitudinal underpinning of a stable political order, one able to manage conflict within the confines of its political institutions. Reviewing the principal conclusions on this set of variables, drawn from the two surveys, we may note the following:

- o Guatemala sat in the middle for most elements of system support when compared with other countries in Central America (1992 survey)
- o Examining system support in the 1993 survey, the highest support on an institution by institution basis was expressed for the human rights procurator, the lowest for congress and the political parties. At a conceptual level, respondents expressed an almost universal patriotic pride as Guatemalans, but felt that their political system did not defend human rights;
- o Taking a set of questions to determine an overall score for system support, the mean was 40, indicating support that was only "lukewarm"

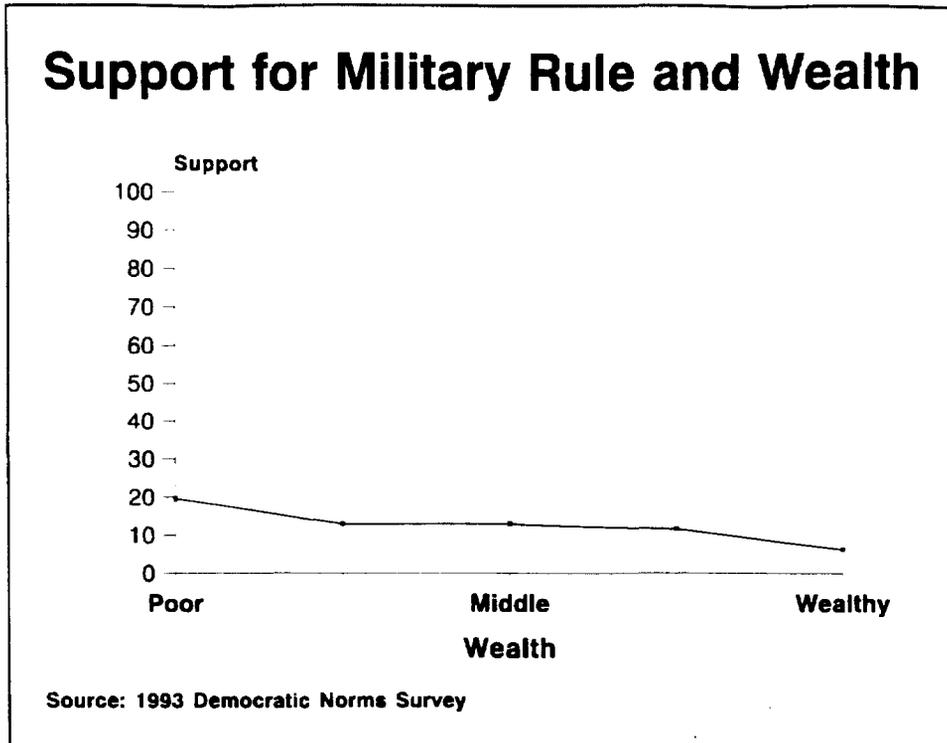


Figure 6

modes of participation (legal demonstrations, communal decision-making and election campaigns);

- o The majority of Guatemalans in the 1993 survey are more concerned about the protection of their own liberties than they are about the rights of other Guatemalans to express their dissent;
- o Looking at an index of democratic liberties, males are more likely than females to support democratic liberties;
- o Higher levels of education are associated with higher levels of support for democratic liberties;
- o Indigenous peoples express higher support for democratic liberties than do ladinos, above all with respect to the right to dissent.
- o Examining this variable more closely, K'iche' are more likely to express support for democratic liberties than other groups, looking at the data from the broad national sample. Looking at the data from the special sample of indigenous peoples, both Mam and K'iche' score higher on their support of democratic liberties than do other indigenous groups;
- o Indigenous peoples, especially the K'iche,' are less likely to be supportive of the Guatemalan political system while at the same time being more supportive of democratic liberties, above all the right to dissent;
- o Education was the strongest predictor of increasing support for democratic liberties. Higher education is associated with higher levels of support for democratic liberties. Gender was second with women lower than men in their support of democratic liberties. Ethnicity, defined in terms of use of Indian garb, was the next best predictor of democratic liberties and being a K'iche' increased the likelihood of support of democratic liberties. We need to note that we have undertaken an additional survey of speakers of the four major indigenous language groups, K'iche', Mam, Kaqchikel and Q'ekchi. Analysis of this data set will provide additional insights into the relationship between ethnicity and political values.

In summary, Guatemalans as whole demonstrate low levels of support in comparison to elsewhere in Central America for democratic attitudes regarding both the right to participate and the right to dissent. They are more concerned about their individual range of political action than the rights of other Guatemalans. Education was the strongest predictor of higher levels of support of democratic liberties, suggesting that education may serve as a route for the formation of such beliefs.

toward political institutions and the political system as a whole;

- o Higher levels of education are associated with lower levels of system support. Guatemala City is associated with lower levels of system support, probably as a function of higher educational levels;
- o System support is highest among the poorest segments of the population, lowest among the wealthier segments;
- o The indigenous population (as measured by form of dress) expresses lower system support than the ladino population, despite the fact that lower education is associated with higher system support;
- o Measuring indigenosity by language spoken, only K'iche speakers stand out as having dramatically lower system support than other indigenous peoples and than ladinos;
- o Examining the relative strength of various factors in explaining system support, the single most important factor is ethnicity, followed by wealth and trailed by education.

To sum up our findings regarding system support, Guatemalans demonstrate only a modest level of support for their system of government. The most important elements that are associated with system support are the ethnic background, wealth and education of the respondents. K'iche' speakers are the least likely to support the political system. The poorest and the most educated are also likely to be the least supportive of the political system.

Support For Democratic Liberties

System support, that is to say, support for a stable political order, does not guarantee democracy. Loyalty to the system may very well serve to bind individuals to an authoritarian order as well as it can bind individuals to the support of a democratic order. We have look at an additional set of values that focus on the acceptance of democracy within the context of a stable political order. Support for democracy can be couched in terms of belief in a system of widespread political participation (extensive cultures) and/or support for the right of minority dissent (inclusive cultures). Both elements are necessary for a full-fledged democratic order, one that assures the maximum liberty to participate in the making of rational and effective choice and one that tolerates a full range of democratic dissent. Among the respondents in the surveys, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding their views of both the exclusive and inclusive as aspects of democratic culture:

- o Guatemalans in comparison with other Central American countries (1992 survey) have little tolerance for the right to dissent and for conventional

democratic principals. Democracy, in essence, is a system to contain political violence and channel dispute resolution in to peaceful channels, within the context of the freedom to express and tolerate dissident viewpoints. Violence, as we noted in Chapter II, has been a hallmark of Guatemalan history. Repression has been a tool of authoritarian regimes throughout Guatemala's political history. Violence has been a tool as well for political change. The future of Guatemalan democracy must include the ability to limit and control violence and to open up the possibility of peaceful expression of alternative viewpoints. The attitudes of the Guatemalans surveyed regarding political resulted in the following observations and conclusions:

- o Around 17% of those interviewed report being victims of what can be defined as political violence;
- o Higher levels of education are associated with a greater likelihood of being a victim of political violence;
- o The vast majority of Guatemalans believe that they live in a society with a high level of political violence (1992 study);
- o The three most commonly cited causes of political violence are inequality of land distribution, followed by the gap between rich and poor and lastly by the differences between indigenous peoples and ladinos;
- o The higher the educational level the more likely that an individual will feel that the income gap is a cause of political violence;
- o Higher levels of support for democratic liberties are found among those who believe that political violence has social causes. Conversely, lower levels of system support are found among those who believe that political violence has social causes;
- o The greater one believes in the ability of the police, the army and the courts to defend the right to life in Guatemala, the greater support for the system one has, but the lower the support for democratic liberties. Stated in other terms, faith in the police, the army and the courts goes with support for the political system. A lack of faith in these institutions goes with support for basic democratic liberties. (These institutions are seen largely as agents of repression and not as agents to protect citizens' rights.);
- o Surprisingly high levels of Guatemalans (from 13-22%) support violent political measures such as land seizures, building takeovers and coups. The greatest support level is for coups (22%);
- o Takeovers of land and buildings are more likely to be supported by the

The Interrelationship of System Support and Democratic Norms

The prospective for democratic development is a function of the relationship between support of the overall political system and the support for democratic participation and democratic liberties. We have examined each of sets of attitudes separately. Combining these attitudes by means of a typology, we can identify four different regime types: stable democracies, unstable democracies, oligarchic regimes and democratic breakdown regimes. This typology begins with the assumption that regimes being analyzed are all at least formally democratic, having, at a minimum, competitive regular elections with widespread political participation. As is clear from the historical context, Guatemala is a recent arrival to the category of a formal democratic order (the last eight years). In the context of this typology, looking at the distribution of attitudes among respondents in the 1992 and 1993 surveys, we have drawn the following conclusions:

Looking in comparative perspective (based on the 1992 survey):

- o Guatemala is the Central American country with the lowest proportion of its citizens supporting stable democracy;
- o Guatemala is the Central American country with the highest proportion of its citizens whose attitudes support "democratic breakdown";
- o Guatemala is the country with the fewest individuals who support democracy overall (are in either the stable or unstable democracy cells).

Looking at the 1993 data:

- o The most important difference in the distribution of overall attitudes toward democracy is according to ethnicity: Indigenous peoples have twice as high a proportion of their respondents in the stable democratic cell as do ladinos. (K'iche' are to be found in the unstable democratic cell because of their low level of system support);
- o With the exception of the K'iche' the largest concentration of Guatemalans are in the democratic breakdown cell.

Guatemala's democracy, drawing out the implications of this analysis, is set on an extremely weak attitudinal base. The events in May suggest that mobilization in support of democracy is possible, under certain circumstances. However, it is clear that the attitudinal base needs to be strengthened to make such crises less likely in the future.

Political Violence In Guatemala

Violent solutions to political disagreements represent the breakdown of

poor and less well educated;

- o A large majority of those interviewed opposed the use of state violence as a means to stop political violence;
- o Only a slim majority supported democracy over the use of the 'mano dura'.
- o The higher the educational level the more likely that the individual will oppose state violence and oppose the mano dura;
- o The younger a respondent is, the more likely to oppose state violence and chose democratic participation over the mano dura;
- o System support is related to more support for state violence and the mano dura, while support for democratic liberties is associated with more opposition to state violence and more support for democracy over the mano dura.

The conclusions reached regarding this data suggest two broad areas of concern. One area relates to the means of preserving public order. Reflecting historical patterns, the police, the military and the courts, who in a democracy represent forces of order who can assure the peaceful resolution of conflict, are viewed as agents of state violence and repression. The other area of concern is the degree to which Guatemalans accept the notion of the use of force, and above all the maximum force expressed in a coup, as appropriate means of effecting political change.

In a more positive vein, a high portion of those interviewed do not endorse state violence as the means to controlling political violence. Perhaps the failure of military action to win a victory over the guerrillas may condition this set of responses.

Conventional Political Participation

The forms of political participation most closely associated with stable democracy are such activities as voting, petitioning officials either informally or formally, and organizing at the community level or through interest groups to promote a specific set of policies. Our data allow us to draw the following conclusions regarding these forms of participation:

From the 1992 survey:

- o Guatemala demonstrates a high level of community participation, second highest in the region;

- o With respect to respondent involvement in community problem solving, Guatemala ranks in the middle;
- o Guatemala ranks in the middle among the countries in the region on the levels of contacting public officials;
- o Guatemala has the second lowest voting turnout rate of all countries in the region;

From the 1993 Survey

- o Communal participation was related only to levels of system support and religiosity. Higher levels of communal participation were associated with higher levels of system support; The more frequently respondents attended church, the higher their communal participation;
- o Participation in occupation-related groups is related to education, gender and ethnicity. Males are more likely to participate than females. Better educated individuals are more likely to participate than lesser educated individuals. Ladinos are more likely to participate than indigenous peoples except in the case of cooperatives;
- o Contacting the mayor (as opposed to other levels of government) was the most common form of communication with public officials. Higher educated respondents are more likely to contact the mayors. Rural Guatemalans are also more likely to do so than urban Guatemalans. Indigenous peoples are more likely to contact their mayors than ladinos;
- o There are significant opportunities for stimulating democracy at the local level.

In sum, the Guatemalans in our study whether they are in urban or rural areas are most comfortable with participating at the community level. Formally, the current Constitution encourages that sort of participation. What may be needed is an expansion of the opportunities and the skills to undertake such participation.

Support for Military or Civilian Rule

We have examined the role of state violence in preserving an existing political order. We have also examined the overall possibilities for the maintenance or breakdown of the Guatemalan democratic order. Finally, we need to turn to the option, always present in Guatemalan history, between military and civilian control of the political order. Our data allow us to reach the following conclusions regarding the choice between military or civilian control of government and the political process:

From the 1992 Survey: