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RELIABLE ELECTORAL ROLL

The National Action Party is doing all it can to achieve new legislation which recognizes the political rights of Mexicans clearly and precisely, as well as the way these rights can be exercised and mechanisms to guarantee them. Given that to every right there is a corresponding obligation, we also emphasize that this legislation should define with clarity and precision, electoral obligations which should be fulfilled by citizens, parties, communication media, associations in general and by the government. The legislation should also define mechanisms which guarantee the fulfillment of obligations and sanctions for those who fail to observe them.

We repeat that it is clear that a good law is naturally followed by obedience; this involves a political will, mainly from the part of the government, which has not existed up to the present. What the states of the Mexican Republic currently experiment in the field of local laws and practices, does not coincide with the explicit purposes of the Federal government.

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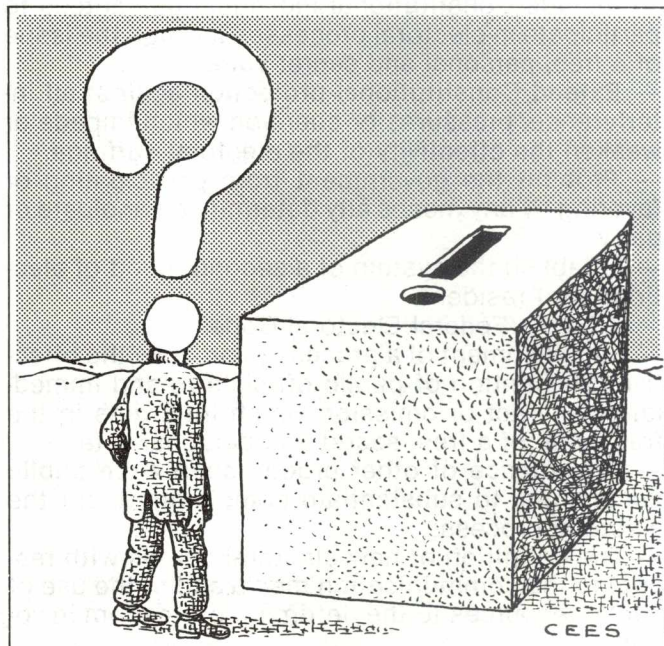
Following the lucid synthesis presented by our colleague Julio Faesler, we state that the starting point should be respect for citizens' political rights by the government and by contending parties and candidates. This means that we want to combat with equal force those who in their actions resist all change, although they apparently ask for change

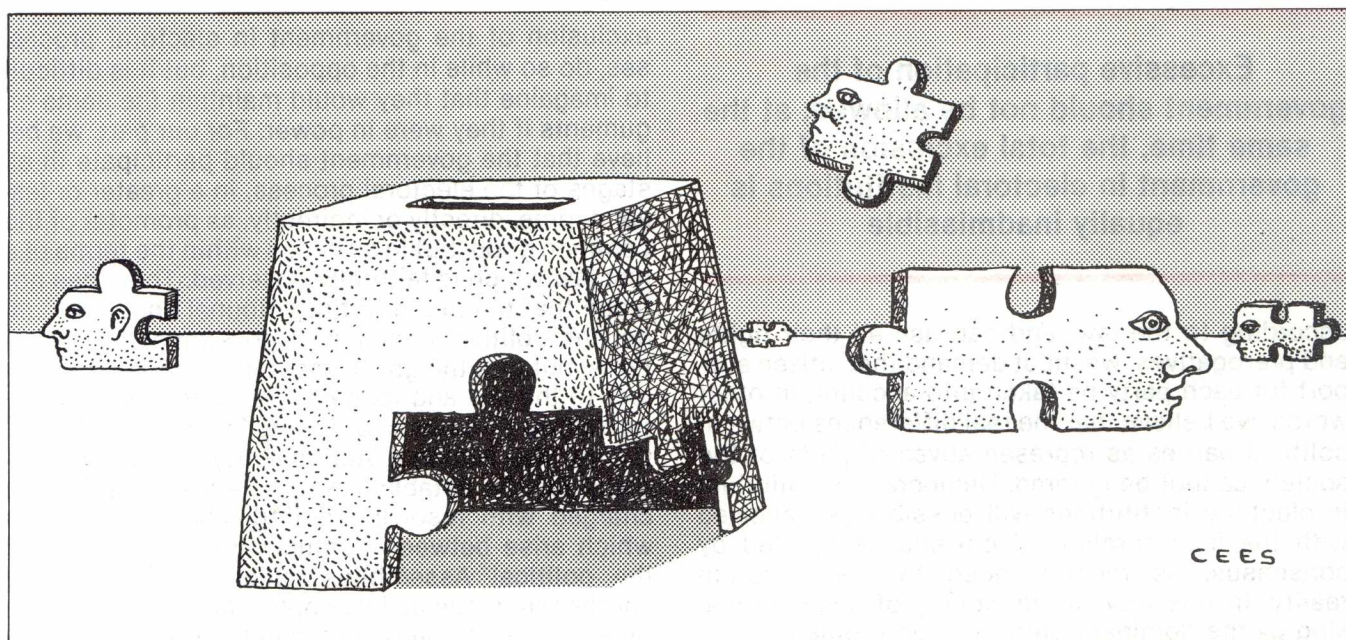
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with words, as well as those who, acting with immoral pragmatism, only see opportunities which might involve advantages. We are searching for agreements which will bring us democratic advances, which will be positive for the society and for all political parties.

According to the law, all citizens are equal, and thus we should act politically in terms of real equality, without threats, pressures or falsehoods which impede or limit the free and secret issue of the vote.





A Permanent Identification Card should be introduced

We reiterate that an indispensable requisite in a real political reform is that every citizen be duly and opportunely informed about national problems, and about possible solutions proposed by candidates and parties. The mass media should not be under the absolute control of the government (be this control obvious or disguised), stating half truths and total lies and obstructing political and cultural communication among Mexicans. The law should provide, with real equity and justice at all times and especially during election campaigns, sufficient space for parties and candidates in the mass media, with rights to response and defence. The same law should demand clarity in the use made of the media by the government and its agencies, with a clear distinction between news and information and editorial opinion. The news should be objective, while opinion is by definition, subjective. Public opinion should be formed with respect for these principles.

One basic point for us is the creation of the Permanent Identification Card, with the photo and signature (perhaps thumb print) of each citizen. This document would have various legal uses, especially in voting; it should be made with the most modern materials and techniques available so that it be durable, impossible to falsify and usable in computers, thus facilitating its use in all kinds of bureaucratic processes and in mechanisms established for checking electoral results.

National Citizens Register

Another basic point in the reform is a National Citizens Register, with the characteristics already proposed in detail by my party and other organizations

and citizens. This Register should include all those—and only those—with the right to vote, and the dead should be allowed to rest in peace. We consider that if political parties and the government do not make a really serious effort to take advantage of modern techniques, we will not advance significantly in the electoral field. While it is true that pencils, erasers and carbon paper are not in themselves instruments of fraud, such primitive elements, in a country with a population and geography like ours, facilitate the dirty work of tricksters. We will lose nothing if we take this aspect seriously, and make provisions in electoral law for all kinds of real and modern advancement.

Referring to electoral institutions, discussion has revolved around the idea that excessive participation of the government should not be allowed; at the same time, the total exclusion of the government in these bodies is equally inadmissible. This first instance is essentially anti-democratic, while the second, apart from being an illusion, is irresponsible. The first produces an unjust disequilibrium; while the second nullifies the government as a promoter of the common good in a vital area: that of democracy. We have to look for adjustments, equilibriums and counter-weights so that government agents participate within clear legal margins, without favoritisms for any candidate or party, so that no party is favored by a law which allows it to decide for itself and by itself on any situation without taking into account the vote of other participants; furthermore, as all parties are equal

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according to the law, and can use all their rights and prerogatives, we must demand that citizen support for each party be taken into account; in other words, we believe that the real differences between political parties as representatives of parts of the society cannot be ignored. Democratic equilibrium in electoral institutions will possibly be achieved with the incorporation of citizens designated by consensus, as recommended by the concrete reality. In this way the monopoly of decision making by the dominant group will be avoided.

In these and other related matters, it is interesting to note that those who most fight for more

exclusion of the government in electoral processes, do so while in the opposition, but it is difficult to imagine that they would maintain the same arguments if they were in power. For our part, we believe that the government should participate in all stages of the electoral process, in a greater or lesser degree, directly or indirectly, as promoter of the common good, but in all cases within the terms of a just law which is faithfully observed. This does not mean that the judge or final tribunal should be under the political decision of governmental institutions, but that the government itself should be subject to the law and respect the decisions made by the relevant tribunals. Speaking in terms of political theory, the National Action Party will fight decidedly for the establishment of electoral tribunals charged with resolving definitively controversies which arise between conflicting parts, instead of the political Assemblies which in one way or another are made up by people who are at the same time judges and participants in their own cause, although they try to justify themselves with sophisms. □