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# Conditions Affecting the Use of Political Repression

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The task of this study is to determine if certain political and socioeconomic variables have strong relationships with political repression conceptualized as disappearance, detention, torture, and political killings. The perspective of the study is from the question of why do people in power—with so many options available—choose repression as a method of rule. Repression is coded into numerical values from the State Department *Country Reports*, and then relationships with the degree of democracy, socioeconomic conditions, inequality, rate of economic change, and the level of economic development are tested in regression models. Significant relationships are found. The degree of democracy, the extent of inequality in society, and economic growth rate go a long way to explain and predict political repression in a parsimonious model.

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**T**raditionally the state has been expected to provide security both internally and externally, and to provide for the general good of society. In an age when considerable resources are available for the state's missions, it is paradoxical to find many states insecure and repressive. Walter's (1969) classic study raises the fundamental question of why some governments choose to rule by violence and fear. But McCamant (1984, 35), considering the coercive potential of the state, wonders why repression is not used more often.

To find out why some states use repression while others do not, most scholars have written impressionistically without the guidance of theory, sometimes using anecdotal evidence and sometimes using case studies. Although no basic theory is being offered here an effort will be made to get an empirical grip on the subject.

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In order to answer the question of why some states choose repression as a policy and others do not, a look at political and socioeconomic conditions may prove fruitful. Policymakers arrive at specific decisions to use repression partly because they are environed by certain conditions that induce them toward repression. These conditions may include the type of government, socioeconomic progress, inequality in society, the rate of economic growth, and the level of economic development of society.

The task of this study is to determine if causal relationships exist between these conditions, acting as independent variables, and political repression. If so, then an important theoretical step will have been taken in the attempt to build a parsimonious and predictive model concerning repression. As a long-term strategy, such a model might serve as a framework for including more specific explanations of repression such as the coercion tolerance of a society (Dallin and Breslauer 1970, 56), the size of the military and the police (Gurr 1972a, 211), reclusiveness of the state from international pressure (Schmid 1983, 178; Gurr 1986, 61), client status of a superpower (Wolpin 1986, 151), the types of targets that invite repression (Taylor and Jodice 1983, 77) to name just a few. And if the kinds of states and conditions most likely to contribute to repression can be identified, policymakers at the national and international levels who are normatively interested in the promotion of human rights can act more intelligently in guiding policy choices.

Because political repression is central to this study, a clear conceptualization of the term should be made. Political repression is the use or threat of coercion in varying degrees applied by government against opponents or potential opponents to weaken their resistance to the will of the authorities (Stohl and Lopez, 1984, 7). Repression can take multiple forms, but certainly this policy can include arbitrary arrest, disappearance, detention, torture, and political killing. This definition and these forms of political repression are compatible with an impressive body of literature (Stohl and Lopez 1984; de Neufville 1986; Reiter, Zunzunegui, and Quiroga 1986; Goldstein 1986; Michell et al. 1986; Rodley 1987; Berman and Clark 1982) that has sought to explore this concept or a dimension of it.

Political repression, as used here, is also widely recognized by governments, international organizations, and professional groups. Repression so frequently violates the same rights that these have taken on the status of a special genre of rights known as the "integrity of the person." This new genre exists alongside the more traditional categories of civil and political rights, and economic and social rights recognized by governments (e.g., *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1985* 1986; Skalnès and Egeland 1986; Carleton and Stohl 1985, 207; Mitchell and McCormick 1988, 483; de

Neufville 1986, 687; Bollen 1986, 567). The United Nations has focused much attention on this genre of rights, establishing special working groups or *rappoteurs* to deal with disappearances, arbitrary execution, and torture (Rodley 1986, 700; Rodley 1987, 64). Amnesty International has pressured governments to improve their conduct concerning the same rights (*Torture in the Eighties* 1984). Legal associations and medical groups have established ethical guidelines, or are considering doing so, to restrain their members from assisting governments in violating the "integrity of the person" (Rodley 1987, 293, 302; Joyce 1979, 85-6), and medical centers have been set up to help the survivors of repression (*Torture in the Eighties* 1984, 25; Dreifus 1987, 10).

Moreover, political repression varies in degree from one country to another. Political repression can range from what Scott (1985, 274) calls steady pressure—the occasional police visit, arrest, or detention—to widespread disappearances, torture, and killings.

Frequently a working pattern is detectable among the elements of repression. A disappearance, whether by the police or vigilantes acting with government support, means a person has been seized and placed in detention without a record. A disappearance has been called the highest stage of political repression because all legal protections of the individual can be ignored (*Torture in Brazil* 1986, 204). Indefinite detention and torture can then be conducted with little or no impunity and with crushing effects on individual lives (Fanon 1963, 249-310; Gutierrez 1984).

Torture, arguably the most sensational of the odious practices of repression, almost disappeared in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Europe (Peters 1985). Once used only in criminal cases, torture was reinstituted by totalitarian states (Glasner and Possony 1979, 483), by colonial powers (Vidal-Naquet 1963, 21), and currently by as many as one third of the states of the world, to maintain control over their populations (*Torture in the Eighties* 1984, 2). In its twentieth-century revival, torture has become a technical speciality with electricity, psychology, and pharmacology providing new dimensions (Dominguez 1979, 93).

If political murder has not occurred, a release following torture returns a shattered person to society with frightening consequences for his or her comrades. As is widely recognized, the purpose of repression is to create a climate of fear (Dallin and Breslauer 1970, 112; McGuffin 1974, 156-57). In the early 1980s, Guatemala helped spread fear by putting pictures of tortured bodies in the press, ostensibly to help relatives claim their dead but also as a warning to others (*Torture in the Eighties* 1984, 5). Terror as a policy is so devilishly shrewd that the government does not have to do everything; terror

works through personal networks based on conversations and rumors among the citizenry (Schmid 1983, 175).

The working pattern of repression also includes a widening circle of complicity. A fully operative government service for repression may come into existence and, once established, a network grows around it to maintain and protect it (de Swaan 1977, 43). Beginning with police and soldiers put to tasks of violence for which they are not trained, a repression apparatus may also include judges, lawyers, informers, doctors, and many others, all supporting a handful of torturers (de Swaan 1977, 48; Bernstein 1972, 52; Vidal-Naquet 1963, 31). The apparatus also tends to find a widening circle of victims as the contacts of one set of victims become the new victims (Ruthven 1978, 297). With the task of the study and the concept of political repression made clear, a discussion of the hypotheses now follows.

## HYPOTHESES

In a global and cross-sectional study that inquires about the conditions behind political repression, repression is of course treated as the dependent variable. The relationship of repression and the independent variables is hypothesized in the statements below:

### DEGREE OF DEMOCRACY

*Hypothesis One: the more democratic the government, the less likelihood that it will repress.*

All types of governments have proven capable of repression, even cases within Wesson's (1987) category of "secure democracies" (McGuffin 1974; Goldstein 1987; Gamson 1975, 140-42; Duvall and Stohl 1983, 196-99; *Torture in the Eighties* 1984, 6; Gurr 1986, 53; Gibson 1988). Democracies have used repression in times of crisis stemming from war, internal conflict, and other challenges to authority, which may produce periods of low tolerance for dissent. Types of governments, including democratic and authoritarian, are not pure forms but can be thought of in relative terms according to their responsiveness to their populations (Douglas 1972, xxii preface; Wesson 1987). It is thought here that the more democratic the government, the more responsive it will be and, hence, the less likely the government will choose repression as a means of rule.

The democratic process, with its emphasis on bargaining and compromise, offers a meaningful alternative for handling conflict if leaders choose to use

it. Democracy should not be viewed as an idealistic process, but as a realistic way to accommodate demands with a minimum of conflict (Gurr and Lichbach 1979, 172-75; Gurr 1986, 58; Gurr 1970, 317; Brown 1988, 10; Douglas 1972, Chapter 5; Muller and Seligson 1987, 429; Sloan 1984, 93-94). With a large measure of democracy, conflict should not grow so sharp as to invite repression.

The democratic process cannot be based on pseudo-participation, however. There must be legitimate channels, such as political parties and elections, that can carry interests forcefully into government (Hibbs 1973, 110-12; Dye and Zeigler 1988, 52; Howard and Donnelly 1987, 22-23; Duff and McCamant 1976, 103-8; Weitz 1986, 411-13; Gurr 1972b, 45; Hardy 1979, 225; Douglas 1972, 6; Malloy 1987, 252-54). In the Third World especially, democracy has been a label identified with an oligarchy that operates through sham institutions and that gives top priority to its own enrichment. That repression tends to occur outside the context of democratic values and institutions is not coincidental as will be seen.

#### SOCIOECONOMIC NEEDS

*Hypothesis Two: the greater the socioeconomic needs in society, the greater will be the use of repression by the government.*

Citizens and governments alike acknowledge the economic responsibilities of government, and so economic dissatisfaction becomes a political variable (Duff and McCamant 1976, 59). A government is almost certain to feel pressure from a citizenry with sharp needs in the areas of jobs, housing, health, food, drinkable water, and much else. Ophuls (1979, 7-9) thinks government has its origin in the necessity of coping with scarcity and, finding it difficult to live with sustained scarcity, government has sought workable strategies to allocate scarce goods and to further develop its economy (Gurr 1985, 70). The most lasting pattern has been for authoritarian governments of various types to take charge, presumably to offer more manageability of the economy (Estes 1984, 137; Pirages 1980, 431), although Malloy (1987, 238-39) has observed the pattern of authoritarian and democratic governments in Latin America taking turns in confronting economic problems. Unable to cope with socioeconomic problems in many countries, governments resort to repression just to stay in power (Sloan 1984, 90; Gurr 1985, 63): The greater the scarcity is, the greater the repression.

## INEQUALITY

*Hypothesis Three: the greater the inequality of society, the more likely that government will use repression.*

As a concept, perfect equality calls for equal units to receive equal goods and treatment (Ward 1978, 11). Perfect equality is unlikely to occur because of inadequate resources in many societies and maldistribution of the resources available. In most countries, an equal division of goods would condemn all to a life of poverty, so elites further impoverish the masses in order to live well (Ophuls 1977, 142). Scarcity associated with Hypothesis Two is intensified by the role of elites. Following the Adam Smith principle that the task of government is to protect the rich from the poor (Moon and Dixon 1985, 669), elites use the state to guarantee that their economic interests are served (Sloan 1984, 96-98; Howard and Donnelly 1987, 21-22; Sterling 1974, 359; Stavianos 1976, 20; Wesson 1987, 6; Thiong'o 1981, 95). This pattern of elite exploitation through the state is found in numerous case studies (e.g., Scott 1985; Stavianos 1976; Duff and McCamant 1976; North 1987; Malloy 1987; *Torture in Brazil* 1986; Claude 1987; Zwick 1984; Flynn 1978; Knauss and Strickland 1983; Arancibia, Charlin, and Landstreet 1987; Russo 1972).

Elites have the option, of course, to reform and some do. But those who hope for a benevolent dictatorship usually get "a dictatorship whose reformist *elan* begins to sag under the weight of full pockets" (Douglas 1972, 10).

The central problem of inequality is that the gap between "haves" and "have nots" in society will create strife and instability. Because the elites do not want to share, repression appears relatively efficient in the short run when resources are scarce (Gurr 1986, 59; Gurr, 1985, 60-61).

An ancient concern, modern scholars consider inequality a problem in every country, believe that it is persistent in nature, and is increasing, especially in Third World countries (Ward 1978, 3; Gurr 1985, 71; Midgley 1987, 38; Perry 1987, 120; Sterling 1974, 397; Russett 1972, 135; Douglas 1972, 60; Grenier 1984; Kohli 1986). Given the emphasis on inequality in the literature, and its logical appeal as a major causative variable, a strong relationship with political repression is expected. But Muller (1985, 47) warns that the importance of inequality has not held up well under the scrutiny of modern social science research. Duff and McCamant (1976, 80-83), for example, found no connection between inequality and repression in Latin America.

## RATE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

*Hypothesis Four: the greater the rate of growth in the economy, the more likely the government will be to use repression.*

Rapid economic growth may encourage leaders to use repression to control the development process by preventing the political mobilization of the masses (Joyce 1979, 89; Gurr 1986, 45). The masses can be expected to resent the disproportionate flow of economic growth into the hands of the rich and their own further impoverishment through inflation that often accompanies rapid economic growth. Repression can block viable unions, parties, and other mechanisms that would allow the poor to demand a share in society's new wealth (Ward 1978, 51-52; Stavianos 1976, 175; Brown 1988, 10).

The imposition of sacrifices on the masses for the sake of growth is a pattern found in many case studies (e.g., North 1987; Pion-Berlin 1984). The "Brazilian Miracle," for example, reflected one of the highest growth rates and the lowest wage averages in the world (Stavianos 1976, 175-76). The increasing misery of the Brazilian masses was enforced by a military regime using torture against any protesters (*Torture in Brazil* 1986).

Although a theoretical argument and case studies are persuasive about the economic growth pattern, the relationship of economic growth to political effects may be complex. Lopez-Pintor (1987, 83), for example, has observed that economic growth in history has had ambivalent political results, sometimes enhancing freedom and, in other cases, leading to its destruction. Other writers have found confused or paradoxical results from economic growth (Weitz 1986, 398; Zimmermann 1980, 182-83; Dallin and Breslauer 1970, 138).

## LEVEL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Hypothesis Five: the higher the level of economic development, the less likely the government will be to use repression.*

A country's level of economic development has long been held as an important predictor of a wide range of dependent variables. It is only logical to think that, with a higher level of development, people will be more satisfied and, hence, less repression will be needed by the elites (Duff and McCamant 1976, 58-59). Presumably even if the goods of society are not distributed equally and class lines remain distinct, a better-off society can afford to share some of the wealth with the masses, at least to a degree that will reduce conflict. Dye and Zeigler (1988) have found that the higher the economic



level of society the greater is the degree of equality. Some specific evidence ties economic level to repression. Banks (1985, 158) has found low income level to be a strong predictor of inadequate levels of human freedom. Mitchell and McCormick (1988, 488) have found a modest relationship between economic level and repression. Finally, Zimmermann (1980, 177) at least found that economically developed countries experience less political violence, which would probably reduce the prospect of repression.

Scholars do not share a consensus on the role of economic level, however. Among communist countries, Dallin and Breslauer (1970, 137) could not establish a clear connection between economic level and levels of repression. Wolpin (1986, 133) thinks there is a weak association at best between poorer countries and repression policies. In the Latin American context, Duff and McCamant (1976, 58-59) question if economic level is all that critical to repression. The relationship of economic level to repression obviously deserves to be tested.

## DATA

For the dependent variable, political repression, a country ranking (REP) was coded from the *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1985* (1986). These *Country Reports* are produced annually by the United States State Department through embassy staffs. Among a wide range of rights reported on are those associated with the "integrity of the person." A number of critics have agreed that the *Country Reports* reflect a professional effort to report rights accurately and fairly (de Neufville 1986, 681).

REP was formed by coding country descriptions ( $N=152$ ) of "integrity of the person" into numerical values based on Gastil's (1980) five-level political terror scale, a procedure already used successfully by Carleton and Stohl (1985, 212-3) and presented below in their abbreviated form:

### Level A:

Countries . . . under a secure rule of law, people are not imprisoned for their views, and torture is rare or exceptional. . . . Political murders are extremely rare.

### Level B:

There is a limited amount of imprisonment for non-violent political activity. However, few persons are affected, torture and beating are exceptional. . . . Political murder is rare.

**Level C:**

There is extensive political imprisonment, or a recent history of such imprisonment. Execution or other political murders and brutality may be common. Unlimited detention, with or without trial, for political views is accepted.

**Level D:**

The practices of Level C are expanded to larger numbers. Murders, disappearances, and torture are a common part of life. . . . In spite of its generality, on this level terror affects primarily those who interest themselves in politics or ideas.

**Level E:**

The terrors of Level D have been extended to the whole population. . . . The leaders of these societies place no limits on the means or thoroughness with which they pursue personal or ideological goals.

Countries were assigned a rank of 1 to 5 according to the degree of repression, with a higher value indicating greater repression.

Coding validity was achieved by comparing these country rankings to rankings based on elements from Humana's (1986) survey and a country ranking coded from the *Amnesty International Report 1986* (1986). The high correlations between REP and these other indicators of repression suggest rankings from these different sources approximate each other closely [REP > Humana ( $r = .86$ ) and REP > Amnesty International ( $r = .75$ )] Consistency in coding was established by asking a volunteer group of eleven students to use the Gastil (1980) political terror scale to code twenty-five countries, varying widely in type of government and geography, from *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1985* (1986). An intercoder reliability score greater than .70 is usually expected (Burgess, Harf, and Peterson 1988, 70). Intercoder reliability between the eleven students and the author ranged from a correlation of .80 to .92.

The first independent variable is the degree of democracy (DEM) based on Wesson and associates' (1987) spectrum of countries ( $N=155$ ). Focusing primarily on 1985, countries are assigned to the categories of stable democracies, insecure democracies, partial democracies, limited authoritarianisms, and absolutisms.<sup>1</sup> These five types of government were conceived by the author as forming a continuum based on Wesson's understanding of democracy: a dual concern with limiting arbitrary power and representing the will of the people to the government (Wesson 1987, 8). Numerical values were

1. Two oddities about Wesson's (1987) categories should be noted. One is that Honduras is listed as both an insecure democracy and a partial democracy; this author includes Honduras in the former category. A second oddity is that Mongolia is placed geographically with "Soviet Eastern Europe" instead of the "East Asia-Pacific" group within the absolutism category.

assigned to each of the types of government ranging from "1" to "5", with a higher value indicating a greater degree of democracy. Wesson's understanding of democracy is similar to the well-known conceptualization of Bollen. Both emphasize the accountability of elites to nonelites and limitations on arbitrary power. Both view these dual concepts as inseparably linked and merged into a single dimension. Bollen's data are only for 1960 and 1965 while Wesson's categories of countries offer a basis for data for 1985 (Wesson 1987, 1-9; Bollen 1980; Bollen and Grandjean 1981; Bollen 1986, 568-72).

An indicator measuring the socioeconomic needs of a country is based on the International Human Sufficiency Index (IHSI; 1987). A ranking on the IHSI ( $N=129$ ) is considered representative of the typical living conditions of most people in that society. Ten conditions are taken from sources published between 1984 and 1987: GNP per capita, average annual rate of inflation, average annual growth of labor force, average annual growth of urban population, infant mortality, daily per capita calories supply, access to clear drinking water, energy consumption per capita, adult literacy, and personal freedom. The higher the IHSI score is, the greater is that country's socioeconomic needs.

Another independent variable is inequality in society. A test of the relationship between inequality and repression is somewhat difficult to make because a completely satisfactory measure for inequality has not been found. Dye and Zeigler (1988, 47-48) bemoan the fact that not enough income data is available to create a Gini index along a Lorenz Curve for all countries. Muller and Seligson (1987) managed to accumulate enough income data to rate about sixty countries on the percentage of national income controlled by the upper 20% of the population. Unfortunately, the large number of missing cases would greatly reduce the global approach of the study. Moreover, as we will see regarding the level of economic development, the reliable use of income data is questionable. Sometimes researchers attempt to create surrogate measures of inequality to avoid the income question. For example, Russett et al. (1981) tried to measure inequality through fertility and health as well as income. Ward (1978) created an Inequality Index (INEQUAL) based on ratios of poverty to affluence for society ( $N=114$ ). Dye and Zeigler decided to use Ward's (1978) Inequality Index and found that it provided reliable scores for a large number of nations; this author makes the same choice. Although INEQUAL contains data about ten years older than the other data of the study, circa 1985, the slow pace of change in inequality should allow any conclusions to remain relevant. This variable was coded so that a higher negative score meant greater equality; the higher a positive score, the less equal was the country's society. Switzerland (-165) was the

most equal society in Ward's data set, and Guinea (123) was the most unequal.

For the rate of economic growth, the indicator will be the Energy Consumption Rate (ENCONR) ( $N=121$ ) taken from the *World Development Report* (1986). This rate is an average for the period, 1973 to 1984. Degrees of change in this indicator may have an effect on political repression, either encouraging or discouraging repression.

The level of economic development is the final independent variable under consideration. Involved is not only the size of the economy per capita but its sophistication and potential resources for policy choices. Energy Consumption per capita (ENCONPC) from the *World Development Report* (1986) and Gross National Product per capita have both been used as indicators for the level of development (e.g., Hardy 1979, 213; Hibbs 1973, 25-26; Ward 1978, 61; Dye and Zeigler 1988, 48-49). Often GNP per capita data have been regarded as unreliable, even though serious efforts to improve income-based data have been made (e.g., Summers and Heston 1988). Given the reluctance of governments to report financial data accurately and, especially given the problems over exchange rates (Muller 1988, 53), ENCONPC appears to be the better choice. Energy consumption can be better understood universally in scientific and real terms, whereas, income data are denominated in national currencies and must be estimated for cross-national purposes. Due to the skewed distribution of the variable, it was reexpressed as the log of energy consumption per capita (LENCONPC).

## FINDINGS

To summarize the hypotheses, it is expected that the worse the conditions of democracy, socioeconomic needs, inequality, the rate of economic growth, and economic level, the worse will be the conditions of repression. An examination of bivariate relations between repression (REP) and all the indicators presented in the correlation matrix of Table 1 suggests support for the hypotheses. The exception is a weak bivariate relationship between REP and ENCONR, but judgment about economic growth rate should be reserved until its role can be observed within a multivariate model. One variable that can be eliminated at this stage, before a full equation is estimated, is IHSI due to evidence of multicollinearity with INEQUAL and ENCONPC, as is indicated by the high correlations of Table 1. Lewis-Beck's (1980, 58-62) standard for multicollinearity was applied here.

TABLE 1:  
Correlation Analysis

Variable	N	Mean	Simple Statistics			
			SD	SUM	Minimum	Maximum
REP	152	2.35	1.02	357.00	1.00	5.00
DEM	155	2.72	1.45	422.00	1.00	5.00
INEQUAL	114	7.06	67.54	805.00	-165.00	123.00
IHSI	129	51.75	25.50	6676.00	4.00	95.00
ENCONR	121	4.34	4.82	525.30	-5.20	21.70
LENCONPC	122	6.19	1.72	754.71	2.77	9.12

  

	Correlation Matrix					
	REP	DEM	INEQUAL	IHSI	ENCONR	LENCONPC
REP						
	-0.63	0.49	0.55	0.02	-0.46	
	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.8704	0.0001	
	152	112	126	119	120	
DEM						
		-0.46	-0.62	-0.30	0.47	
		0.0001	0.0001	0.0010	0.0001	
		114	129	121	122	
INEQUAL						
			0.87	0.33	-0.75	
			0.0001	0.0006	0.0001	
			108	103	104	
IHSI						
				0.30	-0.89	
				0.0007	0.0001	
				120	121	
ENCONR						
					-0.11	
					0.2332	
					121	
LENCONPC						

Pulling all the variables into a single regression model can reveal much more about the relationship of repression with the independent variables. Causal relationships can be pursued that more accurately reflect a complex, real world than in bivariate relations.

To test each hypothesis and to determine the combined predictive ability of the independent variables, a regression analysis was performed. The results of the procedure can be found in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
Regression of the Independent Variables with Political Repression

Variable	Full Model			Trimmed Model		
	Unstandard coefficient	Standard estimate	p	Unstandard coefficient	Standard estimate	p
DEM	-0.41	-0.59	.0001	-0.40	-0.57	.0001
INEQUAL	0.006	0.42	.0003	0.005	0.35	.0001
ENCONR	-0.06	-0.28	.0003	-0.06	-0.26	.0005
LENCONPC	0.06	0.10	.3821			
	$R^2$ .554			$R^2$ .551		

In the full model, three of the four variables were significant predictors, with DEM emerging as the most important predictor, followed by INEQUAL and ENCONR. The relationships were in the expected direction: the less democracy, the greater the inequality, and the lower the rate of economic growth, then the greater the repression. LENCONR, however, was not related to repression. The full model was significant,  $F(4, 96) = 29.87$ ,  $p = .0001$ , and accounted for 55% of the variability in the dependent variable. This analysis was based on 101 countries.

LENCONR was trimmed from the model and a second regression analysis was done using the three significant predictors from the first model. Not only did the relative importance of these variables remain, but the trimmed model [ $F(3,97) = 39.66$ ,  $p = .0001$ ] explained the same amount of variability as the four-variable model. The model of Table 2 is parsimonious, reflecting a balance between the minimum number of variables offering the maximum explanatory power.

## DISCUSSION

A country that has a government with limited power and that is responsive to its people, has sharp class divisions, and an economy with a healthy growth rate has a good chance of avoiding repression.

Democracy's strong relationship to political repression is not surprising. Democracy in full form should almost guarantee the absence of repression, but democracy is a matter of degree and may not perform perfectly to the exclusion of repression. The occasional use of repression by Western democracies demonstrates this imperfection. Only to the extent that Wesson's

(1987) dualism (limited powers and the accountability of government to the people) characterizes government, will repression generally be discouraged.

Limiting government power allows civil liberties which permit people to be free to criticize their government. For example, the enjoyment of the writ of habeas corpus, or a facsimile of it, in Chile in the 1970s allowed critics for a time to demand reform. When this writ no longer had effect, even lawyers and judges could be intimidated allowing selected persons to be "disappeared" or detained at the will of the government (Fruhling 1983). Political detention is frequently the first step in a downward spiral of torture and murder.

The accountability of a democratic government can mean that people have a chance to acquire their goals and will not become so restive as to attract the policy of repression. Gurr (1970) has observed that public order depends on people having the means to reach their aspirations, and that this dependency may be a scientific law of social organization. Democracy in full form usually has competitive elections with two or more parties and with the people finally choosing a government from this context. Such a government is more responsive to needs and wants. It is no accident that the more equal societies are also the more democratic ones. The populations of Eastern Europe are pursuing democratic reforms, not solely for the sake of grand principles, but also because they think a democratic government will meet their economic demands. Democracy has also made some progress in Latin America, but the majority of the people of the world do not take part in meaningful elections and do not control their governments. Many governments in the Third World have chosen to be authoritarian because they do not believe, or do not want to believe, their peasant populations are sufficiently prepared for democracy's complexities. This rationalization for the choice of authoritarianism instead of democracy has been considered bogus by some authors (Douglas 1972; Henderson 1977; Manglapus 1987).

The degree of inequality in society was also found to be important in explaining the use of repression by governments. Ophuls (1977, 143) claimed that, in history, the tendency has been for governments, because of scarcity, to draw a surplus from the masses so the elites could live well. Equality would have condemned all to a life of shared poverty. All societies today are characterized by inequality, but the condition of inequality has been more bearable in the better-off countries where most people live reasonably well. Inequality appears to be greater in the poorer countries, making these more likely to use repression. Under conditions of widespread poverty, the elites are more willing to hold onto their privileges by coercion (Gurr 1985). In terms of covariance, as inequality intensifies so does repression.

The economic rate of growth was found to be important in relation to repression only when involved in a model with other variables in contrast to its weak role in the correlation matrix of Table 1. The healthier the economic growth rate, the less likely is repression to occur. A growth rate is evidently not perceived as "more" for the rich, but as a desirable value that is shared or will be shared. What appears to happen is that an increase in the wealth of a country is shared because the presence of an appreciable degree of democracy permits the general population to insist that new growth be shared.

The satisfaction from growth that lessens the need for repression is likely to take time; in fact, growth may worsen income inequality at first before improving it (Midgley 1987, 38-39). The datum (ENCONR) for each country is actually an average rate of growth for 10 years, which may mean this indicator is capturing some of the effects of the passing of time. But the rate of growth is not positive in its effect for all countries, nor does economic growth help all classes equally. The elites in some countries, as in the "Brazilian Miracle," may be able to absorb all the growth and leave the masses with a rising inflation rate stimulated by the growth.

#### APPENDIX

##### A Listing of Data for All Variables

COUNTRY	REP	DEM	IHSI	INEQUAL	ENCONR	LENCONPC
AFGAN	5	1	88	120	1.6	3.87120
ALBAN	3	1	47	11	7.5	6.96791
ALGER	2	2	67	101	15.6	7.03878
ANGOLA	3	1	91	—	3.9	5.28320
ANTIGUA	1	4	—	—	—	—
ARGEN	2	4	38	-88	2.6	7.28619
AUST	1	5	16	-93	1.8	8.46863
AUSTRIA	1	5	9	-108	0.4	8.11522
BAHAM	2	4	—	—	—	—
BANGLA	3	2	79	—	7.9	3.68888
BARB	1	5	—	—	—	—
BELG	1	5	9	-108	-0.9	8.38981
BELIZE	1	4	—	46	—	—
BENIN	2	1	83	—	1.8	3.76120
BHUTAN	1	2	80	—	—	—
BOLIVIA	2	4	66	110	5.8	5.62040
BOTSW	1	4	60	15	8.2	6.01372



## APPENDIX Continued

COUNTRY	REP	DEM	IHSI	INEQUAL	ENCONR	LENCONPC
BRAZIL	3	4	50	22	4.7	6.62407
BRUNEI	2	1	—	—	—	—
BULGAR	3	1	20	-94	3.9	8.38160
BURK F	3	2	84	—	9.5	3.04452
BURMA	3	1	61	48	4.8	4.26268
BURUN	2	2	77	27	12.2	2.83321
CAMER	2	2	78	74	8.3	4.92725
CANADA	1	5	9	-95	1.8	9.12129
CAPE V	2	2	—	—	—	—
CEN AF	2	1	84	64	4.5	3.49651
CHAD	5	2	88	43	—	—
CHILE	4	2	46	4	0.8	6.67960
CHINA	3	1	50	29	5.3	6.18415
COLUM	3	5	44	36	5.3	6.63068
COMOR	3	2	—	—	—	—
CONGO	3	1	74	42	5.9	5.45104
COSTA R	1	5	40	8	2.7	6.18621
CUBA	3	1	31	-11	3.5	6.98749
CYPRUS	2	4	—	55	—	—
CZECH	3	1	20	-177	1.2	8.40939
DENMARK	1	5	9	-85	-1.0	8.15909
DJIBOU	2	2	—	—	—	—
DOM REP	2	4	53	49	2.4	5.95584
ECUADOR	2	4	54	98	14.8	6.66441
EGYPT	2	2	55	30	11.2	6.33150
EL SALV	3	4	65	69	2.9	5.23644
EQUA G	3	1	—	—	—	—
ETHIO	4	1	82	35	3.4	2.83321
E GER	3	1	15	-101	1.3	8.56121
FIJI	1	4	—	—	—	—
FINLAND	1	5	16	-87	2.3	8.50593
FRANCE	2	5	14	-95	0.5	8.16508
GABON	2	1	—	63	—	—
GAMBIA	1	3	—	50	—	—
GHANA	2	2	87	55	-1.8	4.61512
GREECE	1	4	25	-84	3.7	7.52726
GRENADA	1	4	—	—	—	—
GUATAMA	4	3	64	70	2.0	5.18178

(continued)

## APPENDIX Continued

COUNTRY	REP	DEM	IHSI	INEQUAL	ENCONR	LENCONPC
GUINEA	3	2	82	123	1.3	3.95124
GUIN B	3	1	—	—	—	—
GUYANA	2	2	42	—	—	—
HAITI	3	1	74	—	6.2	4.00733
HONDUR	2	4	62	63	3.5	5.32301
HUNGAR	2	2	17	-102	2.7	8.00169
ICELAND	1	5	16	-6	—	—
INDIA	2	4	61	44	6.5	5.23111
INDON	3	2	62	93	8.0	5.32301
IRAN	4	2	65	34	—	—
IRAQ	4	1	64	62	6.4	6.53959
IRELAND	—	5	23	7	2.7	7.78114
ISRAEL	2	5	32	-88	2.2	7.54433
ITALY	1	5	16	-122	—	7.81883
IVOR C	2	2	73	32	4.1	5.08140
JAMAICA	2	4	40	29	-3.0	6.82329
JAPAN	1	5	11	-50	0.4	8.05038
JORDAN	2	2	53	42	14.8	6.70073
KAMPU	4	1	80	63	0.9	4.06044
KENYA	3	2	77	58	1.0	4.70953
KUWAIT	2	2	35	—	2.8	8.28753
LAOS	3	1	—	47	-0.9	3.55535
LEBAN	4	3	46	19	-3.8	6.49072
LESOTH	3	2	69	-8	—	—
LIBER	4	2	71	122	2.0	5.88053
LIBYA	3	1	53	37	18.3	8.04141
LUX	1	5	6	-106	—	—
MADAG	3	2	68	—	0.5	3.80666
MALAWI	3	1	83	53	3.6	3.76120
MALAY	2	3	48	29	7.0	6.57368
MALDIV	2	3	—	—	—	—
MALI	2	2	88	—	6.5	3.25810
MALTA	2	4	—	—	—	—
MAURITS	1	4	39	—	-0.1	5.73010
MAURTA	2	2	81	—	3.2	4.84419
MEXICO	3	3	47	23	7.9	7.17625
MONGOL	—	1	47	—	—	—
MORROC	2	2	66	58	5.0	5.62040
MOZAM	4	1	95	—	0.9	4.53260

## APPENDIX Continued

COUNTRY	REP	DEM	IHSI	INEQUAL	ENCONR	LENCONPC
NEPAL	3	3	81	—	8.6	2.77259
NETH	1	5	7	-85	-0.9	8.46464
NEW Z	1	5	16	-81	1.7	8.29530
NICARA	4	2	67	41	0.7	5.45532
NIGER	3	1	85	-12	11.2	3.73767
NIGERI	2	2	80	48	12.2	4.85981
NORWAY	1	5	14	-62	2.6	9.05661
N KOR	3	1	40	29	3.5	7.62949
N YEM	3	2	78	93	21.7	4.76217
OMAN	2	1	53	—	8.5	7.78531
PAKIS	3	3	73	44	6.9	5.23644
PANAMA	2	3	47	40	-3.5	6.22258
PAP N G	1	4	68	—	4.1	5.44674
PARAG	3	2	53	32	8.9	5.44242
PERU	3	4	61	49	3.6	6.35437
PHIL	4	3	55	40	2.3	5.60212
POLAND	3	2	25	-96	2.2	8.06997
PORT	1	5	33	-34	3.7	7.10250
ROMAN	3	1	25	-88	3.4	8.11552
RWANDA	3	2	80	—	14.7	3.76120
SAO TP	2	1	—	—	—	—
SAUD A	2	1	56	29	7.4	8.18924
SENEGA	2	3	71	55	4.0	4.77068
SEYCHE	3	2	—	—	—	—
SIER L	2	2	76	55	3.5	4.34381
SING	2	3	18	-1	4.4	7.83201
SOMAL	3	1	87	89	14.9	4.41884
SOU AF	5	2	52	21	4.1	7.71289
SPAIN	2	5	25	-34	1.9	7.49610
SRI L	4	3	58	24	3.3	4.96284
ST K N	1	4	—	—	—	—
ST LUC	1	4	—	—	—	—
ST V G	1	4	—	—	—	—
SUDAN	3	2	77	63	-3.0	4.12713
SURIN	2	2	—	—	—	—
SWAZI	2	2	—	—	—	—
SWEDEN	1	5	12	-69	0.4	8.65312
SWITZ	1	5	4	-165	0.9	8.23669

(continued)

## APPENDIX Continued

COUNTRY	REP	DEM	IHSI	INEQUAL	ENCONR	LENCONPC
SYRIA	3	2	61	35	11.8	6.68336
S KOR	3	2	44	8	8.4	7.06561
S U	3	1	19	-102	3.3	8.43966
S YEM	3	1	74	89	7.0	6.52503
TAIWAN	2	2	—	-15	—	—
TANZAN	3	2	75	57	-2.0	3.63759
THAIL	2	3	47	31	5.9	5.76832
TOGO	3	1	82	—	10.0	4.69135
TRIN T	1	5	21	—	6.1	8.32045
TUNISI	2	2	56	26	7.8	6.20456
TURKEY	2	3	55	-31	4.5	6.45205
UGANDA	5	2	71	70	-5.2	3.09104
UK	1	5	12	-97	-1.3	8.14352
URUG	1	4	37	-11	0.3	6.60394
USA	—	5	8	-138	-0.1	8.89590
U A E	2	1	40	—	18.6	8.58840
VENEZ	2	5	44	24	4.5	7.82764
V NAM	3	1	69	29	-1.5	4.47734
W GER	1	5	5	-74	-0.3	8.35185
YUGO	2	2	32	-72	3.5	7.52023
ZAIRE	4	1	84	95	1.2	4.34381
ZAMBIA	3	2	74	44	1.6	6.04501
ZIMBAB	4	3	69	48	0.4	6.14847

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