WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE:
PROTEST STRATEGIES AND THE LEFT IN
BRAZIL AND MEXICO*

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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at the impact of Left victory and Left party alliance on the protest behavior of popular movements, based on an original dataset of protest in Mexico City, Brasilia, and São Paulo. I ask, first, whether Left victories reduce levels of protest, and second, whether party alliances constrain protest. My findings suggest that neither hypothesis is systematically correct. Organizations do not protest significantly less against their allies. Nor do Left governments experience less protest in general. Indeed, in two of the three cities analyzed, Left governments experienced more protest than conservative governments, much of it directed by their own political allies. In all three cities, Left party allies protest significantly more regardless of who is in power. These results suggest, first, that the tactical repertoires of movements reflect fairly stable characteristics of movement type, resources, and/or culture, as some sociological work has argued. Indeed, these stable characteristics trump changes in local political opportunity structures as predictors of movement tactics. Second, political opportunity structures do matter, but in inconsistent ways across cases. Therefore, my findings also suggest the potential fruitfulness of further specifying the contextual conditions under which Left victories result in increased or decreased tendencies to protest.

RESUMEN

Este artículo observa el impacto de una victoria de la izquierda y una alianza de partidos de izquierda sobre la protesta de los movimientos populares, con base en datos originales acerca de la protesta en México, DF; Brasilia y São Paulo. Me pregunto, primero, si las victorias de la izquierda reducen los niveles de protesta y, en segundo lugar, si las alianzas partidarias restringen la protesta. Mis hallazgos sugieren que ninguna de estas hipótesis es sistemáticamente correcta. Las organizaciones no protestan sistemáticamente menos contra sus aliados. Tampoco los gobiernos de izquierda experimentan menos protestas en general. Por cierto, en dos de las tres ciudades analizadas los gobiernos de izquierda experimentaron más protestas que los gobiernos conservadores; buena parte de ellas, dirigidas por sus propios aliados políticos. En las tres ciudades, los aliados de los partidos de izquierda protestaron significativamente más independientemente de quién esté en el poder. Estos resultados sugieren, primero, que los repertorios tácticos de los movimientos reflejan características más bien estables del tipo de movimiento, loa recursos y/o la cultura, como sostienen algunos trabajos sociológicos. Ciertamente, estas características estables son mejores predictores de las tácticas de los movimientos que los cambios en las estructuras de oportunidad locales. Segundo, las estructuras de oportunidad política importan, pero por motivos distintos en cada caso. Por tanto, mis hallazgos también sugieren que especificar más precisamente las condiciones contextuales bajo las cuales las victorias de la izquierda resultan en tendencias a la protesta crecientes o decrecientes es potencialmente fructífero.

One who rides a tiger will find it hard to dismount.
—Chinese proverb

Those who foolishly sought power by riding the tiger ended up inside.
—John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Inaugural Address

On October 27, 2002, a man who first came to public notice when he led a major wave of protests against Brazil's authoritarian military regime became its third democratically elected president. Luis Inácio da Silva, more familiarly known as "Lula," ran a campaign that downplayed his radical roots and his connection to some of Brazil's most militant and disruptive popular organizations. Beautifully produced and heart-wringing television ads depicted him as a "man of the people," emphasizing his working-class background, his struggle for education, and his status as an outsider uncontaminated by the stigma of association with Brazil's often corrupt political class. He formed an electoral alliance with a more conservative party, said he had learned moderation, and pledged not to renege on promises made to the IMF (International Monetary Fund)—promises he had strongly criticized in prior campaigns. He tried to be, in the pungent Brazilian expression, "Lula Light."

Yet even as he tried to calm the fears of economic elites and international investors, his popular support and the bulk of his political organization came largely from the same organizations and the same kinds of demands that fueled repeated general strikes, demonstrations, and land seizures throughout 2001 and 2002, organizations affiliated to Lula's own party, the Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*, or PT). Elites expected him to rein in these protests while leaving previous economic agreements intact. His supporters celebrated his victory in the presidential election and vowed to support him as president, but not unconditionally: if he did not or could not stand up for them against the rich and the foreign bankers, they had the capacity and the will to protest and hold him accountable.

What happens when former protesters become the new guardians of order? In particular, from the tiger's point of view, does it make strategic sense to play along with

the rider in hopes of intimidating the riders of lesser beasts? Or as these proverbs imply, should it eat the closest, juiciest prey—the rider on its own back?

This paper looks at the impact of Left victory and Left party alliance on the protest behavior of popular organizations understood broadly—from unions to social movements. In doing so, it isolates two specific features of the political opportunity structure—political party alliances, and periods of control of or exclusion from executive office. I ask, first, whether electoral victories by strong, socially rooted political parties inhibit protest in general. Second, I examine whether electoral victory inhibits protest only for the allies of the party which wins power.

My findings suggest that neither Left electoral victory nor party alliance have systematic effects across different political contexts. Leftist governments may try to limit protest, but movement responses depend less on the strength of their identification with parties than on their own internal characteristics and the larger strategic context in which they operate. Where movements themselves are weaker and where they have few alternative party allies, they are more vulnerable to the conservatizing impact of assuming power.

Second, party alliances—far from constraining protest—seem actually to encourage it across a wide variety of contexts. This is particularly true for Left party alliances, but independent movements also protest significantly less than movements affiliated to more conservative political parties. These effects persist whether or not the Left party is in power.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The complexity of protest makes it difficult to study effectively. The number of variables and levels of analysis that can affect protest generates an extraordinary number of combinations that quickly overwhelms degrees of freedom in individual cases. This general problem is complicated by the fact that information about movements and protest—at best, a semi-legal activity—is harder to come by than information about formal political institutions. And if one wants to look at the intersection between formal political institutions (such as parties) and informal or unconventional activity by social movements, one encounters the further problem that these two vast literatures tend to talk

past each other. Rather, the formal and informal worlds seem rarely to meet—at least, on a theoretical level.

In reality, as some scholarship now acknowledges, "there is only a fuzzy and permeable boundary between institutionalized and noninstitutionalized politics."[1] Many organizations—including political parties—use both conventional institutional channels and unconventional and non-institutional tactics to achieve their goals. The real question is what factors tend to incline them toward one tactic versus another. And this is not easy to determine. The fragmentation of scholarship as well as the general complexity of protest has generated a fairly messy and contradictory set of findings about the impact of parties on protest.

Hypothesis One: Parties Inhibit Protest.

The dominant hypothesis in much of the early literature saw political parties as the major alternatives to protest. In particular, parties with deep roots in civil society, allied to key popular organizations, tend to inhibit protest and stabilize political systems.

One of the first formulations of this view came from scholars working within the modernization theory paradigm. The structural-functionalist view (e.g., Almond 1960) saw the role of parties as reconciling the interests of many different groups through the creation of a program that aggregated and prioritized their demands. By successfully channeling the demands of potential dissenters through institutional channels, providing access to policy making, parties offered a viable alternative to protest. While the absence of protest might have many causes—including the difficulty of organizing collective action, the costs of repression, or an unfavorable government—the *presence* of protest indicated the failure of formal political structures to perform these aggregative and expressive functions.

Huntington (1968) further highlighted parties as the solution to the social dislocations created by the process of modernization in the developing world. Essentially, Huntington saw violence and instability as a consequence of a gap between rapid socioeconomic modernization and slow political modernization. The challenge was constructing political institutions that could absorb the rising participation produced by modernization. Huntington assigned this role principally to parties. Thus, "violence,

rioting and other forms of political instability are more likely to occur in political systems without strong parties than in systems with them."[2]

While this hypothesis has been challenged by recent work, much of the contemporary literature on democratic consolidation implicitly or explicitly makes very similar arguments about the effects of a well-institutionalized and socially rooted party system on protest and democracy-threatening "disorder:" that such parties "help groups express their interests while allowing governments to govern….[Institutionalized parties] channel political demands and can dampen political conflicts."[3]

Parties have potentially the most significant impact on protest if they control the loyalties and influence the decision-making processes of other organizations in civil society. Parties seek out alliances with various kinds of organizations primarily for electoral support. There seems to be an empirical association between systems that have high levels of party loyalty and systems with formal linkages between parties and organized interests. As a result, "the strength of the affective attachment to the party of members and supporters…is likely to be strongest where the political party is identified with a broader social movement."[4]

However, these linkages may also prove useful for other tasks. In addition to the political challenge of democratization, for example, many of the Latin American democracies also face the challenge of enacting economic reforms that impose significant costs on organized sectors of the population, particularly unions. In several cases (e.g., Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party—*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, or PRI—and Argentina's Peronist party), the most successful economic reformers have been the unlikeliest: governing parties with strong ties to groups such as labor that are likely to protest against economic reform. The key lies in the ability of these parties to prevent unions from using destructive protest to block reform.[5]

If strong party ties help inhibit protest, the converse may also be true: weakly rooted parties encourage and/or permit it. Studies of Venezuela, Argentina (after Menem), Brazil, and others link rising protest to a "vacuum of effective channels of communication between society and State that has been produced as a result of the de-legitimation and de-institutionalization of the establishment parties."[6] This theory parallels the argument of many scholars of the advanced industrial democracies, who link

declining participation in electoral and partisan politics to another widespread phenomenon: "the shift in overall political involvement toward…unconventional forms of participation, such as petitions, protests and demonstrations."[7]

Ironically, much of the literature on social movements—particularly in Latin America—accepts the argument (portrayed as sinister rather than healthy) that political parties inhibit protest. Many scholars of social movements interpret protest in almost the opposite way as the party literature: as a sign of movement health, rather than political system sickness. Movements that do not exercise their mobilizational capacity are depicted as co-opted or dying. Similarly, discussions of how the end of a democratic transition transfers momentum from civil society mobilization to "normal" party politics portray these alternatives as more complementary than synergistic: parties compete with movements for resources, attention, and leaders, and usually win, resulting in the stagnation of the social movement sector.

Even more provocatively, mobilizational capacity may not be like water from a faucet which movement leaders can turn on and off at will. Rather, the deliberate "turning off" of a movement's mobilization (for example, when their party ally is in power) might permanently reduce its mobilizational capacity. This view recommends that movements should avoid alliance with parties (e.g., Schönwälder 2002), and should continue mobilizational tactics to facilitate successful negotiations.

The implication of these prescriptions is that non-allied movements may be more contentious than movements allied to parties, whether in or out of power. The relationship between party alliance and protest would thus be curvilinear, peaking among the non-allied organizations and diminishing—though perhaps to different degrees—among organizations allied to parties, whether in the government or in opposition.

Hypothesis Two: Parties Foment Protest.

Nevertheless, an important subset of the literature on parties points to the role that parties may play in generating protest, particularly when out of power. Indeed, the creation and maintenance of the "socially rooted parties" believed to inhibit protest may at times require party support for protest. Most hegemonic parties, for example, have emerged from revolutionary or nationalist violence. Even short of this, as Williams notes

in the case of India, the "core task of 'crafting well-organized parties' emerges as a potentially disruptive activity."[8]

The key to the *positive* association between parties and protest lies in their organizational networks. In pursuing electoral support, parties seek connections to various social groups. And this, in turn, makes their resources and organizational networks available. Parties organize people. Particularly among groups that face strong collective action barriers, parties may in fact be the principal agents of popular organization. For example, Schneider notes the key role played by activists from the Communist party in organizing Chile's urban slums, after the Pinochet coup in 1973 forced the party underground. As a result, "the neighborhoods that were most active during the 1983–1986 protest cycle were those most closely linked, historically, to the Chilean Communist Party."[9] The Chilean case is far from unique. All over Latin America, Left parties endured periods of repression under the military dictatorships of the 1970s and shifted their organizing efforts from the electoral to the non-electoral arenas.[10] These organizations played a key role in struggles to re-democratize.

Another cause of party-led protest is competition with organizations seeking to mobilize a similar base. Tarrow's work finds clear evidence of the importance of parties in generating cycles of protest. Indeed, "a protest cycle begins with conventional patterns of conflict within existing organizations and institutions," then expands through a competitive dynamic to include new groups, new demands, and new tactics.[11] In the early stages, parties and their associated groups account for most protest; the weight of unorganized citizens and new movement organizations outside parties increases later. Thus, Tarrow argues, "the function of organization…was not to smother and routinize protest but to reproduce it and make it a more effective weapon."[12]

Hypothesis Three: The Impact of Parties Depends on Their Ideology.

Leftist parties in particular are frequently associated with protest. (Even more particularly, "where the left parties were out of power, they promoted protest."[13]) Nevertheless, empirical evidence about the effect of ideology has been mixed. At the individual level, key findings suggest that partisanship matters (Finkel and Opp 1991), but also that "the relationship between ideological identification and political protest

varies significantly across…countries."[14] Extremism, rather than leftism per se, mobilized people in expressive and non-institutional ways.

But party identification, far from producing relatively more quiescence, seemed to mobilize people. Thus, "identifiers with all party groups in Peru…participate in protest at significantly higher levels than non-identifiers."[15] Crozat (1998) also finds union and party members significantly more likely to approve of protest (though Leftist ideologies were associated with more disruptive forms). Norris, who uses the broadest sample of countries, finds that at least in the case of new social movements, "environmental activism is both strongly and positively related to the conventional channels of party activism and civic engagement."[16] In general, the same factors that predicted party membership also predict protest activity.

Powell's pathbreaking study of participation and contentious political action balances some of these protest-provoking and protest-inhibiting effects of parties. Parties usually use their organizational capacity to mobilize citizens into institutional channels, such as voting.[17] The more parties in the system, the more likely it becomes that all interests will have access to legitimate political channels. Thus, "multiparty systems…are even more inhibiting to protests than they are to rioting."[18] However, parties continue to mobilize protesters. Powell also found that virtually all protests in multiparty systems in his data had some link to political parties. Sponsorship of protest may be the price of legitimate representation.

Hypothesis Four: The Impact of Parties Depends on Their Access to Power.

This concern takes us away from the question of whether parties per se encourage or discourage protest, and points our attention toward the context in which mobilization takes place. A large and very rich set of literature on contentious political action refers to this context as "political opportunity structures." Some aspects of the political opportunity structure are largely fixed and stable, such as the electoral system and number of parties. Stable elements are "especially useful in comparisons across space, explaining differences in movement activity and relative success in different countries." When the focus turns to change over time, "the explanatory action is in the volatile

elements—for example, changes in alliances, breakdowns of social control and elite unity, shifts in public policy, and the like."[19]

A key aspect of volatility is the electoral fortunes of political parties. The presence of political party allies in the government can protect movements from repression (lowering the cost of protest and potentially making it more attractive) or, conversely, make it possible for them to achieve goals without incurring the costs of protest at all. Comparative analysis of European cases finds that "having one's allies inside the government seems to be a mixed blessing." Mobilization by the allies of the government tended to decline as government parties discouraged their allies from protesting. At the same time, while "facilitation by political allies in the opposition considerably increases the mobilization capacity of the movement…[it also] reduces the possibility for the movement to have any effect on government policy."[20] If the prospect of success is part of a movement's calculation about whether to protest, these factors could counteract one another.

Still, rational choice would tend to expect less protest against one's own allies. Focusing on one social movement sector, Kriesi suggests that Left electoral victory should most affect movements allied to the Left party in power. They no longer have their ally's support for protest, *and* they no longer need to protest to get what they want. But other movements may not be similarly affected.[21] Thus, Left victories should generally reduce protest levels, but the impact should be greatest for those organizations allied to the Left party itself.

Hypotheses: Summing Up

These hypotheses target three independent variables: first, the impact of Left party victory as a key shift in political opportunity structure; second, the impact on protest of alliance with Left parties (versus non-alliance or alliance with another party); and third, party alliance as a mediating factor affecting how movements respond to Left party victory. The dominant expectation is that Left party victory should lower incentives to protest, especially for those organizations affiliated with the winning party. Expectations are less clear when it comes to the impact of Left party alliance per se, with some

anticipating that Left party allies should protest more and others anticipating that non-allied movements should protest more than all party allies.

RESEARCH DESIGN

To examine these questions, I make a few simplifying choices. First, I look specifically at *organizations* as the primary unit of analysis. Some of the earliest studies of mass protest focused on individual psychological strains as the cause of protest (e.g., Smelser 1963; Kornhauser 1959; Gusfield 1963). Later works (e.g., Lewis-Beck and Lockerbie 1989; Sussman and Steel 1991; Opp 1988; etc.) have usefully focused on why certain individuals join protests. For me, the continuity of organizations and their role in organizing most protests make organizations an attractive and appropriate target for analyzing tactical change over time.

Second, my analysis holds as many contextual factors constant as possible by following organizations over time in three particular sites: Mexico City, São Paulo, and Brasilia. This geographical focus makes it feasible for me to collect the kind of detailed data that would be impossible for a larger sample of countries or for a nation as a whole. I make little effort to come up with a comprehensive explanation of protest, but rather try to isolate one bright thread: the impact of party alliance.

Case selection maximizes variation on the independent variables and controls for key competing explanations. The choice of Mexico and Brazil maximizes the variation in party-group linkages. The Left party in Mexico (the Democratic Revolutionary Party—*Partido de la Revolución Democrática*, or PRD) is weak, with few ties to unions and late-developing ties to urban popular movements. Instead, the ruling PRI captured virtually all unions and many other urban movements as well. Yet during the period of data collection, the PRI supported conservative policies typically associated with right-wing parties. The case of Mexico thus permits us to separate the effects of ideology from party alliance per se: a party (the PRI) with a continuing strong connection to unions but an increasingly conservative ideology is contrasted to a party (the PRD) with leftist roots (in the Mexican Socialist and Communist parties as well as *cardenismo*—former left-wing PRI members). In Brazil, the more typical Left-union association is preserved. Most Brazilian parties are fairly weak, poorly institutionalized, highly personalistic, and with

few lasting ties to social movements. The exception, however, is interesting: the leftist PT was created by unions and social movements and maintains some of the strongest ties to organized society of any leftist party in Latin America.

In selecting cities and time periods for analysis, I chose cities that had multiple experiences of Left local government interspersed with periods of non-Left control. While I could do little to control for idiosyncratic characteristics like mayoral personality, I tried to compensate for these effects by selecting cities with at least two Left mayors each. If party alliance structures matter, the impact should be the same regardless of who was mayor. In none of these cases did the governing local party enjoy the support of a president from the same party.

These criteria led me to select Mexico City and São Paulo as the primary cases. These cities are prototypes of the "primate city" phenomenon common in developing countries.[22] Each is among the largest cities in the world, with eight to ten million people in the city proper—respectively 8.6 percent and 6 percent of the national population— and fifteen to sixteen million in the metropolitan area.[23] Just as importantly, they are industrial and financial giants with relatively wealthy, well-served, and well-educated populations. Mexico City accounts for about 21 percent of national industrial production and 24 percent of services, especially major banks. One enterprising author calculates that Mexico City consumes "20% of the electric energy, 95% of books and records, 80% of the paper, 60% of the milk, 60% of the fruit, more than 50% of the cheese, and 30% of the meat…[as well as] 40% of the buses and half of the taxis in the country."[24] Over 40 percent of all university professors live in Mexico City. And of course, Mexico City is the national capital.

In the case of Brazil, the political capital is located hundreds of miles from anywhere, in the central heartland (*sertão*) city of Brasilia. In all other respects, São Paulo holds the same position with respect to Brazilian national politics that Mexico City does. The metropolitan region of São Paulo accounts for almost 30 percent of Brazil's gross national product—three times its percentage of national population.[25] São Paulo's financial district on Avenida Paulista dominates Brazil and serves much of the Southern Cone. Thus, despite the transfer of the political capital to Brasilia, São Paulo is, "the de

facto center of Brazil. It is here that everything of national import in Brazil is to be found, except for the formal attributes of national political power."[26]

These cities share another, less comfortable characteristic: devastating extremes in incomes and standards of living. The very qualities that make them stand out in economic terms also made them attractive to poor migrants looking for jobs, better schools, and public services. Interventionist states induced rural-to-urban migration by deliberately concentrating investment and infrastructure in a few key locations, in order to create poles of economic development. Migrants came so quickly that they overwhelmed the capacity of local service networks and housing markets. Poverty, underemployment, growth of informal economy, precarious housing, poor health services, and rising crime rates therefore accompanied the growth of the primate city.

These problems persist today even though the rate of migration to both São Paulo and Mexico City has slowed to a trickle in the last two decades. Neither the Brazilian nor the Mexican economy has managed to create sufficient jobs to employ their millions of poor and unskilled laborers. In fact, the economic crisis of the 1980s and 1990s tended to increase poverty levels and reduce the size of the middle class. The recessionary policies that IMF rescue packages forced both countries to follow further increased pressure on wages and also limited the ability of states to compensate for market losses. These structural similarities should feed similar types of movements.

The basic institutional structures of local governments in Brazil and Mexico also share important similarities. Local governments possess legal autonomy under a formally federal system, use proportional representation to fill seats on their city council, have an executive-centered balance of power, and host multiparty systems, though the Brazilian party system is significantly more fragmented.[27]

However, some structural differences distinguish these cities from one another. The most important of these differences are the delayed democratization of Mexico City, the different constitutional status of São Paulo compared to the two federal districts (Mexico City and Brasilia), and the level of financial resources available to each city.

Like many Latin American capital cities, Brasilia and Mexico City both had a federal district mayor appointed by the national president until quite recently—1989 in Brasilia and 1997 in Mexico City—at which point popular election of both mayor and

city council occur. However, only in the case of Mexico City does data collection include part of the non-democratic period. The need to compare leftist to non-leftist local governments drove the decision to include the 1992–1997 PRI local administrations. The Left (PRD) won both of the post-1997 mayoral elections, so the pre-transition PRI governments were the only possible comparison.[28] Nevertheless, the comparison to PRI governments is especially meaningful regardless of (and in part because of) their non-elected status. In Mexico, it is the PRI and not the independent Left which has had the deepest ties with organized civil society, albeit through a system that left unions and popular organizations subordinated to the party and the government. These legal and financial controls gave PRI governments the tools to avoid social unrest. It is thus peculiarly fitting that the capacity of the independent Left to manage protest should be compared to the champion of social management: the PRI, in all its un-elected glory.

A second major difference affects primarily the internal Brazilian comparison between Brasilia and São Paulo. Indeed, this difference was significant enough that I found myself forced to alter the original two-city design to include Brazil's capital, albeit only as a secondary case. The problem here is an extra layer of governmental authority in São Paulo: the governor and state assembly. State and local authorities share responsibility for public services in complex and murky ways.[29] Teachers and health care workers are split among state and municipal levels, and the provision of many public services demanded by local movements, including public transportation, education, and health services, could lead them either to the state or local government. Rather than resorting to protest, movements can successfully play off the mayor against the governor in negotiations. In contrast, the national capitals have a federal district structure that unites the powers of a governor with those of a mayor. Where mayors and governors in São Paulo can shift responsibility for unmet demands to one another, the mayor/governor of the federal district is the lone local authority. These administrations become much more attractive targets of demands and dissent.

One of the most significant consequences of this difference in legal status has to do with the mayor's ability to raise or lower the risks of repression. In contrast to both Mexico City and Brasilia, São Paulo's mayor does not control police forces except for a small metropolitan guard limited to security for public buildings. Instead, the state

government formally controls the military and civil police.[30] Even in Brasilia and Mexico City, however, mayors must share responsibility for the policing of protest with federal authorities. Protest in the national capital is simply too dangerous to leave responsibility for policing entirely to the local government. Thus, in these three cases, changes in the potential costs of repression probably do not drive shifts in protest strategies.

The third significant difference divides Brazilian cities from Mexico City. The Brazilian transition—unlike the Mexican transition—involved a complete rewriting of the national constitution. The 1988 constitution effectively shifted power to state and local governments. In truth, state governments benefited more from the subsequent division of resources and authority than municipal governments. Nevertheless, local government's share of total state spending rose from 11 percent in 1980 to 18 percent in 1990, higher than any other Latin American nation except Colombia.[31] By way of comparison, Mexican municipalities spend only 3 percent of total state revenue.[32] Limited revenues handicap the efforts of Mexico City mayors to develop alternative spending priorities or to institute participatory budget mechanisms. Moreover, unlike Brazilian cities, Mexico City does not have its own health care system, primary education network, or housing fund. These problems could either increase frustration with local government, or make it a less attractive target for demand making.

Though important, these aspects of the general political opportunity structure are basically exogenous control in the statistical analysis. I hold them largely constant by keeping each city in a separate database and focusing on changes over time by city.

The first independent variable is Left electoral victory. In São Paulo and Mexico City, the Left won power twice. I contrast these cases of Left government to local governments of other parties. From 1992 to 1997, three different PRI regents governed Mexico City. The first of these, Manuel Camacho (1992–1994), represented a more liberal wing of the ruling party and had good relations with many urban popular movements by virtue of his previous position as head of SEDUE (Mexico's Ministry of Urban Development) during negotiations to rebuild housing destroyed by the 1985 Mexico City earthquake. His successors Manuel Aguilera (1994–1995) and Oscar Espinosa (1995–1997) lacked these connections, but still had the benefit of PRI-controlled unions. All three were appointed by neoliberal presidents of Mexico.

In São Paulo, the high level of party-switching by politicians (except for PT members) makes party labels less relevant than political factions. Both the 1993–1996 and 1997–2000 administrations came from the same conservative political clique, led by Paulo Maluf. Maluf won the mayoral election of 1992 and took power in 1993. It was his second term as mayor. The first time, from 1969 to 1971, he governed as an appointed mayor of the pro-military party ARENA, under the military government that lasted from 1964 to 1985. Maluf's local connections in São Paulo and the popularity of his administration made it possible for his handpicked protégé, Celso Pitta to be elected as his successor (1997–2000). But Pitta's administration was so corrupt and inept that he was nearly impeached several times by his own city council. The PT was elected again amid a wave of popular outrage at the Maluf faction.

Unfortunately, time constraints prevented me from collecting a complete set of data for the Brasilia case (from 1995 to 2002). Instead, I sampled two years (1995–1996) from the city's only leftist government (Cristovam Buarque) and two years (2001–2002) from the second administration of Joaquim Roriz. Maluf and Roriz shared both conservative ideology and control of a clientelistic machine (in Roriz's case, under the imprimatur of the *Partido do Movimento Democrático*—PMDB, or Brazilian Democratic Movement Party). However, the Left governed in Brasilia while the Right governed in São Paulo, and vice versa. To the extent that local party control matters, trends should diverge in the two cities despite a similar national political context.[33]

The result is a total of ten cases, summarized below in Table One.[34] The selection of cases nicely varies the key economic and political conditions. The Left does not always "go first," and does not always take over in periods of economic crisis.[35]

TABLE 1

Summary of Cases

	São Paulo			
	PT: 1989–92 (Erundina)	PPB: 1993–96 (Maluf)	PPB: 1997–00 (Pitta)	PT: 2001–02 (Suplicy)
GDP growth	-.3%	4.5%	2%	1.5%
Inflation	1441%	1021.5%	5.5%	7.4%
	Brasilia			
		PT: 1995–1996 (Buarque)		PMDB: 2001–02 (Roriz)
GDP growth		3.5%		1.5%
Inflation		41%		7.4%
	Mexico City			
	PRI: 1992–94 (Camacho, Aguilera)	PRI: 1995–97 (Espinosa)	PRD:1998–00 (Cárdenas, Robles)	PRD:2000–03 (López Obrador)
GDP growth	3.3%	2%	5.3%	2.4%
Inflation	11%	30%	14%	5.5%

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

Collection of data on the dependent variable, patterns of protest, thus covers a thirteen year period in São Paulo (1989–2002), a twelve-year period in Mexico City (1992–2003), and two separate two-year periods (1995–1996 and 2001–2002) in Brasilia. The method relies on coding accounts of protests found in newspapers. Event data based on newspapers have some problematic characteristics. For one thing, media have their own agendas that do not match the scholar's need for accurate, unbiased, and complete records. The media's preferences may introduce some bias into the kinds of events that make it into the database. For this reason, some scholars (e.g., Oliver and Maney 2000) suggest that government records of protest permits and police records of marches provide more accurate statistics. However, in authoritarian governments or transitional democracies such as Brazil and Mexico, government statistics cannot be obtained, are recorded irregularly over time, and/or are falsified.

In part for these pragmatic reasons, using newspapers has become a fairly common procedure in the study of protest at large (e.g., Tilly et al. 1975; Tarrow 1989b). Koopmans argues that newspapers "have distinct advantages over these sources [such as police reports, and movement archives]. They report a large number of news events on a regular day-to-day basis, and because they are in competition with each other and need to

maintain their credibility as reliable news sources, they—or at least those 'quality' papers with an educated readership—are obliged to cover important events with some degree of accuracy."[36]

To minimize the possibility that political bias on the part of a newspaper might slant which movements get covered, I use two newspapers for each city, chosen for overall quality, coverage of local events, and distinct editorial perspectives.[37] I use every newspaper day rather than a random sample.[38]

To identify a protest, I looked for events that were: 1) public; 2) collective (i.e., not disgruntled individuals but representatives of some larger group); 3) intentional; 4) disruptive; and 5) targeted.[39] The target could be another movement or private business, but some entity had to be singled out as responsible for taking action. The criteria of intentionality did not eliminate spontaneous actions, but did restrict events to those where the protesters intended to protest. And finally, disruptiveness indicates an attempt to alter the normal operation of some group, usually the government.[40] This criterion eliminated petitions as a category—a useful result in the end since newspapers do an especially bad job of reporting petitions. Last but not least, I excluded electoral rallies even though critiques of government often came up. Elections occur on a regular basis and parties have little choice about whether to hold them, no matter who is in power. Including these events would therefore exaggerate the role of political parties in protest and fluctuate more with the electoral calendar than the strategic factors in which I am interested.

After identifying events, I coded each event according to the targets, sponsors, location, tactic, and demands. Following Rucht and Neidhardt (1999), I allowed up to two targets, two tactics, three sponsor types, and three demands per event.[41] However, the vast majority of all recorded events had only one type of each coded category.[42]

For the purposes of this paper, two principal limitations to this data should be highlighted. First, my sample does not contain those groups that never protest (or who never have a recorded protest) over the length of my sample. While that does create selection bias, I am not especially worried because my interest lies not in explaining why some groups never protest, but why groups that include protest as an element of demand-making strategy would change their propensity to protest over time.

Second, the database has a starting and an ending point. In all time series data, previous events may have some influence over subsequent ones. To some extent I can control for learning by including variables for the age of an organization and its previous level of protest, though newer groups still have fewer chances to get into the database than older ones. But groups that protested earlier may also have a specific relationship to the kind of administration ("Left" or not) that happened to occur first in historical time. To put it another way, administration type may be correlated with the number of years an organization is included in the database. The problem is most serious in the case of Mexico City, where the first six years of data correspond to PRI years. During these years, PRI-allied organizations may well have existed but not protested. Thus, I lose useful information about the tendency of in-groups to protest, because I lack independent information about organizational age. This factor is mitigated by the inclusion of cases that vary the order of Left/non-Left administrations as well as point in the democratic transition (early or late).

PATTERNS OF PROTEST

Despite these caveats, the results provide a fairly complete picture of protest in these three cities during the years covered (see Table Two, below). In all, I recorded 4,501 events in Mexico City, compared to 2,304 in São Paulo and 851 in Brasilia. This breaks down to an average of 375 per year in Mexico City, 213 per year in Brasilia, and just 165 per year in São Paulo.[43] Average attendance at events in Mexico City was 7,600, compared to 4,886 in São Paulo and 1,535 in Brasilia.[44] Unions account for a larger share of protests in Brazil (40–45 percent versus 27 percent of protests in Mexico City), though the absolute number of protests by unions was quite similar (100 protests per year in Mexico City, compared to 97 protests in Brasilia and 71 protests per year in São Paulo).

The overall disparity in protest levels is mostly accounted for by urban popular movements, political parties, and students.[45]

TABLE 2

Aggregate Levels and Characteristics of Protest

|	Mexico City	São Paulo	Brasilia
Total events:	4,501	2,304	851
Average number of protests/year	375	165	213
Average participation in events	7,600	4,886	1,535
Total (named) groups protesting	961	470	246
Average number of groups/event	1.46	1.29	1.26
Events with unions	26.7%	40%	45.3%
Events with urban popular movements	22.5%	15.1%	15.7%
Events with transport workers	6.4%	18.9%	9.4%
Events involving aggressive tactics	34.9%	45.1%	42.3%
Events targeting local government	37.7%	38.9%	56.5%

LEFT GOVERNMENTS AND PROTEST

As intriguing as these variations are, we are on sounder methodological ground comparing protest over time within each city, holding constant both newspaper sources and some of the structural differences that probably account for variation among cities.

An "eyeball comparison" of Left administrations with their conservative counterparts suggests that Left administrations experience *less* protest in Mexico, but *more* protest in Brazil, in two out of three pairs (see Figure One). Instead of stronger party-union-movement ties giving Brazil's PT greater influence over their allies' strategies, it was Mexico's loosely organized PRD that proved better able to shift movement strategies away from protest. This outcome seems even more surprising when one considers that the alternative to the PT was not another center-Left party (for whom the PT movements might have felt some sympathy) but reactionary local politicians with ties to the military government. Surely they should have been more attractive targets than

their own party comrades. But the PT does not attract substantially less protest than its most conservative rivals.

FIGURE 1[46]

PROTESTS TARGETING LOCAL GOVERNMENT
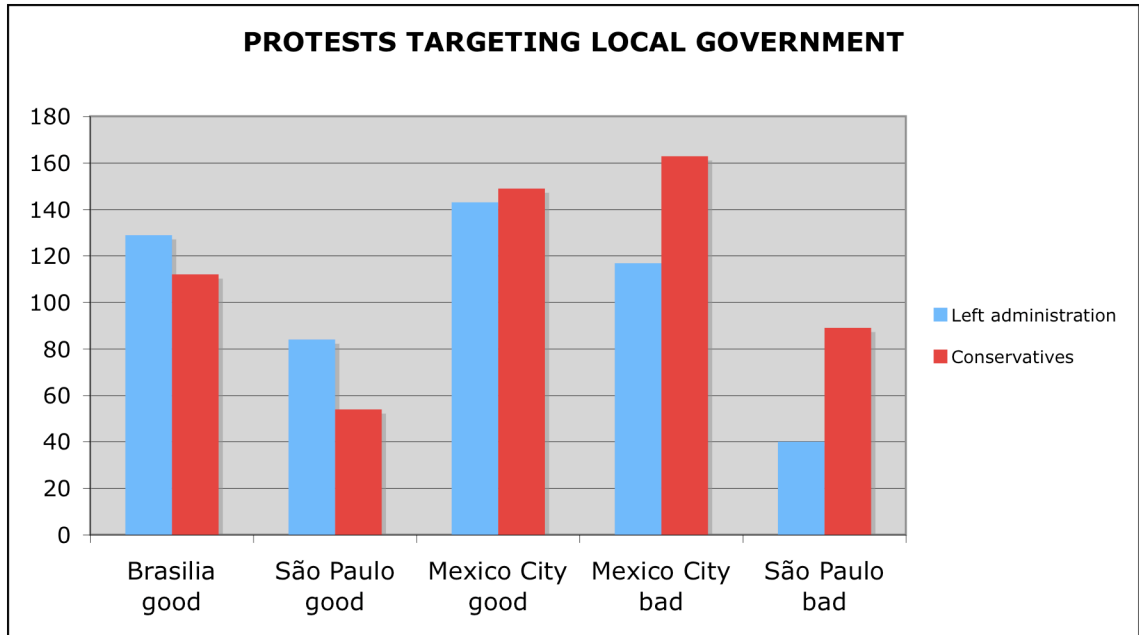
Statistical tests of the correlation between protest number and Left power confirm these observations (see Table Three, below). The unit of observation for these tests is one organization-year. Organizations enter the database the first time they protest. Each year thereafter, another observation is entered, reflecting the number of protests they held in that year, including zero if they did not protest. Most organizations in most years get zeros; thus, negative binomial regression was used to test correlations.[47] The partisanship of the government in power is also entered for each organization-year, as a dummy variable (1 = Left in power). Left power is statistically significant in two out of three cities, but the direction of the association is reversed: in Mexico City, Left victory significantly reduces protest, while in Brasilia, Left victory significantly increases protest. In São Paulo, coefficient is also positive though below statistical significance.

TABLE 3

Left Local Administration and Protest

	São Paulo	Brasilia	Mexico City
Local government target	Insignificant	Significant at .01 Positive (.85)	Significant at .01 Negative (-1.11)
All targets	Significant at .05 Positive (.16)	Significant at .01 Positive (.75)	Significant at .01 Negative (-.88)

When the focus turns to the average aggressiveness of protest rather than the number of protests, Left administrations experience more disruptive protest—strikes, street blockages, and building occupations versus marches or hunger strikes—in all three cities.[48] More disruptive tactics have some advantages in demonstrating greater intensity of commitment to a given set of demands, and greater willingness to escalate disruptiveness if those demands are not met. They are not used more often because they raise the risk for individual protesters, of confrontations with the police, injury, arrest, or even death. If protesters feel that Leftist local governments are less likely to call for police aid to squash protests than conservative governments, they may be more willing to engage in disruptive protests, resulting in a higher level of disruption overall. It is worth noting, however, that the size of the effect (coefficients of .14 and .15 respectively) is roughly the same in São Paulo (where the mayor has very little control over the risk that police will repress) and Brasilia (where the mayor does control the local police). Thus, other factors may also be at work, including the escalation of protest among competing members of the same political coalition for their party ally's attention.

PARTY ALLIANCE AND PROTEST

Movements may also react differently to Leftist governments depending on whether or not they are allied to the Left party. Governments usually prefer to respond to the demands of their allies versus allies of rival political parties, and perhaps also over competing movements that are independent. Moreover, allied organizations are more likely to have relationships of personal trust within the governing party, giving them special access which they can exploit before turning to protest. Movements affiliated to

rival parties may even have reason to step up protest against political enemies. Thus, shifts in opposite directions by political rivals may cancel each other out, leaving the impression that a Leftist government doesn't matter when in fact it drives the calculations of individual organizations.

Intuitively, it makes sense that movements should spare their allies and target their foes. This conclusion results in part from strategic calculations of costs and benefits that change depending on who governs at the local level, and in part on longer-term calculations of how protest actions in the present might affect the prospects of one's ally. As reasonable as this hypothesis seems, however, it does not appear to describe outcomes. Party alliances do matter, significantly and consistently, but the propensity to protest seems much more inflexible and resistant to short-term changes in political opportunity structures than the hypothesis would suggest. Instead, party alliance seems to tap into enduring political orientations toward the state and toward protest itself.

In order to measure the impact of alliance, I had to code this variable for each organization. Using a combination of interviews with organization members, examination of newspapers and organizational documents, and consultation with local experts, I had little difficulty in classifying the party alliance characteristics of the more active groups in the sample.[49] The problem from a methodological point of view is that the "missing information"—groups that I was unable to classify—occurs in a systematically biased way. In the first place, not all newspaper reports of protests even named the group involved, making it impossible to identify party alliance. This category constituted from 19.5% of events (in Brasilia) to 25.6% (in Mexico City). In the second place, it was much more difficult to identify the alliance characteristics of groups that protested relatively little and therefore were smaller and/or less well-known. Because statistical analyses eliminated cases with missing data on the alliance variable, I ended up eliminating disproportionately more of the passive groups from the sample.

Fortunately, a small number of groups account for the lion's share of protest. In each case, over half of all named groups protested only once during the entire sample, while the top 5 percent of groups accounted for at least 40 percent of all protest. Virtually all of these groups were identified. As a result, over 70 percent of named entries have party alliance data.

Perhaps more importantly, because we know the direction of the bias, we can extrapolate the likely effects. Statistical analysis will overestimate the impact of party alliance to the extent that some of those groups that never or very rarely protested were also allied to the PT or the PRD. However, analysis of the known sample finds that PRD and PT groups are disproportionately found among higher protesters (compared to independents and other parties) and disproportionately absent among the categories of groups that protest one or two times in all—the location of most of the unknown groups. It seems unlikely that the participation of Left allies among the unknown affiliation groups would be dramatically different than among the known groups. One available comparison comes from a poll published in the Mexico City paper *Reforma*. Though their methodology is unclear, the sample collected by my newspaper coding reflects fairly closely the partisan distribution they report, as long as the "unknown" category does contain (as I believe) disproportionately more independents.[50] Thus, the bias toward active party allies probably does not have dramatic effects.[51]

Nevertheless, the coefficients presented here reflect primarily the strength of relationships between party alliance and protest among one end of the distribution of potential protesters: that portion that demonstrates the most variation in protest activity, and which accounts for the vast majority of protest.

These analyses suggest relatively limited effects of party alliance on protest in all three cases, but to the extent they exist, they are in the wrong direction: particularly in Brazil, affiliation with the party in power results in *higher* levels of protest rather than lower levels. The variable I used here is "in-group," which takes on a value of one when a group is allied to the party in power (whatever that might be), and zero if it is either allied to a rival party or independent of party affiliation.[52] In-groups protest more than the comparison category (independents and out-groups), in all three cases (coefficients of .08 in Mexico City, .66 in São Paulo, and 1.18 in Brasilia). Curiously, separate analysis of the effects of independence finds that independent groups protest at lower rates than all party-allied groups, whether in power or not.[53]

A far bigger impact, however, comes simply from alliance with the Left. Regardless of whether or not the Left is in power, groups that have formed an alliance with a Left party protest more than other groups. The association between number of

protests and Left alliance is strongest in Brasilia (coefficient of 1.61 with PT alliance) followed by São Paulo (1.20 with PT alliance) and Mexico City (.99 with PRD alliance). This finding suggests that more enduring characteristics of groups—and not short-term shifts in political opportunity—account for most variation in protest rates.

STATISTICAL TESTS OF PROTEST

In order to compare the effects of these factors, multivariate analysis is required. The key independent variables have already been introduced: Left party alliance, Left party in government, and in-group. To review, Left party victory is a political opportunity variable. If Left governments systematically discourage protest, this variable should have a significant negative effect. Left party alliance should have a positive effect, other things being equal. But alliance to the party in power should have a negative effect, and to be entirely consistent, the effect should be larger than that of Left party victory in general.

In addition to these variables, I added two dummy variables to control for the effects of electoral cycles. It is certainly plausible that the political opportunities faced by movements—and the costs of protest—might not be constant over the term in office of a specific government. For example, movements might be inclined to reduce their protest during a government's first term in office (a "honeymoon effect"), or to reduce their protest against allies in electoral years in order to minimize the electoral embarrassment such protests could cause. Alternatively, opponents of a government might increase their protest during electoral years in order to maximize this embarrassment.

The literature on protest also mentions several other factors that affect the propensity of individual organizations to protest. According to resource mobilization theories, organizational capacity to protest depends in part on the ability to draw on resources like networks of solidarity, money, skills, numbers, or being in a position to disrupt key political institutions. Different types of organizations are unevenly endowed with these resources. Many of these aspects of resources are difficult or impossible to measure quantitatively, particularly across such a wide spectrum of organizations and over time. Nevertheless, organizational type captures at least some aspects of resource distribution, in that some kinds of organizations may benefit from more legal protection, regulation, and/or subsidies from the state than others; this is particularly the case with

unions in both Brazil and Mexico. Organizations of similar type may also have similar goals, similar targets, and/or use similar framing devices, though such differences are really better distinguished through qualitative analysis. In any case, to see whether there are systematic patterns of protest based on organization type, I include variables for the most common types of organization (union, neighborhood association, transportation workers, students, and vendors).[54]

A second factor common in the literature is the concept of organizational life cycle (e.g., Michels 1962; Gamson 1975; Panebianco 1988). According to this idea, organizations become more conservative and institutionalized as they get older, gradually relying less on disruptive protests as a strategic weapon. Unfortunately, it proved impossible to identify the foundation dates of most organizations. As a proxy for literal age, I used the number of years since the organization first entered the database.[55] In essence, this variable captures some effects of aging, in that the time lapsed since the initial mobilization of an organization may have some impact on its continued ability to mobilize.

Third, to disentangle the general effects of party identification from the organization-specific effects of dependence on protest as a tactic, I added a measure of lagged protest (protests in the previous year). Inclusion of this variable should adjust for the possibility that a few actively protesting organizations that just happen to be allied to the Left are driving our conclusions about the impact of Left alliance. The most direct reading of this measure is that protest lag tells us to what extent high levels of protest are clustered closely in time. A movement in the midst of a wave of protest may have a higher propensity to protest than a movement that is not. More generally, in the protest-lag variable may tell us something about reliance on protest as a tactic: movements that have protested a lot in the past are likely to continue to protest in the future because it is what they know how to do and what they are good at.

Finally, I tried various specifications of economic variables as controls, under the assumption that economic crises give people reasons to protest, but also may affect the time and resources they have to engage in such protests. In the end, inflation (logged) worked as well as any of these variables, perhaps because inflation rates affect consumption as well as salary/wage demands. However, using other economic variables

(e.g., inflation from the previous year) or other economic measures (e.g., GDP growth rate) produced similar outcomes.[56]

The results suggest that organizational characteristics outperform political opportunity structure as explanations of protest level and aggressiveness (see Tables Four and Five, below). Political opportunity variables do matter, but in somewhat unexpected or even contradictory ways. There is significantly *less* protest when the Left is in power in Mexico City, but *more* protest when the Left is in power in Brasilia and São Paulo (though not significantly). The contradictory effects of Left victories in Mexico and Brazil are intriguing, and suggest at a minimum that some omitted characteristic (or characteristics) of the political context in each case must produce different outcomes. Possibilities include features of the political party system (including the nature of the "non-Left" party, the number of parties, and the competitiveness of the movement environment), but such analysis must await further research.

The good news is that alliance to the party in power is negatively associated with protest in all six models, once other factors are taken into account; the bad news is that the variable only reaches significance when we limit the scope to protests targeting the local government specifically, and then only in Mexico City and Brasilia.[57]

The results are further refined when we look at the effect of the political opportunity control variables, honeymoon year and election year. However, when we focus on those protests that target the local government specifically—where the honeymoon effect of a recent victory should be strongest—we find that this variable is strongly significant *and positive* in all three cases. Rather than giving new governments a grace period, organizations respond by immediately mobilizing, probably to jostle for position on the new government's agenda and list of priorities. Opponents and independents find it most attractive to mobilize at once, while those who are allied to the new government *may* be somewhat less likely to respond by immediately mobilizing, though there is a significant negative interaction effect in only one model of local protests and in the case of Brasilia, this interaction effect is positive. Election years also bring more protest, but the effect is less significant, suggesting that agenda-setting incentives are strongest at the outset of a new government.

Organizational characteristics, in contrast, offer us more consistent results. Left party alliance has a significant positive effect in all cases and for both local and total protests. The results are very robust, surviving as significant even when other variables and outliers are successively dropped. Independence from all parties has a significant *negative* effect in three out of six models and is negative (though not significant) in the other three. Thus, in contrast to what some of the literature on Latin American social movements has suggested, autonomy from political parties does not necessarily improve ability to sustain mobilization. Instead, organizations more closely associated to political parties (both Left and status quo, like the PRI) protest relatively more than independents.[58]

Other organizational characteristics also appear to have fairly consistently significant effects. Age, for instance, is significantly associated with fewer protests in five of the six protest models once party affiliation has been taken into account.

In contrast, the lagged protest variable has a strongly *positive* effect on protest. Several other variables have larger effects, including party identification, but once these other variables are taken into account organizations that protest a lot in one year tend to continue to protest in the next year regardless of political opportunity structure.

Finally, unions consistently account for more protest than other categories of organizations, and transportation unions in particular are especially mobilized.[59] This makes some intuitive sense. Legal regulation and financing of unions in Mexico and Brazil help unions overcome some of the collective action problems that beset many other kinds of organizations. Unions also have more options for protests, including the strike as a potentially useful tool. And unions alone face regularly scheduled and legally mandated opportunities for protest, in the form of contract expiration dates (set by law in both Brazil and Mexico). Knowing that a specific organization is a neighborhood association has no significant effect in models including all protest, but among those groups that target the local government, neighborhood associations protest more than other types of organizations in two of the three models.

None of these models does an especially good job of explaining overall levels of protest. As one author noted, "the causal processes which are at the root of cross-national differences in levels of violence are much too complex to be adequately captured by a

single equation."[60] However, the goal of this exercise is to focus on the impact of the individual variables. The findings can be summarized as follows. Party alliance has modest, but highly significant, robust, and consistent effects on protest levels. Other organizational characteristics, like age and organization type, also have consistently significant effects. But political opportunity variables like Left victory and relationship to the party in power have insignificant or inconsistent effects on protest levels.

The one case where political opportunity structures have a significant impact in my originally anticipated direction is Mexico City—the case where I least expected to find this effect. The party with the weakest links to protesting organizations had far greater success than the PT in shifting its affiliated organizations from protest in the streets to institutional channeling of demands once it took power. The insignificance of the in-group variable in the Mexico case reflects primarily the curious behavior of the *PRI-allied* organizations, which had more will and freedom to protest when in power than initially expected, but which had only a limited ability to sustain protest after losing.

CONCLUSION

This paper began with two fundamental questions. First, how do Left victories affect the likelihood of protest by popular organizations? And second, does party alliance mediate this effect? Do organizations shift tactics from protest to negotiation when their allies win power?

The answer to the first question, alas, appears to be "it depends," but we do not yet know on what. In Mexico City, organizations protest significantly less when the Left wins power; in Brazil, they do not. In fact, the association is positive in one of the two Brazilian cases.

The answer to the second question is a somewhat cautious "yes." Once other contextual incentives are taken into account, such as the appeal of protesting early in a new government's administration, there is a negative association between alliance to the party in power and recorded protest rate in five out of six models presented here. However, the effect is only significant in two cases.

Rather than reflecting shifts in political opportunity, the strongest and most consistent predictor of protest rates was Left party alliance. Party alliance does matter,

but not simply because it changes cost-benefit calculations. Does this mean that Leftist movements are not rational, protesting just to protest?

Three other possible explanations come to mind. First, party alliance may pick up aspects of organizational culture and framing that resist change. For example, protesting may reflect attitudes toward the state that do not change when the people in government change. Similarly, certain organizational frames, perhaps especially those that developed under authoritarian conditions, may interpret protest as a "purer" way to participate than backroom negotiations. Protest once proved the courage and independence of movement leaders from authoritarian rulers; negotiation, in contrast, was framed as a suspicious activity indicating possible co-optation. Finally, protest as an emotionally moving experience helps popular organizations create and renew the solidarity ties that are a key resource in overcoming collective action problems. Once an organization has become dependent on a specific frame for recruiting members and demonstrating leadership competence, it may be difficult for organization leaders to switch frames and declare negotiations—even with their party allies in government—more reliable.

Second, the public visibility of protest makes it a signaling mechanism useful for internal organizational maintenance as well as for making demands. Leaders may use protest to demonstrate their strength and support with respect to rivals within their own organization or to external competitors for the same membership base. Members can use participation in protests to demonstrate their superior loyalty and merit to leaders pressed to allocate scarce resources.

These logics suggest that the benefits of protest are not limited to resources obtained from government. Instead, the benefits extend to organizational maintenance and leadership competition. Because these benefits derive from the act of protest itself, they cannot be obtained without incurring the costs of protest. Thus, my original logic, that movements should prefer less costly forms of action when the benefits of protest can be obtained without incurring protest costs, is incomplete.

Finally, differences in costs and benefits may not result in such starkly different calculations for in-groups as initially expected. The benefits of even a successful protest against a local government may simply be universally low—not changing much whether your ally is in or out of power. Alternatively, the potential benefits of a successful protest

against one's ally versus one's enemy may differ substantially, but so does the likelihood of success. As Banfield (1961) noted, "the effort an interested party makes to put its case before the decisionmaker will be in proportion *to the advantage to be gained from a favorable outcome multiplied by the probability of influencing the decision.*"[61] In the case of organizations facing friendly governments, allies have a predisposition to help, making the likelihood of success greater, but the difference between the ally's program and the organization's own is also smaller. In other words, the friendly government already wants to do what you want it to do. In contrast, when an unfriendly government is in power, there could well be a big difference between its program and yours. A successful protest could deliver big benefits. But the likelihood that the unfriendly government will listen even to aggressive protest is small. Thus, the *expected* benefit of protest remains about the same, because the benefits and probability of success move in opposite directions.[62]

All of these explanations could simultaneously be true. In other work, I look at evidence of case studies from two types of organizations that have significant protest levels: unions, and neighborhood associations. Based on interviews, personal observation, and organizational life histories, I find evidence of all three explanations. Organizations do not mindlessly pursue protest at any cost.

Moreover, while shifts in political opportunity are not unimportant, movements tend to have a fairly short time horizon and low patience even for their allies. Competition among movements keeps these time horizons short. In many cases, movement maintenance sometimes takes precedence even when it conflicts with the movement's longer-term political interests.

Likewise, organizations that stop protesting do not necessarily do so because of rational calculations that political opportunities have changed, but rather because of these internal dynamics. All organizations—in both Brazil and Mexico—talked about their reluctance to damage relations with valued party allies. Yet in Mexico, movement leaders had more latitude to shift toward institutional action, not because they had better institutional access or because they cared more about their party ally than Brazilian movements did, but because they faced less intense and immediate competition for the movement base. Similarly, PRI organizations frequently proved unable or unwilling to sustain collective action in large part due to the chasm between leaders and base and the

lack of internal competition in the movements. Leaders could count on keeping their positions and the formal adherence of their bases no matter what they did. The consequences, however, have been substantial volatility in the category of independent protest and growing alienation of movement (and union) members.

In part, what these results tell us is that tigers do not suddenly become vegetarians when their political context changes. They may eat less meat as they get older and their teeth become dull (to truly torture the metaphor). They do prefer softer, more vulnerable prey—and sometimes, this can mean their own allies. But at the same time, tigers are not always equally hungry. Some consideration is given to the needs of one's allies, and some points in an administration's trajectory are more vital for establishing a presence in the streets. The outcome of these calculations may be complex, balancing organizational, leader, and ally needs, balancing policy goals and organizational maintenance, but it is far from random.

TABLE 4

**NUMBER OF PROTESTS: COMPARATIVE STATISTICAL RESULTS
(ALL TARGETS)**

	Mexico City	São Paulo	Brasilia
PARTY ALLIANCE			
Left party ally	**.43***	**.47***	**1.14***
Independent	-.04	**-.28***	**-.72***
POS			
Left party in power	**-.47***	.12	.53
Allied to party in power	-.02	-.31	-.28
Honeymoon year	-.11	.14	**.37****
Election year	-.00	**.34***	(omitted)[63]
Interaction: Honeymoon year and allied to party in power	**-.45***	-.05	-.21
Interaction: Election year and allied to party in power	-.08	-.49	(omitted)[63]
ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTER			
Age	**-.05***	**-.07***	**-.08***
Protests in previous year	**.20***	**.26***	(omitted)[63]
Union	**.51***	**.46***	.09
Neighborhood association	.06	.00	-.47
Transportation	.18	**.52****	**1.32***
Student	-.23	(dropped)	.02
MOCO/CGH[64]	**3.17***	.62	NA
INFLATION (log)	**-.20***	**.04***	.08
Pseudo R^2	**.11***	**.11***	**.12***

*significant at .1
**significant at .05
***significant at .01

TABLE 5

NUMBER OF PROTESTS: LOCAL GOVERNMENT TARGETS ONLY

	Mexico City	São Paulo	Brasilia
PARTY ALLIANCE			
Left party ally	.55***	.60*	1.18***
Independent	-.32*	-.32	-.59
POS			
Left party in power	-.67***	-.29	.80
Allied to party in power	-.47*	.38	-1.01*
Honeymoon year	.44***	.90***	.58*
Election year	.04	-.48	Not applicable
Interaction: Honeymoon year and allied to party in power	-.33	-.98*	.71
Interaction: Election year and allied to party in power	.76**	.35	Not applicable
ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTER			
Age	-.10***	.05*	-.25***
Protests in previous year	.29***	.37***	(omitted)[65]
Union	.84***	.40	.25
Neighborhood association	.37**	-.11	.68
Transportation	.64***	.97***	(dropped)
Student	.31	(dropped)	-.89
Vendor	.37	(dropped)	(dropped)
MOCO/CGH[66]	(dropped)	(dropped)	(omitted)
INFLATION (log)	-.25*	.05	-.09
Pseudo R^2	.13***	.15***	.15***

*significant at .1
**significant at .05
***significant at .01

ENDNOTES

[1] Goldstone 2003: 2.
[2] Huntington 1968: 398, 409.
[3] Mainwaring and Scully 1995: 23.
[4] Randall and Svåsand 2001: 88.
[5] See Corrales (2002); Levitsky (2003).
[6] López Maya 2002.
[7] Dalton, McAllister, and Wattenberg 2000: 61.
[8] Williams 2001: 618.
[9] Schneider 1995: 156.
[10] For similar findings on the importance of Left political parties in organizing squatters, see also Dietz (1998); Oxhorn (1995).
[11] Tarrow 1989b: 8.
[12] Tarrow 1989b: 222. Similarly, Rucht's (1998: 42) analysis of postwar Germany finds a consistent and even growing role for political parties in the sponsorship of protest, which he notes "cannot be attributed to 'movement parties' such as the Greens."
[13] Wallace and Jenkins 1995: 117. See also Kriesi (1995: 167–198); Maguire (1995: 199–228).
[14] Opp, et al. 1995: 63–64.
[15] Opp, et al. 1995: 87.
[16] Norris 2002: 207.
[17] Powell 1982: 108.
[18] Powell 1982: 130.
[19] Gamson and Meyer 1996: 277–278.
[20] Klandermans, Roefs, and Olivier 1998: 174.
[21] Kriesi 1995: 183.
[22] Primate cities concentrate disproportionately large shares of a developing nation's population, industry, and educational institutions. I chose to focus on big cities for theoretical as well as pragmatic reasons. Such cities have better data on local protest due to the presence of multiple newspapers. But these locations also offer the broadest variety of civil society organizations. Since my observations were of organizations, cities with a greater number and variety of organizations seemed a wiser choice than small cities with only a few.
[23] By way of comparison, the entire metropolitan area of New York holds about 7 percent of the US population (Goldsmith 1994: 21). While estimates of population vary by source, most estimates dating to the mid-1990s fall within these ranges. For metropolitan estimates, see Gilbert (1996: 2); for national population and city population estimates, see Wilkie (2002: 147, 167–168). In both cases, the metropolitan area grew faster than the city itself in the 1990s, with the result that some estimates from 2000 now put the metro area population at over 20 million. See Myers (2002: 9).
[24] Álvarez Enríquez 1998: 45.
[25] The city of São Paulo itself lost many industrial jobs in the 1990s due to economic crisis and the relocation of many industrial plants to peripheral areas around São Paulo. Nevertheless, almost a third of its economically active population works in manufacturing, more than in any other Brazilian city (Santos 1996: 224).
[26] Graham and Jacobi 2002: 298.
[27] On average, 5 parties win seats in the Mexico City Asamblea (Assembly), compared to 11 parties in São Paulo and 7.5 parties in Brasilia. None of the Brazilian mayors won an outright majority of seats in the local legislature. However, all but two succeeded in building a majority legislative coalition based on distribution of rewards to legislators of other parties. One of the mayors that failed, from the PT, deliberately chose to avoid the usual pork and tried to build a

coalition solely on programmatic convergence. The second PT government would not repeat this mistake.

[28] After 1988, Mexico City did have an elected city council, known as the Assembly of Representatives. However, its powers were limited to consultative status. In 1994, the PRI approved regulations expanding the powers of the city council and in 1995, approved the popular election of the mayor as of 1997. See Davis (2002: 227–263); Alvarez Enríquez (1998).

[29] As Nickson notes (1995: 121–122), "the respective competencies of different tiers of government are notoriously ill-defined [in Brazil], even by the standards of Latin America, and the prevalence of concurrent powers among federal, state, and local government remains a significant feature of Brazilian local government…the outcome of this complex legal arrangement is that there is almost no service uniformly offered by all municipalities, and very few in which the state may not be an alternate provider or regulator."

[30] In an attempt to limit the influence of police, the Brazilian constitution divides responsibility for public order between the civil police (responsible for investigation of crime) and the military police (responsible for making arrests and policing the streets. Thus, intelligence gathering is intended to be separate from enforcement but coordinated through the state government. Most state governors probably have little operational influence over the internal management of either force.

[31] Nickson 1995: 52.

[32] Nickson 1995: 44.

[33] The choice of these particular years in Brasilia also reflects a preference for looking at protest under similar economic conditions. Since the PT has governed only once in Brasilia, this meant looking at relatively good years for the non-PT Brasilia comparison. It is not easy to find good economic years in Brazil, so the comparison is not perfect. The mirroring of the PT/non-PT administrations in the two Brazilian cities therefore determined the final choice.

[34] Due to the brevity of the Aguilera administration in Mexico City, I collapsed his administration into Camacho's for the purpose of clarity of presentation. The Cárdenas administration also includes one year of government by acting mayor Rosario Robles, who took his place when Cárdenas resigned to run for president in 2000.

[35] One additional caveat about the comparison among these cases may be relevant here. Both the Buarque government in Brasilia and the Erundina government in São Paulo experienced a high level of conflict with other factions of their own parties, probably resulting in a higher level of protest by PT-allied organizations than would have been the case had they remained united. It is impossible to discuss the causes or the effects of these differences adequately in this paper. I will note only that the problems of Erundina and Buarque seem more the norm for PT governments than the exception. See Keck 1992 for additional examples and commentary on this broad characteristic of PT governments.

[36] Koopmans 1999: 93.

[37] In Mexico City, I used *La Jornada*, *Reforma* (from its foundation in 1994 through 2002), and *El Financiero* (from 1992 through 1994). In São Paulo, I used *O Estado de São Paulo* and *Folha de São Paulo*. In Brasilia, I used *Correio Brasiliense* and *Jornal de Brasilia*. Overlap was greatest in Brazil (30 of percent of events reported by both papers in São Paulo and Brasilia) and lower in Mexico (20 percent of events reported by at least two papers). Most of the difference reflects the unusual attention of *La Jornada* to protest in Mexico City. It reported on over 70 percent of all events in the Mexico sample. No other paper reported more than 60 percent.

[38] On these issues, see Oliver and Maney (2000); Rucht, Koopmans and Neidhardt (1999). Sampling, while potentially useful, is difficult to apply where the distribution of protest over time is unknown. In both Mexico and Brazil, labor protests peak around the time of contract negotiation—set at the federal level for all unions, by sector. Thus, the distribution is unlikely to be random over time and a random sample would seriously undercount this kind of protest.

[39] My definition is consistent with definitions in the literature; e.g., "a collective public action by a non-governmental actor who expresses criticism or dissent and articulates a societal or political demand" (Rucht and Neidhart 1999: 68).

[40] This criterion also has an intellectual pedigree: Tarrow (among others) notes that "The main resource of protesters is…their determination to disrupt the lives of others and the routines of institutions" (1989a: 3).

[41] Rucht and Neidhardt (1999: 68) base their decision on the logic that "an event has a beginning and an end. We regard as an event only a distinct action undertaken by the same group of actors for the same specific purpose over a continuous period of time." A single protest event that involves both a march and a street blockage should not be counted as two events since it is the same group of actors, the same time, the same location, and for the same purpose. Rather, it is preferable to code two tactics per event.

[42] The average number of tactics, targets, sponsor types, and demands was 1.1 for all three cities across all protests. Because only one coder was involved, the usual inter-coder reliability statistics cannot be generated.

[43] The high level of mobilization in Mexico City as compared to the two Brazilian cities came as a surprise to me and initially raised concern that problems with data bias had resulted in flawed counts. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that newspaper bias alone could account for such stark and consistent differences. There are also a number of other plausible explanations which might come into play, including location (Mexico City is both national capital and economic center; it attracts more protest as a result, and is much easier to get to than remote Brasilia), political culture (Mexico's history of social revolution), and even differences in the physical spaces available for protest (Mexico City's large central Zócalo, for instance, a large open space suitable for large gatherings, near important public buildings, and with symbolic significance, attracts 17.6% of all protests).

[44] I am skeptical of attendance figures. From one newspaper source to the other, these figures frequently varied 200–300% even though other aspects of the reports were highly consistent. For this reason, I do not include attendance as a measure of the intensity of protest in my statistical analysis, which depends on accuracy of estimates for individual events that often cite only one newspaper source. However, averages over time should be worth slightly more, because they involve more data points.

[45] Urban popular movements account for an average of 88 protests per year in Mexico City, compared to 27 per year in São Paulo. Parties account for 36 protests a year in Mexico City, compared to 8 per year in São Paulo. And even leaving out the major university student strike of 1999–2000, Mexico City students protested nearly twice as often as their São Paulo counterparts (26 times per year vs. 14 times). Protests by peasant groups constitute another large gap. However, this gap is almost entirely the result of Mexico City's status as national capital. Peasants targeted the national government nearly exclusively.

[46] Administrations were paired according to their relatively better or worse macroeconomic conditions Thus, in São Paulo, Erundina's PT administration is paired with Pitta's, while Marta Suplicy's PT administration is paired with Maluf's. In Mexico City, Cárdenas/Robles (PRD) is compared to the 1992–1994 administration of Camacho/Aguilera, and López Obrador (PRD) with Espinosa. Switching the pairs would make no difference in Mexico City and only a minor difference in São Paulo.

[47] See Long and Freese (2003) for an explanation of the reasoning behind this selection.

[48] Protests were separated into two general categories—relatively aggressive (strikes, street blockages, and building occupations) and relatively mild (marches, demonstrations, hunger strikes). The percentage of events that were aggressive is then recorded for each organization-year.

[49] I established five criteria for party alliance: 1) runs candidates (or attempts to run candidates) under the party label; 2) publicly endorses (and campaigns for) the party's other candidates; 3) contributes to or receives financial assistance from the party; 4) leaders and members participate in party leadership (double militance); 5) legal affiliation with the party. In Brazil and Mexico, the typical alliance pattern for the Left included the first four criteria; in the case of the PRI, it also included the fifth. However, while legal affiliation did not usually occur, there was often a public declaration of affiliation by the organization or recognition of a special relationship to a particular Left party at specific points in time. I was thus able to determine and record when some of the organizations changed their alliance status over the period.

[50] "Marchan en el DF para pedir trabajo," *Reforma*, December 12, 2001: 8B. They report a percentage of mobilizations by PRD groups that is 5 percent lower than my estimate; a percentage of mobilization by PRI groups that is 2 percent higher than my estimate, and a percentage of independents that—if one added most of the unknowns into the independent category, as I propose—is exactly the same as my estimate. The overall number of events is off by considerably more: 1,210 versus 342. In essence, as I anticipated, newspaper coding results in sampling of the universe of protest rather than fully reporting levels of protest. It should be noted that this report is also inconsistent with figures from the Mexico City government on the level of protest for 1997–1998 (*Informe Mensual: Junio 1998*). My descriptions of trends in level of protest and tactics match the Mexico City government data more closely. Unfortunately, these data were not available for all needed years. In particular, I was informed by several sources in the government that the previous PRI government had destroyed many records upon leaving office, including those pertaining to protest.

[51] Sensitivity tests conducted on the sample confirm the direction and magnitude of these biases. I applied the same statistical analyses to subsets of the samples, excluding groups if they had not protested for at least one municipal administration term since their last protest, and never returned to protest again. Most of these, in fact, protested only once. None of the variables changed significance or direction, and there were only modest increases in the coefficients associated with each of the significant variables.

[52] I tried various different specifications of this variable. In one version, in-group is compared only to party allies out of power, and independent is incorporated as a separate variable. In another, all types of party alliance are coded from zero to two, with zero as alliance to the party in power, one as independent, and two as allied to an opposition party. None of these versions produced results any different from those reproduced in this paper. Since, theoretically, only those with special access and loyalty should have particular motives to change their behavior when their ally is in power, I have chosen to present this version as the clearest and most direct reflection of the theoretical expectation.

[53] Overall, 57.7 percent of all of the recorded groups in São Paulo, 50.3 percent in Brasilia, and 60 percent in Mexico City were unaffiliated to any party. They thus account for a large absolute number of protests, but protest at lower rates than all organizations tied to parties.

[54] For São Paulo and Mexico City, I included a dummy variable for two specific organizations that had an unusually high propensity to protest. In Mexico City, I added a dummy variable for the *Consejo General de Huelga* (General Strike Council, or CGH), responsible for a wave of protests anchored by a student strike at the National Autonomous University (UNAM) in 1999–2000. In São Paulo, I included a dummy variable for the volatile bus drivers' union. In only one model (the CGH and total protest in Mexico City) was the variable significant once other variables were taken into account.

[55] In using this proxy, I am picking up some random error. Organizations affiliated with the PRD, for example, might *seem* "older" simply because the PRI happened to be in power when my data collection starts, even though many PRI organizations are actually older. The fact that the order of administration type is different in each city helps ensure that even if this effect occurs in one

case, it should not systematically be the same across the three cities. Thus, if the impact of this variable is the same in all three cases, we can probably conclude at the least that organizations which participate within an earlier cycle of protest are less likely to participate in succeeding ones at the same rate.

[56] Using more than one economic variable in the models was problematic from a statistical point of view. In truth, there were only 13 possible pairs of inflation and GDP growth rates in the São Paulo example—each value of inflation for a given year was always paired with the same value of GDP growth, over and over for each organization that protested in that same year. Thus, these were not independent correlations and produced multicollinearity problems.

[57] Alternative specifications of the variable, including construction of a variable capturing interaction effects between Left party in power and Left ally (to capture whether Left party allies behave differently than other party allies in this respect) also fail to reach significance in the expected direction. This variable is not presented. However, it is a standard interaction effect variable, multiplying the two dummy variables of Left in power and Left party ally. It thus captures only ONE effect: whether *Left* party allies stop protesting when the Left wins. By contrast, the variable I use (in-group) also includes allies of non-Left parties when their specific ally is in power. It should thus suffer from fewer problems of collinearity.

[58] The omitted variable in the models presented here is "other party affiliation," because I wanted to demonstrate the value associated with independent organizations. This comparison is most meaningful for Mexico, since there were relatively few instances of other party affiliation in Brazil compared to independents. When independence is used as the omitted category, the results for the PT affiliation variable do not change—they remain significant and positive. However, it is worth noting that these variables are constituted as separate variables. PT alliance is one for PT and zero contrasted with non-PT and independence; independence is contrasted with PT and other parties. These Left and independent variables therefore do have some original value despite the paucity of other party-allied organizations.

[59] In addition to the categories listed in the tables, omitted types of organizations included parties, environmental groups, religious groups, human rights organizations, ethnic organizations, peasant organizations, business organizations, and "other." For the purposes of the statistical analysis, I folded police/army protests into the main union category since they involved work-related issues almost exclusively. Most of these types of organizations accounted for too few protests for valid statistical findings and were therefore dropped from the calculation.

[60] Hibbs 1973: 5.

[61] Cited in Hirschman (1970: 39), from Banfield (1961: 333). Italics in the original.

[62] I am grateful to Stuart Kasdin for making this suggestion.

[63] The Brasilia dataset contains only two pairs of consecutive years. "Protests in previous year" was therefore only available for two years. Inclusion of this variable would have cut too many cases from the analysis.

[64] This variable controls for major outliers—the bus drivers' union in São Paulo, and the student strikers in Mexico City. No single organization constitutes as huge an outlier in the Brasilia case.

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