

P R E F A C E

METHODOLOGICALLY, this study of the Chilean Senate employs theoretical approaches originally developed by Richard F. Fenno, Jr., John F. Manley, and John Wahlke and his associates to understand and explain the U.S. House Appropriations Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee, and four state legislatures, respectively.¹ Accordingly, several of their questions were translated word for word and incorporated in an overall interview schedule including questions originally written by the author to quantify phenomena unique to the Chilean Senate and perhaps to a few other Latin American legislatures (see Appendix B).

Some readers may believe that this methodological approach is inappropriate for the study of Latin American legislatures and reflects an ethnocentric bias that defines a "developed" political system as one that resembles the existing institutional structure of North America or Western Europe.² They would also probably argue with Samuel Huntington that such institutions have no meaning in Latin America, and that "the variations of the North American political system which North Americans would like to reproduce in Latin America are simply too weak, too diffuse, too dispersed to mobilize the political power neces-

¹ Richard F. Fenno, Jr., *The Power of the Purse: Appropriations Politics in Congress*; John F. Manley, "The House Committee on Ways and Means: 1947-1966" (Ph.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 1967); John Wahlke *et al.*, *The Legislative System: Explorations in Legislative Behavior*.

² See, for example, Charles W. Anderson, Fred R. von der Mehden, and Crawford Young, *Issues of Political Development*, p. 7.

sary to bring about fundamental change."³ Although Huntington's conclusions appear appropriate for most of Latin America, readers are reminded that Chile stands out as a deviant case. Politically, Chile compares favorably with many of the developed political systems of Western Europe⁴ and, on one recent index, ranked ahead of the United States.⁵

As far as Latin American legislatures are concerned, Huntington may be correct to conclude that they "are dominated by landlords" and that a "basic incompatibility exists between parliaments and land reform." It is significant to note, however, that the Chilean Congress is one of the few legislative systems in the developing world that passed a land reform law in the 1960's, as well as other important legislation. Furthermore, although it may be true that "legislatures are more conservative than executives,"⁶ a balanced appraisal of Chile's recent history does not produce such clear-cut conclusions.

It is my contention that, although the methodological approaches used to analyze and understand the North American polity may be irrelevant to most of Latin America, they are relevant to Chile. Just as the U.S. model is a rarity as a political system on the world scene, so is the Chilean political system, which is patterned after it. Similarly, although a Tudor polity may be incompatible with most of Latin America, it may well be compatible with the Chilean society at its relatively advanced stage of political and cultural development and its transitional stage of economic development.

Accordingly, methodological approaches used to analyze and understand the U.S. Congress may be irrelevant in a study of most Latin American legislatures, but they appear to be productive techniques in

³ Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, p. 136.

⁴ William Flanigan and Edwin Fogleman, "Patterns of Political Development and Democratization: A Quantitative Analysis" (Paper delivered at the 1967 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, September 5-9, 1967), fig. 6 between pp. 13 and 14.

⁵ Robert A. Dahl, "The Evaluation of Political Systems," in *Contemporary Political Science: Toward Empirical Theory*, ed. Ithiel de Sola Pool, p. 173.

⁶ Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, pp. 358, 388.

the study of the Chilean Senate. It would be inappropriate to apply these techniques in a study of most Latin American legislatures; it would be just as inappropriate *not* to apply them in a study of the Chilean Senate.

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