

No reelection. Neither the president, governors, senators, nor state or federal deputies could seek reelection to the same post. This effectively reinforced the "temporary monarch" phenomenon of Mexican *sexenios*: each six-year term would bring a new president to the fore with his entourage and cause an extensive re-shuffling of politicians and bureaucrats. The rule also hindered elected politicians from developing bases of power separate from that of the president.

A fixed electoral calendar. Regular elections for Congress or the Presidency were upheld on dates set out in the federal or state constitutions. Changes to electoral dates could only be brought about through constitutional amendment and not by arbitrary means.

Party loyalty. To recapitulate, the whole original reason for being of the PRI was to share the economic pie rather than fight over it. In other words, membership had its privileges. But in order to receive benefits, a member had to toe the party line. While a considerable degree of internal dissent was permitted to members, public criticism was not. Party faithful were generously rewarded while perceived traitors were treated severely. A crucial test of party loyalty was enduring the "freezing" that came when a party member fell into disfavour or lost a leadership bid to a more influential opponent. While in the short term he/she might suffer a demotion or career setback, patience and party discipline in the longer term would often be generously rewarded.

High level impunity. High ranking party and government officials were generally "untouchable". Perhaps most importantly, this rule applied to outgoing presidents. Present or past presidents cannot be impeached or prosecuted under the Mexican Constitution. In general, corruption or criminal scandals within the Mexican media have traditionally focused only on those functionaries who have fallen into disrepute with the executive leadership of the PRI-government.

3.3 The Gradual Demise of the System

For many years, Mexico's post-revolutionary formula of one party rule and state-sponsored, inward-oriented growth produced political stability and economic dynamism. However, in many ways the model sowed the seeds of its own demise. The continuous expansion of the public sector generated sizeable new middle classes, eager to make their own imprint on society. At the same time, not all benefitted from Mexico's impressive economic growth. Poverty and increasing urbanization problems accompanied progress. In what was partially a sign of the times, discontent crystallized in the emergence of a student democracy movement during 1968. In October of that year, the movement was silenced by a hail of gunfire at Tlatelolco and subsequent police and military repression. A similar clampdown took place in 1971.