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From Anti-Nepotism Discourse to Power's Mirror: The Case of José Antonio Kast

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In 2017, while still a congressman, José Antonio Kast introduced bill No. 11364-06, aimed at expanding disqualifications based on family ties for accessing state positions.

The proposal sought to prevent spouses, children, adopted relatives, or relatives up to the third degree of consanguinity or second degree of affinity from holding public positions while the familial bond existed.

The bill included no time limits: the prohibition would remain as long as the family relationship lasted.

Kast's argument was clear: "to put an end to nepotism and the capture of the state by personal interests."

The proposal failed to gain traction.

Ironically, just a year later, in April 2018, Exequiel Rauld Saade, Kast's son-in-law, was appointed to the Ministry of Education, specifically in the Subsecretariat of Early Childhood Education, without a public competition.

According to Transparency records, he was hired as a professional at grade 7 in the Division of Educational Policies, with a gross salary of 2.46 million pesos plus overtime.

His education was in Commercial Engineering, likely completed around 2014 or 2015, suggesting he did not meet the minimum experience required by DFL No. 2/2015 for leadership positions (grades 4 or 5) at that time.

In April 2019, just a year after his entry, he was promoted to Head of the Department of Studies and Statistics, with grade 4 E.U.S. and a salary of 3.09 million pesos monthly.

According to DFL 2/2015, this grade requires at least four years of professional experience post-degree (if the degree is ten semesters) or five years (for an eight-semester degree).

Considering his graduation date closer to 2015, he still fell short of these requirements when assuming the leadership role, reinforcing the idea of a politically motivated appointment rather than a technical one.

After a few months in that position, Rauld continued working through contractual agreements, providing direct advice to the Subsecretary on strategic matters.

From 2018 to 2021, he earned over 133 million pesos gross, including payments for overtime and advisory services without a competitive process.

His contractual evolution reveals a common pattern in Chilean administration: initially irregular discretionary appointments that later become “normalized” through extended honorarium contracts or advisory roles.

Meanwhile, Kast left Congress, founded Acción Republicana, and subsequently the Republican Party, consolidating a political-communicational circle that included Cristián Valenzuela, his former campaign spokesperson and current head of communications for the party.

It was Valenzuela who, on October 8, 2025, published an op-ed titled “Parasites” in La Tercera, criticizing a state that he described as “rotten, filled with operators and cronies living off taxpayer funds.”

In it, he states: “Parasites have no political color. They reproduce in every government, in every party... They are the same people who preach meritocracy while their resumes are full of favors.”

The contrast is striking: the moralistic rhetoric of Kast and his circle—portrayed as a crusade against corruption, waste, and nepotism—collides with the actual practices of his own political and familial group.

Rauld, the son-in-law, was a direct beneficiary of the same system of personal networks and discretionary appointments that Kast’s law aimed to eradicate.

Valenzuela, the spokesperson, now denounces the “parasites of the state,” yet his circle participated in the very ecosystem he criticizes.

In reality, the story of Exequiel Rauld serves as a mirror to the power structures that the republican discourse prefers to avoid: a framework repeating the vices it

claims to combat, where ethical convictions end up subordinated to family ties, trust, and political convenience.

Original article: [Relato: Del discurso contra el nepotismo al espejo del poder](#)

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