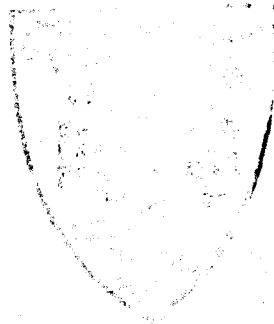


REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE AND STATE
LEGITIMACY IN LATIN AMERICA.

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the
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Philosophy by Luis Alvaro Mogollón Ramírez.



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ABSTRACT.

By: Luis A. Mogollón

REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE AND STATE LEGITIMACY IN LATIN AMERICA.

My research focuses on the dynamic relationship between political violence, formal democracy and state legitimacy in Latin America since the 1960's.

In contemporary Latin America states modernization, corruption, civil control of the armed forces, and distribution of the benefits of the neo-liberal economic model imposed on Latin America, are some of the points of discord between governors and the governed. Since newly democratized governments will find it difficult to satisfy the necessities of the people (land, housing, food, education, work, etc.), social protest will continue. In the past the shortcoming of Latin American democracy led many to take up arms. If democratic legitimacy proves elusive then Latin America could again become an area of "Chronic insurrections".

I develop a study of the guerrilla movements in the region as a symptom of the weakness of traditional democracy. I make a systematic attempt to combine empirical studies of guerrilla groups with theoretical analysis of social revolutions, because until now, guerrilla struggle has been more often defined in strictly military terms, rather than in political and social ones. Guerrilla groups nowadays are less orthodox philosophically and more pragmatic in their strategy and tactics. They may seek to obtain better social conditions through democracy but the option for violence remains. The method of inquiry best suited to the problem is a comparative approach; the appropriate sources of information are manuscripts, journals, interviews with leaders, and published analyses.

Guerrilla groups have arisen at different times and in different countries of Latin America over the last forty years. Different governments of different political persuasions such as Liberal, Conservative, Democratic, Christian, Socialist, etc., have been in power while pursuing armed confrontation against guerrillas. At the same time, the people of these societies have been suffering from the presence of dissident guerrilla movements.

My concern is the danger that the Latin American region may create a democracy that is a formalized fiction, without real content. The continuation of a series of guerrilla movements, on the left or right, could enable the problem of political order to return to the political agenda. This contemporary situation requires attention, because by improving our knowledge of guerrilla movements, we may promote the possibility of negotiable solutions. The study is therefore intended to be a contribution to the strengthening of democracy in Latin America.

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INTRODUCTION.

In the study of the establishment, consolidation and overthrow of democratic political regimes, a focus on the role of political institutions has fallen out of favour in recent decades. Analysts ¹ have preferred other explanatory variables such as culture, internal class formation, or international economic dependency; and, when examining political factors, they have focused more on the party or electoral system. These various factors, to differing degrees, do often play a role in any comprehensive explanation of political regime change. Whatever the merits of presidentialism in the previous century or early years of this century, in contemporary Latin America the logic inherent to presidential systems has helped create or exacerbate crises in democratic regimes.

Fred Riggs notes that, with a few exceptions such as the US and France, no country following a presidential model has been able to avoid a breakdown or significant disruption of some kind, whereas similar problems are true of only one-third of the Third-World countries that adopted

¹ See Juan J. Linz, "Crisis, breakdown and reequilibration", in Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, The breakdown of democratic regimes, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1978); Scott Mainwaring, "Presidentialism in Latin America", in Latin American Research Review, Volume 25, No. 1, 1990; Fred Riggs, The survival of presidentialism in America: Para-Constitutional practices, (Hawaii, University of Hawaii, 1987); Arturo Valenzuela, "Hacia una democracia estable: La opción parlamentaria para Chile", en Revista de Ciencia Política, No. 7, 1985.

parliamentary constitutions. Linz and Valenzuela advance their arguments against presidentialism by comparing relatively successful parliamentary regimes with failed presidential ones marked by military overthrows, in which elections did not provide clear majorities for a single party or coherent coalition of parties, for example: Italy with Argentina or Chile, and Spain with Chile. In his review essay, Mainwaring concurs with the argument that institutional analysis must be brought back and more specifically that presidentialism may negatively affect the possibilities for democratic consolidation, especially in multi-party systems; he also usefully warns of the risk of an excessive focus on institutional analysis that underplays issues of domination.

Even after reviewing the perceived faults of the presidential system in Latin America, these scholars have often concluded that because of cultural factors and the need to centralize power to achieve national integration, presidentialism was still the system best suited for the continent. ² Presidentialism has been favoured principally because of its perceived ability to increase state capacity and achieve national integration, rather than because it

² See Harold E. Davis, "The political experience of Latin America", in Harold E. Davis, Government and politics in Latin America, (New York, Ronald Press, 1958); Jacques Lambert, Latin America: Social structure and political institutions, (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1967).

was better than alternative institutional arrangements in terms of consolidating democratic rule.

Yet at least four factors may be identified that are either inherent to or empirically associated with presidentialism in Latin America and that may have negative effects on political regime consolidation. These factors are: the impact of attempts to check presidential abuse of power while seeking, paradoxically, to strengthen presidential power; the absence of a moderating power; the "winner-take-all" nature of presidential elections, with the potential for serious executive-legislative deadlock; the polarizing potential of these elections.

In presidential systems, major fears depend on whether the president possesses a majority in the legislature or not. When the president has a congressional majority, the principal fear is of excessive, unchecked presidential power. This fear has led to efforts to control potential abuses, primarily by prohibiting re-election, though also by such measures as filibustering, judicial review, federalism, or even granting the armed forces a constitutional "moderating power". Yet, in efforts to sidestep immobility, a consequence of executive-congressional deadlock when the president and congress are of opposite parties, or of lack of support towards the end of a president's term, or perceived congressional localism,

countries have often strengthened presidential power vis-à-vis the congress.

This, in turn, has tended to shift political struggles away from electoral arenas, with potentially negative consequences for regime survival: presidents can become virtual or actual dictators through the use of special powers, or fears of such action may encourage other political actors to seek a military overthrow of the president. The potential for these actions is increased by the fact that presidential systems usually lack a symbolic head of state, either a monarch or a president, which could provide flexibility or serve as a moderating influence or unifying element in times of crisis.

The dilemmas of presidentialism can be illustrated by the Colombian case. In the late 1940s, the rhythm of presidential politics in a context of a minority president with extensive appointive powers, executive-congressional deadlock, fixed terms in office, and polarization around "winner-take-all" elections, intensified the sense of crisis, which eventually resulted in a breakdown of the regime. A parliamentary regime, which could have led to a coalition government, mitigating fears of exclusion and making the sharing of spoils easier, might well have attenuated a number of these critical issues and prevented the 1949 breakdown. Yet firm judgment on this point is complicated by the existence of past patterns of intense

inter-party violence in the country. It is also difficult to point to presidentialism as the insurmountable obstacle, given the fact that successful accommodation required peculiar and costly institutional adaptations to ensure that it would function in a presidential system.

The consolidation of the "National Front" agreement that facilitated the restoration of civilian rule in 1958 has been unique among consociational cases in being the only one in a presidential system.³ Its rigidity and the method chosen to ensure that the constitution was appropriately modified by a national plebiscite, showed distrust of sectarian, regional and local figures by national party leaders. It also demonstrated the willingness of the majority Liberal party, as it was out of government, to underplay its potential power and agree to grant an equal share of political power to the Conservatives in order to ensure access to the government itself. Thus, the rigidity of the "National Front" agreement reflected not only a desire for demobilization following the country's intense violence, but also fears of potential abuse of power by a party in control of the unitary, presidential system.

³ Two other presidential systems, Venezuela and Chile, had democratic transitions with important consociational elements. However, neither the transition of Venezuela in 1958 nor that of Chile in 1989 involved constitutional changes, and in Venezuela a full return to a model of competitive politics was achieved by 1968.

The almost inevitable result of the immobility inherent in the "National Front" agreement was the strengthening of formal presidential power. Combined with the fact the agreement was constitutionally enshrined, this had several negatives effects. It encouraged coalition rule to continue longer than was necessary because the benefits of participating in the executive weakened Congress as a site of policy discussion and accommodation even as links between regional figures and national leaders deteriorated. This also simultaneously encouraged and increased reliance on brokerage and clientelism by regional politicians and the growth of non-electoral opposition and tactics by increasingly frustrated groups in society. As sectarian party hatreds receded a different kind of guerrilla violence and civic protest emerged in the late 1960s and through the 1970s until the 1980s, when national party leaders saw the need for political reforms and for attempted incorporation of guerrilla movements into the country's political process. However, the structure of incentives generated by coalition governments, multiple party lists, and high-abstention elections so favoured regional leaders that they resisted change.

The dual process of amnesty for the guerrillas and political reforms began somewhat separately under President Betancour but became joined by the middle of his term. Economic problems limited the government's ability to deliver on its promises of socio-economic measures, but

guerrilla groups had also been promised reforms to assure them greater political access. Laws touching on electoral reform, the civil service, party structure, campaign financing, regionalization, local referendums, and access to television and public information were passed though their impact was limited. They had been considerably weakened in their passage to being approved.

On the other hand, most Latin American countries have at one time or another suffered political upheavals threatening national harmony, internal peace, and institutional stability. Chile, the Latin American country that stood out for its long tradition of representative democracy, suffered its most serious crisis with the violent overthrow of constitutional government in 1973 and the installation of a authoritarian regime lasting almost eighteen years. From the perspective of Chile's military commanders, the September military coup meant the rejection not only of the Marxist experiment of President Allende, but also of the inefficient democratic regime that had failed to turn away externally inspired demagogic movements intent on destroying the nation's institutions and corroding "patriotic values". From the outset, the dictatorship expressed profound contempt for parties and politicians and the institutional arenas in which they were most visible, particularly the national legislature and local elected governments.

The diagnosis soon led the new authorities to define their mission as foundational: they would break sharply with the past. Rather than simply rectify the misguided policies of the ousted government by restoring the pre-existing constitutional system, they would embark on a concerted strategy to revolutionize economic policy and implement far-reaching political and institutional changes. The two objectives would soon be viewed as closely connected. Economic development, spurred by the private sector and combined with the destruction of the old party system and the establishment of more authoritarian political institutions, would lead to basic changes in the very physiognomy of Chilean democracy, with far-reaching implications for the party system and the underlying political loyalties of the citizenry.

The expectation of Chile's military rulers was that a dictatorial interlude of indeterminate length would forge a wholly different country. Market forces and an open, export-orientated economy would unleash entrepreneurial skill and boost production and economic growth. In the political arena, Chile would become a society of loyal and obedient subjects, no longer divided by class or ideology. To guarantee the emergence of this "protected" democracy, the transformed party system would operate within the framework of a new constitutional order characterized by a far more powerful president, a weakened parliament, appointed rather than elected local governments, and a

central role for an autonomous military establishment that was the ultimate guarantor of national security.

The crisis of Chilean democracy was exacerbated by the incongruity between the nation's competitive and polarized party system on the one hand, and its institutional system on the other. The challenges for democracy in Chile were closely linked to the difficulties of making compatible a presidentialist constitutional framework, with its winner-take-all elections, and a polarized multi-party political system in which no single party, or political tendency of the Left, Right, or Centre, could generate a majority to elect the president or support him in the legislature. Although coalitions were frequently created prior to the presidential race in order to maximize electoral chances, the presidential system provided few incentives for the maintenance of stable coalitions after the president took office. The result was unstable minority governments and frequent governmental paralysis.

These are two extreme cases, and are reasonably clear cut. Other cases are not so extreme or easily explained, and there are many theories as to why revolutions occurred in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala. As Nicos Poulantzas has recognized,⁴ all political crises consist of a common set of characteristics. These shared characteristics mark

⁴ See Nicos Poulantzas, Fascismo y dictadura, (México, Siglo XXI, 1971).

the class struggle of any society in which a certain general equilibrium between contending social groups has broken down. In other words, not only must social relations, and especially their political, economic, and ideological aspects have to be affected. The guaranteed privileges serving to maintain the system's normal reproduction also have to be altered. Furthermore, the crisis can only be seen as revolutionary when the rupture in political relations affects all elements that form the class base of the state's power.

In Central America, in effect, the fragile nature of the loyalties created in order to keep some people subservient to others was combined with elite unwillingness to share power with the subordinate classes. These two factors must also be recognized as fundamental elements affecting social institutions such as the political parties, the church, the mass media, the unions, the schools, and the family, both in their formative stages and in the current period of crisis. Thus, this type of crisis is at once a challenge to state power and a consequence of the weakness of that power, because the state is the institutional crux of the system of class domination. ⁵

It is sometimes suggested, that the roots of the difficulties in Central America go back to the Spanish

⁵ See Ruy M. Marini, "El reformismo y la contrarrevolución", en Serie Popular ERA, No. 37, 1976.

colonial period, even to the structures of the pre-Columbian Indian civilizations, and there is some validity in this claim. ⁶ On the other hand, it has been argued that the modern period in Central American history corresponds to a global acceleration of social/political/economic change that has been going on since the 1930's. As economic and social modernization proceeded, a variety of new social and political groups began to emerge, challenging or, most often, seeking a place for themselves within in, the older system of hierarchy and elites. The groups included a new business/commercial/import/export sector sometimes distinct from, but often connected to the older landed elite, an emerging and aspiring middle class that included both civilians and military officers, more militant and mobilized student groups, and a nascent trade union movement. ⁷

These changes were managed not entirely unsatisfactorily in most of the countries from the 1930s on into the 1960s. In Nicaragua the elder Somoza ruled as an authoritarian, but it was a generally mild authoritarianism, and he opened the gates to middle-class and mestizo civilians and the military and provided for considerable modernization of his country. Costa Rica had a democratic revolution in 1948

⁶ See Howard J. Wiarda, Politics and social change in Latin America: Still a distinct tradition?, (Boulder, Westview, 1992).

⁷ See Kalman H. Silvert, The conflict society: Reaction and revolution in Latin America, (New York, American Universities Field Staff, 1966).

that ushered in stable, progressive middle-class rule. In Honduras there was also gradual progress under both civilian and military rule. In El Salvador a government of national character came to power in 1958 that in some areas supplanted the proverbial "fourteen families" and in others ruled alongside them. Guatemala was the most turbulent dictatorship in the 1930s though it also stimulated some modernization. It went on to suffer a revolutionary period from 1944 to 1954, followed by US reaction and considerable turbulence and guerrilla struggle in the 1960s. ⁸

The crisis of the system of oligarchic domination and of its corresponding institutional manifestation, the liberal state, did not begin during the 1930s as in some Southern American societies. On the contrary, the global capitalist crisis, which spread to other countries via international trade, commercial credits, and financial intermediation, left the social bases of the oligarchy's political predominance intact. In effect the crisis only reinforced those social bases. Though protests of various sorts took place, they did not achieve a definitive erosion of the political order. Perhaps the best example of such challenges to the system is Augusto César Sandino's nationalist movement (1927-1932).

⁸ See Howard J. Wiarda and Harvey F. Kline, Latin American politics and development, (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1979).

But the system of domination was able to resist those effects of the crisis by applying traditional measures of control, including the political exclusion and violent suppression of the popular masses, and, in particular, of the peasantry. These measures implied permanent forms of institutionalized violence in conjunction with restrictions on civil rights, such as the elimination of political parties, and the elimination or prohibition of trade union organizations. Furthermore, executive power was predominantly personalized, and arbitrary. By assuming the role of the oligarchy's armed right hand, caudillos and/or military leaders placed themselves at the summit of political power in each country, with the exception of Costa Rica. Their justifying credo repeated the old, familiar formula of sacrificing social progress to "order", whose value reigns supreme in backward agrarian societies.

On the other hand, the oligarchy's unwillingness either to allow or to encourage social change, stemmed from political causes. This was due to the orthodox conservative behaviour of the dominant agricultural groups and by the large landowners, particularly the coffee growers, which established the boundaries within which economic policy could take shape. The need to defend the political order in turn inspired acceptance of a conservative diagnosis and treatment of the ailing body of the economy. In sum, the governments of the time were responding, through both

omission and commission, to deeply rooted oligarchic instincts.

As a result, the eventual moment of economic recovery was delayed, the vitality of the economic recovery was reduced, and its consolidation made more difficult. Deflationary policies, for example, exacerbated the long-term negative effects of the decline in foreign commerce. Worse still were the corresponding restrictions on bank credit, the suspension of public works, and a shrinking national budget.⁹ The upshot was an economy paralyzed by a lack of demand in almost every sector. An orthodox, neoclassical economic model induced the oligarchy to neglect supply, to sharply cut public spending, to reduce wages, and to block the possibility of mobilizing financial resources through institutional channels.

Therefore, the concept of "governability" directs attention to a state's capacity to govern. For the Latin American situation, the issue of its growing crisis of governability refers to three types of problem: (1) the absence of enduring coalitions, (2) policy ineffectiveness, and (3) an incapacity to accommodate political conflict without violence. A government whose power rests on fluctuating

⁹ See Henry Wallich, and James Adler, Proyecciones económicas de las finanzas públicas: Un estudio experimental en El Salvador, (Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1949); James Adler, et. al., Las finanzas públicas y el desarrollo económico de Guatemala, (México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1952).

coalitions and whose leaders repeatedly fail to fulfil their stated goals and to control politically directed violence will be deemed to be a government with a low capacity to govern.

In a democratic polity, the issue of the endurance of coalitions refers mainly to the stability of social support that competing parties may or may not enjoy. A fluctuating social base often implies fluctuating party membership and low levels of identification between parties and supporters. The organization of such parties is also likely to be weak, without clear and coherent programmes. If all or most of the parties in a polity display these characteristics, the governments led by such competing parties will probably be vulnerable to wide swings in public opinion and to populist tendencies.

The issue of policy effectiveness can be understood in either more or less demanding terms. One could, conceivable, set up standards whereby some objective definition of a society's problems would be sought and against which the capacity of a government to solve problems would be assessed. A more modest standard of policy effectiveness, adopted here, is to judge a government's performance on issues that the government itself defines as areas of priority. A government that repeatedly fails to accomplish its stated goals is likely to be a government that does not govern well.

The last and most obvious indicator of increasing problems of governability is the pursuit of political goals by violent means, either by the state or by its citizens. The absence of open violence, especially in non-democratic settings, does not necessarily indicate a government that governs well, but an increase in politically orientated violence in a more or less open polity nearly always indicates a growing crisis of governability. It indicates that the state does not possess the institutions necessary for peacefully resolving the society's normal political conflicts.

Thus, the issue of governability directs attention to both governmental and political traits. Ruling parties without stable social support, a government that can not meet its own goals, and a polity in which political goals increasingly come to be pursued by violent means are all characteristics of growing problems of governability. A democratic nation that suffers such problems and comes to be characterized by them is likely to be experiencing a crisis of governability.

Finally, the significant role of the state in contemporary developing countries adds an additional set of causal variables. The state in the countries of Latin America is not only an agent of political order; it is also responsible for facilitating socio-economic development. The attempts to establish legitimacy and order in these

settings periodically come into conflict with efforts to promote socio-economic change from above. Whereas the former tends to require that the state accommodates many of the competing demands, effective performance of the developmental function pushes the state to stand above society in order to act as a rational agent of change. This tension is not irreconcilable. Its continuous presence, however, strains governmental capacities, adding several structural perversions that contribute to recurring crises of governability.

Firstly, as a result of the state's widespread encroachment on the affairs of society, which, on balance, is neither as undesirable nor as easily done away with as some would have it, the distinction between the public realm and the private sector becomes blurred. Thus, the state cannot claim that distributive problems are social and not political ones. Under conditions of competitive politics, moreover, distribution, along class, status, or ethnic lines, tends to be rapidly politicized. The resulting demands can strain the government's capacity, both to accommodate and to instigate development. So, establishing "hegemony" within the framework of an interventionist democratic state typically tends to over-politicize the polity; conversely, the absence of democracy makes it difficult to legitimate state power.

Secondly, a highly interventionist state tends to control a relatively large proportion of a poor society's "free-floating" economic resources. Under these circumstances, individuals and social groups arrive at the view that their everyday struggles for livelihood must be fought not only in the market and in the civil society but also in the state arena. The state and its resources become objects of considerable political attention. Again, if the situation is one of competitive politics, access to the state often becomes a matter of bitter contest. Although it is normal in most polities to seek power, both as an end in itself and as a means to influence policy, the added element of intensity seen in low-income, interventionist states stems from the fact that access to state resources is one of the few avenues to rapid upward mobility. Thus, control of the state becomes the goal for the competitive energies of many who under different politico-economic conditions would pursue other productive tasks.

A highly interventionist state therefore tends to politicize its society more than a limited state does. As the state reaches everywhere, ubiquity characterizes its politics. Of course, in states in which political competition is not allowed, the state's vast presence can be used to stifle political activities. An interventionist democratic state, however, typically encourages considerable politically orientated activism. The pervasiveness and intensity of political activism tend to

be even higher in mobilized but low-income settings. This is because alternative outlets for competitive energies in low-income societies tend to be limited or absent.

An interventionist democratic state in a developing country is unusual. Cases of this type have been relatively few, and their political dynamics are not well understood. One thing, however, that should be clear, even on a *a priori* grounds, is that, if sustained, democracy in a low-income setting typically gives rise to an enormous outpouring of political activity. Thus, well-organized political parties become especially crucial. Parties constitute one set of political institutions that can help narrow the gap between the growth in politicized demands and governmental effectiveness. Suffice it to note at the outset that in the absence of effective mediating institutions like parties, rapid politicization typically exacerbates problems of governability.

Therefore, given an interventionist state in a poor economy, those who control state power tend to exercise enormous influence. Because such control often is in the hands of individuals rather than institutions, leaders with charismatic appeal typically are at the helm of the state in low-income developing countries. The personalities and roles of these leaders can have far-reaching consequences for patterns of political change. Whereas this is true in many polities, it takes on added significance in low-income

developing countries, where the importance of the leadership is structurally propelled. Whatever may be happening in the social structure in such settings, incompetent and recalcitrant leaders typically tend to exacerbate the problems of governability. Power-hungry leaders, therefore, often are as responsible for weakening democratic institutions as are the demands of newly mobilized social groups.

EL SALVADOR.

Introduction.

El Salvador, located on the Pacific coast of Central America, is the smallest mainland nation in the Western Hemisphere, with a total area of 8,260 square miles. The population was estimated at 3.4 million in 1970 and 4.4 million in 1992.¹⁰ Thus, the country has the second highest density in the Western Hemisphere, over 400 per square mile; there are no more arable tracts left for agriculture, and the country cannot raise enough food crops for the expanding population. Further, the best agricultural land is concentrated in the hands of the leading families, who raise crops for cash sale, such as coffee and cotton.

About 40 per cent of the population lives in urban areas, and nearly everyone else lives within miles of a major city. Three cities have populations of over 100,000 and six others, between 30,000 and 100,000. Still, the country is essentially rural, with many small villages and single farms scattered over the landscape. In 1961, 44.4 per cent of the population were under fifteen years of age, and 5.5 percent were over sixty, which put great strain on the already burdened and scarce national resources; a

¹⁰ See The World Bank, World tables 1994, (Washington, The International Bank, 1994).

relatively small proportion of people had to work to support the economically inactive young people.

Ethnically, the people are considered to be either ladinos or Indians, where the term ladino is a cultural rather than a racial designation. Most ladinos are racially mestizos, but whites, negroes, and even full-blooded Indians are included in the cultural designation. In effect, a ladino is one who does not follow Indian practices, an acculturated Indian. The number of Indians in the country is estimated to be between 100,000 and 400,000; censuses do not include questions about race.

The economy is based upon agriculture and industry. Agriculture is the largest segment of the economy, but industry is the fastest growing, and the country is the most industrialized in Central America. Coffee is the dominant commercial crop, cost of production is low, and the quality is high. However, the chief food crop is maize. More acreage is devoted to maize than to coffee. Rice, sugar-cane, beans, yuca, potatoes, and cotton are also grown. On the other hand, the principal industrial activity is the processing of agricultural products. Foodstuffs, cotton textiles, sisal bags, leather, footwear, cigarettes, and soap are some of the chief products manufactured.

A small elite group, some descended from the original Spanish settlers and some descended from Spanish immigrants

who came in the second half of the nineteenth century, control the economy. Thus, the emergence of this oligarchy was relatively recent and occurred with the development of coffee as a prime export. There is almost no rural middle class, and the gap between rich and poor is very obvious. The cities have a growing middle-class, which, together with the upper class, consumes most of the wealth of the country.

The country has had fifteen constitutions; the last, the Constitution of 1983, is still in effect today. The various constitutions have reflected the struggle between Liberals and Conservatives, each one containing the views and principles of the prevailing faction. Local government is composed of 14 departments, divided in turn into 260 municipalities. Departments are headed by an appointed governor and provide some local services. Municipalities are akin to townships and are headed by an elected mayor and council-men. Municipalities have a degree of autonomy in local matters, and municipal elections are contested by national, regional, and local political parties and partisan groups.

Members of the Salvadorean oligarchy ruled the country directly until 1931. As a result of a massive peasant insurrection that cost no fewer than 20,000 lives, a military dictatorship established itself in the country fifty years ago. From then on the military were directly in

charge of the political system until 1986. The officers of the army, in alliance with the civilian oligarchy, adopted a rigid, inflexible attitude towards anything that would oppose their domination or that would tend to change the kind of society to which they were accustomed and from which both groups derived considerable privileges. Therefore, the dominant groups committed frauds in presidential elections in 1972 and 1977 and stopped an attempt to initiate change by a highly publicized programme of agrarian reform in 1976.

Coffee.

With the introduction of coffee production during the 1920s a second kind of development began. In response to rising international prices, farmers began to shift from indigo to coffee. A radical programme of land reform was initiated by the government designed to transform a countryside devoted to subsistence agriculture into one dominated by corporations. The more recent stage of development and exclusion had its origins in the Great Depression. With coffee prices faltering, an attempt was made to diversify agricultural exports. In the 1950s and 1960s, large regions of the Pacific lowlands were converted into cotton plantations, and sugar production was expanded in middle altitude areas. Again, many peasants were displaced.

With the onset of the Great Depression... the demand for coffee on the international markets

collapsed and prices fell dramatically. With coffee no longer in demand, the limited possibilities of the peasantry to obtain even temporary work faded away.¹¹

Following World War II, a small industrial bourgeoisie had arisen and, in alliance with the military, technocrats, and a sector of the coffee oligarchy primarily engaged in the export business, had set out to modernize Salvadorean capitalism through industrialization, agricultural diversification, and political reform. However, this new industrial elite did not create an internal market for their industrial products by raising the living standards of the masses through structural reforms, but sought to generate an external demand in the form of the Central American Common Market. As a result, El Salvador has been burdened with one of the most rigid class systems and unequal income distribution in Latin America. For over a century, social and economical life has been dominated by a small landed elite. About 2 per cent of the population own 60 per cent of the land and receive a third of the national income.¹²

Development has political implications as well. Industrialization and modernization gives rise to new

¹¹ Liisa North, Bitter grounds: Roots of revolt in El Salvador, (Ontario, Between the Lines, 1981), p. 29.

¹² See Thomas P. Anderson, The war of the dispossessed: Honduras and El Salvador 1969, (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1981); Simon R. Lawrence, and James Stephens Jr., El Salvador land reform 1980-81: Impact audit, (Boston, Oxfam, 1981).

socio-economic groups, especially the urban middle and working classes. These sectors, in turn, make economic and political demands. El Salvador is a classic example of acute structural petrification. The rules of the political game only permitted change that did not threaten the position of established elites. Thus, a 1981 Agency for International Development (AID) report, based on a 1977-78 random sample of 1,366 Salvadorean households (excluding metropolitan San Salvador), found that 49 per cent of household heads had no formal education and another 30 per cent were functionally illiterate; the median educational level for family members over eighteen years of age was two years nation wide and zero for rural areas. ¹³

In summary, the transformation in land tenure structures and production was not accompanied by equally significant changes in the nature of the state and political power relations. The state and the ruling coffee oligarchy came to rely on coercion to maintain the stability and expansion of the new economic order. With the peasantry for its part resisting the implementation of liberal land laws, the period has been studded with minor and major rebellions. Force became necessary to consolidate and maintain the position of the oligarchy in the rural areas, to guarantee its control of the land as well as of adequate supplies of

¹³ See William L. Flinn; Suzanne Vaughn, and Linda K. Wright-Romero, Profiles of rural poor and factor related to poverty: El Salvador rural poor survey, June 1977-May 1978, (Columbus, Ohio State University, 1982).

labour to the plantations. Thus, the judicial system was revamped to meet the needs of landlords with new laws enabling private property owners to expel tenants and squatters from their estates via the local civil and military authorities. Consequently, the alternative of armed struggle developed, and became a main political instrument of the disenfranchised.

Historical Background.

Under Oscar Osorio (1950-1956) the promise of the Revolutionary Council to remove the army from politics soon proved empty. The president and his colleagues were loath to allow any significant opposition. The Revolutionary Party of Democratic Unification (PRUD) emerged as a political actor in 1954. The regime so restricted the activities of opposition parties in the Assembly election campaign that they withdrew their candidates. Osorio's justification for this renewed interference was that an open campaign would permit Communism to flourish in El Salvador. ¹⁴ The increasing radicalization of the Guatemalan government was a source of concern to the military and the oligarchy, and there was agreement between them that radical elements in El Salvador should be given no opportunity to gain a toehold in the country's political life.

¹⁴ See Robert V. Elam, Appeal to arms: Army and politics in El Salvador 1931-1964, (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico - PhD dissertation, 1968).

Therefore, by the mid-1950's, army officers once again held a large number of government posts, including a majority of the departmental governorships and key offices in new institutes that had been established to develop and carry out various reforms. The 1950's suppression ¹⁵ provided sufficient political pressure to foment the development of several centre-to-left organizations. As these groups became more vocal in their demands for reform the regime grew more defensive, so suppression increased thereby producing more opposition.

Under pressure from the US through its ambassador, Williams, and to the dismay of the oligarchy, President Rivera opened the electoral process to opposition parties. He established proportional representation in the National Assembly, thus guaranteeing the opposition representation commensurate with its electoral strength. After the Cuban revolution, the US cast about for an alternative to right-wing military dictatorship and left-wing revolution in Latin America and discovered the Christian Democrats, who promised a "third-way" to revolution through social and economical reforms via the development model. Thus, the US encouraged the fledgling Christian Democratic party (PDC) in El Salvador during the 1960s.

¹⁵ See Salvador C. Carpio, Secuetro y capucha en un país del mundo libre, (San José, EDUCA, 1979).

President Rivera dictated to the National Conciliation Party (PCN) national convention his choice of General Fidel Sánchez Hernández as successor. The only opponent who received any attention, apart from Sánchez, was Fabio Castillo, the candidate from the Renewal Action Party (PAR), and rector of the National University. Further, the Catholic Church jumped into the fray with a condemnation of the PAR by the Episcopal Conference issued two weeks before the election.

In the late 1960s two other opposition parties were formed. One was the Revolutionary National Movement (MNR), which affiliated with the Socialist International. The other party was the Nationalist Democratic Union (UDN), which described itself as the non-communist left but was in fact, the legal front for the proscribed Salvadorean Communist Party.¹⁶ Further, in September 1971 the PDC, MNR, and UDN announced their intention of forming a permanent coalition, the National Opposition Union (UNO), not just for the coming election but to work together on a continuing basis.

After the abortive coup led by Colonel Benjamín Mejía, and the inauguration of Molina it appeared for a brief time that the balance had been restored. But 1972 proved to be a watershed: the army dominated government had increasingly infuriated most of the oligarchy by its modest reform

¹⁶ See Stephen Webre, José Napoleón Duarte and the Christian Democratic Party in Salvadorean politics 1960-1972, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1979).

efforts; and it had alienated many workers, peasants, and youth by the inadequacy of those reforms and by the blatant fraud that paraded as an election. The scapegoat of Molina's campaign became the University of El Salvador (UES), a target of increasingly frequent right-wing attacks. Further, Molina induced the National Assembly in July to issue a decree ending the university's autonomy, and order its campuses in San Salvador, Santa Ana, and San Miguel to be occupied by security forces. Many professors, students, and administrators were arrested; foreigners among them were expelled, and a good number of Salvadoreans were exiled.

In December 1980 José Napoleón Duarte was sworn in as President, but in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, conducted in March 1982, the PDC failed to win an absolute majority against the five Right-wing parties, and formed in opposition to them a government of National Unity. Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, leader of the extreme right-wing Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (ARENA) emerged as the most powerful figure and became president of the National Constituent Assembly.

In April a politically independent banker, Alvaro Magaña, was elected interim President of El Salvador, after pressure from the armed forces. However, the Assembly voted to award itself considerable power over the President, but military leaders then demanded that five ministerial posts

be given to members of the PDC, fearing that, otherwise, US military aid would be withdrawn. Then a presidential elections was scheduled for 1983.

The presidential election planned for 1983, was postponed until March 1984, as a result of disagreement on the National Constituent Assembly over the new Constitution, which finally became effective in December 1983. The agrarian reform programme caused serious disputes between ARENA and the PDC, and prompted a campaign by Right-wing death squads against trade unionists and peasant leaders. Further, in February the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front- Democratic Revolutionary Front (FMLN-FDR) proposed the formation of a broadly based provisional government as part of a peace plan without preconditions. The plan was rejected by the government, so the guerrillas refused to participate in the presidential elections, conducted in March 1984, and attempted to prevent voting in various provinces.

Following his inauguration in June 1984, President Duarte instituted a purge of the armed forces and the reorganization of the police force. Despite the inauguration, in September 1987, of a National Reconciliation Commission (CRN) appointed by the President in August, and the Government's proclamation in November of a unilateral cease-fire, no long-term cessation of hostilities was maintained by either side. In 1989, the

election result was, as expected, a victory for the ARENA candidate, Alfredo Cristiani.

The Guerrilla.

The seizure of power and the destruction of the old regime were the principal objectives of the advancing revolutionary process. The seizure of power has been defined as "the moment in which the revolutionary forces destroy and dismantle the state apparatus, which is the old ruling class, organ of political domination and repression".¹⁷ This was a long term objective of the revolution, but it is also considered to be a continuing process in the revolutionary praxis of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN).

... Furthermore, the crisis that is being endured in Latin America and the Caribbean is not only economic, but one of capitalist domination, obsolete agrarian structures, and the entire gamut of relations associated with dependent capitalism.¹⁸

Specifically, the guerrilla organizations' capacities and influence developed in conjunction with linkages established with a number of broadly-based and loosely-structured political coalitions. The largest of the

¹⁷ See Saniel E. Lozano, "El problema de la revolución", en Serie Teoria, Cuaderno No. 4, 1985.

¹⁸ Franciso A. Alvarez, "Transition before the transition: The case of El Salvador", in Latin American Perspectives, Volume 15, No. 1, 1988, p. 81.

coalitions, the Popular Revolutionary Block (BPR), was founded in 1975 and associated itself with the oldest of the guerrilla organizations, the Popular Forces of Liberation-Farabundo Martí (FPL-FM). The BPR brought together the Christian Federation of Salvadorean Peasants (FECCAS), the Federation of Rural Workers (FTC), the National Teachers Association (ANDES), the Union of Slum Dwellers, the Union Coordinating Committee made up of more than fifty industrial unions, the Association of University Professors, and the three federations of university and secondary school students. ¹⁹

The three other smaller coalitions were similarly structured. The United Popular Action Front (FAPU), formed in 1974 and later associated with the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN); the Popular League 28th of February (LP-28), a student dominated coalition established in 1977 supporting the Popular Revolutionary Army (ERP) ²⁰; and the popular Liberation Movement (MLP), organized jointly with the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores Centroamericanos (PRTC) in 1979.

¹⁹ See William L. Wipfler, "El Salvador: Reform as cover for repression", in Christianly and crisis, Volume 40, No. 8, 1980.

²⁰ This coalition took its name from the date in 1977 on which security forces killed more than one hundred demonstrators protesting the fraudulent election of general Romero to the presidency.

On the 11th, January 1980, a new coalition called the Movement for National Unity (MVP) came together. It included the BPR, FAPU, and LP-28, as well as the Communist Party associated with the Democratic Nationalist Union (UDN). The leadership of these organizations constituted themselves into the Revolutionary Coordination of the Masses, which in combination with the Communist Party (PCS), and the guerrilla organizations formed the Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU), to coordinate the military actions. Then, on April 18, 1980 the Democratic Front joined with the Coordinator, adopting its programme and forming the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR), which even today leads the political opposition in El Salvador. The FDR's military arm, the successor to the DRU, is the FMLN.

In El Salvador US investment rose tenfold between 1913 and 1930 while British investment fell by 15 per cent, to less than a third of North American holdings. US economic interests were very important but they have always been subordinate in the Caribbean and Central American region to strategic and military requirements. It took the fear of spreading revolution, brought home by the Sandinista's victory in Nicaragua in July of 1979, to move the United States into action.

... Between 1981 and 1987, official US assistance to El Salvador was approximately 3.000 million

dollars. On average it has been 4.000 million dollars each year... ²¹

Therefore, the conjuncture in El Salvador was characterized by a growing popular struggle against the model of domination that the US had been imposing on the country. From January, 1986, the correlation of forces in El Salvador revolved around the development of large scale military operations carried out by the Salvadorean armed forces under the direction of the Reagan administration. Towards the second half of 1986, the correlation of forces tended to centre on the government's proposal for dialogue with the FMLN-FDR.

The Popular Forces of Liberation-Farabundo Martí (FPL-FM) had been formed in 1970. It emerged in a split from the PCS, which had never achieved legal status because of its role in the peasant rebellion of 1932. The FPL-FM under the leadership of long time PCS Secretary General Cayetano Carpio, drew its cadres from radicalized sectors of the labour movement and the universities.

... Our conception is very elementary. The people, we say, have two arms to liberate themselves, the military arm and the political arm. The first one responds to the guerrilla warfare, the second one to the mass movement. ²²

²¹ Raúl M. Benítez, "Empate militar y reacomodo político en El Salvador", en Nueva Sociedad, No. 106, 1990, p. 77.

²² Marta Harneker, Con la mirada en alto: Historia de las FPL Farabundo Martí a través de sus dirigentes, (San Salvador, ECA, 1993), p. 80.

The second guerrilla organization, the Popular Revolutionary Army (ERP), was founded in 1971 by radical Christians, primarily university students associated with the Christian Democratic Party. Between 1975 and 1977 the ERP put itself through a process of self criticism and purged the hardliners from the leadership, but even there after its brand of politico-military activity was highly adventurist. This was styled "people's revolutionary war" with the end of establishing a popular democratic government that would lead to socialism.

The third, the Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN), emerged as a split from the ERP in 1975. The line taken by the FARN was that of national Resistance built around an anti-fascist front, in which the guerrilla would act as the military vanguard less for insurrection than for halting the rise of the Right while the organization of the masses was improved and a united Left built. The concept was founded on an ambiguous political stance on the nature of the class struggle in El Salvador, but there are to be found in the National Resistance's (RN) positions more elisions and contradictions than in those of the other two groups. The FARN raised considerable funds and gained the most international notoriety through abductions of members of the international business community.

A fourth guerrilla organization, the Revolutionary Party of Central American Workers (PRTC) was founded after general Romero's overthrow in 1979. As the other two groups above favoured the strategy that combined revolutionary war with popular insurrection.

The leadership of these guerrilla groups met in Havana in May 1980 (Salvador Sánchez Cerén [Leonel González] of the FPL, Joaquín Villalobos of the ERP, Shafick Handal of the FAL, Eduardo Sancho [Fermán Cienfuegos] of the FARN, and Francisco Jovel [Roberto Rocca] of the PRTC), and agreed to coordinate their activities within a unified revolutionary directorate (CRM). This command structure never achieved complete unity of purpose, and disagreements continued about internal strategies and external alignments.

... The FDR has a different political rationale to the FMLN. The organizations that formed the FMLN have Marxist-Leninist tendencies and are of popular origin, especially amongst farmers. The forces of the FDR are social democratic and Christian and the cadres are fundamentally from middle class and of urban origin.²³

The FPL-FM directed its activities against the economic elite through a "prolonged popular war", a strategy of wearing down the existing regime by hit-and-run military assaults, and sabotage. The FPL's rejection of the "foco" theory, Carpio maintained, was largely the result of the

²³ Santiago Echeverría, "Análisis coyuntural de los proyectos políticos", en ECA - Estudios Centroamericanos, Volume 43, No. 480, 1988, p. 900.

experience of some guerrilla movements in South America. These movements were removed from the people, failed to reach out to them, to organize them and so succumbed to militaristic designs only. Therefore, from the beginning, the FPL tried to build support groups and attained a certain degree of influence among the working class, student movements, and teachers.

The ERP set up a political party, the Revolutionary Party of El Salvador (PRS), which argued unequivocally for a broad front comprising all democratic forces opposed to fascism. The ERP continued to be the ultras of the guerrilla movements, rejecting prolonged war in favour of popular insurrection, and dismissing any possibility of a democratic stage in the revolution, as held by the PCS. The ERP, led by Joaquín Villalobos and Jorge Antonio Meléndez, decided to concentrate its organizational work in the isolated area of Morazán. In their strategy, says Villalobos, imperialism is the fundamental strategic enemy, in alliance with the national oligarchy and the most reactionary sector of the army. Thus, the ERP directed its activities against members of the government and security forces.

In consequence, the coalition of the FMLN/FDR brought together a broad spectrum of progressive political forces, ranging from social democrats and radical Christians to orthodox and not at all orthodox Marxists. The programme

and goals of the FMLN/FDR were akin to the policies being implemented by the Nicaraguan revolutionary government. ²⁴

During the last three decades, political and military insurgency has passed through different stages of struggle, each with its own distinct occurrences. The first stage, which occurred between 1970 and 1979, was primarily carried out in metropolitan San Salvador and in other urban areas of the country. It was characterized by organization, mobilization, and struggle of the masses for the fulfilment of their demands. The level of military development at this time was minimal, since only small guerrilla nuclei existed at the urban level. They provided self defense and carried out actions of "revolutionary justice" as well as strikes and military operations.

The second stage, which represented the first step in building the military structures, began during the last month of 1979 and continued through 1980. The revolutionary forces began to move to rural sectors to avoid the regime's counterinsurgency action. The new military structures - guerrilla detachments and popular militias - that began to develop in these zones later became the people's army. Military activity intensified in the rural areas with minor sabotage, elimination of members of the paramilitary

²⁴ See Richard Fagen, The Nicaraguan revolution: A personal report, (Washington, Institute of Policy Studies, 1981).

organizations such as ORDEN, and small ambushes of governmental military patrols.

The strategy of the FMLN-FDR developed on three lines. Firstly, through the military sector and the decentralization of its forces. The idea was to spread the struggle to all the national territory. Secondly, by the sabotage of the economy through the economy of war, that is the destruction of infra-structure and of harvests. Thirdly, the reactivation of the mass movement as a unique alternative for a political triumph.

The key point of all our politico-military strategy is the problem of the advance of the masses towards the general insurrection.²⁵

In order, the tasks and objectives of the revolution in El Salvador included among other things: firstly, the overthrow of the reactionary military dictatorship of the oligarchy and "Yankee" imperialism, imposed land sustained against the will of the Salvadorean people; to destroy its "criminal political-military" machine, and to establish a revolutionary democratic government, founded on the unity of the revolutionary and democratic forces in the people's army. Secondly, the end of the overall political, economic, and social power of the great lords of land and capital. Thirdly, the liquidation of the economic, political and

²⁵ FMLN, Our Struggle for peace: FMLN-FDR, (San Salvador, Commission for International Relations of the FMLN-FDR, 1982), p. 28.

military dependency of the country on "Yankee" imperialism. Fourthly, the orientation of the foreign policy and international relations of the country around the principles of independence and self-determination, solidarity, peaceful coexistence, equal rights, and mutual respect between states. ²⁶

Dual power in El Salvador was established in the zones of control, which are areas under the partial control of the FMLN, in the north of the Salvadorean zones such as San Salvador, Cuscatlán, Chalatenango, Cabañas, and Morazán; and in the central zone of San Vicente, and Volcán Chinchontepec.

It is precisely because of the prolongation of the war, as a result of the enormous intervention of imperialism in El Salvador, that the FMLN has deemed it necessary to follow a strategy of constructing and consolidating its rearguard in areas that are predominantly under its control.

²⁷

In these areas, four combat fronts were established, named after guerrilla members: Anastacio Aquino, Feliciano Ama, Modesto Ramírez, and Francisco Sánchez. And new brigades were also formed in these zones, named Rafael Arce Zablan (BLAZ), Felipe Peña Mendoza (FPM), and Rafael Aguiñada Carranza. These new territorial divisions had altered the

²⁶ See Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of the Masses (CRM), "Platform of the Revolutionary Democratic government", in Revolt in El Salvador, (New York, Pathfinder Press, 1982).

²⁷ Francisco A. Alvarez, op. cit., pp. 82 s.

political and administrative division of the country, and adversely affected the various spheres of production (coffee, sugar, cotton, and agro-industry). The new local organizations of people's power, referred by the FMLN-FDR as Poder Popular Local (PPL), consisted of agricultural workers, middle peasants, small landowners, salaried urban workers, students, professionals, and labourers.

When the present armed struggle was initiated twenty years ago, 70% of the population lived rurally, and 30% were urban. Today the estimates run at 48% rural and 52% urban, with 25% of the total population living in the San Salvador metropolitan area. ²⁸

In the political and military jurisdictions, dual power was consolidated by the diverse military campaigns that strengthened the experience of the combatants involved. The tactics of attrition and permanent sabotage of the economy had weakened the economic base of the country, destabilizing the rhythms of production to the point that they barely maintained the war-torn economy. However, liberated zones in the strict sense of the word did not exist in El Salvador. In the first place, the FMLN was not waging a war of positions. In addition, it was impossible to speak of liberated territory in a geographic sense, since El Salvador has an area of 21,393 sq/Km.

²⁸ El Rescate, Toward reconciliation in El Salvador: Demilitarization and the FMLN, Part II, (Los Angeles, El Rescate Human Right Department, 1991), p. 9.

FMLN leaders saw the Salvadorean insurrection as a process, which they referred to as "civil rebellion". In essence, for the FMLN the insurrection was the counteroffensive, the increasing involvement of all kinds of people, with different levels of commitment, in all kinds of popular violence and rupture with the authority. In consequence, negotiations and multi-class alliances could only be developed as the idea of an insurrectionary victory became a realistic possibility, and was perceived as such by other social and political actors.

For the FMLN, negotiations must reflect concessions from the government and military commensurate with ten years of war and that establish the basis for lasting peace, democracy, reconstruction and economic survival of the population.²⁹

It was at the beginning of 1981, with the "general offensive", that the conflict of irregular insurgent warfare with the character of military activity shifted from the cities to the countryside. It was at this stage that the FMLN began to re-direct its military forces: widening the theatre of war and enlarging its zones of control as its rearguard. Also it was the beginning of the first emission of "Radio Venceremos" from the Morazán area.

Since then, the radio station has been the FMLN's only means of mass communication for the FMLN. At the beginning

²⁹ Ibid., p. 8.

of 1982, the FMLN grouped its new fighters into larger concentrations and launched a series of actions such as the attack on the Cuscatlán bridge, the country's largest and most important inter-areas communication. After a failed attempt at urban insurrection in early 1981 and the suppression that followed, the FMLN withdrew from the cities to the countryside where a long process of constructing a revolutionary army and a defensible strategic rear guard, or zones of control began.

By 1983 the revolutionary movement had successfully transformed itself into an almost professional army. Paradoxically, with the advantage of hindsight, for the Left this was the period that deserves the most negative marks. The elimination of fixed government positions in large parts of the countryside, for example, opened space for a new relationship to develop between the FMLN and the residents of those zones. It also allowed the guerillas to train new fighters and consolidate its political and logistical structure. In essence, the beginning of 1984, marked the return to guerrilla warfare, that is, military units were dispersed and reverted to a more underground status.

The emphasis on a permanent revolutionary army, the clandestine structure of collaborators, militia and guerillas was renewed and strengthened. The objective was to return to the process of accumulating forces on a more

popular footing: a more grassroots, multi-dimensional, political force that would again be capable of growth, and at some future point, of an offensive against which the conventional tactics and resources of the Armed Forces would be inadequate.

The transition to the strategic counter-offensive had involved a restructuring of the FMLN forces as thorough as the transition from the guerrilla concentrations to the war of resistance in 1984, and as the earlier shift from urban insurrection to guerrilla concentration in 1979. The new scheme was both audacious and unorthodox in classic guerrilla strategy, the strategic counter-offensive implied a shift to a more conventional style involving increased use of heavy weaponry. The FMLN proposed the opposite: instead of greater centralization, the FMLN was working towards promoting local initiative. In place of conventional arms, it proposed a qualitative and quantitative increase in homemade weapons. Instead of greater emphasis on the use of its permanent forces, the teenager on the corner with a Molotov cocktail had become the key.

Analysis.

In contrast with the Nicaraguan and Cuban experiences, one can make the following points. Firstly, unlike those revolutions, where broad multi-class alliances toppled

unpopular dictatorships, the Salvadorean struggle has been primarily a class conflict, a war of elite against have-nots. Nor has there been a single ogre-figure like Batista or Somoza, who could serve as a personal target for the concentrated wrath of the populace. Instead, the conflict in El Salvador has been notable for both the anonymity and the viciousness of the contending forces.

Secondly, the Sandinistas could always retreat to the Segovia mountains in north central Nicaragua, where they were virtually untouchable by Somoza's national guard. The Salvadorean guerrillas, in contrast, have had to live and work among the people, since there are almost no uninhabited areas of the country. Thirdly, from Che Guevara's lessons in Bolivia, in El Salvador from the first day the FPL and the ERP have been living among the people; they helped plough land and harvest crops, they provided medical care and other forms of assistance to the population. Fourthly, the governmental system of suppression in El Salvador has been more pervasive and consistent, spanning over half a century under the conception of the "Low Intensity Conflict" strategy (LIC). Fifthly, the anti-imperialism that developed in Nicaragua made it possible for Nicaraguans to produce an armed struggle much sooner than the Salvadoreans, and it strengthened the alliance between broad sectors of the opposition.

It is absurd trying to explain the Salvadorean conflict as a part of East-West conflict and to think it is going to be resolved through a deal between the United States and the Soviet Union. The only valid negotiation in El Salvador is the one made by Salvadoreans.³⁰

The level of mass organization in El Salvador is very high. One can see it in the many organizational forms that exist in the masses, which span the political spectrum from Left-centre to the Left. Thus, the accumulation of forces on the part of the Salvadorean revolutionary movement has been shown in the following ways. Firstly, a high level of organization and consciousness raising the "motor forces", that is, the working class and farmers. Secondly, the revolutionary forces' capacity for advanced processes of unification. Thirdly, a high level of military development under the guerrilla strategy, so that the people's war reached an advanced level.

The Salvadorean people have a tradition of organization and struggle, an ability to conspire, and have endured a wide variety of experiences: seven coup d'etat (1931, 1944, 1948, 1960, 1972, and 1979), two popular insurgences (insurrection of 1932 and "huelga general de brazos caidos" in 1944), three popular movements (1960, 1972 and 1977), and a series of fraudulent elections.

³⁰ Joaquín Villalobos, "Perspectivas de victoria y proyecto revolucionario", en ECA - Estudios Centroamericanos, Volume 44, No. 483-484, 1989, p. 42.

... By the late 1960s and early 1970s there was once again electoral fraud at the end of a decade of increasing political competition.³¹

Furthermore, it is no coincidence that the most complex revolutionary popular war in Latin America has unfolded in El Salvador. This can only be explained by the depth of a class struggle generated by the endemic misery of a populated country lacking in resources. By 1932, organization among agricultural workers and poor farmers was the principal protagonist of the insurrection. In the late 1960s, new developments were made among teachers and secondary school students, which extended grassroots organizations beyond the main urban centres, and reached an important sector of the governmental apparatus itself (public school teachers nationwide). By 1978 to 1980, grassroots organizations had embraced the greater part of the urban and rural working class, poor farmers, students, small business owners, and new parts of the governmental apparatus, and the electrical energy industry.

Therefore, in the case of El Salvador, the depth of the class struggle generated a revolutionary tradition of mass struggle that has allowed the masses to resist and confront the counter-insurgency model imposed by the United States. The military complexity of the war created a high level of

³¹ Tommie S. Montgomery, Revolution in El Salvador: Origins and evolution, (Boulder, Westview Press, 1982), p. 120.

ideological confrontation that has increased the awareness and analytical capabilities of the masses.

There was also an obvious political crisis in which the government demonstrated real weakness. This was reflected in the division within the Christian Democratic Party, the contradiction among the different branches of governments, the dispute between the oligarchy and the United States for control of the army, etc. Although it is true that the armed forces had remained cohesive as a result of US control, the situation was beginning to change since the Army could not remain indefinitely indifferent to the political crisis in the government. This is the sociological explanation for the 1988 development of urban guerrillas in the capital city; it lies precisely in the frustration caused in vast sectors of the population by the failure to meet their demands and because of the unsuccessful suppression of the struggle.

In this framework, the elections, conceived as a fundamental political component of the Low Intensity War strategy, caused instability, working against the counter-insurgency plan rather than for it, and doing little or nothing to improve the national situation. First, after five elections, the war continued and the economic and social crisis had worsened. The result was that the dominant tendency among the people was to reject the electoral process as a means of change. Secondly, the war

continued to be the most important political phenomenon of Salvadorean society. Thirdly, without a resolution to the war, elections exacerbated the contradictions within the power block rather than contributed to their resolution, thus provoking further destabilization within the system. Fourthly, the FMLN rejected elections and called on the masses to veto them, inciting the anti-election sentiment already present.

The Church.

In El Salvador the influence of the Catholic church is both social and political, and both aspects must be taken into account in any evaluation of the solution to the conflict. The Medellín (1968) and Puebla (1979) conferences of Latin American bishops demanded that the primary relationship between the Church and society be based on an option for the historically oppressed.

Religion played a liberating role among the farmers... We defined a policy of relations with the Christians since 1972, in the document Red Start # 2, we extended a political invitation to them to incorporate the revolutionary process, to make just revolutionary change in El Salvador. ³²

During the three years of Alfonso Romero's ministry as Archbishop (1977-1980), the outbreak of violence demanded

³² Iosu Perales, and Marta Harnecker, La estrategia de la victoria: Entrevista a los comandantes del FMLN Leonel González, Jesús Rojas, Ricardo Gutiérrez, (Managua, Farabundo Martí, 1989), p. 122.

a response from the Church. It responded by opening itself to the crisis, analyzing its causes and proposing solutions from the point of view of Liberation Theology.³³ The reaction of the US to the existence of a church committed to extending a social influence by the US, as the "Rockefeller Report" and the "Santa Fe Document" drawn up by President Reagan's advisers in 1980 showed, was to openly attack it and to promote religious alternatives such as the sects and spiritual Christian movements. Their affinity with the masses and their tendency to sympathise with the FMLN rather than with the government show a growing degree of Christian autonomy from the oligarchy.

The Church's most important contribution to El Salvador has been in promoting negotiations as the most humane and effective way of ending the war. From the beginning, Rivera Damas, Romero's successor, considered war an evil and sought to dissuade both sides from seeking an end to it through military victory. Rivera's personal contribution was to accept the role of mediator at the talks which began in 1984 at La Palma, and to propose the national dialogue for peace in 1988.

³³ See Carol S. Robb, Integration of Marxist constructs into the Theology of Liberation from Latin America, (Ann Arbor, Boston University - PhD dissertation, 1981); Gustavo Gutiérrez; Inda Caridad, and John Eagleson, A Theology of Liberation: History, politics, and salvation, (New York, Orbis Books, 1973).

The role of the USA.

A number of points indicate that the relationship between the US and El Salvador prior to the "Soccer War", was different from the relationship between US and many other Latin American countries. Firstly, there was little economic interpenetration between the two countries; the giant fruit companies and the mining interests, such as Rosario Mining, had stayed out of El Salvador. The largest US-owned plant in the 1970s was that of Texas Instruments, which employed no more than 200 Salvadoreans. While the US bought substantial amounts of Salvadorean coffee and cotton, it was by no means the sole customer.

Secondly, the US seldom tried with any real degree of seriousness, to influence events in El Salvador. In 1932 against the communists, it sought to maintain a non-recognition policy against Hernández Martínez, and was forced into a recognition that destroyed the whole policy of not recognizing illegal regimes. Further, President Johnson successfully fended off armed conflict between El Salvador and Honduras in 1967, but the conflict broke out in 1969 and the US actively participated in the Organization of American States (OAS) settlement. Thirdly, there was no "clear-cut" policy towards El Salvador. The chief efforts of the US were directed towards the country in instances when it became a threat to the peace and stability of the region, either as a potential communist base or through an aggressive military policy.

In 1961 the US and El Salvador had signed a general agreement for economic and technical assistance as part of President Kennedy's Alliance for Progress. ³³ Under this it was envisioned that the US would help to train peasant leaders in order to pave the way for land reform. The following year, the Agency for International Development (AID), the Salvadorean ministry of labour, and the American Institute for Free Labour Development (AIFLD) signed an agreement to begin training these leaders, and the process began in 1965. Out of AIFLD's experience in this work grew the Union Communal Salvadoreña (UCS), founded in 1968. The involvement with the UCS indicated once again the concern, both of the US government and the labour movement, to ward off the threat of Marxism in El Salvador, not because of the importance of the country itself, but out of regional strategic concerns. Again the fear was that El Salvador would become a disturber of the peace, as it had been in 1932.

The administration of Jimmy Carter had an announced policy of championing human rights. But Ambassador Frank Devine received mixed signals from Washington, and was himself unclear how much emphasis should be placed on the matter of the growing menace of Marxism. What was evidently intended by Washington was a "carrot-and-stick" approach, in which gradual rewards would be given for an improvement of the

³³ See José M. Insulza, "The United States and Central America", in Robert Wesson, and Heraldo Muñoz, Latin American views of US policy, (New York, Praeger, 1986).

human rights situation, while rewards would be withheld should the government fail to co-operate. ³⁴ Ambassador Devine believed in a low-key, co-operative approach to the question of human rights. One approach he tried was to invite prominent members of the government to his residence and to leave scattered about various clippings from the world press that condemned the actions of the Salvadorean government. By such methods he hoped to shame the government into a better human rights policy.

Violence between the military and the Left continued, as did atrocities by the security forces and the White Warrior Union (UGB). On the other side, Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, one of the 60 officers removed from the military in the October Coup and the deputy chief of military intelligence under President Romero, was advocating a coup by the right in order to save the country from communism. Finally, the murder of PDC leader and Attorney-General Mario Zamora by the UGB sparked a series of defections to the opposition by prominent Christian Democrats, including his brother Rubén and Hector Dada, who charged the government with being unwilling to put down right-wing terrorism. The crisis with D'Aubuisson and the right reached a critical point in late February, 1979, when a coup seemed imminent. At this time Ambassador Devine was slated for retirement and departed

³⁴ See Robert Drinan; John McAward, and Thomas P. Anderson, Human rights in El Salvador 1978: Report of findings of a investigatory mission, (Boston, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, 1978).

the country. Until the new ambassador, Robert White, could arrive, the post was taken by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Central American Affairs James Cheek.

Sending Cheek was an indication of how seriously the US regarded the situation. Cheek immediately began to make contact with leading landholders, businessmen, and members of the armed forces. Indeed, after November 4, 1980, the government seemed to trouble less about its image, confident that the new Reagan administration in Washington would back it in any event as a bastion against communism. But the policies of the new administration did not meet with universal acceptance within the ranks of the foreign policy professionals. A "dissent paper" was prepared by a number of officials in the State Department, Defense Department, and CIA, who preferred to remain anonymous, and was circulated throughout the government in January. It warned that the US had "identified our strategic interests in Central America with a relatively weak, unpopular and isolated regime". It went on to state that current policy consistently underestimated the domestic legitimacy and international approval enjoyed by the opposition FDR/DRU coalition. ³⁵

Thereafter, the Reagan administration moved quickly to give massive aid to El Salvador. Military assistance had been

³⁵ See Thomas P. Anderson, "El Salvador: Influence in trouble", in Robert Wesson, US influence in Latin America in the 1980s, (New York, Praeger, 1982).

resumed in October by President Carter, and by March it had reached \$ 41 million. Starting in September 1981, the military was to receive an additional \$ 66 million. Fifty-four military advisers arrived at the beginning of March, with Pentagon sources suggesting that the "optimum figure" would be 270. ³⁶

The situation was that the guerrillas had succeeded in establishing coalitions with politically significant social sectors, particularly with sectors representing a broad cross-section of the socio-economic system at large, thus democratization was likely to have had a less severe impact on the movement's prospects. In addition, the capacity of the transition regime to marginalize the revolutionaries politically was considerably more limited. Indeed, when the revolutionary movement crossed a certain threshold in terms of the size and breadth of the anti-regime coalition, it probably became all but invulnerable to marginalization.

Negotiations.

On June 1, 1989, Alfredo Cristiani received the presidency from José Napoleón Duarte. Cristiani adopted a more moderate line than his predecessor, with a five-point plan for talks with the FMLN, which did not call for their surrender. These moves came as a result of the social and economic costs of an interminable war (military stalemate).

³⁶ See Central America Update, March 1981.

Salvadorean public opinion increasingly favoured negotiations. Latin America leaders were calling for a negotiated solution, and the Soviet Union was no longer willing to bankroll revolutionary governments.

Negotiations between the government and the FMLN continued through 1991 on a monthly basis, and were accompanied by a fluctuation in the intensity of violent exchanges between the guerrillas and the security forces.³⁷ In early March the FMLN announced that a three-day cease-fire, to coincide with forthcoming elections, would be observed by the rebel forces, although voting would not be permitted in those areas under rebel control. In late 1991 hopes for an early settlement to the conflict were renewed when a new initiative for negotiation was presented by the FMLN in Managua, Nicaragua, following a meeting between Central American and EC foreign affairs ministers. This new proposal dispensed with previous stipulations, put forward by the guerrillas, that military and constitutional reforms should be effected prior to any cease-fire, and suggested that concessions on both sides could be adopted simultaneously. The constitutional requirement that amendments to the Constitution be ratified by two successive legislative assemblies lent impetus to negotiations in April, the current Assembly being scheduled to dissolve at the end of the month.

³⁷ See Ignacio Ellacuria, "Nueva propuesta de diálogo del FMLN-FDR: Los 18 puntos", en ECA - Estudios Centroamericanos, Volume 42, No. 465, 1987.

In May 1991 the UN Security Council voted to create an observer mission to El Salvador (ONUSAL), to be charged with the verification of accords reached. In August 1991 the US Secretary of State and the USSR's Minister of Foreign Affairs urged the UN Secretary General, Javier Pérez de Cuellar, personally to intervene in negotiations between the government and the guerrillas. In response to a personal invitation from Pérez de Cuellar, both sides attended a new round of discussions in New York, where it was announced that a new framework for peace had been agreed. Further, a new National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (COPAZ) was to be created with a composition representing both sides, together with all major political parties, which would supervise the enforcement of guarantees for the political integration of the guerrillas. The FMLN also secured guaranteed territorial rights for the peasants settled in guerrilla-controlled areas, and the participation of former FMLN members in a new National Civilian Police (PNC), to be under the control of a new Minister of the Interior and Public Security.

In late December 1991 the efforts of the UN Secretary General were rewarded with the announcement of a new peace initiative, following renewed discussions in New York, and a formal cease-fire was to be implemented on 1 February 1992, under the supervision of some 1,000 UN personnel. The FMLN's process of disarmament, to be implemented in five

stages, and the dissolution of the 17,000-strong rapid deployment battalions, were to happen simultaneously, leading to full disarmament by 31 October.

The success of the cease-fire agreement was likely to be dependent upon the adequate implementation, by the government, of previously agreed reforms to the judiciary, the electoral system, guarantees for territorial rights, human rights, and guerrilla participation in civil defense. Further in November 1992, in accordance with the terms of the December 1991 peace accord, the "Comisión de la Verdad" announced the names of more than 200 military personnel alleged to have participated in abuses of human rights during the civil war. ³⁸

Conclusion.

There are many competing theories about why a revolution has occurred in EL Salvador in the past two decades; one explanation proposed by the US government blames Communist subversion by the ex-Soviet Union, Cuba, and the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. According to this theory, pro-Soviet Communist countries stirred up the Central American rebellions and supplied the rebels with the money, arms, and intelligence with which they fought their own

³⁸ See Comisión de la Verdad, "De la locura a la esperanza la guerra de doce años en El Salvador: Informe de la Comisión de la Verdad", en ECA - Estudios Centroamericanos, Volume 48, No. 533, 1993.

governments. Other theories blame the region's rebellions on political, economic, and social processes within the region itself. Such arguments treat these domestic factors as the main causes of revolt and regard foreign involvement as a relatively less important cause or motivation for rebellions.

Today one must reject the subversion thesis that outside Marxist forces undermined what would otherwise have been a stable state of grinding poverty. It is the thesis of Marxists that North American involvement in Third World countries is based upon the economic needs of American capitalism. In the case of El Salvador, the US had become so heavily involved because it feared that events within that country might have serious regional consequences. The idea that El Salvador might follow Cuba and Nicaragua into the socialist camp greatly alarmed Washington officials, who feared a chain reaction, leading perhaps to revolution in Guatemala, always volatile, or even Mexico, two oil-producing countries strategically close to the US. Another geo-political concern was for the Panama Canal, should the wave of revolutions spread southward.

El Salvador, even without a civil war claiming 15,000 lives a year in the 1980s, would have been in a pitiful shape. Desperately overcrowded and over-farmed and with a rapidly growing population, El Salvador would need massive aid to survive without the dislocations of the war. But the

conflict has greatly intensified all the problems: much of agriculture has been ruined by the fighting, and the land reform, while eventually beneficial, had the temporary effect of furthering agricultural disruption.

All this increased the US potential for influencing events in the country. The last four governments had to be responsive to US policy because only the US supplied the military hardware to continue the war. Indications of the importance of US influence can be found in the land reform programme and in the ability of the US to persuade the military not to go along with the projected coup of Major D'Aubuisson.

However, one can argue that rapid changes in economic and political conditions within Central America are the main forces driving rebellion. Among the most explicit theories, one school has treated economic factors such as the nature of production, class relations, and economic growth and development as the driving forces of Central America. Pérez Brignoli,³⁹ for example, argued that thirty years of prosperity seem to have created internal conditions sufficient to nurture a social conflict of vast proportions. Bulmer Thomas⁴⁰ asserted that the expansion

³⁹ See Ciro Cardoso, and Hector B. Pérez, *Historia económica de América Latina: Sistemas agrarios e historia colonial*, (Rio de Janeiro, Graal, 1983).

⁴⁰ See Victor T. Bulmer, *The political economy of Central America since 1920*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987).

of export agriculture has disrupted economic and social relations in agriculture to the point where the political model underpinning export agriculture is called into question. Therefore, political and social stability in Central America threatens to break down because of the success of export-led growth rather than despite it.

Another school of thought on Central America's rebellions has emphasized such domestic political factors as elites and their behaviour, the disaffection of interests and pressure groups, and the decay of the state or of traditional dominance systems. Other theorists have stressed both domestic and international actors that organize, mobilize, and coalesce Central American opposition. Within this approach fall various studies of the Catholic church as both a domestic and international actor involved in mobilizing opposition.

Many explanations for Central America's rebellions have treated them as the result of a complex combination of socio-economic processes and political factors, both internal and external. In some works the theory linking these economic, political, and organizational factors to turmoil is mainly implicit, rather than explicit. Other theories have expressly linked Central American rebellions to the combined effects of social strains upon collective psychology, arguing that economic and political change created intense dissatisfaction. The most promising of the

complex explanations have concentrated on the development of contradictory class relations in Central America's dependent agro-export orientated economies. This emergent school has held that the structural sources of grievances for key class groups include the following factors: historically extreme mal-distribution of wealth and income, aggravated by the recent rapid growth of the rural and industrial working class, by increasing concentration of wealth, especially agricultural land, and declines of real incomes for rural and urban working classes during the 1970s.

The expansion of speculative export agriculture from the 1950s through to the 1970s and rapid capital-intensive industrialization throughout the 1960s and 1970s in Central America created or expanded classes or sub-classes of landless agricultural wage labour, urban sub-proletarians, proletarians, and such white-collar sectors as commercial and public employees. Further, in the absence of deliberate government efforts, such as agrarian reform or wage policies, to reduce or ameliorate inequities, Central America's rapid economic growth during the 1960s and 1970s tended to increase inequalities in wealth and income and to reduce the real wages of agricultural and urban wage labourers.

Rapidly escalating oil prices and resulting inflation, the deterioration of the Central American Common Market in the

mid-1970s, and natural or economic catastrophes such as the 1972 Managua earthquake, and the 1978-1979 common market trade disruptions, greatly reduced real income and employment among working-class and some white-collar sectors. Thus, the grievances caused by increasing inequalities, declining real income, economic/natural catastrophes, and the political dissatisfactions of would-be competing elites led in the late-1970s to burgeoning agrarian, labour, neighbourhood, and community self-help opposition party organization, and to reformist demands upon the state and protests about public policy.

The regime's responses to burgeoning organization and protests determined whether rebellions occurred. On the one hand, where regimes responded to demands and protest with ameliorative policies, and with low or modest levels of force or suppression, protests subsided as in, for example, Honduras. On the other hand, where regimes rejected demands and protests for ameliorative policies and responded with sharply escalated suppression by public security forces, protests, opposition organization, and resource mobilization increased, and rebellions occurred as in, for example, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

Subjected to suppression and the refusal to reform, the aggrieved developed greater organization, formed progressively greater coalitions among regime opponents, mobilized increased economic resources from poor and

wealthy regime opponents and from some external sources, forged alliances with and swelled the ranks of armed Left guerrillas, and violently contested the regime's sovereignty. The outcome of the contest over sovereignty depended upon the relative success of the regime versus the rebels in mobilizing and maintaining domestic and external economic and material support and organization.

Even though peace was achieved in late December 1991, the problems facing Central American development are likely to continue to be immense. Progress towards their solution will depend on an understanding, on the part of important internal and external actors, that social, economic, and political factors are interrelated. Indeed, socially distributive programmes in health, education, food, agrarian reform, and so forth could reduce the worst effects of poverty. However, they can be implemented only through a reduction of military spending and the termination of the wasteful destruction of public and private infrastructure occasioned by armed conflict, through the extension of credit to large-scale agro-and urban-industrial activities orientated largely towards export production. This is financially safer and easier to manage.

Historically, the most basic political problem in Central America has been the lack of concern on the part of local elites for the plight of the poor and the problem of

reducing the region's most debilitating inequities. Balanced economic growth capable of propelling true social development is not likely to take place without a more equitable distribution of political power. As it is now, the elites that control countries such as Guatemala and El Salvador are the same groups that benefit from the social and economic system as it is. The holding of technically clean and periodic elections, although useful and important as one tool in building such participation, is simply not sufficient to represent the needs of the majority to entrenched power holders.

NICARAGUA.

Introduction.

The entry into Managua on July 19, 1979 of the forces of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (FSLN) marked the first success of a social-revolutionary movement in Latin America since Fidel Castro took power in Cuba over twenty years earlier. The revolution not only ended the rule of Latin America's longest-lasting family dictatorship, but also totally destroyed the regime's armed forces, damaged the image of US control in Central America, and brought to power a young, Marxist-influenced government. Any discussion about the causes of the Nicaraguan revolution must take into account a multitude of factors, both foreign and domestic. So why did the Somoza dynasty fall after over forty-two years in power and why did the FSLN replace it? This obviously assumes that the Sandinistas were not the basic cause of the regime's collapse and that there were other alternatives to their assuming power.

The Somoza dynasty rested on three basic pillars of support: the complete control of the Guardia Nacional (Nicaragua's combined military and police force), the maintenance of the image of US support, and the reality of

US support. ⁴¹ Control over the Guardia Nacional was maintained by an extreme degree of paternalism and isolation. Actual command of the force was always exercised by a Somoza. Furthermore, in the last years of the dictatorship, when Anastasio Somoza acted as both president and Guardia commander, his half-brother José Somoza was inspector-general and commander of the armoured units. His son, Anastasio Somoza Portocarrero, ran the infantry training school that produced the Guardia's best troops. Therefore, paternalism, favouritism, isolation, alienation from the public at large, and opportunities to exercise petty tyrannies and profit from corruption, helped to ensure the loyalty and dependence of the enlisted men.

The image of US support was maintained through a series of tactics. All members of the Somoza family spoke excellent English, with legitimate sons being sent to the US for high school and college. General Somoza himself was a West Point graduate, and utilized the influence of such former classmates as Congressman John Murphy of New York. Thus, for the Somoza family a key tactic had long been to be more "gringo" than the "gringos", conveying an identification not only with US policies, but with American culture, sports, and life-style. Furthermore, economic and military ties were also the subject of a constant barrage of publicity. Most of the Guardia Nacional received at least

⁴¹ See Richard Miller, Guardians of the dynasty: A history of the US created Guardia Nacional of Nicaragua and the Somoza family, (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1977).

some training in the US or the Panama Canal Zone. Most uniforms and equipment came from the US, and the role of the US military Group was stressed and exaggerated. ⁴²

The image of US support was an important source of strength for the dictatorship, but it also contained some serious potential weaknesses. There was always an effort to portray any disputes as lovers' quarrels and to actively discourage any speculation that they might be the preliminary stages of a breakdown that would lead ultimately to a divorce. If the relationship ever began to seriously deteriorate and that deterioration became public knowledge, Nicaraguans would interpret that as a sign that Washington wanted a new government. Many would then rush to distance themselves from the Somozas and get in line for succession.

Another effective Somoza tactic in dealing with the traditional sources of internal opposition, such as the newspaper "La Prensa", the Conservative party, labour movements, university students, and business community, was to divide them. Pacts would be made with various sectors; offices, favours, and economic opportunities were bestowed in return for gestures of support or even for moderating opposition. The ultimate tactic for keeping most of the upper and middle classes in line was to present the Somoza

⁴² See Samuel Z. Stone, The heritage of the conquistadors: Ruling classes in Central America from the conquest to the Sandinistas, (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1990).

family as the only alternative to communism, a tactic made more credible by years of co-optation, acquiescence, and humiliation which had undermined the prestige and credibility of the traditional opposition.

A final factor in this process was the developing generational split among many elite families. Often sent abroad for education, younger members of the elite were increasingly disenchanted with conditions in Nicaragua and came to view the Somoza dynasty as an oppressive, corrupt anachronism. They were disillusioned with the efforts of traditional opposition groups, efforts that usually ended with the dictatorship co-opting their leaders in return for a small share of political offices and patronage.

Opposition.

Labour organizations had not grown much in the 1920s and 1930s. In part this was due to the small proportion of industrial workers and also to the generally repressive nature of the Nicaraguan governments. But with the foundation of the Partido Trabajador Nicaraguense, and the Somoza's interest in engaging labour's support for his political ambitions, the presence of organized labour gradually increased. By late 1943, Somoza began to soften his attitude toward labour organizations and Left-wing political groups seeing them as a counterbalance to growing opposition from university students, professionals,

businessmen, and Conservative oligarchs. The Communist party, under the name of the Partido Socialista de Nicaragua (PSN), emerged in 1947 from being clandestine to openly supporting a labour code for Nicaragua, and various pro-and anti-Somoza factions of the labour movement came together in the Consejo Intergremial Obrero.

In dependent countries where the state has a shortage of resources, grassroot organizations fulfil an important role as voluntary promoters of a diverse range of activities for socio-economic development. In the case of Nicaragua, these popular organizations contributed to an improvement in the living conditions of the lower classes and created an understanding of participation and organization.

Therefore, broad-based popular organizations (OPs) first developed during the insurrectional period (1978-1979) and then grew very rapidly after the overthrow of Somoza. After the triumph of the FSLN, the OPs declared their support for the revolutionary process and recognized the leading role of the FSLN. As of mid-1984, the six principal OPs were the Sandinista Defense Committees, the Sandinista Workers Federation, the Rural Workers Association, the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers, the Luisa Amada Espinosa Nicaraguan Women's Association, and the Sandinista Youth.

The largest OP in both membership and geographic coverage was the Sandinista Defence Committees (CDSs), which were

created on a territorial basis. The CDSs were initiated during the insurrection, as civil defence committees, carrying out such tasks as organizing the supply of basic goods to the Sandinistas, keeping track of Somocistas, providing safe houses and arms deposits for combatants, and generally supporting the struggle against the dictatorship. Membership was open to all persons of 14 years of age or older, without regard to sex, religious belief, or membership in any other social or political organization. By 1984 there were 15,000 CDS Base Committees organized by block or housing nuclei throughout the country. ⁴³

The spirit of "Medellín" was introduced to Nicaragua by a movement of young priests, whom the Somocista daily "Novedades", called the "seven priests of Marx". ⁴⁴ Their guiding initiatives led to the establishment of the earliest Comunidades Eclesiásticas de Base (CEBs) in Managua, on the Atlantic Coast, in rural areas north of Estelí, and on the islands of Solentiname. Another current that fed the renovation of the church was the Catholic student movement. In 1970 students at the Jesuit Central American University attempted to challenge the "developmentalist" orientation of the curriculum and its support of the Somoza dictatorship.

⁴³ See CIERA (Agrarian Reform Research Centre), La democracia participativa en Nicaragua, (Managua, CIERA, 1984).

⁴⁴ See Pablo Richard, and Guillermo Meléndez, La iglesia de los pobres en América Central, (San José, DEI, 1982).

Furthermore, in the countryside, church innovation included the creation of two important religious programs called the Delegates of the World and the Agrarian Education and Promotion Centre (CEPA). Originally based in the Western zone of the country, CEPA was created in 1969 by the Jesuits to provide training for peasant leaders. It led some into active sympathy with the FSLN long before the first insurrection broke out in September 1978. ⁴⁵ The dominant organization of Nicaragua's Protestants, the Protestant Development Committee (CEPAD), was formed as a result of the 1972 earthquake, when the Protestant community coalesced to deal with the emergency situation. Starting from a membership of three regional committees in 1972, CEPAD came, by 1984, to have a network of 12 regional committees and to have 90 per cent of Nicaragua's Protestant churches affiliated to it. ⁴⁶

To sum up, religion was one of the most dynamic, sensitive, and controversial arenas of the revolutionary process in Nicaragua. While both Christian religious leaders and Christian populations generally welcomed the fall of Somoza, the division among them over how to adapt to the revolution had already shown itself before the triumph. In Post-triumph Nicaragua, democratization within the Roman

⁴⁵ See Philip Wheaton, and Ynonne Dilling, Nicaragua: A people's revolution, (Washington, EPICA, 1980).

⁴⁶ See Michael Dodson, and Tommie S. Montgomery, "The churches in the Nicaraguan revolution", in Thomas W. Walker, Nicaragua in Revolution, (New York, Praeger, 1982).

Catholic Church ran parallel with, and was complementary to, the efforts of the FSLN to organize the masses.

Historical Background.

The coffee growers, the backbone of the Liberal party, remained the dominant economic force in the country, but they were deprived of direct access to state power by the Conservatives' strangle hold on the electoral machinery and their alliance with the US. Therefore, the Liberal party in its struggle to regain power took on an "anti-imperialist" stance in the face of the United States' presence. More specifically, the Liberals wanted the US to give up its economic control. ⁴⁷

In 1932, a group of political leaders from both parties met to discuss ways of guaranteeing a smooth transition in the Nicaraguan government once the US Marines had departed in January 1933. Most of the debate centred on the issue of minority representation in the government's various branches. A second agreement, signed on 3 October 1932 by presidential candidates Juan Bautista Sacasa and the Conservative Adolfo Díaz, was the immediate formation of a bipartisan commission to negotiate peace with Sandino. However, for the Liberal party, in control of the government, the agreements were a means of assuring that

⁴⁷ See Marco A. Valle, Desarrollo económico y político de Nicaragua 1912-1947, (San José, Consejo Superior Universitario Centroamericano, 1976).

the Conservatives would not cry fraud too loudly or attempt to overthrow a government in which they would have a direct participation. For the Conservatives, the agreements allowed them to check the implementation of Liberal principles to which they objected and to maintain some of their members on the public payroll.

But the agreements suffered from two errors of omission: neither Sandino nor Somoza, by then assistant director of the Guardia Nacional, were consulted nor were their respective armed bodies taken into consideration when the agreements were discussed and signed. Without their support the agreements were in the end meaningless because only Sandino and Somoza had control over the elements of coercion required to guarantee obedience. The strongest of these two forces was the Guardia Nacional. Organized in 1927 under the direction of Marine officers, it was conceived initially by the US as a constabulary that would have no relation at all with either political party. On the other hand, Sandino's forces by 1932 were much better organized and operated at times on the northern side of Lake Managua. But in Washington, the Hoover administration had made it clear that the marines would be pulled out of Nicaragua without fail on 1 January 1933. Thus, in Managua the leaders of both the Conservative and Liberal parties were mindful of the need to end the war through negotiations. Sandino himself had never refused to

negotiate; his only precondition was that the US forces withdraw prior to any political solution to the conflict.

The elimination of Sandino placed Sacasa face-to-face with Somoza. During the next years they played politics by attempting to influence the US minister, ordering changes in the officer corp of the Guardia, and fortifying their respective places of residence.⁴⁸ But compounding Sacasa's strictly political problems, was the constant of enormous pressure of the depression on the Nicaraguan economy. Coffee exports, the principal source of foreign exchange, had dropped in value from \$ 5.9 million in 1929 to just under \$ 2.4 million in 1934. At the same time, government income had declined sharply, in good measure, reflecting the decline in imports and of import duties. In the absence of new taxes or of additional internal revenue, the government was forced to reduce its expenditures drastically; some public services were cut back to the extent that they did not function at all. The public school system, for example, was closed down entirely in 1932.

Somoza's control of the Guardia Nacional should not lead us to interpret his eventual accession to power as out purely achieved by means of force. Somoza had a message for Nicaragua and for different groups within the society. There is no doubt that Somocismo represented a break with traditional Nicaraguan politics, especially in its attempt

⁴⁸ See Richard Miller, *op. cit.*

to incorporate workers and farmers into a national political movement. Furthermore, his candidacy was projected as an alternative to the two traditional parties, which some identified with the national disasters that had be-fallen Nicaragua.

In 1936 Somoza approached organized labour in a very tentative fashion. In the 1920s and under the efforts of Obrerismo Organizado and the Federación Obrera Nicaraguense to promote labour unions, most of the labour leaders gained experience. In 1931 they founded the Partido Trabajador Nicaraguense (PTN), whose objectives were drafted in vague terms, with no reference whatsoever to Marxist or Leninist principles and with only some references to justice and the rights of man. By early 1935, the more progressive faction within the PTN took control of the leadership and set down a line more in accord with Marxist-Leninist principles.

They approved a programme that proposed, among other things, a labour code with provisions on minimum wages and the right to strike, abolition of all lines on debts, a capital tax, socialization of all industrial and agricultural enterprises, nationalization of banks, state ownership of all lands, repudiation of all outstanding foreign debts, and an overhaul of the educational system to promote socialism. In addition to being very ambitious, the programme was also contradictory because some objectives could be achieved within a capitalist system whereas others

would require a prior proletarian revolution. For Somoza at this moment, the PTN was nothing but a minor nuisance to be handled through the use of selective suppression.⁴⁹

In summary, Somoza's rise to power was due to a number of fundamental political circumstances. Undoubtedly the most important was his control of the instruments of coercion. The assassination of Sandino and the destruction of his movement by the Guardia Nacional constituted a second important element. In the third place, the foreign power that had intervened during the two previous decades now turned into a political sphinx, under the "Good Neighbour" policy. In addition to Washington's decision to reduce US intervention in the hemisphere, after 1934 there was no danger of a situation arising that would have warranted direct intervention in Nicaragua.

The FSLN.

With the victory of the FSLN, the social configuration of political power in Nicaragua, and the philosophy behind it, changed abruptly. The Sandinistas drew their strength and their revolutionary mandate from their 18 years of anti-Somoza struggle and from their military victory over the National Guard. The FSLN's nine-member Joint National Directorate (DN) acted as a *de facto* board of directors for

⁴⁹ See Carlos P. Bermúdez, and Onofre G. López, El movimiento obrero en Nicaragua, volume I, (Managua, El Amanecer, 1970).

the Nicaraguan revolution from 1979 to 1984. National Directorate members held key government positions in order to shape revolutionary policy: Daniel Ortega was Coordinator of the Junta; Tomás Borge headed the Interior Ministry; Humberto Ortega, Defence; Jaime Wheelock Agriculture and Agrarian Reform; Henry Ruíz planning; and first Bayardo Arce and later Carlos Nuñez served as President of the Council of State.

In June 1979 the FSLN announced the formation of a provisional Junta of National Reconstruction, with five members. The 1974 Constitution was abrogated, and the bicameral National Congress dissolved. The National Guard was also dissolved, being replaced by the Sandinista People's Army, officially established in August.⁵⁰ On taking office, the Junta had issued a Basic Statute, providing for the creation of an appointed Council of State to act as an interim legislature. In March 1981 the Junta was reduced from five to three members. At the same time, Daniel Ortega was appointed Co-ordinator of the Junta and of its new consultative body, the Council of Government.

The Junta legislated by decree from July 1979 until May 4, 1980, when the Council of State began operation. After May 1980, the Junta shared legislative authority with the Council of State. The Junta-passed decrees submitted to the

⁵⁰ See Sergio M. Ramírez, "Nicaragua: Un modelo propio", en Areito, Volume 9, No. 34, n.f.

Council for approval took effect within ten days if not acted upon. If the Council made its non-binding recommendations for revisions to a Junta decree within ten days, it returned to the JGRN, which could accept or reject the Council's proposals. Furthermore, the Council had the following powers: i) to approve or propose reforms to laws submitted to it by the JGRN; ii) to initiate its own legislation; iii) to reform administrative sub-divisions; iv) to authorize the functioning of civic and religious entities, that is, concerning their juridical existence; v) to write an electoral law and a draft constitution at the initiative of the JGRN; vi) to ratify treaties and conventions concerning boundaries and maritime limits; vii) to regulate all questions of citizenship and patriotic symbols; viii) and to require information from cabinet ministers and agency heads. ⁵¹

Another aspect of the Council of State was the emergence by the end of the first legislative session of two opposing coalitions. The National Patriotic Front (FT), a coalition of parties that supported revolutionary programmes. It included the FSLN, the Popular Social Christians (PPSC), the Independent Liberals (PLI), and the Socialist Party (PSN). The opposing Democratic Co-ordinating Committee (CD) included the Social Christians (PSCN), the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement (MDN), the Liberal Constitutionalists

⁵¹ Decree No. 338, "Estatuto General del Consejo de Estado", en Leves relacionadas, pp. 25 ss.

(PLC), the Social Democrats (PSD), the five private sector groups, and two unions, the CTN and CUS.⁵²

The nature of the Armed Forces also changed during this period. Total military manpower grew in response to the external threat, and the army was expanded from 13,000 - 18,000 in 1980 to around 24,000 in the period from 1981 to 1983. It was further expanded to over 40,000 in 1984, when the regular army was increased by re-grouping some of the best militia troops into reserve army battalions and by instituting mandatory military service. The arms build-up during this period was significant, in an effort to standardize the light arms carried by the EPS and the militia. From the ex-Eastern block AK-47 automatic rifles soon replaced the Belgian FALs, US M-16s, and Israeli Galils and Uzis. The Sandinista armed forces were clearly one of the major support pillars of the revolutionary system.

By 1981 discontent caused by the postponement of elections and the increasing hegemony of the Sandinistas had led to the creation of counter-revolutionary forces, "Contras", who were mostly members of the former National Guard and

⁵² See Carlos M. Vilas, The Sandinista revolution: National liberation and social transformation in Central America, (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1986); Thomas W. Walker, Nicaragua: The first five years, (New York, Praeger, 1985).

operated from camps in Honduras.⁵³ At the same time, relations between the US and Nicaraguan governments had seriously deteriorated, culminating in the suspension of US economic aid in April 1981. In the same year the US government donated \$ 10 million in support of the Contras, while a covert operations by the CIA attempted to destabilize the Sandinista regime. In March 1982 the Sandinista government responded to the growing attacks by declaring a state of emergency. However, the intensity of attacks on economic targets, border towns and the Nicaraguan army by the Fuerzas Democráticas Nicaraguenses (FDN), anti-Sandinista guerrillas based in Honduras, increased. A Contra group, the Alianza Revolucionaria Democrática (ARDE), was also established in Costa Rica, led by Edén Pastora.

In June 1985 leaders of the FDN and of more moderate opposition groups announced the formation of the Unión Nicaraguense Opositora, a co-ordinating opposition movement, which also included Miskito Indian opponents of the government. In the same month the US Congress voted to allocate \$ 27 million in non-military aid to the Contras. In August 1986 the US Congress approved assistance for the Contras of \$ 100 million, though this had twice been

⁵³ See Leslie Cockburn, Out of control: The story of the Reagan administration's secret war in Nicaragua, the illegal arms pipeline, and the Contra drug connection, (London, Butler and Tanner, 1987); Christopher Dickey, With the Contras: A reporter in the wilds of Nicaragua, (London, Faber and Faber, 1986).

rejected by the House of Representatives earlier in the year. In November the US government disclosed that funds accruing from its clandestine sales of military equipment to Iran had been used to support the Contras. In May 1987 the Union Nicaraguense Opositora and a rival Contra faction, the Bloque Opositor del Sur (BOS), based in Costa Rica, agreed to form a new coalition grouping, to be known as the Resistencia Nicaraguense.

In November 1986 the legislature adopted a new Constitution, which was promulgated in January 1987; on the same day, however, civil liberties, guaranteed in the Constitution, were again suspended by the renewal of the five-year-old state of emergency. In June 1989 the Unión Nacional Opositora (UNO) was formed by 14 opposition parties of varying political views. They decided to present a unifying presidential candidate, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, and a single programme in the forthcoming elections.⁵⁴

On assuming office, the UNO government immediately attempted to reverse a number of Sandinista policies. The suspension of the civil service law in May 1990 provoked a public-sector strike, which brought the country to a standstill. President Chamorro was forced to concede wage increases of 100 per cent and the establishment of a joint

⁵⁴ See Enrique N. Camacho, "El proceso electoral en el regimen Sandinista 1979-1990", en Cuadernos Americanos, No. 21, 1990.

trade union and government commission to revise the civil service law. In July another general strike, involving 100,000 workers, was held in support of demands for wage increases and the implementation of legislation allowing the restoration to private ownership of land that had been nationalized and redistributed under the Sandinista government. Once again the government granted concessions, including a 43 per cent wage increase, the promise of a further rise in August, and the suspension of the programme to privatize land.

During 1990 there were numerous violent incidents arising from conflicts over the ownership of land. In mid-October the government announced the formation of a National Agrarian Commission to study the problems of land distribution and illegal land seizures. But in June 1991 the emergence of groups of re-armed Contra rebels, known as "Re-contras" became apparent when the occupations of several cities in the northern province of Jinotega were reported in the media. The Re-contras' stated aim was to publicize the grievances of thousands of demobilized Contras in the north of the country who had not received land and aid promised them under the terms of the resettlement plan introduced by the government following demobilization.

In late August 1991 a supervisory body, the National Security Commission, including a Special Disarmament

Brigade (BED) was established to disarm civilians. In the same month Radio Sandino acknowledged the existence of groups of re-armed Sandinistas "Re-compas", which, it claimed, had been formed to counter the military operations of the Re-contras. In spite of the efforts of the National Security Commissions, reports of hostilities between Re-contras and Re-compas continued. The phased disarmament of the Re-contras and the Re-compas began in late January 1992. However, in mid-April groups of the former combatants began to join forces, forming the "Revueltos", to demand that the government honour the promises of land and credit that it made to the soldiers prior to demobilization. The groups, acting predominantly in the north of the country, blockaded roads and occupied public and private property. In mid-May the government attempted to placate the Revueltos, allocating them 800 plots of land outside the capital as a gesture of its intent to address seriously the groups' grievances.

The Guerrilla.

By then thoroughly disenchanted with the PSN, Carlos Fonseca Amador, Tomás Borges and Silvio Mayorga met in Tegucigalpa, Honduras in 1961 to create the National Liberation Front (FSL), a guerrilla organization of the Castro-Guevara type.

... The majority of the founders and leaders of the FSLN - future vanguard of the Nicaraguan

revolution - were members of the student movement. Carlos Fonseca, Silvio Mayorga, Tomas Borges were the generators of a new revolutionary orientation, a movement free of the influence of bourgeois parties of opposition.⁵⁵

Therefore, throughout the 1960s the FSLN carried out a rural guerrilla struggle among the peasants, using the cities as a rearguard and source of assistance. In the 1970s they began to pay more attention to the Pacific region, to areas such as Chinandega, León, Carazo, and Managua, and to the agricultural proletariat and semi-proletariat as well as to the urban working masses.

The first FSLN "foco" on the Rio Coco in 1963 was based on Che's three lessons of the Cuban revolution. Firstly, that irregular forces can defeat a regular army; secondly, that there is no need to wait for the proper revolutionary conditions, since the insurgency itself will create positive conditions; and thirdly that the vulnerability of urban revolutionary movements to suppression requires the insurgents to seek the mobility and security of the countryside, preferably the remote places with small populations. However, the FSLN's military defeats in Rio Coco and Rio Bocay were made worse by the absence of strong links with the masses. The Front acknowledged that during this period their military operations had an "invasionist" character, that is, the Sandinistas would enter a rural

⁵⁵ Elena Gorovaya, "En los orígenes del Frente Sandinista", en América Latina (USSR), No. 2, 1990, pp. 89 s.

area without having conducted prior political work there, and so would fail to win the support of the local population.

In 1966 the FSLN leadership decided to resume the armed offensive. The Sandinistas strengthened their guerrilla units on the mountain of Pancasan, but this time the FSLN arrived previously in order to train and indoctrinate the new potential peasant recruits. At the end of August 1967, the National Guard detected the guerrilla columns and launched an attack against them. For the FSLN, the attack on Pancasan was a severe military defeat: thirteen experienced members of the organization had been killed. With the FSLN underground, the role of intermediate organizations became more crucial than ever. Therefore, the Sandinistas carried out intense organizing efforts in the factories, in working class neighbourhoods, and in middle-class high schools and universities.

A new strategy had emerged from the circumstances. The "Prolonged Popular War" (GPP), which centred on the rural proletariat, sought to develop a popular army in the countryside, similar to those which existed during the long guerrilla wars preceding the victories of revolutionaries in China and Vietnam. The main tactical objectives were a military take-over and the establishment of a revolutionary government based on a "worker-peasant" alliance.

In 1969, the FSLN published a new programme, which defined the Front as a politico-military organization. Its objectives being the takeover of power through the destruction of the bourgeois military dictatorship, and the establishment of a revolutionary government based on the worker-peasant alliance and the participation of all the anti-imperialist forces in the country.⁵⁶

The literature on the revolutionary potential of agrarian societies offers two strategic perspectives. Firstly it emphasizes the role of the peasant as a driving force of social change, ready to confront exploitation and oppression from the state as well as the large landowners. Secondly and derived directly from the Marxist tradition, it emphasizes the role of the revolutionary vanguard of the agricultural proletariat and of the minifundia peasants, already in process of losing their lands.

According to the first of these perspectives the revolution is the task of those who still have something to lose and thus to defend. According to the second perspective it is the task of those who have already lost everything but their chains.⁵⁷ Both perspectives are relevant to Nicaragua because the course of capitalist development in the countryside over the 1960s to 1980s linked the medium sized peasant producers of the interior to the growth of export

⁵⁶ Ilia Bimov, "El Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional fuerza decisiva en la lucha", en América Latina (USSR), No. 3, 1980, p. 26.

⁵⁷ See Bart J. Moore, Social origins of dictatorship and democracy, (Boston, Beacon Press, 1966), Eric R. Wolf, Peasant wars of the Twentieth Century, (New York, Harper and Row, 1969).

agriculture, primarily in the Pacific area, generating a mass of agricultural proletarians and semi-proletarians.

The FSLN fused socialist ideological elements with the essence of Sandinismo (its broad popular basis, its anti-imperialism, and its reliance on armed struggle), to create the revolutionary ideology that drove their struggle for the next twenty years. Thus, they considered guerrilla warfare the appropriate means of achieving political change and they were convinced that a revolutionary struggle based in the countryside, relying on the support of the peasantry, would eventually lead to the overthrow of the dictatorship. Consequently, when workers, students, and members of the middle class joined the FSLN, they were transferred to the politico-military structure in the mountains.

... In my judgement, the FSLN entered power as a vanguard, politico-military organization that based itself on three pillars: Marxism (as interpreted by Lenin, Mao, Ho Chi Minh, and Carlos Fonseca), the revolutionary and class-conscious ideas and practices of Augusto Sandino, and the inspiration of the successful Cuban revolution.⁵⁸

In accordance with the new strategy, the front's urban cadres entered an alliance with the PSN under the Republican Mobilization Umbrella Front. The Sandinistas were mainly involved in setting up committees in the poor

⁵⁸ Thomas W. Walker, Revolution and counterrevolution in Nicaragua, (Boulder, Westview Press, 1991), p. 101.

urban neighbourhoods of Managua and León to pressure the government into providing services like water, street lighting, etc. But the Sandinistas became convinced that the revolution could not be made through grassroots demands for reform. The problem with the PSN lay in the defensive, economic and materialist nature of its efforts.

Proponents of the original "Prolonged Popular War" strategy remained faithful to their position: that the guerrilla units were the vanguard of the revolutionary process and that mountain strongholds and the rural proletariat would prevent the bourgeoisie from co-opting the revolution. Thus, only a long struggle would foster socialist consciousness among a working class kept politically backward by forty years of Somocismo.

When the GPP talked of accumulating forces, what they had in mind was a gradual build up of material, human and ideological resources, a solid and patient process.⁵⁹

The GPP was based on the assumption that Nicaragua was still a predominantly peasant agrarian society in which the major objective problem available for revolutionary exploitation was land hunger amongst the peasantry.⁶⁰ Therefore, the GPP fulfilled the minimum Marxist

⁵⁹ George Black, The triumph of the people: The Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, (London, Zed Press, 1981), p. 95.

⁶⁰ See FSLN, People war, (Managua, Ed. Vanguardia, 1986).

requirement of agreeing that "the working class is destined by history to lead the victorious revolution". Yet, that class, according to the GPP, had not proved capable of providing a base for the necessary level of revolutionary violence. The innovation that the GPP made, in Nicaragua's terms, was its insistence that the masses be mobilized and indoctrinated through the struggle for power, before rather than after victory.

There was a certain passiveness about the GPP's submission to "reality" which undermined their ability to make events happen. In a sense, the GPP fell into the same mistake the Communists did; emphasizing the need to wait patiently for conditions to mature, and for the inevitable to occur over their own role in creating the inevitable.

Initially, the Proletarian Tendency was directed by Jaime Wheelock, Luis Carrión, and Carlos Roberto Huembes. When Huembes was killed in November 1976, he was replaced by Carlos Nuñez Telles. This faction advocated a shift from the focus on Asian style revolution in rural areas to more orthodox focus on ideological indoctrination of the proletarian masses in the cities of the Pacific lowlands. The inspiration for this strategy was Chile, where the "Popular Unity" coalition led by the Socialist and Communist parties took the form of a popular resistance movement after Salvador Allende's government was overthrown in September 1973.

TP leaders argued that the FSLN's struggle ought to be conditioned by objective forces such as the level of economic development, and that the more class conscious proletariat should be in the vanguard. Their mistake, the Proletariat Tendency argued, was that the guerrilla army was operating in isolation, detached from the urban working-class. The PT pointed to the relative decline of the agricultural sector in the 1960s and the rapid growth and new militancy of the urban proletariat. The proletarians held that only a Marxist-Leninist party of the proletariat could guide the revolutionary struggle.

Consequently, the TP focused its efforts on political, educational, and agitational work with urban working class cadres and in the marginal slums of Managua. Although the TP concentrated on the urban proletariat, they extended their organizing efforts to radicalize farm workers and landless peasants. In March 1978, they consolidated the Rural Workers Association (ATC) as a public legal organization.

... The overall dominance of agriculture in the Nicaraguan economy had obscured to many analysts the new revolutionary potential of the urban workers and the steady proletarianization since the 1950s of their rural counterparts in important agro-exporting enterprises.⁶¹

⁶¹ George Black, The triumph of the people: The Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, op. cit., p. 92.

Members of the FSLN leadership in exile tried to find a way through the dispute racking the front. The "Group of Twelve" emerged as mediators, and came to represent a third force within the FSLN, and this led to them being popularly known, especially outside Nicaragua, as the Terceristas. This Insurrectional Tendency (TI) was led by Humberto Ortega, a former GPP colleague of Fonseca and Borges, and supported by Ortega's brother Daniel and an old Mexican friend Víctor Tirado López.

TI believed that socio-economic and political conditions in Nicaragua were ripe for a rapid, popular based, anti-Somoza insurgency led by an elite vanguard, struggling primarily, but not exclusively, in the cities. The Terceristas promoted the idea of an anti-Somoza coalition, that was to include not only workers and peasants, but also elements of the middle class, particularly the intelligentsia, the students, and the petite bourgeoisie.

... Rapid recruitment to the new Terceristas or (Tendencia Insurreccional) followed from church and lay workers, lawyers, academics and some lumpen elements. ⁶²

The Terceristas did not agree with the Proletarians and the GPP that the struggle must be a protracted one requiring a gradual accumulation of forces. On the contrary, they claimed that a revolutionary situation already existed, that is, anti-Somoza sentiment had spread throughout the

⁶² George Black, *Ibid.*, p. 96.

different classes of society. In their social theory, the Terceristas rejected both the peasants and the proletariat as useful social bases for the war against the dictatorship, counting instead on a "third social force" made up of the petite bourgeoisie and other urban middle sectors which provided the necessary level of popular revolt.

... The insurrection's success, according to the Terceristas, rested on gaining support from all anti-Somoza sectors, including factions of the bourgeoisie whose economic pressure (through strikes) would coincide with armed activities.⁶³

The platform's goal was to establish a revolutionary popular democratic government, on the Marxist-Leninist model, evocative of the popular democratic stage of government through which the East European Communist States passed briefly in the post-war period. The economic reason for not moving directly to pure socialism was that the economy was non-industrialized and dependent on the world market system.

In summary, like many practising Marxist revolutionaries before them, the Terceristas differed with classical Marxism on several points of social theory and strategy. Firstly, the objective conditions of capitalist economic development would not necessarily create a proletariat in

⁶³ Gary Ruchwarger, People in power: Forcing a grassroots democracy in Nicaragua, (Massachusetts, Bergin and Garvey Publishers, 1987), p. 20.

an imperialized Third World country. Secondly, the subjective conditions for revolution, in the form of conscious class struggle, would not always develop together with the objective conditions. Thirdly, the historical subject (the proletariat) would not necessarily be the same as or even directly generate the revolution's political subject, the conscious vanguard organization (the party). Fourthly, the class content of the revolutionary project (the ideological goals) did not have to reflect the empirical social background of those making the revolution. Finally, the way in which power was won did not determine the nature and extent of the socio-economic transformation that would follow.

The solution finally reached by this third tendency, combined the strategies of Prolonged People's War in the countryside with massive popular resistance in the cities. Several novel ingredients were added such as a general insurrection, backed up by urban guerrilla warfare, and the mobilization of Nicaragua's middle sectors in a political confrontation with the Somoza's dictatorship.

In May 1977, the Terceristas under the National Directorate selected a new platform on for the FSLN, authored mainly by Humberto Ortega. In the new document, the Sandinista's struggle was viewed as a revolutionary process guided by the Leninist vanguard elite of the FSLN, not the Marxist proletariat. Furthermore, the first major thesis in this

new statement, based on an assessment of Nicaragua's political and economic conditions, was that the popular forces by themselves were incapable of overthrowing the dictatorship. Consequently, it became imperative to establish a temporary alliance with the bourgeois opposition.

In June 1978, the three tendencies signed agreements on immediate military actions. They established a national Sandinista Coordinating Committee, with the understanding that tactical agreements were the first step towards ultimate formal unification. Promptly after the FSLN achieved tactical unity, the Sandinistas created the United People's Movement (MPU). The three FSLN tendencies, the Communist Party of Nicaragua, more than twenty student, labour, women and civic organizations joined it to develop a concrete plan for mass opposition to Somoza.

The FSLN-GPP, the FSLN-Tendencia Proletaria, and the general staff of the urban resistance, FSLN-Insurreccional, had decided to unite our political and military forces in order to guarantee that the heroic struggle of our people not be stolen by the machinations of Yankee imperialism and the treasonous sectors of the local bourgeoisie. ⁶⁴

Following Castro's example, the supports of insurrection organized in February 1979 the National Patriotic Front (FPN). This network of alliances included the Independent

⁶⁴ FSLN, "Communique to the Nicaraguan people", in Latin American Perspectives, Volume 6, No. 1, 1979, p. 127.

Liberal Party (PLI), the Popular Social Christian Party (PPSC), the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN), the Communist Party of Nicaragua (PCdeN), the Group of Twelve, and the United People's Movement (MPU). It was a massive coalition under the FSLN leadership.⁶⁵ The FPN shared the Sandinista perspective and accepted the three fundamental points of the Sandinista programme: disbandment of the National Guard, nationalization of all Somocista business and property, and establishment of a democratic popular government.

There are three fundamental points to note about these agreements. Firstly, they encouraged in all the respective organizations and militias, a policy of unity orientated towards ending personal attacks and replacing them with the political and moral imperative that revolutionaries should settle their differences amicably through internal criticism. Secondly, they set in motion the formulation and development, within the framework of a unitary process, of the revolutionary theories which would lead the way to unleashing the armed insurrection for the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship. Thirdly, they combined the available political and military forces into an emergency plan designed to destroy or neutralize the plan of imperialism, the bourgeoisie, and Somoza's government.

⁶⁵ See John A. Booth, The end and the beginning: The Nicaraguan revolution, (Boulder, Westview Press, 1985).

Analysis.

Nicaragua's predominantly mixed socialist principles with economy a relatively broad state sector with a private part that incorporated large, medium and small private producers. Included in this last category were an increasing number of service and producer cooperatives which were being promoted by the revolutionary government.

As a result of this cautious approach, there exists in Nicaragua today three basic forms of ownership of the means of production: 1) State ownership, the so-called People's Property Area (ALP); 2) cooperatives and associations such as the Sandinista Agricultural Cooperatives (CAS); and 3) private ownership. ⁶⁶

In some ways, the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions fit well into the conceptual categories. Firstly, both revolutions sought social justice and political freedom through social engineering approaches, while rejecting Capitalism as a societal political goal. Secondly, both revolutions changed violently the old regime's policies, rulers, and organization through an internal insurrectionary process. Thirdly, neither revolution tolerated resistance to, or poor compliance with, their policies, particularly from disaffected groups, after having broken the state's monopoly of power during the insurrectionary period.

⁶⁶ Jiri Valenta, and Virginia valenta, "Sandinistas in power", in Problems of Communism, Volume 34, No. 5, 1985, p. 18.

Fourthly, both revolutions built, during the insurrectionary process, a new political consensus which supplied later political support and legitimacy to the authority of the revolutionary government. Fifthly, both revolutions signalled the initiation of the revolutionary phase, as distinguished from the previous insurrectionary stage, during which the process of social change was initiated. Sixthly, both dictators received internal support from the local alliance of corporate interest, the traditional marriage of convenience between wide segments of Latin American bourgeoisie, and the traditional relations with the United States.

Seventhly, Washington tried to put some distance between itself and those regimes once the popular tide supporting the insurrection was practically overwhelming and, therefore, the end of the autocracies was a foregone conclusion. Eighthly, in both cases, some sectors of the social classes and interest groups originally associated with the dictatorship also tried to separate themselves from those regimes. Lastly, The government was organized in the form of a pyramidal structure with the Council of Ministers and its Executive Committee at the top.

The cases of Cuba and Nicaragua contrast in a number of other ways. Firstly, the dynamics of revolutionary actions and counter-revolutionaries' counteractions produced, finally, the radical nature of the revolution. The

revolutions leadership, ideology, social and economic relations, and international posture were all equally radical. The Cuban state was organized in a Marxist-Leninist character that became formalized with legal and political institutions, such as the 1976 Socialist constitution, the legislative and administrative organs of People's Power at the national, provincial, and municipal levels, and the Cuban Communist Party (PCC), which was founded in its present form in 1965. Meanwhile, in Nicaragua, the FSLN National Directorate and other leading members struggled to safeguard an institutional arrangement which provided a balance between the private and public sectors and between revolutionary and non-revolutionary groups and organizations. They opted to use the nationalistic and anti-imperialistic values of Sandinismo as its revolutionary ideology.

Secondly, the various groups fighting against the Batista regime were of middle-class, urban composition. Castro's 26th of July Movement was originally formed with members of the youth section of the orthodox political party (PPC), who had middle and lower socio-economic background, coming from cities like Havana, Artemisa; mostly from the western provinces of the island. Only after 1956 did the Cuban insurrection have an increasingly rural character. It was between 1957 and 1958 that the insurrection turned from an urban underground to a rural guerrilla warfare. The insurrection in Nicaragua had a much broader urban and

rural character than that of Cuba. The expansion of the insurrection into urban and rural areas was reflected in the populist nature of the final offensive launched in the summer of 1979. The anti-Somoza coalition covered a wide political spectrum. The Broad Opposition Front (FAO), originally brought together political parties and groups such as the Nicaraguan Conservative Party, Independent Liberal Party, Democratic Liberation Union, and Nicaraguan Social Christian Party. Most of these groups featured urban, middle-class leadership, but their opposition to Somoza was not necessarily addressed against Somocismo. Often they repudiated the man not the system.

Thirdly, the Christian ideology played an important supportive role in Nicaragua, but not in Cuba. In Nicaragua, the theology of Liberation had made its way into the ideology of the revolution by means of a Christian faith representing the majority of the population.

In a devoutly Catholic country, in which about 90 per cent of the population actively professed their faith, the FSLN has attempted to blend Christianity with Sandinismo to buttress support for the regime and weaken the position of the Catholic church hierarchy.⁶⁷

Fourthly, while the Cuban revolution experienced a limited reign of terror, especially during its initial period, when some of Batista's military and police officers, and later

⁶⁷ Janusz Bugajski, Sandinista Communist and rural Nicaragua, (New York, Praeger, 1990), p. 20.

some counter-revolutionaries were executed, Nicaragua refused to institute the death penalty. Fifthly, while both Cuba and Nicaragua became members of the non-aligned group of nations, developing relations with all sort of countries, developed and under-developed, socialist and non-socialist, Nicaragua followed a more open and less committed approach in foreign policy by avoiding alignments with either the United States or Soviet Union.

The role of the USA.

The relationship of the non-Somocista bourgeoisie to the United States is important for the political understanding of the national situation. On the one hand, it shows that the accusations about long term US involvement with the Somocista regime were not simply an FSLN slogan, but a basic part of the reality with which the bourgeoisie had to deal. On the other hand, the negotiations of these bourgeois fractions with the United States shows that the opposition that grew out of them was generated by the system of domination established in Nicaragua a half-century before by the US itself. Therefore, US endorsement represented the common denominator of all the projects of bourgeois political domination in Nicaragua; neither Somocismo, nor bourgeois anti-Somocismo, was conceived of as viable without US support.

Ever since the Hise Treaty of 1848, by which, if it had been ratified, the US was to receive exclusive rights to a

canal across Nicaragua in return for a guarantee of Nicaragua sovereignty, the United States has been the dominant foreign power in Nicaragua. The administration enhanced the relationship by conducting surveys in Central America and declaring that Nicaragua was the best site for the construction of a pan-isthmus canal. The US might have built the canal in Nicaragua, except for Cromwell, who delivered the prize to Panama. Furthermore, with the construction of the Panama Canal, one might have expected that Nicaragua would be resentful and that US influence would diminish; but such was not the case. Nicaragua was still a possible alternate route, and it was too close to Panama to permit it to fall under anyone else's influence.

US military intervention must be divided conceptually into two quite distinct periods.⁶⁸ The first began in 1912, when Marines were landed to stabilize a country torn by civil conflict. In the process the Marines shored up an incumbent and unpopular Conservative government. During these years, US policy oscillated from one extreme to the other. In consequence of this, was the fact that the Liberal party, supposedly less friendly to the United States than the Conservatives, could not permanently be denied access to power. Secondly, since no defeated party could have accepted the results of falsified elections, the Marines would have to remain for several years to assure

⁶⁸ See Don L. Etchison, The United States and militarism in Central America, (New York, Praeger, 1975).

the integrity of elections. Finally, since no victorious government could escape an armed challenge from its defeated rivals, private military and paramilitary forces would have to be disarmed and disbanded. In their place the armed Marines would train a non-partisan constabulary to preserve public order once the US expeditionary force had departed. In effect, the US proposed to give Nicaragua the national army it had never possessed.

In the second period, from 1927 to 1933 the process turned out to be so nettlesome that even if the Depression had not eventually intervened to force a drastic reduction of overseas commitments, by 1933 Washington would in all likelihood have been ready to withdraw its troops from Nicaragua. One problem was the refusal of dissident elements of the Liberal party to recognize the "Peace of Tipitapa". Led by Augusto Sandino, they retained their arms to pursue a guerrilla campaign against US and Nicaragua forces for six years.

Sandino's "hit-and-run" tactics succeeded in making Washington's policy of pacification in Nicaragua very expensive, in terms of blood and of money. This made all the more urgent the formation of a professional military force in Nicaragua to take over from the Marines. Thus, the National Guard of Nicaragua was organized under the twin pressures of time and circumstance. At first the infant force had American Marines as officers, but by 1931 most of

these had been replaced by Nicaraguans quickly trained at the new La Loma Military Academy. However, since most of the enlisted men were drawn from Nicaragua's underclass, there was no training up into the commissioned ranks. Instead, officer candidates were drawn from civilian life, which made their indoctrination into non-partisanship a rather quixotic exercise.

The US had a firm ally in Nicaragua; during World War II, it had no fear of subversion or attack in its own backyard, because Somoza made clear his hatred of Communism.⁶⁹ The US could rely upon the support of Nicaragua in the Organization of American States and the United Nations. Somoza's Nicaragua aided the Central Intelligence Agency in the overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz of Guatemala in 1954. It provided the staging area for the "Bay of Pigs" episode in 1961, and when Lyndon Johnson intervened in the Dominican Republic in 1965 and called for an OAS peacekeeping force, Nicaragua was one of only three states to provide troops.

It was in the first half of "Tachito's" presidency (1967-1972) that the US seemed most strongly to support the regime, largely because of the obsequious conduct of Ambassador Turner Shelton, whose excessive identification with the dictator created a scandal in Nicaragua and

⁶⁹ See Eduardo Crawley, "Nicaraguan security perspectives", in Peter Calvert, The Central American security system: North-South or East-West?, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988).

ripples of opposition from the State Department and his own embassy. From 1975 on, US policy was clearly aimed at getting Somoza to restore some integrity to Nicaragua's political institutions, through dialogue with the opposition and free elections.

When it became obvious that the dictator intended to do neither, Washington, in conjunction with other countries of the region, began to pressure him to resign. During these tense months, relations between the US and the Nicaraguan opposition became rather frayed. The opposition wanted Somoza out as expeditiously as possible, and at the beginning at least could not understand why the US could not easily accomplish this, since in their view his regime was utterly dependent for its very existence upon Washington's good will.

The State Department and the US Embassy in Managua were equally anxious to see Somoza depart, at least after 1978, but also wished to avoid a power vacuum in which the radical elements in the revolution, that is, the Sandinistas, could seize power. This led the State Department and the White House into "policy paralysis" throughout the Carter administration. In the end, Washington's modest proposals were rejected by the council.

of the Organization of American States (OAS), which had become involved in the mediation process.⁷⁰

The United States was supported in its economic objectives by organizations such as the Agency for International Development (AID), the American Institute for Free Labour Development (AIFLD),⁷¹ the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank, through plans such as the "Santa Fe Document", the "Kissinger Plan", and the "Caribbean Basin Initiative". The political and military objectives of this phase are manifested most recently in Washington's new strategy of Low Intensity Conflict (LIC).

Thus, all of these instruments conform to the defence of US global geo-political interest, because the Carter and, even more so, the Reagan administration perceived Central American revolutionary movements as a part of a global conflict between a Communist East and a democratic capitalist West. Indirect involvement was realized through the training and military instruction of the Nicaraguan armed forces by secondary countries such as Chile, and Israel. On the political and ideological fronts, the US counts on the support of the International Christian

⁷⁰ See Charles D. Ameringer, "Nicaragua: The rock that crumbled", in Robert Wesson, US influence in Latin America in the 1980s, (New York, Praeger, 1982).

⁷¹ The AID and the AIFLD which operates under the auspices of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Democratic Movement, represented principally in El Salvador by Venezuela, with the financial support of Germany.

The new element in Nicaragua's traditional pattern of violence was that after the Sandinista revolution it was not being used by the Soviet-USA confrontation. Thus, the US promoted the stabilization of friendly governments such as UNO, and supported every effort by them to gain authority, the main political goal in the region. But these views were not consensual and were not intended to be by the government of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro. On the contrary, their purpose was to disassociate the new administration from the previous one, and behind this defiant mentality was the optimistic assumption that a more determined US attitude would improve the US position in the region in a short time.

Therefore, in late May 1992, at the instigation of Republican US Senator Jesse Helms, the US Congress suspended the release of \$ 116 million in aid to Nicaragua, on the grounds that the Nicaraguan government had failed to compensate US citizens for land expropriated under the Sandinista regime. In addition, objections were raised concerning the influence enjoyed by the Sandinistas over the government, and the alleged channelling of US funds to Sandinista organizations. But in August 1992 the imminent release of the suspended US aid was again postponed, following the publication of a report by the US Senate's

Foreign Relations Committee which claimed that the facto rulers of Nicaragua were the Sandinistas, who, it maintained, controlled the army, police and judiciary as well as much of the public administrative system.

As a result of the suspension of US aid, the government was forced to implement a series of compensatory austerity measures. Furthermore, in early September, in response to US and UNO criticism on the issue of the return of property expropriated under the Sandinista government, Chamorro signed decrees establishing a property ombudsman's office and other provisions to expedite the processing of property claims. In addition, the President signed an agreement specifying that all unjustly confiscated property would be returned or the rightful owners compensated.

Summarizing, Washington was unable to make Nicaragua behave like a democracy, even in the Latin American sense of the term. Intervention could eliminate private armies but not the influence of the military in politics; it could assure honest elections at the bayonet point of a Marine but not one moment beyond it.⁷² Further, the two policies, intervention and non-intervention were equally frustrating. Non-intervention won out because it was, quite simply, less expensive, and, at the beginning, more popular, if not with

⁷² See Mark Falcoff, and Robert Royal, The continuing crisis: US policy in Central America and the Caribbean, (Lanham, The Ethics and Public Policy Centre, 1987).

the Nicaraguan opposition, at least with other Latin American countries.

Negotiations.

In June 1984 talks had commenced between the Nicaraguan and US governments in order to foster the peace negotiations proposed by the "Contadora Group".⁷³ However, although the Sandinistas agreed in September to sign a peace agreement, the US government rejected the agreement on the grounds that the forthcoming Nicaraguan elections would not be fairly conducted. In February 1985 President Ortega launched an independent peace initiative, announcing the expulsion of 100 Cuban military advisers from Nicaragua and imposing an indefinite moratorium on the acquisition of armaments.

Ortega's reforms were rejected by the US President, Ronald Reagan, who reaffirmed his government's commitment to removing the Sandinistas from power in Nicaragua. In spite of the set-back (\$ 27 million aid to the Contras), the Nicaraguan government reaffirmed its desire to resume

⁷³ Contadora is a island located in the Gulf of Panama. In January 1983, representatives of the governments of Mexico, Panama, Colombia, and Venezuela met in Contadora to try to devise some type of Latin American solution to what those governments have called the Central American crisis, focusing on Nicaragua and El Salvador. The meeting concluded with the establishment of the "Contadora Group". See Fernando U. Cepeda, and Rodrigo G. Pardo, Contadora: Desafío a la diplomacia tradicional, (Bogotá, Oveja Negra, 1985); Tom Farer, "Contadora: The hidden agenda", in Foreign Policy, No. 59, 1985.

negotiations with the US. Concurrently, the Nicaraguan government revoked its moratorium on purchases of armaments and declared a state of alert.

In April 1986 the governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras agreed to sign a peace settlement which had been proposed by the Contadora Group in September 1984. This accord agreed on limiting the acquisition of weapons, the withdrawal of all external and irregular forces and the holding of democratic elections. Nicaragua did not consent to sign the agreement. Furthermore, in February 1987 the same four governments approved a new peace plan, suggested by the President of Costa Rica and largely based on the Contadora proposals, but placing greater emphasis on democratization within Nicaragua, including the lifting of the state of emergency. The proposal subsequently underwent some modifications, and in August the peace plan was signed by the President of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, at a summit meeting in Guatemala.

In accordance with the plan's requirements, a four-member National Commission for Reconciliation was created in Nicaragua in August; it was chaired by Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, the Archbishop of Managua, a leading critic of the government. In January 1988, following a summit meeting of the five Central American presidents, the Nicaraguan government ended the state of emergency, and

consented to participate directly in negotiations with the Contras. The first direct discussions between the Contras and the Sandinistas took place in San José, Costa Rica, in January, but ended without agreement in the Contras' demand for a programme of broad democratic reform.

In March, however, a further round of negotiations was held in Nicaragua itself, between representatives of the government and of the Contras. A 60-day cease-fire was agreed, with effect from 1 April, as a prelude to detailed peace negotiations, and was later unilaterally extended by the government, until November 1989. The government agreed to release political prisoners and to permit the participation of the Contras in domestic political dialogue, and eventually in elections. In April the US Congress agreed to provide \$ 48 million in non-military aid for the Contras.

However, in May 1988, the Nicaraguan government signed an agreement on a permanent cease-fire with the Yatama group of Miskito Indian rebels.⁷⁴ In August the US Senate approved the provision of \$ 27 million in humanitarian aid

⁷⁴ Miskito is an Indian people ethnically mixed with the blacks who inhabit the Caribbean Coast of Honduras and Nicaragua and the north-eastern coast of Costa Rica. The Miskito are descended from the Macro-Chibcha family of pre-colonial Colombia. Forgotten in Somoza's time, the Miskito Indians have had serious confrontations with the FSLN government, which has forced massive re-locations for military and political purposes. See Charles R. Hale, Resistance and contradiction: Miskitu Indians and the Nicaraguan state 1894-1987, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1994).

for the Contras. Thus, as the hope for further military aid diminished, the Contra fighters retreated into Honduras. In February 1989, the five Central American Presidents met in El Salvador to discuss the reactivation of the regional peace plan. At the meeting it was agreed that, in return for the dismantling of Contra bases in Honduras, there would be moves towards greater democracy in Nicaragua. These included pledges to hold a general election, open to opposition parties, to abolish restrictions on the press, and to allow all political parties free access to the media.

In March 1989, 1,894 former members of Somoza's National Guard were released from prison in accordance with the agreement reached at the February meeting. But in the same month the US government agreed to supply the Contras with \$ 4.5 million of humanitarian aid per month until February 1990. In April 1989 the government announced that a general election would be held on 25 February 1990. A number of electoral reforms were introduced: Contra rebels were permitted to return to vote, on condition that they relinquished their armed struggle under a proposed demobilization plan.

In August 1989 the five Central American Presidents met in Tela, Honduras, where they signed the "Tela Agreement". This provided for the voluntary demobilization, repatriation, or relocation of the Contra forces within a

90-day period. To facilitate this process, an International Commission of Support and Verification (CIAV) was established by the UN and the OAS. Following mediation conducted by the former US President Jimmy Carter, the government concluded an agreement with the leaders of the Miskito Indians of the Caribbean coast. The rebels agreed to renounce their armed struggle and to join the political process, and decided to support the presidential candidate of the Partido Social Cristiano Nicaraguense (PSCN), Erick Ramírez.

In November 1989 President Daniel Ortega declared the ending of the cease-fire with the Contras on the grounds that not enough was being done to implement the Tela agreement and disband Contra forces stationed in Honduras. In response to these events, the UN Security Council established the UN Observer Group in Central American (ONUCA), to monitor compliance with the Tela agreement, to prevent cross-border incursions by rebel groups and to assist in supervising the forthcoming Nicaraguan elections. Furthermore, on 19 April 1990, a cease-fire was agreed by the Contras and the Sandinista armed forces. The Contras agreed to surrender their weapons by 10 June, and to assemble in "security zones" supervised by UN troops. A transitional agreement between the outgoing Sandinista government and the newly-elected UNO coalition provided for a reduction in the strength of the security forces and their subordination to civilian authority.

Upon taking office on 25 April, President Chamorro assumed the post of Minister of National Defence, but allowed the previous minister, General Humberto Ortega, temporarily to retain the post of Chief of the Ejército Popular Sandinista (EPS). This provoked considerable controversy within the UNO and the Contra leadership. However, in return for a commitment from the Contras to sign the demobilization accords, the government agreed to the establishment of a special police force, composed of former Contra rebels in order to guarantee security within the demobilization zones. On 27 June the demobilization of the Contra rebels was officially concluded, signifying the end of 11 years of civil war in Nicaragua.

Conclusion.

The Somoza dynasty collapsed because of internal contradictions and a growing inability to adapt to a changing society. It had become an anachronism, embarrassing even to the United States and humiliating to Nicaraguans with any sense of national pride. Internally, it had become an instrument of economic destruction and political polarization. Total dependence on the Guardia for regime survival further alienated the bulk of the population and eventually undermined Guardia morale. Internationally, the regime's own excesses, the ineptitude of US policies, and the success of FSLN propaganda efforts had made Nicaragua the ultimate pariah state. Even the

dictatorships in Guatemala and El Salvador saw Somoza's fall as the only hope for restoring any measure of regional stability.

On the other hand, the FSLN took power because it was able to project itself as the only viable alternative to the dictatorship. It effectively mobilized anti-Somoza, anti-imperialist sentiment both within and outside Nicaragua, forging an overwhelming national coalition in the process. By subordinating ideology to nationalism, the FSLN even convinced of the middle and upper classes that FSLN triumph was preferable to a continuation of the Somoza dynasty. Therefore, when the dynasty finally collapsed, only the FSLN, with the vital support of "Los Doce" and the National Patriotic Front, was in a position to establish an effective claim to popular support.

In order to explain the nature of the generalized violence in the region, the characteristics and conditions under which an economic development model was implemented during the last forty years must be considered. Firstly, the accelerated modernization of Central American societies should be underlined separately from such well known conditions as the concentration of income, the regressive and exclusive character of wealth distribution, chronic unemployment, absolute misery thresholds, scant participation of most of the population in the decision making process concerning their own vital interests,

generalized suppression of any dissident activity, and the progressive loss of autonomy.

The long period of dynasty dictatorship that the Somoza family succession brought to Nicaragua reflects, beyond all its negative aspects, a particularly important fact: Somoza, in the specific framework of pre-revolutionary Nicaragua, was a guarantee of stability and consequently of the capitalist development model, at least while that model brought accelerated modernization with it. The twenty-five years that preceded the defeat of the dictatorship saw attempted coups such as the civil-military rebellion of 1954, acts of individual heroism such as the execution of the dictator in 1956 by a citizen, guerrilla activities that preceded the Cuban revolution, the ascent of the popular movement in the episodes of 1962-1963 and 1966-1967, resistance on the part of various political and social sectors, including the Catholic church, press attacks, conspiracies of exiles, and a permanent guerrilla movement that was beheaded only to reappear again and again.

Until 1975 in Nicaragua, the dominant power bloc was constituted by the bourgeoisie of the agricultural-export sector, the financial sector, and the developing industrial sector. The ascent and enrichment of very different social groups was carried out in the shadow of a paternalistic state represented by, and under the hegemony of, Somoza.

Therefore, what emerged was not an autonomous social class with a coherent social projection and ideology, as it would appear during and after the fall of Somoza. But the terms of the society changed radically when that pattern of development started to give signs of exhaustion and above all when the crisis began in 1977. It was at that time that Somoza's the economic group decided to clamp down on the non-Somocist bourgeoisie; it started what the bourgeoisie would term "un-loyal competition", in collusion with the trans-national enterprises and especially with the US multi-millionaire Howard Hughes. The Somocist group invaded areas of economic activity reserved by and traditionally exploited by the other financial groups.

On the other hand, the other groups intruded into areas of Somocist dominion, with the predictable result, considering their disadvantage. This explains the sharpening contradictions inside the dominant bloc, which for the first time reached the level of evident antagonism and showed that Somoza was no longer the motor of development nor the generator of productive forces in Nicaragua. It also explains the radicalization of a considerable part of the bourgeoisie and the middle sectors, leading them to look for an alliance with the revolutionary movement, which at that time already had an unquestionable presence in national political life.

GUATEMALA.

Introduction.

Guatemala is situated in the Central American isthmian region immediately to the South of Mexico. Because of Guatemala's traditional relationship with the rest of Central America, its frontiers to the south, with El Salvador and Honduras, are the product of diplomatic negotiation rather than geographical determination. Similarly to the north, not only did Guatemala fail to hang on to Chiapas and the Soconuzco, annexed by Mexico early in the nineteenth century, but some thirty years later it also lost to its powerful northern neighbour much of what is now the Mexican state of Tabasco.⁷⁵

In addition, Central America lies on the American plate and is the product of two separate geographic forces: the pressure of that plate bearing against the stable Caribbean plate and the shearing movement of the Cocos-Nazca plate moving southward in relation to the American plate just off the Pacific shoreline. The result is that Guatemala is a highly unstable earthquake zone, two-thirds of which consists of folds of conical volcanic peaks running broadly

⁷⁵ See Ministerio de Educación Pública - República de Guatemala, Límites entre Guatemala y México, (Ciudad de Guatemala, Ministerio de Educación Pública, 1964).

northwest to southeast, including six active and twenty-four dormant volcanoes.

The basic climate at sea level is maritime and tropical, and the average annual temperature on the coast ranges from 25oC to 30oC. The bulk of the population lives in the temperate uplands of the Piedmont region facing the Pacific, but in the mountains of the northwest the average temperature is only 15oC, and alpine climate gives way to a cold mountain one. The Pacific foothills of the highlands are gently sloping and fertile with deposited volcanic ash. Quite different from all of these, and representing in area about one-third of the republic, is El Petén, an enormous salient stretching northward into the centre of the Yucatán Peninsula. El Petén consists of flat, low-lying limestone tableland with a characteristic karst topography, perforated in places by drainage holes and wells but otherwise semi-arid except briefly during the heavy rains.

The valleys of the southern highlands offer the best sites/land for agricultural settlement. It is here and in the very high country of the northern departments of Huehuetenango, El Quiché, and Alta Verapaz that the main centres of traditional Indian culture are found. Therefore, there is a historical difference between the plantation agriculture in the highlands and that in the lowlands. In the highlands, plantation agriculture originated with the Spanish conquest. Cacao and indigo, source of a blue dye,

were two crops they grew for export, but in neither could they compete with other parts of the Spanish empire. Under the presidency of Justo Rufino Barrios (1873-1885), the landowners of the central highlands and upper Motagua Valley turned to coffee, both of which were opened up in the same period by German settlers. So by 1939 Germans owned 48 per cent of the large estates in Guatemala, nearly one-third of the total land in cultivation, and they accounted for some two-thirds of the country's coffee exports. ⁷⁶ On the other hand, in 1906 the United Fruit Company of Boston began operations in the Atlantic coastal zone, on the model of its already successful banana plantations in Jamaica.

The Indian languages spoken in Guatemala fall into twenty-one linguistic sub-groupings, which are relatively homogeneous in linguistic terms. Most of these languages belong to the Totonac-Mayan linguistic group, related not only to the Maya but also to other ethnic groups in modern Mexico. These include Maya itself, now spoken mainly in the north of El Petén; Chol and Chontal spoken on the Atlantic side; and Chuj, Jacaltet, and Kanjobal spoken on the border with Chiapas. Grouped together as Quichoid languages are Mam, Ixil, and Aguacatec in wester Guatemala; Quiché, Cakchiquel, Uspantec, and Zutuhil of the highlands; Kekkchi

⁷⁶ See Chester L. Jones, Guatemala: Past and the present, (New York, Russell and Russell, 1966).

in the north-western highlands; and Polomam on the Salvadorean border. ⁷⁷

The main division in Guatemalan society is the ethnic and cultural one between the ladino and the Indian. The ethnic element in the division, it is generally agreed, is expressed in terms of the cultural, and not the other way round. The ladinos constitute about two-thirds and the Indian one-third of the population. ⁷⁸ The Quiché accepted the rule of God and of the king of Spain together; their descendants are ritually received at baptism into both the Church and the civic body. The civic body is a highly developed organization, with parallel religious and secular hierarchies. Though the highest offices are civil, the bodies that are at the heart of the system, the cofradias or fraternities, are cult societies of between six and eight members who are dedicated to the service of a saint. Further, the religious practices that bind the Indian communities together stem from the land, and it is the land that forms the secular proof of the survival of a community. Even though a possible remedy of minifundia would be migration or the acceptance of land colonization schemes, the Indians have a mystical association with their ancestral lands that they are reluctant to break.

⁷⁷ See Franklin D. Parker, The Central American republics, (London, OUP for RIIA, 1965).

⁷⁸ See Felix W. McBryde, Cultural and historical geography of Southwest Guatemala, (Washington, Smithsonian Institute, 1947).

Governments have nevertheless, not reluctant to encourage this solution.

Under-development.

Much of Guatemala's poverty and underdevelopment flows from the archaic land tenure system, and the emphasis given to export-led development which maintains and enforces inequalities. Four issues are often pinpointed as the main ingredients in Guatemala's situation. The first is unequal development. In the 1960s and 1970s the Guatemalan economy boomed with an average annual growth rate of 6.8 per cent; more than double the population growth rate of 3 per cent. Yet USAID studies in 1970 and 1980 both concluded that the situation of the farmers worsened in absolute terms over the previous decade. ⁷⁹ Also in 1970 the wealthiest 20 per cent received 47 per cent of the national income, 55 per cent in 1980 and 57 per cent in 1984. The poorest 50 per cent had 24 per cent in 1970, 20 per cent in 1980 and 18 per cent in 1984. ⁸⁰

The second ingredient is the low level of wages in the agro-export sector. Wages on the plantations, which generate the country's wealth remain very low for four reasons: the abundance of labour, the absence of an

⁷⁹ See WOLA (Washington Office of Latin America), The roots of revolution, (Washington, WOLA, 1983).

⁸⁰ See INFOPRESS (Prensa Informativa), Guatemala: Elections 1985, (Guatemala City, INFOPRESS, 1985).

internal market, the absence of any unskilled alternative work, and the permanently seasonal nature of the available work.⁸¹ The third factor is the fact that food crops were neglected in favour of export crops because Guatemala fell into the trap of producing what it did not consume, and consuming what it did not produce. In 1965 Guatemala imported 11 per cent of its cereal requirements (93,000 tonnes), but this had risen to 17 per cent by 1980 (249,000 tonnes). Moreover, in the ten years between 1970 and 1980, the cost of all Guatemala's food system imports jumped from \$ 56.5 million to \$ 313 million.⁸²

The main obstacle to improved food production was the fact that the food crops were grown by minifundistas, who live on the worst land, benefit from little technical assistance, and either suffer usurious credit terms or receive no credit at all. The modernised agro-export sector hogged the major share of the commercial credit dispensed by the banks. In addition, there was no agrarian reform. Decree # 1551, passed in 1962, allows in certain circumstances for the expropriation of unused land in farms over 100 hectares, but a labyrinth of bureaucratic obstacles has meant that not much cultivable land has been

⁸¹ See USAID (US Agency for International Development), Report of the AID - Field mission in Guatemala, (Guatemala City, USAID, 1980).

⁸² See Solon L. Barraclough, and Patrick Marchetti, Towards an alternative for Central America and the Caribbean, (London, G. Irwins and X. Gorostiaga-Allen and Unwin, 1985).

expropriated since the law was past. According to USAID estimates, in the whole of the country there are 3 million acres of idle land. A tax on idle land is meant to encourage the large landowners to bring this unused land into production, but this has been easily circumvented.⁸³

To sum up, more than 100 years after the Liberal revolution, coffee still forms the spinal column of the Guatemalan economy and the country's number one export. In 1985 coffee exports were worth \$ 450 million, equivalent to 42 per cent of total exports. Furthermore, according to a 1986 estimate by the coffee-growers' association ANACAFE, more than half a million peasants and agricultural workers receive an income as a result of coffee production, and two million more benefit indirectly through their involvement in other branches of the coffee process.⁸⁴ Sugar cane was the second major crop that participated in the growth of the Guatemalan economy in the 1960s and 1970s. Guatemala was a net importer of sugar in the early 1950s, but production soared after the Cuban revolution in 1959 when the US government decided to switch Cuba's sugar quota to Central America. Therefore, the amount of land given over to sugar cane jumped from 15,000 to 76,000 hectares between 1961 and 1976.

⁸³ See A. Hintermiester, Rural poverty and export farming in Guatemala, (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1984).

⁸⁴ See El Gráfico (Newspaper), Guatemala City, 6 Julio 1986.

Changes in the productive and social structure of the highlands during the 1970s transformed the social status of the Indian population and led to its incorporation into and mobilization in support of the guerrilla movements. The key was the combination of two processes: expulsion from the land aggravated by the bourgeoisie's seizure of land on the one hand, and changes in the organization of agriculture, from the traditional hacienda to modern agribusiness, on the other.⁸⁵ As a consequence, class conflict increasingly focused on the relationship between the migratory rural semi-proletariat that still lived in the highlands but worked seasonally on the southern coast, and two "exploiter oppressor" classes, the ladino bourgeoisie, who expropriated their lands in the plateau; and the southern coast agrarian bourgeoisie, who had become their main employers during the capitalist expansion of the 1960s and 1970s.

During the 1980s, this situation was made more acute by the turn towards neo-liberal structural adjustment policies advocated by the United States and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Such measures included successive devaluations, which raised prices for basic goods and services in order to "control" inflation; the imposition of real wage ceilings or "discipline"; moves to open up the economy by dismantling protectionist structures; the

⁸⁵ See Jeffery M. Paige, "Social theory and peasant revolution in Vietnam and Guatemala", in Theory and Society, 1983.

privatization of various state-run enterprises; the removal of state subsidies for social services; cuts in public spending, and a general reduction of the state's role in the economy.

However, the development of the Central American Common Market increased foreign investment, and high coffee prices produced an economic boom with a series of resultant social consequences which contributed to the development of the mass movement. In the first place, the boom because it was not combined with any redistributive government social policy. In the second place, the boom was orientated towards the world market rather than the growth of a domestic or regional consumer market.

Historical Background.

The principal objective of the Jorge Ubico regime (1931-1944) had been economic development, reflecting a positivistic attitude.⁸⁶ Although the effort focused on the export sector, which benefited the upper-class more than other segments of the population, the results were expected to trickle down and permeate the entire society. The government devoted its major attention to expanding the country's infrastructure with the highway construction programme. Increasing the acreage under cultivation and

⁸⁶ See Jesús J. González, El positivismo en Guatemala, (Ciudad de Guatemala, Universitaria, 1970).

encouraging greater production constituted another major goal. The regime also engaged in an extensive public works programme, designed to provide modern facilities for governmental agencies and expand public services.

Ubico exhibited a passionate hatred of Communism, and opposing the spread of this doctrine became one of his primary concerns. A Communist-led uprising in neighbouring El Salvador in 1931, served to make the threat real.⁸⁷ The Ubico regime was oligarchic in nature, and its policies primarily benefited the landowning class. The efforts to establish order and stability, promote economic development, and expand commercial agriculture, clearly benefited the elite more than the other classes. Similarly, foreign investment brought most benefit to those elements of the population which were actively participating in the economy.

The middle-classes were both a major beneficiary and a major antagonist of the Ubico regime. In 1931 the middle-classes were numerically, an insignificant portion of the nation and did not constitute a major power bloc. The traditional middle-class consisted principally of professionals and intellectuals, forming an intellectual elite closely associated with, but at times highly critical of, the oligarchy. During Ubico's tenure the Guatemalan

⁸⁷ See Fay A. Des Portes - (United States Minister in Guatemala), To Secretary of 'State Cordell Hull, December 9, 1936.

middle-class underwent a drastic change that was the unintended result of his policies. The economic development promoted by the Ubico regime significantly increased the number of clerical white-collar, and middle-level management positions available, as well as providing additional business for professionals such as lawyers. ⁸⁸

The most significant result of Ubico's government for the Indians was the passage of the "Vagrancy Law" in 1934. This statute directly changed the status of all peons in the republic. Its consequences were sweeping. Since colonial days, labour in the rural areas was based on a system of peonage, by which Indians were encouraged to move onto the great "haciendas" where they exchanged their labour for a hut and a small parcel of land to farm for themselves. ⁸⁹ The vagrancy law abolished debt peonage by simply cancelling outstanding debts and barring legal prosecution to enforce payment after a two-year transitional period. It substituted a new labour system based on a collective labour obligation to the state, by requiring that all citizens must have the means of supporting themselves and their families.

Jorge Ubico was forced from power in June 1944, after ruling Guatemala for almost fourteen years. The end of

⁸⁸ See Georges A. Fauriol, Latin American insurgencies, (Washington, Georgetown University and the National Defense University, 1985).

⁸⁹ See Chester L. Jones, *op. cit.*

Ubico's regime was paralleled by similar dictatorial collapses in El Salvador, and Costa Rica. In Guatemala, however, the US played a major role. The collapse of the last of the liberal dictators was not the product of a vast internal upheaval. The Indians were quite conservative, and the farmers in general had nothing particular to gain in the immediate future. It was the increasing opposition from a growing middle class, organized primarily around student groups who were clamouring for new economic policies and democratic opportunities. Following Ubico's resignation, students and young professionals organized themselves politically, and the majority of them coalesced into two nascent organizations, the Popular Liberation Front (FPL) and National Renovation (RN).⁹⁰

There was a widely held expectation that the departure of Ubico would usher in a new era for Guatemala, an era symbolized by the young students, professionals, and officers who participated in the "October Revolution". The first administration following the revolution, that of Juan José Arévalo, clearly reflected the middle-class and idealistic nature of the October Revolution.⁹¹ But the Arévalo administration faced violent opposition from many sources. The church, business-people, landowners, and

⁹⁰ See José M. Aybar de Soto, Dependency and intervention: The case of Guatemala in 1954, (Boulder, Westview Press, 1978).

⁹¹ See Kenneth J. Grieb, Guatemalan caudillo: The regime of Jorge Ubico 1931-1944, (Athens, Ohio University Press, 1979).

politicians felt restricted by the opportunities offered by Arévalo's pluralism, and increasingly opposed much of the revolutionary legislation passed by congress during his term in office. The most serious opposition came from a divided military and US business interests. Caught in a quagmire of conspiracy as opposition stiffened, Arévalo actively discouraged peasant and rural labour organizations and did little to begin the social transformation he heralded.

Much of the government's economic policy in rural areas was directed towards expanding agricultural production, both for export and for domestic-use. The most important legislation promoting the latter was designed to stimulate corn cultivation by providing rural workers with land. Another area of significant legislative endeavour during the Arévalo administration was in the field of labour relations. The growth of unions and their influence on the government became one of the major sources of conflict.⁹² While labour unions took a relatively moderate stance towards Guatemalan owned businesses, they made increasing demands on foreign-owned companies. Their perceived influence on the government and the strengthening links between them and the Communist-linked Confederation of Workers of Latin America (CTAL) were two important causes

⁹² See Jorge M. Garcia, "Partidos políticos, orden jurídico y cambio social en Guatemala: La cuadratura del círculo", en Ignacio Sosa, and Jorge M. García, Centroamérica: Desafíos y perspectivas, (México, UNAM, 1984).

of the heightened opposition to Arévalo from other sectors of society by the end of his term in office.

Further, the railway workers' union, the Union for Action and Improvement of Railroads (SAMF), with approximately 4,500 members, was the best organized and largest workers' union in the country. It quickly dominated the labour movement and the Confederation of Guatemalan Workers (CGT), formed in October 1944.⁹³ The SAMF adopted an extremely belligerent attitude towards the US-owned railway. The only union able to challenge the dominance of the SAMF unions in the labour movement was the Union of Guatemalan Educational Workers (STEG). Teachers were especially important in the formation of the rural unions since many of them had been working in rural posts for years. They were often the only people in the community outside of the military with national connections.⁹⁴

Arévalo welcomed union organization and supported the unions with a new Labour Code in 1947 and substantial revisions of the code in 1948. The code established an eight-hour day and a six-day week. It set minimum wages, encouraged union organization, and established a series of labour tribunals to arbitrate over disputes. Union organization of farms was restricted to those employing

⁹³ See Mario T. Monteporste, La revolución de Guatemala 1944-1954, (Ciudad de Guatemala, Universitaria, 1974).

⁹⁴ See STEG Bulletin, No 3, Sept-Dec 1946.

more than 500 people. Yet these actions influenced Arévalo's relationship with the parties and with congress, and affected his ability to get the legislation passed. Thus, caught in an atmosphere of intrigue, where political and personal battles intervened, and were fought in party conventions, congress, and the press, Arévalo walked gingerly along a thin line between showing a non-partisan attitude among the revolutionary parties and fighting for support in congress.

The second government of the revolution, that of Colonel Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, was much more secure than the first.⁹⁵ Yet under Arbenz, opposition to government reforms became more widespread and more determined. Increasingly, the issue of Communist control over the government overshadowed all others, despite the capitalist tone of Arbenz's reforms. Much of the economic programme of the Arbenz administration was based on the recommendations made by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The most important and most controversial aspect of Arbenz's programme was the Agrarian Reform Law. There was little consensus about what shape that reform should take. Because of rising opposition, both within and outside the revolutionary movement, supporters of the Arbenz government were forced towards active alignment with Communists, who naturally found this expedient.

⁹⁵ See Georges A. Fauriol, and Eva Loser, *op. cit.*

Opposition from US private interests and the US government had already become evident during the period of Arévalo's administration. Under Arbenz, this began to crystallize when the US government supported the United Fruit Company's defense against the proposed expropriation under the agrarian reform. There were other important changes that affected the structure of the country such as the institution of electoral procedure. This was no return to the pre-revolutionary plebiscites but, instead, the positive encouragement of party opposition. This had a special effect in Indian areas. ⁹⁶

Summarizing, while Arévalo believed in the virtue of competing institutions as a means of insurance against dictatorship, Arbenz was clearly more interested in centralizing power in the presidency to facilitate the implementation of his economic programme. The president's office became especially important as individuals sought to affect legislation, to receive personal favours, or to win political advantage through the personal intervention of the president or his associates. In direct contrast to the confused political smorgasbord served up during the Arévalo administration, national political power increasingly centred on a dozen or so men and women. In the process, the political parties that had been the major support, unsteady

⁹⁶ See Richard N. Adams, Political changes in Guatemalan Indian Communities, (New Orleans, Middle American Research Institute, 1957).

as they might have been, for Arévalo, disintegrated into a myriad of competing factions. ⁹⁷

The post-revolutionary decade contrasted sharply with the previous revolutionary decade. In 1954, profound changes were brought about in the position and policy of the Guatemalan government. Support was entirely withdrawn from all the lower-sector organizations, unions, political parties, agrarian committees, and mass organizations were declared illegal and eliminated. Thousand of the leaders and participants were jailed for varying periods. ⁹⁸ The change was in no sense a simple reversion to a Ubico-style unitary power structure, but, rather, a proliferation of upper-sector power foci, together with upper-sector interpenetration of the government. In addition to, and combined with these changes, the military strengthened its general position. It was the pointed lack of military action that had allowed the Castillo forces to win, and, after a brief struggle with the Liberation Army, the military once again closed ranks for its own protection. The role played by the military placed it in an advantageous position to receive increased aid from the US in material and training.

⁹⁷ See George Black; Milton Jamail, and Norma S. Chincilla, Garrison Guatemala, (London, Zed Books, 1984).

⁹⁸ See Shelton H. Davis, and Julie Hodson, Witnesses to political violence in Guatemala: The suppression of a rural development movement, (New York, Oxfam American, 1983).

Aside from the appearance of new groups of upper-sector interests, increasingly, the elite simply assimilated groups that already existed. Among these were the military, the Church, the civil service, and bank employees. The military had long been a fairly close and self-protective body, but its propensity for cohesion developed to a remarkable degree during these years.⁹⁹ Increasingly evident during this period was the polarization of attitudes within all these groups, with some becoming more positively liberal, progressive, and revolutionary, and others gravitating back towards a conservatism characteristic of the Ubico period. The current party in power, the Partido Revolucionario, tried to identify itself with the revolution, but at the same time looked to the Right for permission to survive.

The position of the Guatemalan Indians in this evolving national society and their relation to its centres of authority were problematic. The years of revolutionary organization penetrated the isolation of the Indian regions as much as it did the other rural or provincial areas. The Indians, long accustomed to being exploited by the Ladino, were tere suspicious of the blandishments of political propaganda. However, the revolutionary period had telling effects. Some municipios were deeply politicized, while

⁹⁹ See Philippe C. Schmitter, Military rule in Latin America: Function, consequences, and perspectives, (Beverly Hills, Sage Publications, 1973).

many others were experienced enough to respond relatively quickly to calls for political action. ¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, the success of the US effort to contain and reduce the influence of Communism in the hemisphere had significant effects on Guatemala. In its confrontation with Castro, the US found Miguel Ydigoras a co-operative ally. A large farm on the south coast was converted into a training headquarters for Cuban exiles and served as one of the major bases for the "Bay of Pigs" invasion. Guatemala's role in this venture made it a special target of Castro; and the failed US attack served to strengthen Castro's general position in the Caribbean. Further, Guatemala was not well disposed towards US intervention and was still smarting over the CIA support of Castillo. Guatemala saw in this an expansion of that agency's efforts to subvert revolution wherever it might occur. The 1960 military revolt led directly to the formation of the guerrilla bands that subsequently served to crystallize the extremist revolutionary efforts. ¹⁰¹

The political stance assumed by the guerrillas was not merely an objection to the government's action articulated at a low level of intensity, but a public challenge

¹⁰⁰ See Richard N. Adams, *op. cit.*

¹⁰¹ See Mario Payeras, "Guatemala's army and US policy", in Monthly Review, Volume 37, No. 10, 1986.

addressed to the government and its armed forces.¹⁰² This assumption was deliberately ignored by the Peralta government, and the guerrillas were publicly classified as bandits and treated as such. The guerrillas believed that Guatemala, along with all other Latin American countries except Cuba, was under the control of the US and that anything leading to the removal of that control was legitimate. In the post-Peralta years, the military, because much more aggressive in their suppression of the guerrillas, and the latter increasingly began to operate within Guatemala City. The metropolis had always been part of the guerrilla strategy; it served as a source of financing through kidnapping for ransom, and personnel recruited from the radical students and other upper-sector supporters.

General Angel Aníbal Guevara won the presidential and congressional elections of 7 March 1982, from which the Left-wing parties were absent, but was prevented from taking office by a coup on 23 March, in which a group of young Right-wing military officers installed General Efraín Ríos Montt as leader of a three-man junta. Congress was closed, and the Constitution along with all political parties was suspended. In June, General Ríos Montt dissolved the junta and assumed the presidency. After

¹⁰² See Anónimo, "21 años de lucha: Fuerzas armadas revolucionarias de la Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca", en Nueva Antropología, Volume 6, No. 24, 1984.

initially gaining the support of the national university, the Catholic Church, and the labour unions, he hoped to enter into dialogue with the guerrillas, who refused to respond to an amnesty declaration in June. President Ríos Montt declared a state of siege, and imposed censorship of the press.

In April of 1983 the army launched a new offensive, which made significant gains against the guerrillas, principally in the Petén and the province of El Quiché. In response, the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) announced a major change in tactics, which gave priority to attacks on economic targets instead of direct confrontation with the army.¹⁰³ On the other hand, the government's pacification plan included three phases of aid programmes, combined with the saturation of the countryside by anti-guerrilla units. Nevertheless, on 8 August, General Oscar Humberto Mejía Víctores, the Minister of Defence, led a successful coup against President Ríos Montt.

In May, 1992, economic austerity measures, in particular electricity price rises, led to increased unrest as public confidence in the government declined. In that month, a rally attended by some 10,000 people was staged in the capital to demand Jorge Serrano's resignation. With the Movimiento para Acción y Solidaridad (MAS) no longer able

¹⁰³ See Anonymous, Guatemala: Dare to struggle dare to win, (n.c., Concerned Guatemala Scholars, n.d.).

to effect an alliance in Congress and the country's stability in jeopardy, on 25 May, 1993, Serrano, with the support of the military, suspended parts of the Constitution and dissolved Congress and the Supreme Court. A ban was imposed on the media and Serrano announced that he would rule by decree pending the drafting of a new constitution by a constituent assembly. This assembly was to be elected within 60 days. In addition to civil unrest, Serrano cited widespread corruption as the motive for his actions.

The constitutional coup provoked the US to immediately suspend aid of more than \$ 30 million. Such pressure, in addition to overwhelming domestic opposition, led the military to re-appraise its position and, opting to effect a return to constitutional rule, it forced the resignation of Serrano, who resigned his post on 1 June and subsequently fled to El Salvador. The Minister of National Defence, General José Domingo García, assumed control of the country pending the election of a new president. An attempt by Vice-President Gustavo Adolfo Espín Salguero to assume the presidency was checked by a legislative boycott of his ratification. He was later ruled ineligible for the post by the Constitutional court.

The Instancia Nacional de Consenso (INC), a broad coalition of political parties, business leaders and trade unions which had been instrumental in removing Serrano from

office, proposed three candidates. One of these, Ramiro de León Carpio, the former human rights ombudsman, was elected President in an uncontested second round of voting. He was inaugurated on the following day to complete the remainder of Serrano's term, which was due to end in January 1996. The US subsequently restored its aid programme to Guatemala, and in the reorganization of the military leadership, de Leon appointed a new minister of national defence.

The Guerrilla.

When Castillo Armas was assassinated by a member of his own palace guard in 1957, his eventual successor was Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, but on 13 November 1960, an armed uprising was staged against Ydígoras by a handful of junior officers who sympathised with the ideological thrust of the Arévalo-Arbenz era. The coup attempt was suppressed by the army, who put down the rebels. Furthermore, when one of Ydígoras own officers, Enrique Peralta Azurdia overthrew Ydígoras in 1963, the nation was then faced with an open guerrilla insurgency composed of radicalized army officers such as Marco Antonio Yon Sosa trained at Fort Gulick in the Panama Canal Zone and Luis Turcio Lima trained at Fort Benning Georgia. ¹⁰⁴ Both men were experts in the

¹⁰⁴ See Richard Gott, Guerrilla movements in Latin America, (London, Thomas Nelson, 1970).

techniques of rural warfare but politically unsophisticated.

Guatemala's guerrilla insurgency had its genesis in what came to be known as the 13th of November Movement (MR-13), emerging in 1962 with a group of disillusioned ex-Army officers such as Alejandro León, Vicente Loarca, Luis Trejos Esquivel, Rodolfo Chacón, and Zenón Reina. The last of these had been working quietly with the Guatemala Labour Party (PGT) in Guatemala City since 1961. By 1966, though operating mainly in the eastern mountains of Guatemala, they had come to pose a serious threat to the survival of the regime.

Three military columns were formed, one under the command of Zenón Reina, another under Yon Sosa and Turcios Lima, and a third directed by Chacón and Trejos. These columns worked mainly in the area of Izabal attacking United Fruit Company property and assaulting small military garrisons to capture arms. Their political demands were the handiwork of a small number of cadres of the Trotskyist Fourth International, calling explicitly for insurrection and the prompt installation of a Socialist government. But in 1968 their ranks were decimated by a massive counter-insurgency campaign sponsored by the United States.¹⁰⁵ The first and third of these columns were destroyed by the Guatemalan

¹⁰⁵ See Gabriel Aguilera, "The massacre at Panós and capitalist development in Guatemala", in Monthly Review, Volume 31, No. 7, 1979.

Army, the second under Yon Sosa and Turcios Lima returned to hide in the capital city where they continued to work with the PGT.

In December 1962, a new unified group was formed under the name of the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR). It was composed of the tattered remnants of MR-13, the PGT guerrilla survivors and the student based 12th April Movement. In the beginning, the FAR adopted Che Guevara's "foco" tactical concept, the widespread idea of the 1960s, that through rural organization, guerrilla focos could defeat a regular army, then bring down a military regime, and thus avoid having to develop a widespread revolutionary army.

By 1967, the leaders saw the wisdom of some new ideas such as a "Prolonged Popular War", that is, a long and patient process of blending together economic, political and military modes of struggle into a single multifaceted war, that involves a series of phases. First, would come "implantation". This phase would see the creation of a solid guerrilla base and its political infrastructure, which could then spread itself to more communities. The second phase would see the war become "generalized" in the countryside, with the Left accumulating strength and extending its social, political and military influence. In the third phase "liberated zones" would be established and frontal combat against the Armed Forces would develop. The culminating stage would be mass insurrection, which many of

Guatemala's revolutionary leaders believed was likely to follow extended military combat.

They began military operations in 1963 under a tripartite command and with three sub-groupings directed by Yon Sosa, Trejos and Turcio Lima. Their actions included assaults on army and police stations, bank robberies, and the kidnapping of leading capitalists and diplomats, including two US military advisers, a US labour attaché, US Ambassador John Gordon Mein and German Ambassador Karl Von Spretti. These methods were counter-productive, because the government stepped up its counter-insurgency drive and the United States increased its military assistance. ¹⁰⁶

After its sixth military reverse in the Petén area in 1971, the FAR shifted its base of operations to the capital city and the south coast sugar and cotton export plantations, opening the way for a more active collaboration with the PGT. Subsequently it opted for intensive work in the urban labour movement with the goal of eventually forming a working class party through the National Workers Confederation (CNT) and the National Trade Union Unity Committee (CNUS). This provoked a sharp reaction from many of the organizations' membership, above all from those who had been devoting their time to winning Indian support in

¹⁰⁶ The military assistance programme figures for US aid to Guatemala 1950-1970 totalled US \$ 16.2 million. This figure did not include CIA subventions. See US Secretary of Defense, Military assistance and foreign military sales facts, (Washington, US Department of Defense, 1971).

the heavily populated western states of Quezaltenango and San Marcos. The FAR under the command of Pablo Monsanto called for popular revolutionary war, that is, the support of worker-farmers alliance, with the workers as the vanguard and the farmers as the principal motor force.

The other two organizations that emerged as a result of high urban agitation were the PGT and the Turcio Lima's Edgar Ibarra Guerrilla Front (FGEI). In March 1962 the PGT opened up a tiny guerrilla front in the Concua mountains of Baja Verapaz. Again an ex-military officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Carlos Paz Tejada was given command. The PGT laboured under the illusion that it could recreate an Arbenz style reformist government by forging alliances with a virtually non-existent national bourgeoisie. Thus, they supposed, they would modernize the economy, revive bourgeois democracy and create an industrial working class, and so generate the necessary conditions for revolution. The FGEI, fighting in the arid hills of the Sierra de las Minas, developed into one of the strongest military guerrilla forces. Under 1965 agreement, the FGEI would furnish the combatants and the PGT the organizational structure. From this alliance the second version of the FAR was born.

In summary, in the 1960's, many factors contributed to the emergence of guerrilla movements in Guatemala. ¹⁰⁷ With

¹⁰⁷ See URNG, Parte de guerra, n.e., 1991.

respect to the eventual rupture of the isolation of the highland Indians, the most influential factor was the series of major changes in the land use and labour requirements of the agro-industry introduced in the early 1960's. These changes forced the Indians to become a seasonal, migratory work force. This fact combined with state terror, created the conditions out of which the new peasant organizations blossomed in the late 1970's. In consequence, the incorporation of the Indian peasantry into mass labour organizations was a precondition for the development of the Indian-based guerrilla organizations that emerged in the 1980's.

Secondly, the destruction of most existing peasant organizations in 1954 under the Castillo Armas' regime, was followed by the introduction of an alternative peasant co-operative. The promotion of a rural co-operative movement, seen as a lesser evil than the peasant leagues and unions of the revolutionary period, was undertaken by the Catholic Church through the foreign missionary orders. Thirdly, in 1963, the Armed Forces became the pivot of political power. They overstepped their authority and gradually began to encroach on fields beyond their competence, resulting in the militarization of the State and society. Fourthly, in Guatemala, more than in any other case during the 1960's, US direction of the counterinsurgency campaign was necessary and decisive, and only as a consequence of such

assistance was the insurgency finally controlled and defeated.

By 1972, four guerrilla organizations were active in Guatemala, all radically different from the guerrilla groups of the 1960s, though influenced by veterans of the 1960s insurgent experience. In these new organizations, one could discern the birth of a "second generation" insurgency. This new wave proceeded more cautiously than its predecessors and began generally by political organization rather than launching a frontal assault on the Army. ¹⁰⁸

The major qualitative change since the 1960's was a high degree of grassroots support from the young middle-class ladinos and from students who refused to be coopted by the regime. Only slightly less significant was the fact that ideological, geographical, and tactical differences blocked the consolidation of one predominant guerrilla group. Instead, the same factionalism that had dogged the movement in the 1960's led to the creation of new groups, as well as to the continuation of the old ones.

... In Guatemala today the principal contradiction and the basis for the struggle lies in the fact that a small minority controls the country's wealth, while the vast majority of the

¹⁰⁸ See URNG, Línea política de los revolucionarios Guatemaltecos, (México, Nuestro Tiempo, 1988).

population - Indian and Ladino alike - are the object of intense exploitation.¹⁰⁹

The Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP), in its own publications, describes its organizational work as having begun in January 1972. After three years of initial approaches, a group of 16 men - most of them survivors from the FGEI - entered Guatemala from Mexico through the Ixcán region of El Qhiché. At the beginning they called for a "Prolonged Popular War" based in a worker-farmer alliance, with guerrilla warfare as the dominant and vital form of struggle. In theory they recognized the importance of mass work, but it was not until the mass movement began to take shape and grow in strength that the validity of mass participation was really incorporated into practice. The survivors of the FGEI inclined towards the formation of a party, the EGP began to develop the concept of promoting many forms of struggle for a popular, revolutionary war in which the masses were to play a vital role. Finally, the ethnic-national question was given fundamental importance and considered an integral part of the class struggle.

Critically, the guerrilla movement failed to recognize and embrace the revolutionary potential of the Mayan Indian communities which make up more than half the Guatemalan population. Indeed, the PGT explicitly denied that the Indians - not

¹⁰⁹ The term Ladino generally applies to those people who speak Spanish, use Western dress and identify themselves with the dominant, Western beliefs, practices and values. Anonymous, op. cit., pp. 49 and 51.

only peasants, but culturally "backward" to boot
- had any such potential. ¹¹⁰

A second major guerrilla force led by Gaspar Ilóm, and organized in the Indian highlands, burst onto the scene in the late 1970s, from the Sierra Madre mountains. This force called itself the Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA) developed as an entirely new organization, dedicating its efforts to building an Indian support base for its military actions in predominantly Indian areas such as San Marcos, Quezaltenango, Sololá, Totonicapán, and Huehuetenango.

By the early 1980's, the revolutionary Left had overcome many of the chief obstacles to its unification. The first step was the tripartite forum for unity discussions between the EGP, FAR, and PGT. This was just before ORPA revealed its existence publicly, and ORPA joined the unity discussions in October 1980. The four guerrilla organizations united under a joint command, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG). By mid-1982 guerrilla actions, including ambushes and short-term occupations of large private farms and villages, were regular occurrences in 16 of the country's 22 departments.

There were significant modifications in the relationships between the different organizations. In the case of the URNG's emphasis on negotiations, one can describe some of

¹¹⁰ George Black; Milton Jamail, and Norma S. Chincilla, Garrison Guatemala, op. cit., p. 76.

these changes. ¹¹¹ Firstly, the openly professed Marxist objectives that were to be accomplished through a total transformation of Guatemalan society in the 1960s and 1970s, were no longer the goals of the guerrilla movement. Secondly, a new relationship between reformists and revolutionaries began to develop. In the 1960's "reformism" was perceived as the enemy of revolution, but in the 1980's "reformism" came to be perceived as the only remaining route for revolution. Thirdly, a new association between democracy and social demands emerged, as the conditions claiming social justice took on a revolutionary significance and required many forms of struggle for the realization of that justice.

Therefore, the URNG asserted, in order to build a democracy, it was necessary to redefine and relocate the functions for which the Armed Forces were constitutionally responsible, because the militarization of the Guatemalan state and society was the underlying cause of the absence of democracy. ¹¹² The democratization, URNG maintained, should be based on two elements: demilitarization and the strengthening of civil power, because neither one is possible unless they occur concurrently. Consequently, it is not only political parties and elections that are the

¹¹¹ See URNG, Guatemala a just and democratic peace: Content of the negotiations, (n.c., URNG Publications, 1992).

¹¹² See URNG, "Negociación: Instrumento de lucha por la democracia", en Guatemala, No. 3, 1991.

foundations of a real democracy. The various civil organizations (popular, union, sectoral, etc.) should be recognized and legislation enacted to ensure their participation in decision-making process that concern national problems and their solutions. ¹¹³

Analysis.

Despite rapid swings in the balance between revolutionary and counter-insurgent forces, one can consider various objective factors that determined the course of the war. Firstly, the main condition leading to the rise of a revolutionary peasant movement was the breakdown of communication between the peasant economy and the dominant capitalist economy. This created a population without land, and with no real prospect of work in the cities, which in turn lead not to the proletarianization, but to the pauperization of a complete social class.

These conditions were intensified by a second factor: government policy. Governments such as those under Castillo Armas (1954-1957), Ydígoras (1958-1963), and Peralta (1963-1966) had all ruled by decree, facilitating curbs on individual freedoms and justices but also paving the way for social unrest and the consequent development of a violent Left-wing opposition. A third factor was the fact that the experience of the masses radicalized some sectors

¹¹³ See URNG, Unitarian statement from the revolutionary organizations - EGP, FAR, ORPA, PGT - to the people of Guatemala, (n.c., n.e., 1982).

of society (such as urban labour, the student movement, the co-operatives under Catholic missionaries), while revolutionizing others, (above all, the rural Indian peasantry in the process of being proletarianized).

Fourthly, the exclusion of independent social actors virtually guaranteed that the masses would have to constitute themselves outside the political party spectrum. Fifthly, following their defeat in 1968, the guerrillas had engaged in a rebuilding process that, by the mid-1970s, provided a framework within which the masses took on a revolutionary character. Both the Guatemalan and Salvadorean movements of the 1980s had more in common with the Nicaraguan revolution than with traditional state Socialist models. They came to emphasize a mixed economy and political pluralism along with popular participation in democracy.

Sixthly, the seizure of state power in the traditional sense had been re-conceptualized in Central America. The Sandinista experience in Nicaragua demonstrated that lacking state power did not necessarily reduce the vulnerability to all-out attack by the United States. However, Central America and other Third world areas continue to move from beleaguered economic planning designed to mediate the tide of modernization, to terrorism, revolution, and civil war bent on redefining "progress". Therefore, guerrilla activity will continue to

be a factor in Guatemalan political life if there is no scope for open political opposition.

The role of the USA.

After the fall of Somoza, the Carter administration continued, as before, to press for democratization in Guatemala. It was argued that a centrist solution, however difficult in the short term, would in the long term prove the most effective way of preventing a popular explosion and a victory of the radical left. In the meantime, any slackening of repressive measures or even very modest reforms were seen as positive steps towards helping decrease tensions. But the Carter policy towards Guatemala failed miserably. Continuing pressure and public chastening from Washington led only to a breakdown in communications between the two governments, while within Guatemala suppression wreaked havoc upon those centrist groups that enjoyed Washington's support. ¹¹⁴

By 1980, a debate began in earnest within the Carter administration. The Defense Department, the National Security Council, and the State Department argued that the policy of the "stick" towards the Lucas government had failed. They therefore advocated an improvement in

¹¹⁴ See Luis G. Solis-Rivera, and Francisco A. Rojas, "From war to integration: Democratic transition and security issues in Central America", in Paul C. Psaila, Redefining national security in Latin America, (Washington, Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, 1993).

relations and the resumption of military assistance. By proffering and resuming the dialogue, the Carter administration, they argued, would be able to regain the confidence of the Guatemalan regime and could eventually persuade it to adopt some reforms. They would have advocated military assistance for the regime, had they believed that it was necessary for its survival. But in their eyes the Guatemalan government was not yet seriously threatened, hence the US could afford to wait, while the military assistance was provided by Argentina and Israel.

The Reagan administration came to power promising to return the US to its former grandeur and to redress Carter's policy of "blunders" based on humiliating concessions to communist and radical states and on the betrayal of loyal allies like Anastasio Somoza and the Shah of Iran. Within the Reagan administration, high-ranking officials saw the Lucas government as a "moderately repressive" regime whose excesses had to be understood within the violent context of Guatemala's history and of what they saw as aggression by terrorists backed by Cuba and the Soviet Union.¹¹⁵ Therefore, the US had to provide assistance to a beleaguered and loyal ally, rather than indulge in intemperate and native criticism of a deeply rooted social reality. Reforms were welcome, but only at the pace, and within the scope, accepted by the Guatemalan ruling class.

¹¹⁵ See Mario Payeras, *op. cit.*

Another group, which included the majority of the career officials working in the region and middle-ranking echelons, acknowledged that Guatemala desperately needed social reforms. For them, the Guatemalan regime was repressive to a degree that could not be justified either by the country's history or by aggression from the Left and that in the end might well prove self-defeating. They argued that Carter's tolerance had failed to persuade the Lucas government to temper its own policies. By resuming the dialogue, Washington might eventually succeed in convincing the Guatemalan ruling class that it was in its own interests to accept some reforms. In any case, they concluded, the US had no other alternative.

However, both approaches stressed the need to provide military assistance and maintain a close relationship with the Guatemalan government. Both approaches also agreed on the administration's need to make support for the Guatemalan regime more palatable to Congress by lifting up the sordid image of the Lucas government.

Negotiations.

In June 1987 Guatemala was the venue for a meeting of Central American Presidents to discuss a peace proposal for the region. The country was a signatory of the agreed peace plan, signed in Guatemala City in August by the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and

Nicaragua. Although the plan was principally concerned with the conflicts in Nicaragua and El Salvador, it also referred to the long-standing guerrilla war in Guatemala.¹¹⁶ Subsequently, a commission of National Reconciliation (CNR) was formed in compliance with the terms of the accord, and in October, representatives of the Guatemalan government and URNG guerrillas met in Spain to discuss the question of peace in Guatemala.

Right-wing pressure on the government continued to force President Cerezo to postpone negotiations with the URNG, scheduled for March 1988. Despite evident right-wing opposition to the policies of President Cerezo, the Partido Democracia Cristiana Guatemalteca (PDCG) won 140 mayoralties out of 272 at municipal elections held in April. During 1989 a new Leftist group emerged, the Comando Urbano Revolucionario, which joined the URNG. Meanwhile, President Cerezo continued to refuse to negotiate with the URNG for as long as its members remained armed. In September the URNG made further proposals for negotiations, following the signing of the "Tela Agreement", the Central American peace plan accord, but the President adhered

¹¹⁶ Contadora's role suffered what may have been a fatal setback in June 1986 when a second Revised Act was not signed by the Central American countries. Therefore, the Contadora Group and the Support Group (Argentina, Peru, Brazil, and Uruguay) decided to postpone further negotiations until the Central American states themselves requested them. See Luis G. Bekker, The negotiations process in search of a political solution to the armed conflict in Guatemala, (Los Angeles, LASA, 1992).

firmly to his conditions, and negotiations were again postponed.

In March 1990 the URNG and the CNR began discussions in Oslo, Norway, with a view to resolving the problem of reincorporating the armed movements into the country's political process.¹¹⁷ The talks, which constituted a preliminary stage towards initiating direct negotiations between the government and the guerrillas, culminated in the signing of an agreement to continue the peace process. In June, representatives of the CNR and of nine political parties, including the ruling PDCG, met for further talks with the URNG in Madrid, Spain. As a result of these negotiations, the URNG pledged not to disrupt the presidential and legislative elections scheduled for November, and agreed to participate in a constituent assembly to reform the Guatemalan constitution.

In the period preceding the presidential, congressional, and municipal elections of November 1990, public attention was increasingly drawn to the candidacy of General Efraín Ríos Montt. However, his attempt to regain the presidency was ended in mid-October, when he finally lost his protracted struggle with the courts, and his candidacy was declared invalid on constitutional grounds. Under the Constitution, anyone taking part in, or benefiting from, a

¹¹⁷ See Jack Child, The Central American peace process 1983-1991, (Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992).

military coup was disqualified from participating in elections.

Finally, as none of the presidential candidates obtained an absolute majority in November, a second ballot took place on 6 January 1991, with the voters choosing between the two leading candidates: Jorge Serrano Elías of the Movimiento de Acción Solidaria (MAS), a former member of the 1982 Ríos Montt government, and Jorge Carpio Nicolle, of the Unión del Centro Nacional (UCN). Serrano received 68 per cent of the votes cast, but the MAS failed to secure a majority in Congress. Therefore, Serrano invited members of the Plan por el Adelantamiento Nacional (PAN) and the Partido Socialista Democrático (PSD) to participate in the formation of a coalition government.

In April 1991 a fresh round of direct talks between the URNG and the government began in Mexico City. The initial meeting resulted in an agreement on negotiating procedures and an agenda for further talks with a view to ending the conflict. Renewed talks between the government and the URNG which took place in Mexico City in February 1992, focused on the issue of human rights, but ended without agreement. A further round of talks, held in August, led to concessions by the government, which agreed to curb the expansion of the Self-Defence Civil Patrols (PAC). These PAC played a major role in the army's counter-insurgency campaign and were widely accused of human rights

violations. In November the government accepted renewed proposals by the URNG for the establishment of a commission on past human rights violations, but only on the precondition that the rebels sign a definitive peace accord.

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In January 1993 President Serrano announced his commitment to the negotiation process and to signing a peace agreement with the URNG within 90 days. Serrano pledged that a ceasefire would be implemented at the end of that period, provided that the URNG demonstrated its commitment to the peace process. In reply to Serrano's announcement, the URNG called for a 50 per cent reduction in the size of the armed forces, and repeated demands for the immediate dissolution of the PAC and the dismissal of military officials implicated in human rights violations.¹¹⁹ The government rejected these proposals through talks continued in February. The talks faltered in the following month, owing principally to government demands that the URNG disarm as a precondition to the implementation of procedures for the international verification of human rights in Guatemala.

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¹¹⁸ See WOLA (Washington Office on Latin America), Uncertain return: Refugees and reconciliation in Guatemala, (Washington, WOLA, 1989).

¹¹⁹ See URNG, "Las Patrullas Civiles debe desaparecer", en Guatemala, No. 7, 1992.

¹²⁰ See Luis A. Padilla, El proceso de paz en Guatemala: Implicaciones para los derechos humanos y la democracia, (Los Angeles, LASA, 1992).

In June 1993 the URNG announced a unilateral cease-fire as a gesture of goodwill to the incoming President Ramiro de León Carpio. Government proposals announced in July, which aimed to involve all sectors of the society in a Permanent Forum for Peace, addressing social, economic, and human rights problems independently of simultaneous cease-fire negotiations with the URNG, were rejected by the guerrillas. In October the government presented a revised peace plan to the UN, providing for the creation of a Permanent Forum for Peace and renewed cease-fire negotiations with a view to an eventual amnesty for the URNG. The plan was, however, rejected by the guerrillas. Preliminary talks were finally resumed in Mexico in early January 1994.

Conclusion.

The popular struggles in Guatemala in recent years, and the political crisis that has accompanied them present democracy as a programme entirely dependent upon two preconditions: the conquest of power on the one hand, and the reorganization of the fundamental bases of society on the other. The issue of democracy in Guatemala concerns itself with finding out what are the prerequisites for the existence of democracy in backward societies where a democratic state of law has never existed and in which sustained policies of popular welfare have never been implemented.

The three periods of Guatemalan history had seen some important changes in the organization of power. While an essentially unitary system existed under Ubico, the revolutionary government established national programmes of lower-sector organization and a multiple domain, to facilitate confrontations between farmers and bring them clearly within the control of the government. The subsequent period found the government attempting to return power to the upper sector, removing it from the lower sector and calling in help from the Church and the United States. The post-revolutionary government needed external power, just as Arbenz had needed it though he had been unable to get it.

Therefore, in understanding the course of Guatemalan social evolution, it is important to see the Ubico period as the genesis of ideological revolt. Yet, at the same time, it set the stage for a flourishing nationalism. The structure of the country was increasingly centralized and commerce and politics continued to be concentrated under the domination of the US. The outcome of the Second World War excited the younger literate Guatemalans to try to formulate a new system of government. At the same time, however, the majority of the population did not participate in the revolution. Further, the revolutionary period opened with a sympathetic urban population but with a rural hinterland that was essentially unadvised of what was going on. Long dependence on a unitary power structure left few

prepared for broad changes. The upper sector, initially in favour of some growth, found itself little better equipped to calculate the future than did the lower.

The revolutionary decade saw a systematic weakening of the local and regional power still exercised by the landholders and their access to power at the national level, held in common with the businessmen. At the same time, a complementary series of policies and actions was emerging on the international scene. The US, as influential as it had been during the Ubico period, became increasingly alarmed over the combination of burgeoning socialism and "anti-Americanism". The fact that the United Fruit company was the largest single landholder in the country and that it was foreign owned made it the obvious target. The quick defence of the United Fruit Company provided by the US government made it appear to many Guatemalans that the two were working as one.

The fact that the guerrilla existed and have been able to persist since their formation in the early 1960's is suggestive of the depth of the cleavage that divides Guatemalan society. It is a consequence, in part, of the division that exists at the higher levels and that finds confrontation with lower levels essential to its success. It is not entirely surprising that conservative interests, which also regard violence as a legitimate tactic, would set in motion to counter those of the guerrillas. The

Right-wing terrorist organizations were bent on the destruction not only of the guerrillas, but also of Leftists in general. The strategy used was not merely to confront the guerrillas, but to silence them. By forcing the guerrillas to deal with lower-level social groups only their claim to be representing a nationalist movement, could be seriously weakened.

The same logic that dictated the character of the coup against Arbenz has marked the nature of the Guatemalan political system ever since. The most important change within this system has not been the emergence of different sectors of bourgeoisie agro-exporting and commercial activity, but the shift in the relative importance of the military. In the wake of Arbenz's overthrow, the army was the junior partner of the triumphant landowning class. The alliance between the military and the bourgeoisie has continued to the present day. But the military has progressively become the senior partner in the alliance, acquiring in the process, particularly in the 1970s, its own independent economic base.¹²¹ Once they had developed a relative degree of unity, the Guatemalan armed forces became the country's strongest political "party", ruled by a central committee of a few senior officers.

¹²¹ This represents an important difference from the situation of the salvadorean counterparts throughout most of the 1970s. It is only through the October 1979 coup and the 1980 reforms that the Salvadorean army has acquired a formidable potential economic base at the expense of the civilian ruling class.

Throughout the 1970's and 1980's the military determined the selection of Guatemala's presidents. As a result the other parties of the Right, including the Partido Revolucionario, were reduced to a secondary role, and the presidential elections, already meaningless for a large majority of Guatemalans, became increasingly meaningless for the civilian parties of the right as well. Therefore, the key characteristics of the Guatemalan political system can be summarize as follows:

1- Guatemala lives under a reactionary class dictatorship.¹²² The bourgeoisie rule the country, minor quarrels notwithstanding, in peaceful coexistence with the armed forces. The middle class, whose elements have been co-opted, cowed, or destroyed, have played no independent political role.

2- This reactionary dictatorship has inflicted on the Guatemalan people waves of extreme violence as in 1966-1968, 1970-1973, 1978-1981; and periods of extreme suppression as in 1974-1977. The crucial factor affecting the swing of the pendulum has been the degree to which the dominant class has felt threatened from below.

3- The political centre has been emasculated or eliminated through physical violence. Whereas the Lucas government

¹²² See Edelberto Torres-Rivas, "Guatemala: Crisis and political violence", in NACLA-Report on the Americas, Volume 14, No. 1, 1980.

chose the latter approach, emasculation was the fate of Méndez Montenegro and his Partido Revolucionario (PR) government in the 1966-1970, a period that marked the demise of the PR as a centrist force.

4- Guatemala's economy experienced on average an adequate growth rate during the 1970s. This growth has not been followed by even modest social reforms. This imbalance has resulted in a structurally weak economy with a limited internal market for domestic industry and, more importantly, has further exacerbated social tensions within the country.

5- The guerrilla forces did not arise in a political vacuum but in a society governed by a military and civilian elite who from the outset were frightened by the social and political consequences of the "cost-free" economic modernization programmes begun in the 1960s, and by the demographic changes that accompanied them. What they feared most were challenges either to their authority or to the existing economic order. Governing their nation became increasingly difficult after 1970 as more and more claims were made upon authorities by a more diverse business community and by increasingly assertive opposition parties.

6- Labour unions and peasant organizations, many of which were encouraged by Catholic clergy working within local communities, began to make their presence felt during the

1970s. It was frustration with the rigidity they encountered at the top, with a leadership frightened by issues of social justice and political participation, that led many once compliant people to seek redress through more direct military action.

COLOMBIA.

Introduction.

In most countries of Latin America there are, at best, only traces remaining of those political parties that predominated during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Colombia, however, the parties of the past have survived into the present largely unchallenged by any third party. National politics is dominated by the traditional Liberals and Conservatives, and their respective factions or splinters. Elsewhere in Latin America widespread and economic and social change has usually been accompanied by significant modifications in political parties, in the relationships between parties, and to their relationship to their electorates. Yet in the face of such change Colombia has been able to maintain relative stability and to keep the basic shape of its party-system largely intact.

Colombia today is not the country it was in the 1960's, either economically or socially. The early 60's saw the initial years of the institutionalized arrangement in bipartisan power-sharing called the "National Front" (1958-1974). Colombia's population is nearly double what it was twenty-five years ago. Even though its rate of demographic growth has declined substantially in recent years, the country's estimated population was 33,399 million in 1992

compared to only 22,350 in 1972. But some of the most dramatic changes have taken place in the composition of the labour force and, especially, in urbanization and in education. Agricultural employment declined in just fifteen years from 47 per cent of the workforce in 1965 to 31 per cent by 1980.

As the countries of Latin America have changed economically and socially over the last few decades, most have evolved one or a number of political parties which reflect the interests or perspectives of new or transformed groups and classes. In Colombia, however, the Liberal and Conservative parties have shared more than 90 per cent of the vote in national elections since time immemorial; indeed, the two-party average for elections to the House of Representative from 1945 through 1986 was 97.3 per cent.¹²³ The only election to fall below the 90 per cent vote level was that of 1974, when the National Popular Alliance (ANAPO) won 9.5 per cent of the vote for the House of Representatives and a Leftist front won another 3.1 per cent.¹²⁴

It has been a signal feature of Colombia's political history that when dissident factions break away from one of

¹²³ See Gary Houskin, Colombian political parties and the current crisis, (New Orleans, LASA, 1988).

¹²⁴ See Robert H. Dix, "Political opposition under the National Front", in Albert R. Berry; Ronald G. Hellman, and Mauricio Solaún, Politics of compromise: Coalition government in Colombia, (New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1980).

the traditional parties and do come into being as a separate political force (at times even to the point of taking on new labels and holding separate conventions), they and their adherents have almost invariably returned to their original partisan allegiance, rather than becoming the basis of enduring new parties, or for that matter using their dissidence as a transitional step on the way to joining the other traditional party. A good example of this phenomenon was the Revolutionary Liberal Movement (MRL) of Alfonso López Michelsen that waxed during the early 1960's and then rather quickly waned. López Michelsen won almost 24 per cent of the vote in the presidential election of 1962, yet by 1968 he had rejoined the main body of the Liberal party and had been appointed foreign minister by a Liberal president. In 1974 he won the presidency as the official Liberal candidate.

Moreover, the two major parties' respective share of the vote has not varied appreciably over the last forty years. Elections for the House of Representatives are our most accurate indicator here, since presidential elections are more influenced by the personalities of the candidates. The Liberals constitute the permanent majority party; since the effective demise of ANAPO their winning percentage has ranged between 53.8 and 56.3 per cent of the House vote, with the Conservative ranging between 37 and 40.3. ¹²⁵

¹²⁵ See Fernando U. Cepeda, "The Colombian elections of 1986", in Electoral Studies, Volume 6, No. 1, 1987.

Furthermore, the electoral geography of the country has remained uncommonly stable. During the years 1931-1982, most Colombian municipalities remained with the same party affiliation; only 115 municipalities, that is, 12 per cent of the total, switched their party allegiance in that half-century. ¹²⁶

Therefore, third parties have had almost no importance live in Colombian political life. Marxist parties have never won as much as five per cent of the vote; 4.6 per cent in the departmental assembly elections of 1976 is the maximum attained to date. There is a tiny Christian Democratic party, but it has never won as much as one per cent of the vote nation wide. Nor has there been any social democratic party like that of Venezuela's Acción Democrática (AD) or Peru's Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA). Populism has fared better, in the form of ANAPO, as well as with the movement that adhered to the dissident Liberal cause of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in the 1940's. Yet both were essentially dissident factions of the established parties and proved to be short-lived as significant political forces; most of their followers re-entered the political mainstream upon the physical decline or demise of their respective "caudillos".

While there are ideological and policy differences between Conservatives and Liberals, they are not substantial and

¹²⁶ Ibid.

have not been for many years. ¹²⁷ Leaders of the two traditional parties are in fact frequently referred to by critics as comprising a single oligarchy, which was formalized by the "National Front" coalitional arrangements and its subsequent permutations. ¹²⁸ The principal historic distinction between the parties has centred on the status and value each party gives to of the Catholic Church, but even that distinction has faded considerably in recent years.

The coalescent behaviour of the Conservative and Liberal parties which began with the overthrow of Rojas Pinilla in 1957 and the formation of the "National Front", came to an end, at least temporarily, when Virgilio Barco took office as president in 1986. He invited three Conservatives to join his cabinet, but they refused the posts, regarding them as inadequate reflections of their electoral standing. This refusal initiated the first government since 1953 that clearly pitted a governing party against an opposition party, and that saw the division between government and opposition drawn along traditional party lines.

On the other hand, the formation of the Unión Patriótica (UP) as a kind of electoral front for the Communist-

¹²⁷ See Robert H. Dix, The politics of Colombia, (New York, Praeger, 1987).

¹²⁸ see Francisco Leal, Análisis histórico del desarrollo político nacional 1930-1970, (Bogotá, Tercer Mundo, 1973).

associated Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), had the most potential significance of any development on the political left in many years, especially coupled with the introduction of elections for mayors of municipalities in March 1988. But the performance of the UP in the 1986 elections, both presidential and congressional, was meagre, less than 5 per cent of the vote, even including some alliances with Liberals for particular congressional seats. Moreover, it won only 14 of 1,008 mayoralities in the 1988 municipal elections, although it did participate in coalitions that won an additional 120 posts, most of them rural. ¹²⁹

Yet a comparison with most other Latin American countries, where non-establishment parties have indeed flourished, suggests that the suppression of new emerging political forces has been no mere successful in Colombia than elsewhere. The difference between Colombia and other Latin American countries is that in Colombia, the emergence of new political forces seems to have been of little consequence. Except for the years 1954-1957, the Colombian Communist Party (PCC) has never been illegal. Even under the rigid bipartisan structure of the "National Front", party factions opposed to the leadership of the two parties, and indeed to key aspects of the Front itself, such as ANAPO and the MRL, were free to organize and campaign. Therefore, while harassment and exclusion of the

¹²⁹ See Latin American Weekly Report, No. 24, 1988.

non-establishment opposition have clearly occurred in Colombia, they hardly seem to account for the failure of significant new parties to emerge, whether class-based or otherwise.

In summary, the unusual nature of Colombia's traditional parties, notably, though not only, their ability to retain the intense loyalty of a socially-diverse array of partisans, plus the nature of Colombia's workforce and major industry, which have inhibited the formation of party attachments based on competing class or nationalistic loyalties, go far to explain why Colombia's party system has not needed to change very much to keep pace with the rapid transformation of its economic and social systems.

By modernizing later than many Latin American industrial sectors, Colombian industry has been able to make use of the most technologically sophisticated modes of production. These methods require far fewer workers, and have created an urban environment of chronic unemployment in which labour unions tend to be relatively small and cooptable. Thus, though Colombia's urban population is large, and outbreaks of urban violence do occur, the nation's urban centres do not pose the mobilized threat to the system that is represented by the older and more organized urban concentrations of Argentina, Chile or Uruguay.

In addition, rural Colombia has not become as socially mobilized as its rising literacy level and declining isolation might imply. The demobilizing effect of "La Violencia" may be the most important factor contributing to the surprisingly low level of rural demands.¹³⁰ Fals Borda claims that this experience of inter-party conflict accelerated the breakdown of traditional rural society. Although Colombian peasants may no longer be as firmly controlled by traditional authority structures, they are still not ready for political action because of their fears of further violence. Instead, Dix notes that studies of refugees from "La Violencia" reveal a widespread condition of confusion and valuelessness. This unique historical experience seems to keep rural Colombia a less politically active area than one might expect, given the impact of socially mobilizing forces.¹³¹

The Military.

The Colombian armed forces' obedience to civilian rule in an unusual phenomenon in recent Latin American history, but such relationships are not rare in Colombia's own history; civilian control of the military has been the norm since

¹³⁰ See Orlando B. Fals, "Violence and the break up of tradition in Colombia", in Claudio Veliz, Obstacles to change in Latin America, (London, Oxford University Press, 1965).

¹³¹ See Robert H. Dix, Colombia: The political dimensions of change, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1967).

the early years of independence. Furthermore, Colombia's only military government, from 1953 to 1957, began as an amnesty programme to reduce rural violence. On the other hand, the armed forces' principal function under the "National Front" was that of controlling rural violence. Some armed groups of the "La Violencia" epoch had never disbanded and had turned to banditry. In addition, other small guerrilla units had developed Marxist orientations and had established "independent republics" in inaccessible regions. As the military worked to eradicate these problems, the institution increased in size and became more professional.

Most Colombian politicians supported professionalization and expansion because a strong military was needed to combat disorder. Between 1961 and 1965, the armed forces grew from under 23,000 men to over 37,000 and military expenditures rose from 1,148,239 pesos in 1970 to 17,143,000 pesos in 1980, and to 289,454,000 pesos in 1990.¹³² During the later years of the "National Front", the armed forces were permitted to expand to 64,000 men to meet the new Marxist guerrilla threats represented by the National Liberation Army (ELN) and the FARC.

¹³² See Jorge Villegas, "Presupuestos nacionales de ingresos y gastos 1871-1970", en DANE (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística), Boletín Mensual Estadístico, (Bogotá, DANE, 1972); Europa Publications, The Europe World Yearbook, (Rochester, Staples Printers, 1995).

The armed forces relied on armed suppression to deal with these guerrillas, and by the end of the "National Front" period, the army had significantly reduced the guerrillas' ability to carry out major operations against the government. Actually, neither the ELN nor the FARC ever posed a serious danger to the National Front's survival because of the guerrillas' inability to generate popular support in rural Colombia. Indeed, the only serious threat to the traditional elite was ANAPO and, when the 1970 elections results were disputed, the armed forces further demonstrated their loyalty by suppressing ANAPO rioters and by holding candidate Rojas under house arrest.

Between 1975 and 1978, the Colombian guerrillas staged a resurgence which forced the army to increase counter-insurgency actions. The ELN executed several kidnappings of prominent people and ambushed many army patrols especially in the department of Bolívar. However, the military was actually more persistently involved with the FARC, which was active in many areas (eg. Antioquia, Tolima, Magdalena, Boyacá, Caquetá, and Meta). A third guerrilla organization, the Popular Army of Liberation (EPL), which surfaced after 1974, was also unable to co-operate with either of the two more important movements because of its allegedly Maoist orientation. Although the military's most important role has been to maintain public order, the regular armed forces were also used by the government to continue colonization, and to undertake civil defence projects begun during the

"National Front" period, and to control drug, emerald, and coffee smuggling.

Guerrilla activity increased further in the first two years of President Julio César Turbay's administration. The ELN and EPL had been less active than in past years but the FARC had expanded its operations considerably. A FARC communique, for example, claimed that the movement now had 11 guerrilla fronts.¹³³ The most spectacular guerrilla operation of the Turbay era, carried out by the 19th of April Movement (M-19), was the raiding of Bogota's principal military arsenal. The guerrillas escaping with thousands of weapons. In February 1980, the group gained worldwide media attention when it took various diplomats hostage, including US ambassador Diego Asencion, in an armed assault on a reception at the Dominican embassy.

In response to the rising level of guerrilla activity, the Colombian army expanded its counter-insurgency campaign during the Turbay administration. Armed with a new and tougher "Security Statute", which suspended some of the civil rights of those arrested as "subversives" and which raised penalties for political crimes, the military relentlessly pursued suspected members of M-19 and other guerrilla organizations. Search-and-destroy sweeps by Colombian army brigades kept the FARC on the run in rural

¹³³ See Latin American Weekly Report, No. 31, 1980.

areas and urban military units detained literally thousands of suspected guerrillas.

To date, the Colombian armed forces have generally been successful in meeting any new guerrilla threat. For example, within a few weeks of M-19's arsenal assault, most of the stolen arms had been recovered and many of the guerrillas involved were placed in custody. Nevertheless, the military's heavy-handed use of the new security legislation also resulted in the indiscriminate detention of many on the Left. In addition, many prisoners accused military units of using torture during interrogation.

A number of studies have focused on these harsh methods and on the increasing visibility of the armed forces in this context of growing turmoil,¹³⁴ and have argued that the military were using this new situation to gain control of Colombian politics at the expense of traditional civilian authorities. If one examines the reports of growing military influence in Colombia, one finds that this judgement largely comes from: i) foreign newspapers and periodicals such as "Le Monde" or the "New York Times", whose reporters have little more than a superficial knowledge of Colombian politics; and ii) Leftist and particular Marxist foreign and domestic sources, which have a vested interest in discrediting the Colombian civilian government.

¹³⁴ See A. Echeverry, El poder y los militares: Un análisis de los ejércitos del continente y Colombia, (Bogotá, Suramericana, 1978).

Between 1980 and 1986 the military actions of the armed forces against the guerrilla groups were reduced to a minimum. At times they were forced to stop or delay operations, in accordance with the amnesty laws promulgated by Betancourt's and Barco's governments. It should be noted that the prestige of the Colombian military, already low, further declined during these administrations because of repeated embarrassments putting an end to their operations. In consequence, the citizenry's judgement of the military institution was that it was not competent to end the guerrilla phenomenon. Finally, under the Gaviria's government the transition to a civilian Ministry of Defence occurred without any attempt at insurrection by the military forces.

Historical Background.

The historic period between Conservative party president Mariano Ospina's inauguration and General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla's 1953 *coup d'etat* is known in Colombia as "the years of La Violencia". During this period, Colombia was governed by two democratically elected Conservative party presidents, the second of whom delegated power to a designate due to ill health. Peasant bands of armed men, whose ostensible purpose was to reclaim rural property taken away by illicit means by the politically powerful, began to appear especially in southern Tolima, southern Cundinamarca, and the eastern plains region. Since the

government was in the hands of the Conservative party, the bands received support from local and national leaders of both the Liberal and Communist Parties. Soon the Conservative landowners not only sponsored the organization of their own bands to protect their interests but also looked to the national government for army and police protection. ¹³⁵

Military and police forces had not been politically neutral since the 1930's. Party subscription was fairly common among the military and the police, with officers taking sides in political battles. The army was under the authority of the War Ministry and the majority of its members openly supported Conservative party policies and programmes. The police were under the Ministry of Government and the majority of its members openly supported Liberal party policies and programmes. Consequently, during violent, armed inter-party confrontations, especially in rural areas, the military and police forces usually took part on opposite sides.

Entire towns and village were also known for their partisan subscription. Residents did not tolerate dissident points of view. For example, it was fairly well known that the departments of Boyacá and Huila were Conservative while the easter plains were mostly Liberal. This kind of extreme

¹³⁵ See Russell W. Ramsey, "Critical bibliography on La Violencia en Colombia", in Latin American Research Review, Volume 8, No. 1, 1973.

behaviour was a mixture of political fanaticism, personal vendettas, unresolved agrarian problems, and a lack of reliable local governmental authorities.

General Rojas did not want to govern, but took power under the pressure of strong public opinion. "Peace, Justice, and Liberty" became his political motto, by which he meant an immediate end to any form of inter-party violence or rural banditry. Once in power he received the immediate support of all sectors of society. Congress was in its mid-year recess, but a National Constitution Assembly, aimed at reforming the Constitution, was in session. The National Constitution Assembly ratified his presidential powers until 1958. ¹³⁶

Rojas Pinilla's administration began as a populist government working very hard to pacify the country and to improve the fate of the poor. During the first months in government, Rojas successfully offered amnesty to all bandits and guerrillas and made a special effort to abolish any type or form of press censorship. Communist and Liberal guerrillas ceased their aggression, the Communists seeking a safe haven in an area located between south-eastern Tolima, north-east Huila, and southern Cundinamarca. The Liberal guerrillas turned in their weapons and accepted peace. Furthermore, in an effort to put an end to open

¹³⁶ See John D. Martz, Colombia: A contemporary political survey, (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1962).

political partisanship and confrontation, Rojas removed the national police from the authority of the Ministry of the Interior, and then placed them under the command of the War Ministry.

Rojas Pinilla's problems began on 8 June 1954, when he authorized the army to break up a student demonstration which was commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the murdering of a student in 1929. The troops broke in and some eleven students were killed. Then, in November 1954, new confrontations between peasants and the military left some peasants dead, and rural violence began again, especially in the Communist controlled areas of Villarica. In 1955, criticism from the leading national papers "El Espectador" and "El Tiempo" angered the General, who ordered them closed. Both soon re-opened under the temporary names of "Intermedio" and "El Independiente".

After governing the nation for over two years, and despite his initial reluctance to become the Chief of State, by 1955 he began to take steps to consolidate his power so that he could remain in the presidency. In an attempt to strengthen his own political support, General Rojas organized two political groups: a new workers union, called the National Workers Confederation (CNT), and a third political party, the National Action Movement (MAN), meant to unify people from various political and economic backgrounds against the traditional Conservative and

Liberal elites.¹³⁷ Reaction from the two traditional parties began on 20th July 1956. They held secret negotiations in the Spanish sea coast cities of Benidorm and Sitges. Two former presidents, who were also the bosses of the two traditional parties, were in charge of the meetings: Laureano Gómez and Alberto Lleras Camargo. The meetings discussed alternative ways of returning Colombia to democracy. The outcome was the conception of the "National Front".

Amidst increasing personal criticism alongside criticism of his economic policies, General Rojas Pinilla was forced to resign on 10 May 1957. To replace him, he named a military junta which was to rule the country for the following twelve months. The Junta members were: Major General Gabriel París (President), Major General Deogracias Fonseca, Rear Admiral Rubén Piedrahita, Brigadier Rafael Navas Pardo, and Brigadier General Luis E. Ordoñez. The military junta committed itself to serve as a bridge between the Rojas dictatorship and civilian democracy. At the request of the leaders of both the Conservative and Liberal parties, the Junta Members decided to call for a plebiscite on 1 December 1957 on the feasibility of the "National Front" as discussed by Gómez and Lleras Camargo in Spain.

¹³⁷ See Carlos H. Uran, Rojas y la manipulación del poder, (Bogotá, Carlos Valencia, 1983).

On 4 May 1958, the Military Junta called for a presidential election. Initially, Conservative party leader Guillermo León Valencia was launched as the National Front candidate, but eventually party boss Laureano Gómez launched senior statesman and Liberal party boss Alberto Lleras Camargo as the Front's candidate, instead of Valencia. On election day, Lleras Camargo received almost 2.5 million votes, and was challenged only by Jorge Leyva, a "Laureanoista" dissident, who received some 600,000 votes. Former Liberal president Alberto Lleras Camargo was elected the first National Front President. He held the office from 1958 to 1962.

One of president Lleras Camargo's first tasks was to urgently organize and implement a democratic transition from the previous military dictatorships to a constitutional civilian government. Political sectarianism and violence still existed, but not of the magnitude of the past decade. The possibility of granting amnesty to all rural subversive individuals and groups was discussed and approved by the Lleras Camargo administration, but with no success. On the other hand, an Agrarian Law which created the Colombian Institute of Land Reform (INCORA) was passed in 1961. Strongly criticized by the regressive elements of both traditional parties for being too radical, and by the progressive elements of both parties for being inadequate, the law did not succeed in implementing the much needed agrarian reforms.

In 1959, a new Constitutional reform was passed which ruled that the Conservative and Liberal parties must alternately hold the presidency. ¹³⁸ As a result, no candidate from any other political party could run for president. This constitutional reform, as were many of those passed by the plebiscite of 1 December 1957, was intended to be temporary until the whole process of pacification was completed.

An important political event occurred in 1961 when General Rojas Pinilla returned from political exile and organized his own political movement, ANAPO. This became increasingly active throughout the National Front administration, challenging its policies and programmes, and almost winning the 1970 presidential elections. In 1962, as mandated by the National Front Constitutional Reform, Lleras Camargo has to call for a presidential election to elect the second National Front president. According to the 1959 reforms, the Conservative party's presidential candidate has to be elected president. No other president candidates were accepted. Presidential elections had become a formality.

The impact of the Cuban revolution throughout Latin America was tremendous. Under its influence, new guerrilla groups began to organize in Colombia (such as the short-lived Movimiento Obrero-Estudiantil-Campesino 7 de Enero, founded in 1959, the Maoist-inspired EPL, founded in 1963, and the

¹³⁸ See Robert H. Dix, Colombia: The political dimensions of change, op. cit.

Castroite ELN, founded in 1964). Father Camilo Torres, a Colombian Catholic priest also organized a university student movement to demand necessary structural reforms, a movement he called the "United Front". The old Communist agrarian groups of the early 1950s, in addition to the recently created guerrilla groups, continued to operate in the southern, central and eastern Andes.

There, they were protected by the virtual absence, locally, of any type of governmental institutions. The Communists organized themselves in such semi-autonomous rural communities as: Marquetalia, in southern Tolima; Rio Chiquíto in northern Cauca; El Pato and Guayabero; and the border areas between the departments of Huila and Caquetá. On 20 July 1964, these groups celebrated a conference in Rio Chiquíto, which they called the "Southern Block", and issued a National Guerrilla Agrarian Programme. Two years later, following a strong military attack on their previously semi-autonomous region, they transformed themselves into the so-called Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces-Popular Army (FARC-EP).

During the April 1970 presidential elections an important incident occurred. According to a press statement issued by General Rojas Pinilla, he had received 1,235,679 votes by 2:00 a.m. of the 20th April, while Pastrana Borrero had 1,121,958 votes. However, at 3:00 a.m. the government announced that Rojas Pinilla was taking the lead over

Pastrana with only 753,243 votes over Pastrana 749,022. On Monday, 20 April, General Rojas Pinilla's political supporters began suggesting that the outgoing administration was committing fraud to avoid the victory of their candidate, including electoral fraud. It was in this context that on Monday night, at about 7:00 p.m., President Lleras Restrepo made a surprise television appearance stating that since there was serious social unrest he was declaring an 8:00 p.m. curfew. Two days later, the administration officially announced that Pastrana had won the elections with 1,571,249 votes over Rojas who received 1,521,267. ¹³⁹

On 21 April 1974, the first open presidential elections since 1946, as well as the first in which a women candidate participated, took place. The offspring of three Colombian presidents ran as candidates in addition to the representative of the Communist party front called the National Opposition Union (UNO). Alfonso López Michelzen ran for the Liberal party, Alvaro Gómez Hurtado for the Conservative party, and María Eugenia Rojas de Moreno for the ANAPO. Almost 4.5 million people voted. López Michelzen was the victor with almost 2.5 million votes, followed by Gómez with 1.4 million, Rojas de Moreno with some 440,000, and the UNO candidate with some 122,000.

¹³⁹ See El Tiempo (Newspaper), Bogotá, 20-24 April 1970.

The bipartisan form of government ended formally with the presidential and legislative elections of April 1974, although the 1974-1978 Cabinet remained subject to the parity agreement. The Conservative and Liberal parties together won an overwhelming majority of seats in Congress, and support for ANAPO was greatly reduced.¹⁴⁰ The presidential election was won by the Liberal party candidate Alfonso López Michelsen, who received 56 per cent of the total votes.

At congressional elections in March 1986, the traditional wing of the Liberal party (PL), secured a clear victory over the Conservative party and obtained 49 per cent of the votes cast. The Union Patriótica (UP), formed by the FARC in 1985, won seats in both houses of Congress. In the presidential elections in May, Virgilio Barco, candidate of the PL, was elected president with 58 per cent of the votes cast. The large majority that the PL secured at both elections obliged the Partido Conservador to form the first formal opposition to a government for 30 years.

Attempts by the new administration to address the problems of political violence and the cultivation and trafficking of illicit drugs enjoyed little success during 1986 and 1987. Hopes that an indefinite cease-fire agreement, concluded between FARC and the government in March 1986,

¹⁴⁰ See Robert H. Dix, "Political opposition under the National Front", *op. cit.*

would facilitate the full participation of the UP in the political process, were largely frustrated by the government's failure to respond effectively to a campaign of assassinations of UP members conducted by para-military death squads between 1985 and 1987. This campaign resulted in an estimated 450 deaths. The crisis was compounded in October 1987 by the decision of six guerrillas groups, including the FARC, the ELN, and the M-19, to form a joint front, the Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar (CGSB).

In October 1990 the creation of the National constituent Assembly was declared constitutionally acceptable by the Supreme Court, and later in the same month Navarro Wolff resigned the health portfolio in order to head the list of candidates representing the Alianza Democrática M-19 (ADM-19) in the elections. The ADM-19 secured around 27 per cent of the votes cast and 19 of the 70 contested Assembly seats, forcing the ruling Liberals, with a total of 24 seats, to seek support from ADM-19 members and from seven elected independents, including two members of the Evangelical Church and two representatives from Indian groups, in order to ensure for the successful enactment of reform proposals. In February 1991 the five-month session of the National Constituent Assembly was inaugurated. The composition of the Assembly had been expanded from 70 to 73 members in order to incorporate three invited members of former guerrilla groupings, two from the EPL and one from the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), and

was later expanded further to accommodate a representative of the Comando Quintín Lame.

By June, a political pact had been negotiated between President Gaviria and the representatives of the three largest parties within the Assembly: the PL, the ADM-19, and the Movimiento de Salvación Nacional (MSN). It was agreed that, in order to facilitate the process of political and constitutional renovation, Congress should be dissolved prematurely. The Assembly subsequently voted to dismiss Congress in early July, although congressional elections had not been scheduled to take place until 1994. Incumbent government ministers and members of the National Constituent Assembly, which was itself to be dissolved on 5 July, were declared to be ineligible for congressional office.

On 4 July 1991 the new Constitution was presented to the nation by President Gaviria and on the following day, it became effective. At the same time, the state of siege, which had been imposed in 1984 in response to the escalation of political and drugs-related violence, was optimistically ended. Although the new constitution preserved the existing institutional framework of a president and a bicameral legislature (reduced in size to a 102 seat Senate and a 161 seat House of Representatives), considerable emphasis was placed upon provisions to

encourage greater political participation and to restrict electoral corruption and mis-representation.

The duration of the state of siege was to be restricted to 90 days, only to be extended with the approval of the Senate. The Ministry of Justice was to be restructured, with the creation of the posts of Public Prosecutor and Defender of the People. All marriages were to be placed under civil jurisdiction, with the guaranteed right to divorce. Most controversially, extradition of Colombian nationals was to be prohibited.

The Guerrilla.

Insurgency in Colombia has been most generated by the historical use of violence in the competition between Liberal and Conservative political parties. The elite was divided, as most Latin American elites were, between anti-clerical rationalists and pro-clerical defenders of church prerogatives. Violence was not the only important factor though, local as opposed to central control of political patronage and economic favour also became an issue in the Liberal-Conservative confrontation, although advocacy of centralism or federalism shifted from party to party over time. ¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ See Arturo Alape, La paz, La violencia: Testigos de excepción, (Bogotá, Planeta, 1987).

Politically motivated violence emerged as a consequence of the 1946 presidential and congressional elections. The majority of the Liberals, who had won the presidency in 1930 because of divisions in Conservative ranks, and who had then retained control of the executive for sixteen years, divided, in 1946, into two factions. As a result, the Conservatives, united behind a single presidential candidate, were able to win the presidency. As Conservative mayors replaced Liberals in local government, violent disputes broke out in several departments between followers of the two parties. The scale of attack and counter-attack by Liberal and Conservative civilians, as well as police intervention on the side of the Conservatives, increased as the 1947 congressional election approached and set the mood for the Bogota riot of April 1948.

The expression of traditional party conflict through violence, and its resolution through political settlement has structured the context in which modern revolutionary appeals, based on social and economic discontent, have been made to sectors of the Colombian public since the early 1950s. In addition, the long standing Colombian tradition of political violence has conditioned the structure and recruitment of guerrilla organizations and determined the location of their areas of operation. Furthermore, guerrilla violence and insurgences in Colombia have been

carried out by organizations that have varied origins, purposes, and social characteristics. ¹⁴²

The phenomenon of the "La Violencia" (1946 to 1964), represented an upheaval which for many years had a significant impact on peasant mobilization. The violence gave rise to the monopolization of land and above all to forced sales of goods, took a toll of 250,000 lives, led to large scale migration, terror, and banditry, and led finally to the consolidation of networks of political power. In addition, it gave rise to new forms of social organization, such as the self-defence initiated by the Colombian Communist Party, which in the 1960s was the culminating factor in the creation of the FARC.

Guerrilla activity in Colombia began to develop a decade before the Cuban revolution. ¹⁴³ Furthermore, one can distinguish three periods in its development. Firstly, a stage of predominantly guerrilla activity under the patronage of the Liberal Party (1949-1953). Secondly, a phase characterized by the preponderance of Communist guerrilla activity (1955-1958). Finally, the emergence of diverse ideological groups, after the Cuban revolution (1962-1991).

¹⁴² See Gonzalo G. Sánchez, y Ricardo Peñaranda, Pasado y presente de la violencia en Colombia, (Bogotá, CEREC, 1986).

¹⁴³ See Guillermo G. Cardona, Para un estudio sobre la violencia en Colombia: Bibliografía, (Bogotá, CINEP, 1989).

The first phase of "La Violencia" was its most violent. Three-quarters of its estimated 200,000 victims were killed between 1948 and 1953, with more than 50,000 in 1950 alone. In these years, the violence was generated mostly in the name of the parties. Rural bosses mobilised their peasant clients in bloody vendettas against neighbouring villages, and Liberal landowners organised peasant-guerrilla armies which engaged the Conservative forces of the State in "hit and run" actions. In consequence, para-military groups of civilians and police, such as the "Aplanchadores", the "Clulavitas", and the "Pájaros", carried out indescribable acts of violence, which Liberals met with atrocities of their own.

"La Violencia" affected rural Colombia, but it was confined to certain regions, especially the coffee-producing regions of the Valle del Cauca, the minifundia areas of Boyacá, and the Santanderes, which had long histories of partisan violence, and the Eastern Llanos. Among the Liberal guerrilla leaders who came to fight alongside the Communists were Pedro Antonio Marín (Manuel Marulanda Vélez), Jacobo Prías Alape and Ciro Trujillo. They drew closer to the Communist party and had joined it by 1952, while, by the end of 1953, most of the Liberal guerrillas chiefs were collaborating with the National Army against the Communists. ¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ See José J. González, "Geopolítica de la violencia", en Análisis, No. 2, 1989.

The social dimension of the Colombian state at this time was built around two principles. Firstly, political power was in the hands of one of the two traditional parties, each of which, in turn, controlled vast numbers of dependent people, primarily through sectarian methods. Secondly, the social-class system was based on a small elite dominating both all economic and political structures. ¹⁴⁵ In addition, politically organized labour had been at the fringes of the state system. Thus, the first two labour federations; the Confederación de Trabajadores Colombianos (CTC), and the Unión de Trabajadores Colombianos (UTC), were founded, respectively, by the Liberals and by the Conservatives.

General Rojas Pinilla had the temporary support of both parties, who chose him as president for the 1954-1958 term. He began by declaring an amnesty, with the objective of disarming and demobilising the guerrillas. But Rojas Pinilla's "peace" inaugurated a new period of official violence, in which an estimated 16,000 people died, including many of those who had accepted the amnesty. This happened because the amnesty did not include the Communists, even though they would have readily accepted it. The party was declared illegal in 1955 and the regions in which the Communists were supported, such as Villarica, were declared war-zones. Subsequently, the Communist

¹⁴⁵ See José J. González, "De Marquetalia a Casa Verde: Permanencias de la lógica de exclusión", en Análisis, No. 5, 1991.

guerrillas re-grouped in the south of Tolima and the north of Cauca, where they set up what came to be called the "independent republics". At an advanced stage of the Communist inspired self-defense agrarian movements of the early 1950s, each of them had its own autonomous government.

The formulation of the National Front officially brought "La Violencia" to an end but it did in fact continue in different forms. Banditry was perhaps the most notable. It resulted in over 18,000 people losing their lives, 75 per cent of them in the department of Tolima, Valle del Cauca, and Viejo Caldas. The bandits of this second phase of violence were peasants who had been called guerrillas in its first phase. These bandit-guerrillas had not accepted either the amnesty offered by Rojas Pinilla or the amnesty offered by the National Front in 1958, and found themselves under attack from the National Army.

The banditti, although a radical social force, mostly remained loyal to their Liberal party affiliation. This ambivalency was exploited by Alfonso López Michelsen, who set up a faction within the Liberal party, the MRL, in opposition to the National Front. The significance of the MRL vote in the 1962 elections led the new president Guillermo León Valencia to negotiate with them. The MRL seized the opportunity to institutionalise itself and gain

access to government office. Further, the MRL accepted the ministry of mines and broke with the Communist party.

In 1964 and on US advice, the Colombian government launched what would become one of its most infamous operations; the "Plan Lazo". 16,000 troops encircled the valley of Marquetalia, where a group of peasants were living. Almost all the peasants from these independent republics escaped and formed mobile guerrilla groups. Further, they came together, first in September 1964 in a conference of the "Bloc of the South", and again, for its second conference in 1966, when the FARC was officially founded. A new era of guerrilla warfare was beginning and the administration of Guillermo León Valencia (1962-1966), the second National Front president, saw the emergence of a new type of violence as a result of the Cuban Revolution and Ernesto Che Guevara's policy of exporting it to neighbouring countries.

The FARC-EP was officially formed on 20 July 1964 and was sponsored by the Communist Party of Colombia (PCC).¹⁴⁶ The FARC-EP leadership had remained virtually the same since its foundation: Manuel Marulanda Vélez, Jacobo Arenas, Jaime Guaracas, Raúl Reyes, and others. In 1987, the FARC-

¹⁴⁶ See Jacobo Arenas, Cese al fuego: Una historia política de las FARC, (Bogotá, Oveja Negra, 1985); Alberto Gómez, "Perspectives of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)", in Donald C. Hodges, and Robert E. Shanab Aabu, NFL - National Liberation Fronts 1960-1970, (New York, William Morrow, 1972).

EP, the whole organization was under the command of a National Secretariat also known as "Estado Mayor Central", which in March 1984 had agreed a cease-fire with the national government, and which in May 1985 had supported the creation of the Patriotic Union (UP) as a political coalition of diverse Marxist organizations. Further, the presence of democratically elected FARC-EP/UP government authorities in many national areas, had enabled the movement to increase its political influence openly at a national level.

The FARC-EP as the ultimate expression of revolution for national liberation, is a politico-military movement, that develops its ideological, political, organizational, propagandistic, and military action in relation to the use of all forms of struggle. ¹⁴⁷

The ELN's origins go back to the early 1960s, and Fidel Castro's rural guerrilla success, which precipitated the fall of Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. ¹⁴⁸ A group of mostly college-trained political activists travelled from Colombia to Havana to learn more about the Cuban revolution and to study the ways in which such an experience could help to develop a similar revolution in Colombia. Among the students on the initial trip were Victor Medina Morón, Fabio Vásquez Castaño, and Eriberto Espítia. In Cuba they

¹⁴⁷ FARC-EP, Estatuto de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo, Capítulo I, Artículo 1, (n.c., n.e, n. f.), p. 5.

¹⁴⁸ See Jaime Arenas, La guerrilla por dentro: Análisis del ELN Colombiano, (Bogotá, Tercer Mundo, 1975).

agreed that it was imperative to begin working towards the Colombian revolution and, in order to do so, they founded the brigade "pro-liberación nacional de Colombia José Antonio Galán". The ELN's units were located mostly in the departments of Santander, Arauca, and Antioquia. Another ELN location was the area better known as the "Cauca's Boot"; the southern area of the department of Cauca. Other included southern Huila and western Caquetá.

In 1967 the Partido Comunista de Colombia-Marxista/Leninista (PCC-ML) founded the EPL. The EPL's origins parallel those of the ELN. Both guerrilla organizations were founded by political activists who were either PCC sympathizers or members. On the other hand, both guerrilla leaders were also deeply impressed by the Cuban Revolution and thought that foquismo would eventually lead the people to power. The EPL initially attempted to experiment with foquismo in an area that they called "Zona X", that is, Bolívar and Santander. Later, they moved to the developed agricultural areas of Córdoba's upper San Jorge, and upper Sinú River valleys. From Córdoba, the movement eventually moved to the newly settled areas of northern Antioquia, including the border department between the of Cauca river valley and the Urabá .

... We took the "Foco" to a strategic level, which resulted in the detachment of the masses. We separated off the people, we forgot that the masses are the protagonists of their own process,

and this resulted in the standstill of the movement. ¹⁴⁹

The Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria-Patria Libre (MIR-Patria Libre), the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), the indigenous group Quintín Lame, and the M-19 constituted a new generation of guerrillas. ¹⁵⁰ They tried to consolidate their presence in the community by working with unions, town co-operatives, and village committees. Their aim was a "Prolonged Popular War", and they had been developing a way to "Latinise" the revolution. They adopted a critical vision of the communist central powers (Moscow, Peking, Havana), and focused their strategic socialist ideas on the Latin American situation. This allowed them to present themselves as a part of the national history, appropriating patriotic symbols and cultural traditions as a part of their revolution.

Founding members and current leaders did not share any classical political ideology. As a result, M-19's policies and goals have been closely related to the personalities and opinions of a series of leaders. Spectacular populist activities intended to deal with social, economic, and political issues by influencing public opinion characterized the M-19's activities under Jaime Bateman's leadership. Ospina's succession as head of M-19 led to a

¹⁴⁹ Olga Behar, Las guerras de la paz, (Bogotá, Planeta, 1986), p. 378.

¹⁵⁰ See Germán Castro, Del ELN al M-19: Once años de lucha guerrillera, (Bogotá, Carlos Valencia, 1980).

substantial decline in the urban and political effort and the group became an old style military guerrilla organization. Armed clashes with the Army increased under Alvaro Fayad. Military tensions continued, and in June 1985 Carlos Pizarro Leongómez steered the movement in a more militant direction. Now under José Navarro Wolf the M-19 is the third political force with parliamentary representation.

To sum up, there are numerous different factors that have led to the persistent presence of guerrillas in Colombia. Guerrillas of different ideologies and varied sociological configurations emerged in the 1960s, and this prevented them from finding common modalities of action. On the other hand, the incapacity of the Colombian State to resolve the conflict, unlike Uruguay or Argentina, was due to a degree of military parity. Finally, the early militarization of Left-wing projects encouraged the state to make illegal any protest, civil disobedience, strike, or governmental opposition in Colombia for more than three generations.

Between the 10th and 12th Congresses of the Colombian Communist Party, the FARC were thought of as a reserve force in case of a *coup d'etat* by the National Communist Forces. They had not established themselves as an alternative power via a revolutionary process. Thus, they began as managers of local in reaction to State violence. It was only between the 2nd and the 5th Conferences of the

FARC (1966-74), that they started to develop a political aspect, and to assign to it a principle significance in the revolutionary process. At the Fifth Conference, Luis Alberto Morantes Jaimes (Jacobo Arenas) said that the new conception permitted the guerrillas to participate alongside, the mass movement, in the first national civic strike. This took place on 14 September 1977, during the administration of Alfonso López Michelsen. ¹⁵¹

In order to achieve its purposes, the FARC aimed to have forces in all of the nation's departments. As a result, throughout the past twenty-five years, the FARC has organized its semi-autonomous, so-called "Frentes", a number of areas. ¹⁵² By late 1986, government sources estimated that the FARC had twenty-nine fronts, concentrated especially in the eastern plain departments of Meta, Caquetá, Guaviare, Cauca, and Antioquia. The FARC's urban struggles, were augmented one year later when the Sixth Conference, set down the first plans for the formation of a revolutionary army. But it was with the Seventh Conference (1982) that the FARC participated in the Patriotic Union's electoral campaign for parliamentary

¹⁵¹ See FARC-EP, Crecimiento estratégico y toma del poder por las FARC, (n.c., 1985).

¹⁵² See Eduardo L. Pizarro, Las FARC 1949-1966: De la autodefensa a la combinación de todas las formas de lucha, (Bogotá, Tercer Mundo e Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1991).

positions. This followed the cease-fire and peace agreement of October 1983.

Within the first year of its existence, disagreement about the best way to develop the insurrection occurred within the National Liberation Army-Camillist Unity (ELN-UC). Some, such as Víctor Medina Morón, believed it was necessary to emphasize the political aspect before military action was employed. This would be done through the consolidation of liberated zones to establish a national movement.¹⁵³ They planned to do it through the Movimiento Revolucionario Liberal (MRL). The contrary position was adopted by Fabio Vásquez Castaño, who gave primacy to military action, with the intention of demonstrating to the masses the existence of a new political option that could take over power.

Both positions recognized the principle of developing socialist ideas, through the foco tactic.¹⁵⁴ In 1964 the expectation that the countryside would be the principal theatre for army confrontation was confirmed. At that time, the distribution of population in Colombia was 65 per cent rural, 35 per cent urban. Later, and as a result of La Violencia period, the balance of population changed radically, to 75 per cent urban, and only 25 per cent rural. The idea that farmers would form the vanguard

¹⁵³ See UCELN, Carta a la militancia, (n.c, n.d.).

¹⁵⁴ That is, to establish a group of men in the mountains, and from there to start the political work that would become the beginning of a regular revolutionary army.

element of the insurrection process, (an idea that obliged the UCELN to concentrate on military action) failed to find a enough support to be implemented. Ultimately the ELN-UC failed to find the support necessary for them to form a political party.

In the 1980s, the ELN emerged as a guerrilla organization, this time under the leadership of Manuel Pérez Martínez, a former Spanish Roman Catholic priest, who served as the organization's political ideologue.¹⁵⁵ By then, the ELN were re-emphasizing the fact that their goal was Colombia's liberation from domestic and international capitalism and imperialism through an armed struggle that would bring the people to power and that would eventually help implant a Socialist political system in Colombia. To this end, during the mid-1980s, the ELN decided to declare itself protector of Colombia's oil and gas resources.

Further, the ELN claimed that something had to be done to stop the giving away of Colombia's natural resources. Since, they claimed, the government did nothing, the guerrilla organization began to take action, such as dynamiting short sectors of the Caño Limón-Coveñas oil pipe, destroying equipment managed or owned by oil corporations, and kidnapping oil corporation employees and officers for ransom, regardless of nationality.

¹⁵⁵ See UCELN, La Guerra Popular Prolongada y su carácter continental, (n.c., n.d.).

The EPL with a clearly defined pro-Peking Marxist ideology, initiated activities without making clear what they were going to use to achieve their goals. Its founders wanted to implement a revolutionary government in Colombia but did not have a clear idea of how to proceed. As a result, EPL activities included various types of political activity, such as the ideological training of teachers, co-operative leaders, peasants, and farmers through literacy classes and discussion groups. These political activities were supplemented by military action. The goal was to organize what became known as "Patriotic Councils", which would operate in the area together with local EPL people. ¹⁵⁶

The EPL began to distance itself from the Marxist model in the late 1970's. This process climaxed at the EPL's 1980 convention, where a final break with Peking was approved. According to Oscar William Calvo, the EPL agreed that it had to diversify its activities and become a broader-based political organization. Thus, it was agreed to provide support to the rural based union movements founded in Medellín, an organization called Colombia's Revolutionary Youth, and to open a newspaper called "Union". ¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ See Partido Comunista de Colombia (Marxista-Leninista), Política del Partido Comunista de Colombia (ML) para el frente militar, (Bogotá, Escuela Nacional de Combatientes del EPL, 1983).

¹⁵⁷ See Olga Behar, op. cit.

The M-19 organization began late in 1973 as a nationalist, populist, and uniquely Colombian movement seeking social reform. It stressed the need for greater participation by the lower classes in the whole political process. They considered themselves inheritors of the ideas of Simón Bolívar (1783-1830), and their goal was to return Colombia to Bolívar's ideal of an independent nation.

... The 19th of April Movement appeared publicly when a group of its members took over the House of Bolívar in Bogota and gained possession of the sword of the liberator, as a symbol of the fight that was commencing. Simultaneously, another group of its members took over the city-hall of Bogota, and wrote graffiti on its walls "with the people, with the guns, with Maria Eugenia to the presidency, M-19".¹⁵⁸

The M-19 movement got under way in a manner very different from that of traditional guerrilla campaigns. Their use of legal channels, such as the mass media, caused great confusion, even in the government. Other factors generated even greater confusion. Firstly, this was the first time that Colombia had experienced a guerrilla movement in urban areas. Secondly, this was the first time that any group had formulated, from the outset, a combination of political and military ideas. Thirdly, the guerilla group was established as an integral part of a legal institution (ANAPO).

¹⁵⁸ Patricia Lara, Siembra vientos y recogerás tempestades, (Bogotá, Punto de Partida, 1982), p. 33.

Analysis.

In Colombia, the guerrilla movement has run contrary to democracy. On the one hand, the fact that violence was used to try to produce social mobilization by all guerrilla groups clearly demonstrates the guerrillas' contempt for any kind democratic process. On the other hand, the permanent presence of the guerrilla groups permitted governments to legitimize the permanent application of military rule, a perpetual "State of Exception", under which all civil liberties were suspended.

When partisan guerrilla groups, like the FARC and the EPL, began to emerge in the 1960's, they concentrated on accumulating military power to obtain a unified front to repel governmental actions. The government has not resolved the "domination of land conflict" even today, nor the crisis of legitimacy its political institutions that has long threatened. We must say then that the guerrilla war finished without having had any social impact. In essence it has been no mere than a confrontation between two apparatuses: the National Army and the insurgents.

The military guerrilla groups of foquista character, such as the ELN, presumed the existence of a crisis of legitimacy in the political institutions and so, the presence of a pre-revolutionary situation. From this point of view, obtaining political space was considered secondary. The objectives were revolutionary and so the

accumulation of military capability became a necessity. They perceived social and civic movements simply as instruments for war.

The M-19 brought about a change in the classical conception of guerrilla warfare, with the move from being a military protagonist, to being an interlocutor in the political arena. The M-19 presented political proposals, and offered themselves as a political opposition.

The guerrillas have obtained some political credibility in the last decade. This is evident, even today. Their political legitimacy that is to say, their support is considerably smaller than their massive employment of military violence might imply. This disparity reflects their eternal failure to legitimize themselves in the eyes of the masses (workers). But the criminalization of the popular movement by the State, and the making illegal of almost all the manifestations of opposition have constituted two of the most dramatic products of the National Front, which had ruled out the possibility of parliamentary left, forcing all opposition to be conspiratorial and clandestine.

By the terms of the National Front agreement, the political pact simultaneously covered two fronts: firstly, it cleared the path for inter-oligarchical relations between Liberal and Conservative: relations that had been blocked, with

tremendously destabilizing effects, since the 1940s. Secondly, it was a pre-emptive response to a wholly new phenomenon: political violence itself. From this moment on the government tried to cast a cloak of silence and forgetfulness over the violence, doing their utmost to silence the voices of victims and to distort the political reality.

The contemporary guerrilla movement has gone through three different phases. Firstly, a period of emergency and the consolidation for the first generation groups, under the Focista conception. Consolidations include the creation of such as the Movimiento Obrero Estudiantil Campesino (MOEC 1959), the Ejército Revolucionario de Colombia (ERC 1961), the Fuerzas Armada de Liberación (FAL 1963). These constituted the frustrated groups of the 1960's, along with, the Ejército Popular de Liberación (EPL), and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), which is still in existence today. The Second phase, during the 1970's, was a time of crisis and divisions over theoretical issues of orthodox Focism and the isolation of these groups from the popular mobilizations. The final phase saw the development of a second generation of groups, and the reactivation of old ones, especially the M-19, who began to transform the guerrilla into a political actor that stood against the State.

There were other factors that helped to foster the presence of guerrilla movements in Colombian society, such as the absence of the State in some zones of national territory, or its traumatic and repressive presence in others. ¹⁵⁹ It was during Julio César Turbay's administration (1978-82) that the government used military power to resolve the social and political conflicts, and made the guerrilla a principal actor on the national scene.

The reformist intentions of the Belisario Betancourt government (1982-86) resulted in two different positions being adopted by the guerrilla groups. On the one hand, the FARC proposed the "politicization of the war", that is, the implementation of their political project through the UP, and the consolidation of their political presence at national level. On the other hand, the M-19 presented the "militarization of politics", that is, the refusal to enter into dialogue with the government, and the call for the unification of all forces under the Coordinadora Nacional guerrillera (CNG).

The government of Virgilio Barco (1986-90) continued the peace policy of the previous administration, but went on to attack the causes of the subversion, such as the absence of the State, unequal distribution of land, discrimination towards minorities, and absolute poverty. The guerrilla, as

¹⁵⁹ See Fernando Landazabal, *Factores de la violencia*, (Bogotá, Tercer Mundo, 1981).

a social actor was ignored. Finally, the administration of César Gaviria (1990-1994) began demobilization and reintegration into the political arena through the Amnesty Act with the EPL and the M-19. Actually, it continues in preliminary conversation with the other two remaining guerrilla groups; the CGSB and the Corriente de Renovación Socialista (CRS), a split from the ELN.

The role of the USA.

Foreign policy has not played a prominent role in Colombia's party policies. For most of this century, the dominant factions within Colombia's Liberal and Conservative parties have consistently agreed on limited goals for foreign policy, although differing administrations have varied the means of pursuing those goals. Politics in general and elections in particular tend to focus on personalities and domestic problems rather than foreign issues. The result is that foreign policy formulation and execution have developed along sectorial lines, especially over the past quarter of a century, which has seen Colombia's economy evolve from a largely rural and agricultural economy into a more integrated urban-economy, orientated towards industry and services.

US-Colombian relations should be viewed as a big power/small power relationship.¹⁶⁰ A constant in this relationship is that, from Colombia's viewpoint, the US operates with great concern for diplomatic courtesy, so long as big power's interests are not involved, questioned or compromised. Colombia is a junior partner in the hierarchy of Latin America, as far as the US is concerned; lumped with Peru and Venezuela behind Chile, Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina. Furthermore, though at present relations are generally cordial, several areas of disagreement exist that deserve special attention.

The relationship between the US and Colombia is always open to a number of interpretations. On the one hand, Colombia's government has been concentrating its military forces on the war against guerrilla groups, and it welcomes US military aid. On the other hand, the US government is interested in assisting the Colombian army with logistics, military training, and money, but imposes the condition that this aid will be concentrated on anti-drug programmes.

The illegal export of marijuana and cocaine from Colombia has ranked among the most important issues in bilateral relations since the early 1970's. The "Colombian connection" has been the subject of feature articles in leading news magazines, and of television news programmes

¹⁶⁰ See Daniel L. Premo, "Colombia: Cool friendship", in Robert Wesson, US influence in Latin America in the 1980s, (New York, Praeger, 1982).

and documentaries. ¹⁶¹ The impact of drug trafficking on the domestic economies of Colombia and the US has been the topic of congressional hearings in both countries and the subject of numerous executive memoranda. Colombia's perception of the drug trade began to change when Julio César Turbay was inaugurated as president in August 1978. An agreement on drug control was signed with the US involving additional security measures in the Guajira peninsula, where most of the traffic originates. For the first time, the Colombian armed forces took over the responsibility for drug interdiction from the national police, and soon placed the Guajira region under military jurisdiction. For its part, the US has been singularly unsuccessful in formulating a coherent and consistent drug policy.

Since the 1960's, Colombia has pursued a development policy in which the principal objectives have been to reduce the economy's dependence on coffee by diversifying exports, and to alter the traditional pattern of its trade relations by actively seeking new markets in Latin America and Europe. The US is still Colombia's leading trading partner, although its relative share of Colombia's foreign trade has been decreasing as Colombia has successfully developed new

¹⁶¹ See Rosa del Olmo, Prohibir o domesticar? Políticas de drogas en América Latina, (Caracas, Nueva Sociedad, 1992); CERID (Centro para el Estudio de las Relaciones Internacionales y el Desarrollo), El impacto del capital financiero del narcotráfico en el desarrollo de América Latina, (La Paz, Atenea, 1991).

markets. Also Colombia's shift in the late 1970's from a development strategy emphasizing import substitution to one stressing export promotion resulted in the rapid expansion of non-traditional exports such as fresh flowers and leather goods. Furthermore, bilateral trade issues have been resolved amicably for the most part, especially since December 1979 when Colombia announced its decision to join the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Summarizing, the US lost a major instrument for exercising economic and political influence in its trade relations with Colombia when Colombia relinquished US economic assistance after 1975. As a major recipient of aid during the early years of the Alliance for Progress, Colombia received a total of \$ 1.4 billion from the US from 1960 to 1974, most of it in the form of loans administered through the US Agency for International Development (AID).

Negotiations.

In 1988 a Commission of Democratic Cohabitation was established, with the aim of setting further meetings between all sides in the internal conflict in Colombia. Moreover, at the beginning of September President Barco announced a new peace initiative, composed of three phases: the pacification of the guerrillas forces, a transitional phase and the definitive re-integration of the guerrillas into the democratic system. Under the plan, the government

was committed to entering into a dialogue with those guerrilla groups that renounced violence and intended to resume civilian life. In January 1989 the government and the M-19 concluded an agreement to initiate direct dialogue between the government, all political parties in Congress, and the CGSB, in an attempt to seek a political solution to the unrest. In March the M-19 and the government signed a seven-point document which would provide for the re-integration of the guerrillas into Colombian society. ¹⁶²

In the same month, the ELN, EPL and FARC publicly confirmed their willingness to participate in peace talks with the government. In July the leading guerrilla groups held a summit meeting, at which they agreed to the formation of a "Comisión de Notables", which was to draft proposals for a peace dialogue with the government. In September the M-19 announced that it had reached agreement with the government on a peace treaty, under which its members were to demobilize and disarm in exchange for a full pardon. In addition, the movement was to enter the political mainstream.

In October the M-19 was formally constituted as a political party, and its leader, Carlos Pizarro Leongómez was named presidential candidate for the movement. By March 1990 all M-19 guerrilla forces had surrendered their weapons,

¹⁶² See Carlos M. Jiménez, "La última batalla de Carlos Pizarro", en Foro, No. 10, 1989.

thereby satisfying the terms for the latest peace accord agreed with the government. In exchange for a firm commitment from the Barco administration to a referendum to decide the question of constitutional reform, and for assurances that proposals for comprehensive changes to the electoral law would be introduced in Congress, members of the M-19 were guaranteed a general amnesty, reintegration into civilian life, and full political participation in forthcoming elections.

Meanwhile, in February 1990 the government had established the National Council for Normalization, in an attempt to repeat, in negotiations with other guerrilla groups, their recent success with the M-19. The EPL announced the end of its armed struggle in August 1990 and joined the political mainstream as the "Partido de Esperanza, Paz y Libertad", along with the Comando Quintín Lame and the PRT, in early-1991. Attempts to negotiate with the FARC and the ELN, however, proved ultimately fruitless, and violent clashes between the guerrilla groups and security forces persisted into the early 1990's.

In December 1993 negotiations with the Corriente de Renovación Socialista (CRS), a dissident faction of the ELN disposed to political assimilation, produced a nine-point agreement for the guerrillas' reincorporation into civilian life and transformation into a legitimate political force. However, the experience of other former guerrilla groups

who had effected a similar move to the political mainstream only to be persecuted by less compromising guerrilla factions made agreements like this difficult. In January 1994, for example, more than 30 EPL members were murdered, allegedly by FARC activists, during a demonstration in the Urabá region.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, the two traditional parties, both of which can be traced back to the early post-independence period of the nineteenth century, have shown their resilience by their survival, even reactivation, during the period of socio-political changes that Colombia has been experiencing since the early 1930's. This contrasts sharply with the emergence in many Latin American countries during the 1930's and 1940's of new reformist parties eventually known as the "Aprista parties".

In Colombia, the "Depression" led to a realignment of political forces within the existing two-party system, transforming the majority party into the minority one.¹⁶³ However, the end result of such changes was not democratic reform but the escalation of political violence to civil war proportions, eg. La Violencia, political breakdown via

¹⁶³ The change was from a Conservative to a Liberal majority. See August Campbell; Philip E. Converse; Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, The American voter, (New York, Wiley, 1960).

a *coup d'etat*, and an authoritarian military regime from 1953 to 1957. The subsequent attempts to restore civilian rule and end the lingering violence, took the form of a coalition between the two traditional parties.

Despite the existence of a democratically competitive constitution during large parts of the twentieth century, before the National Front came into being, Colombia had failed to go beyond the institutionalization of "proto-democratic" regimes. It has established a form of partial democracy, where neither a mass democracy nor a competitive aristocratic elite had emerged.¹⁶⁴ Between the turn of the century and the initiation of the National Front in 1958, bipartisan competition for the presidency occurred only in 1922, 1930, and 1946. The typical mode for changing the president was by competition within the ruling party. Cleavages along party lines were too disruptive to be contained even by a representative democracy with limited participation.¹⁶⁵ Only between 1946-1949 did sustained inter-party electoral competition occur, and the result was La Violencia and the breakdown of the regime.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ See Rober H. Dix, Colombia: The political dimensions of change, Op. Cit.

¹⁶⁵ see Gino Germani, and Kalman Silvert, "Politics, social structure and military intervention in Latin America", in European Journal of Sociology, No. 2, 1961.

¹⁶⁶ The rate of electoral participation rose sharply during this period: 1943 saw 41 per cent of the potential vote for a congressional election; 1945 saw 39 per cent; 1946 saw 60 per cent for a presidential election; 1947 saw 64 per cent for a congressional one; finally, in 1949, 73 per cent of potential votes participated in the

The traditional political system was characterized by the hegemony of one of only two parties. This reflected the doubts, especially by the opposition party, including its elite, that it could win power through non-fraudulent elections. But on the other hand, the system was not a closed hegemony or dictatorship.¹⁶⁷ Firstly, the constitutional and other formal/legal texts were democratic; secondly, the ruling party did not generally enjoy a total monopoly over governmental positions. There was, rather, a recurrent tendency to seek minority representation in the cabinet, partly because full-blown party dictatorship tended to lead to escalated violence.¹⁶⁸ In addition, the freedom of the press was fairly respected; office was held on a temporary basis, the executive normally changing according to a schedule of periodic ruling-party elections; and the opposition often participated in the lesser, non-presidential elections in which ruling party hegemony was not at stake.

The nature and maintenance of the traditional system rested on the strength of both parties. Before the initiation of the National Front, the minority party was itself a

congressional election. See DANE (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística), Colombia política, (Bogotá, DANE, 1972).

¹⁶⁷ See Robert A. Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and opposition, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1971).

¹⁶⁸ See John C. Pollock, "Violence, politics and elite performance: The political sociology of La Violencia in Colombia", in Studies in Comparative International Development, No. 10, 1975.

relatively strong political force. Consequently, when it occurred, partisan violence did not result in the successful "take-over" of the government by the opposite party; the opposition was incapable of replacing the party in power because the ruling party, particularly under conditions of polarization, could count upon sufficient rank-and-file support willing to employ counter-violence. On the other hand, it was difficult for the military to intervene effectively and displace a civilian elite, because even under conditions of inter-party strife, effective support was not easy to obtain or maintain. ¹⁶⁹

Typically, the experience of extreme violence where opposing forces exist in a situation of relative equilibrium would eventually prompt the urge for compromise and lead to coalition government. In other words, the extreme use of violence led, eventually, to a permanent "civic" restrictions. It was not a case of participation in the legal system leading to the efficient development of civic virtues; rather the opposite. The historical recurrence of civil war, with its costly violence, produced a mutual "socialization through violence" which resulted in a relatively lasting, though not permanent, spirit of compromise.

¹⁶⁹ See James L. Payne, Patterns of conflict in Colombia, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1968).

In summary, the minority party so counted upon its support that it would have been too costly to govern without paying due regard to its interests. As evidenced by "La Violencia", party dictatorship further escalated violence, and prolonged escalated violence eventually endangered the vested economic and political interests of the elites of both parties. Thus, full-blown dictatorships have been rare in Colombian history, and paradoxically, prolonged violence itself has led to coalition governments, since neither party was capable of really vanquishing the other. ¹⁷⁰

Despite the recurrent need to employ a "state of siege" to quell civil disruptions, Colombia's pattern of development stands in contrast to the mode of political control so widespread in Latin American: the coup-prone, military based, "authoritarian" regime, with its non-rotating charismatic leadership, a weak or non-existent party system, and relative reliance on corporate interest-group participation.

Finally, the range of issues that divide the US from South America is large and growing larger. The common ground shared historically by the US and South America as parts of

¹⁷⁰ Mil Días resulted in less of a tie than La Violencia in that the Conservatives did not then alternate the presidency with the Liberal. At the turn of the century, the opposition warring the government was probably the minority party and the military was then a very small unprofessional organization. After La Violencia, it took a more formalized coalition, a coalition regime as opposed to governments, to restore party system control away from military rule.

a "New World" order is wearing dangerously thin.¹⁷¹ Yet, the winding down of the "Cold War" may lead to better US-South American relations. The transformations in Eastern Europe, and the economic troubles and political unravelling of the Soviet Union, mean that the South Americans can no longer play game the superpowers of each other and gain assistance from the US in order to keep the communist wolf away. But with the Soviets no longer interested and unable to afford a global foreign policy, South America has been thrown back into the arms of the US whether it wants to be or not.

Prudent politicians in South America have recognized and understood this fact, and are already adjusting to take advantage of it. It should not be assumed, however, that because there are now a greater number of democracies in South America, the US is happy with the situation. Yet it is true that recent Presidents such as Alfonsín in Argentina, Febres in Ecuador, García in Peru, Paz in Bolivia, Sanguinetti in Uruguay, Sarney in Brazil, and Barco in Colombia were probably the most moderate and most democratic collection of leaders for the USA.

¹⁷¹ See Arthur P. Whitaker, The Western hemisphere idea: Its rise and decline, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1954).

PERU.

Introduction.

No policy process operates in a vacuum, whatever those who guide that policy might wish. The constraints affecting not only what decision-makers decide but also how their decisions are carried out are both numerous and complex. They include factors domestic and international, temporary and permanent, institutional and personal. In Peru as in most other Latin American countries, these constraints on public policy are multiple and varied. One of the most permanent and important is geography. Peru has a rugged mountainous terrain over much of its national territory and extensive, heavily forested jungle over most of the rest. This makes communication networks difficult, expensive to build and maintain, and often hazardous. The difficult geography also results in severe limitations on the quantity of land available for cultivation. Perhaps as little as 10 per cent of Peru's land area is suitable for agricultural purposes, one of the lowest percentages among the Latin American countries.¹⁷²

The Indian population is also an important constraint. It makes up a segment of Peruvian society, about 30 per cent

¹⁷² See CIDA (Comité Interamericano de Desarrollo Agrícola), Perú: Tenencia de la tierra y desarrollo socioeconómico del sector agrícola, (Washington, OSA, 1965).

today, which speaks a native language, dresses in traditional garb, practices traditional subsistence occupations like farming and weaving, and which participates only at the margins of the national society or economy. Thus, the Indian filter serves to slow down social mobilization and concomitant new demands on the national governments. ¹⁷³

The above point highlights another basic constraint, the fact that Peru is an intermediate sized country with an intermediate sized population, the majority of whom do not consume the products of the modern sector. Its resource structure, both human and material, is relatively small, so that historically it has not had the capacity to deal, on an equal footing, with large countries or large corporations. Another enduring element is that of geology. Peru boasts significant deposits of many mineral resources, from gold and silver to lead, copper, mercury, tungsten, molybdenum, iron, and oil. The large and diverse mineral deposits attracted substantial foreign investment in the last decades of the nineteenth century and through most of the twentieth, creating new patterns of dependency and the infrastructure of enclave economies. ¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ See David Chaplin, "Peru's postponed revolution", in World Politics, No. 19, 1968.

¹⁷⁴ See David G. Becker, The new bourgeoisie and the limits of dependency: Mining, class and power in revolutionary Peru, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1983).

To sum up, then substantial mineral resources, affected the evolution of both the economy and the politics of Peru. A minerals-based export economy was subject to changing prices on the international market, to foreign investment and foreign technology, and to the external pressures, both public and private, to which these subjected the government.

Historical Background.

After the October 3 *coup d'etat* in 1968, which overthrew President Fernando Belaúnde's constitutional government (1963-1968), Peru's military regime significantly altered the conventional image of the Latin American military. The Latin American *coup d'etat* has characteristically involved a conservative military intervening in an institutionally weak political process in order to maintain the *status quo*.¹⁷⁵ In 1964 in Brazil, for example, and in 1965 in Argentina political systems were in place which required continual or continued military involvement.

Despite an agreement on the principle of regularized presidential secession, the Brazilian military had shown little inclination to broaden the decision-making process to include the society's principal interest groups and the masses. Firstly, the emphasis continued to be placed on

¹⁷⁵ See Martin C. Needler, Political development in Latin America: Instability, violence, and evolutionary change, (New York, Random House, 1968).

rapid economic growth as a general solution to national problems, including political instability. Secondly, a relatively low overall level of social mobilization and the concentration of mobilized forces in coastal areas allowed the military government to employ suppression to control any particular group representing a threat to the regime.¹⁷⁶ Unless the military is prepared to redefine substantially the political rules of the game in order to incorporate established power contenders such as Varga's neo-corporativism, Goulart's neo-Marxism, suppression becomes the only means of controlling social forces which demand a share of political power.

In Argentina, the military had played a long-term veto role. High levels of social mobilization, and the mass-based Peronist party accustomed to playing the role of leading power contender, effectively prevented post-1965 military regimes from bringing about the political order they so much desired. In an effort to establish political peace, the Lanuse government was forced to move towards a restoration of Peronist power, the very group from which the military seized control seventeen years before.

Peru stands in sharp contrast both to the above examples of the military's traditional political role, and to the specific dynamics of control in Brazil and Argentina. It

¹⁷⁶ See Karl W. Deutsch, "Social mobilization and political development", in American Political Science Review, Volume 55, No. 3, 1961.

soon became apparent after the 1968 coup that the Peruvian military was unwilling to withdraw from active politics until they had carried out a number of basic reforms. At the centre of their initiatives to deal with the complex social, economic, and political dimensions of development was the effort, at both national and local levels, to create the institutional basis for a new political system. They were deliberately attempting to bypass the Western democratic framework of multiple political parties and self-mobilized competitive interest groups, in order to institutionalize the citizen's relationship to the system. Hierarchical political organizations were set up along functionally determined sectoral lines, largely at the initiative of the central government. The resulting political framework closely parallels corporative systems of citizen participation.¹⁷⁷

The Peruvian military was attempting to use "revolutionary" initiatives to solidify its state and society, an already extant "evolutionary" process. They held that Peru's colonial heritage constituted an historical and cultural background with which these efforts would be essentially congruent. Implementation of the corporative structure was complicated by the persistence of other ideological

¹⁷⁷ Corporativism had been defined as a system of interest and /or attitude representation, a particular model or ideal-typical institutional arrangement for linking associationally organized interests of civil society with decisional structures of the state. See Philippe C. Schmitter, "Still the century of corporatism?", in The Review of Politics, No. 36, 1974.

traditions that wanted to organize political participation and social interaction along other lines. ¹⁷⁸ Furthermore, the parallel but weaker influence of nineteenth century liberalism and democratic thought underlied the military's problems in imposing a corporative structure on previously mobilized political actors, such as labour unions and political parties, who had enjoyed a tradition of citizen influence in the national decision-making process. ¹⁷⁹

Central to the military elite's ability to address itself to the basic questions of political institution-building, was the concept of "political space"; the sphere of action in which the regime could freely implement its own policies. ¹⁸⁰ Where the levels of social mobilization are high, the extent to which military reformers can substantially redefine the rules is significantly limited by the opposition of established procedures and patterns of interaction. Conversely, where levels of social mobilization are relatively low, the regime's freedom to

¹⁷⁸ See Gabriel A. Almond, and Sidney Verba, The civic culture, (Boston, Little Brown, 1965).

¹⁷⁹ See Douglas E. Ashford, National development and local reform, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1967).

¹⁸⁰ See David S. Palmer, Revolution from above: Military government and popular participation in Peru 1968-1972, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1973).

shape its social and political policies is much greater.

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In the Peruvian case these components combined to grant the armed forces considerable initial leeway as social reformers and political organizers. Firstly, Peru's overall level of social mobilization was among the lowest in Latin America.¹⁸² While social division constitutes an obstacle to national development, the gradual erosion of social and cultural barriers slowed and filtered the demands made upon the military regime.¹⁸³ Furthermore, a non-assertive middle class tied to service industries which had circumscribed national political participation, and an urban migration pattern characterized by the strong maintenance of rural and provincial ties, were both factors which eased the pressures of social mobilization.¹⁸⁴

In the 1950's, new moderately reformist political parties, largely based on middle-class support (eg. Popular Action and the Christian Democrats), started challenging the

¹⁸¹ See Samuel P. Huntington, Political order in changing societies, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1968).

¹⁸² See Karl W. Deutsch, op. cit.

¹⁸³ See William B. Margin, "Sociological, cultural, and political characteristics of some urban migrant to cities in Peru", in Edward Bruner, and Aiden Southall, Urban anthropology: Cross-cultural studies of urbanization, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1973).

¹⁸⁴ See David Chaplin, Peruvian nationalism: A corporativist revolution?, (New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1974).

political domination of the formerly dominant conservative forces. This led to a virtual stalemate among the participants in the political arena, to governmental inefficiency and an inability to respond to pressures from the increasingly mobile lower social groups.¹⁸⁵ This mobilization occurred both in the urban and in the rural sector. There was a considerable proliferation of peasant unions, and land invasions took place on a rather large scale in some areas.¹⁸⁶ Unions were strong in the sugar plantations, where 85 per cent of the land was cultivated by unionized workers.¹⁸⁷

In the 1960's, the control of the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA) trade union confederation of Peruvian Workers (CTP), which had dominated the labour movement since the 1940's, was eroding and new, more Leftist tendencies were gaining influence. Already in the years of the economic crisis, 1958-1959, a Committee of Union Reorganization was formed under the leadership of bank employees, metal workers, and construction workers. This committee tried to gain control over the central CTP

¹⁸⁵ See Francois Bourricaud, Power and society in contemporary Peru, (New York, Praeger, 1970).

¹⁸⁶ See Susan C. Bourque, and David S. Palmer, "Transforming the rural sector: Government policy and peasant response", in Abraham F. Lowenthal, The Peruvian experiment, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1975).

¹⁸⁷ See Mar J. Matos; Julio Cotler; Jorge B. Bravo; Augusto B. Salazar, and Felipe Portocarrero, El Perú actual: Sociedad y política, (México, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1970).

leadership, but was destroyed through the suppression of its leaders after the banking and metalworkers' strike in 1964.

However, in 1966 a new Committee was formed, which founded a new central union organization under the leadership of the Communist Party; the General Workers' Confederation of Peru (CGTP).¹⁸⁸ When the CGTP was officially recognized by the military government in January 1971, it counted 267 affiliated base unions in manufacturing industry out of a total of 870 officially recognized unions in that sector.

Peru in 1968 was in the low to intermediate stages of modernization, industrialization, and political mobilization.¹⁸⁹ Oligarchic domination had been eroding, as economic power had shifted from the land-holding oligarchy toward mining, fishing, and manufacturing sectors. The coastal export-orientated sugar plantation owners were, economically the most powerful group among the old oligarchy, who as a whole managed to retain an amount of political power incommensurate with their economic importance. This was due to the over-representation of rural departments in the Peruvian Congress, the political importance of Congress, and the oligarchy's continuing

¹⁸⁸ See Denis Sulmont, El movimiento obrero en el Perú 1900-1956, (Lima, Pontificia Universidad Católica, 1975).

¹⁸⁹ See David S. Palmer, Revolution from above: Military government and popular participation in Peru 1968-1972, op. cit.

influence over mass media. A large proportion of the resources in the new important economic sectors was under foreign control and thus not concentrated in the hands of a new dominant social group capable of establishing a leading position in civil society and of assuming control over the state apparatus.

A further factor contributing to the social mobilization of lower social groups, and consequently to a potential for political mobilization, was rural-urban migration, which led the percentage of Lima's squatter population to grow from 20.2 per cent in 1961 to 27.2 per cent in 1972.¹⁹⁰ With the traditional order disintegrating because of pressures from increasing mobilization at the bottom and stalemate at the top, the military's role as guardians of the constitutional order became an increasingly controversial issue for the military leadership.¹⁹¹ In particular, the suppression of the guerrilla movement in 1965-1966, when the military crushed the guerrillas in the Sierra, in a short but very cruel campaign, made a lasting impression on the military. This campaign pointed to the potential threat of a mass-based socialist revolution,

¹⁹⁰ See David Collier, "Squatter settlements and policy innovation in Peru", In Abraham F. Lowenthal, The Peruvian experiment, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1975).

¹⁹¹ See Luigi Einaudi, "The military and government in Peru", in Clarence E. Thurber; Lawrence S. Graham, and Edgardo Boeninger, Development administration in Latin America, (Durham, Duke University Press, 1973); Victor Villanueva, 100 años del ejército Peruano: Frustraciones y cambios, (Lima, Juan Mejía Baca, 1972).

among whose prime victims, of course, would be the traditional military apparatus.

The most salient characteristic of the Revolutionary Military Government (RMG) was its lack of ideological clarity. According to this government's description of itself, they were following a "non-communist", non-capitalist, humanist-socialist third way to economic development and social justice. Thus, the government was criticized by the Left for simply modernizing a dependent capitalist economic system ¹⁹² and then creating a control-orientated corporate political system. ¹⁹³ They were also censured by the Right for creating a climate of uncertainty around the future of private ownership of the means of production, and therefore stifling private entrepreneurial initiative.

Clearly this lack of ideological consensus was a major weakness in the Peruvian revolution, as it deprived the leadership of a clear sense of direction for political action and of a moral basis for legitimizing this action. The essential element of an ideology is a shared image of

¹⁹² See Anibal Quijano, "Nationalism and capitalism in Peru: A study in Neo-imperialism", in Monthly Review, Volume 23, No. 3, 1971.

¹⁹³ See Julio Cotler, "Bases del corporativismo en el Perú", en Sociedad y Política, No. 2, 1972.

a desirable future socio-economic order.¹⁹⁴ The Peruvian military government had by no means arrived at such a coherent view of the revolutionary process, and policy-making developed as a sequence of actions and reactions rather than as a pursuit of a clear-cut strategy. Thus, the Peruvian process cannot be analyzed as an attempt to implement a grand vision of a new socio-economic order and a corresponding politico-economic system, but rather as a process of structural change brought about by diverging tendencies within a state elite whose primary unifying goal was the creation of a stable socio-political order, that is, the achievement of an integrated security.

Recently in Peru, as in most Latin American countries, the Left has almost unanimously replaced the themes of class struggle, revolution, and socialism with that of democracy, with all its virtues, problems, and possibilities. This transition must be understood fundamentally as the result of the ideological depletion which reforms carried out by the military government produced in most of the Marxist Left, in particular that which today makes up the legal Left, the Izquierda Unida (IU). To this must be added the disenchantment with existing socialism.

As in the countries of the Southern Cone, this theoretical and political turn towards democracy took place after a

¹⁹⁴ See Ulf Himmelstrand, "Des-politicization and political involvement", in Erik Allardt and Stein Rokkan, Mass politics, (New York, The Free Press, 1970).

military dictatorship. In those countries the army overthrew governments that were trying to carry out a second cycle of transformations, usually of a populist or socialist character. Thus, the military sought to found a new order imposing a new norm by means suggested by the logic of war: the annihilation of the adversary and the abolition of differences.¹⁹⁵ There the revolutionary and socialist forces suffered a historic defeat that marked the end of an era.

The military government of General Juan Velásco Alvarado marked the beginning of a different process. Once they had overthrown Fernando Belaúnde, invoking nationalist justification, the military set in motion a series of structural reforms which marked, in a decisive way, a large part of the social order. Peruvian agrarian reforms, considered to be the most radical in the Americas except for those of Cuba, eliminated the archaic landowners of the sierra and, above all, the big agrarian capitalists of the north coast; in their place associated enterprises were forcibly created and controlled by the state.

The state took control of petroleum, paper, cement, and important parts of copper and banking. They also took change of the commercialization of food and supplies, and

¹⁹⁵ See Norbert Lechner, "De la revolución a la democracia: El debate intelectual en América del Sur", en Norbert Lechner, Los patios interiores de la democracia, (Santiago de Chile, FLASCO, 1988).

became the main economic agent. With these resources it tried to plan the entire economy and to renegotiate relations with the capitalist world. There were strong clashes with the US government, while at the same time commercial, diplomatic, and military relations were established with countries in the socialist orbit.

All of this was carried out in the midst of an intense campaign that called for the elimination of exploitation, and that laid claim to complete ideological originality, a revolution that was neither capitalist nor communist. Furthermore, a nation-wide attempt to get society to think ideologically then took place by means of educational reform and increased governmental control of the mass media, the stated purpose of which was to transfer the media to the control of the new workers' organization which the state was setting up in the course of its reforms. With the exception of the Peruvian Communist Party (PCP), the Marxist Left criticized and combated this government, and these reforms, mostly in ideological terms.

Therefore, the military government deployed the ideas of the Peruvian Left, and since both acted in the framework of the same paradigm, the development of the country followed the model of industrial societies and their productive forces. The difference was that the Marxists used another language, adding the role of the proletariat and the peasantry, even though they equated socialism with state

control of the economy. Yet their affinity with the military government was shown, not only by their efforts to distinguish themselves from it, but by the fact that when the reforms began to slow down or to be dismantled, the Left could not but defend them, following and channelling popular protests. In other words, they were not able to present themselves as an alternative for which to struggle.

However, the Peruvian Left has always viewed the revolution from the extremes of the international socialist movement. The most important cases of this fanaticism were the Peruvian Communist Party, linked to the ex-Soviet Union, and diverse Peking parties that split from the PCP in the sixties. The so-called "New Left" of the seventies had a fundamentally Leninist orientation, although gradually Maoism gained wide acceptance. But after Mao's death came the Chinese crisis, the war between the US and Vietnam, Cambodia, and Solidarity. ¹⁹⁶ In Latin America one could witness the crushing of diverse Left groups that were both geographical, closely related, and politically, closely related, but acted as enemies and fought between themselves for ideological reasons.

Almost at the same time (1979-1980), a debate took place on the question of a "National Left", that is, on the

¹⁹⁶ See José Arico, "El Marxismo en América Latina: Ideas para abordar de otro modo una vieja cuestión", en Fernando Calderón, Socialismo, Autoritarismo y Democracia, (Lima/Buenos Aires, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos/CLASCO, 1989).

dialectics between the autonomous Peruvian Left and the Peruvian revolution's links with the world revolutionary socialist experience. The figure of José Carlos Mariátegui was invoked to uphold both positions. Maoism, on the other hand, pointed clearly towards autonomy because of its emphasis on the peasantry, the nation, and on culture, themes that in those years began to be intensely studied and discussed in Peru.

To summarize, then, it was the absence of a programme for the transformation of Peruvian society, once the military's reform programme had been accomplished, that resulted in the masses becoming less radical, that led to a great deal being expected of the newly opened channels of political democracy, and that allowed these factors to combine with a general disenchantment with various Socialist experiences. This combination ultimately led to the Left accepting democracy. Such an acceptance was by no means the only road allowed by savage suppression, as in the Southern Cone, nor was it the result of a theoretical development that freed it of sterilizing dogmas and led to the achievement of new political movements.

The Guerrilla.

Sendero Luminoso (SL) did not develop in the country's major university in the capital city and spread outward, but rather in a small, newly re-founded provincial

university in a small, isolated, historic but impoverished department capital. Its organization and growth occurred not during economic crisis and government retrenchment, but during an extended period of economic growth and government expansion (1963-1975), saw improvements in public education and rural development initiatives.¹⁹⁷ It began its public operation in the same year in which Peruvians got their first elected government since 1963.

According to Carlos Iván Degregori,¹⁹⁸ historically speaking, Ayacucho is the epicentre of the Huarpa culture, the Wari empire, and the Inca administrative centre: its Indian name is Vilcashuaman. Through the Colonial period, it held the diocese mission and formed the nucleus of the Intendancy of Huamanga. Finally, it was the seat of the second university established by the Virreinato (1677). In the twentieth century, three phenomena have marked the region: Ayacucho ceased to be a centre of power, it became impoverished and lost its peripheral inhabitants, and finally became subordinate to other departments.

In pre-Colonial times, the vanquished groups were transported to other areas by the Incas, and the Ayacucho

¹⁹⁷ According to the United Nations figures on access to education in Latin America, Peru moved from fourteenth place in 1960 to fourth place in 1980. See ECLA (Economic Commission on Latin America), Statistical yearbook for Latin America: 1984, (New York, United Nations, 1985).

¹⁹⁸ See Carlos I. Degregori, Sendero Luminoso: 1- Los hondos y mortales desencuentros; 2- Lucha armada y utopía autoritaria, (Lima, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1989).

region was then re-populated by ethnic groups from other parts of the empire. This produced a traumatic cultural dislocation that has yet to be resolved. It is also the origin of continuing conflicts between various different communities. ¹⁹⁹ To defend their cultural identity and their new territory, the various ethnic groups organized themselves into communities, and closed themselves off from the wider society. Since independence (1824), communities have continued to fight over the boundaries of their communal land. These cannot be cultivated but the thin pasture grasses can be used for grazing. Thus, the economic value of the land was not the issue; it was the defense of their cultural identities that caused the communities to continually re-open hostilities.

These conflicts contributed over time to the development of a strong communal organization within each community, because most peasants of the region saw the neighbouring communities, rather than regional or national power elites, as their primary enemy. On the other hand, the low fertility of the land made the area unattractive to colonial landlords, so no significant agrarian oligarchy ever developed in Ayacucho either.

Furthermore, most of Ayacucho's urban population work in the service sector, in trade and small cottage industries.

¹⁹⁹ See Carlos I. Degregori, "Ayacucho: La guerra ha comenzado", en El Diario, January 13, 1983.

There is no urban industrial proletariat, and the few unions are confined to civil servants in the ministries, municipal service workers, university lecturers, and bank employees.

Therefore, Ayacucho's poverty provided the perfect conditions for the growth of the Shining Path; it is one of the three poorest departments of Peru. But poverty is not the only factor involved. Another is the long standing conflict, at grassroot level, among the hundreds of Indian communities that dominate the area, each with a distinctive background, heritage and origin. Most are the product of the defeat of the Chanka Confederation, which had joined together the early Wanka, Pokra, and Chanka residents of Ayacucho, all victims of the expanding Inca empire in the early 1400's.²⁰⁰

Ethnic variation can be observed in a wide variety of situations. There are only a few settings, such as sports, music, and dance, in which ethnic groups understand each other and communicate. Lack of communication based on race is translated into the educational system, the workplace, and social settings, and it has greatly affected social and economical mobility. Caucasians are concentrated in the wealthier part of Lima, and in some provincial capitals. Mestizos are concentrated in lower-class and slum areas,

²⁰⁰ See Carlos I. Degregori, Raíces de una crisis, (Ayacucho, Instituto de Estudios Regionales José María Arguedas, 1986).

and Indians in the rural Andes and the Amazon. Therefore, because of racial separation by residence and occupation, the groups are only marginally involved with each other and do not have a sense of belonging to the same nation.

Thus, when Sendero Luminoso became active in the overwhelmingly Indian Andean communities of rural Ayacucho, the mestizo and Caucasian inhabitants of the cities took little interest; they saw the conflict in terms of Indians confronting other Indians. On the other hand, the Indian communities of the district supported Sendero for the first two years because SL's short-term goals corresponded to their own. Firstly, they were looking to get rid of enemies, in most cases the mistis who seemed to be gaining power. Secondly, they were trying to set up better schools. Finally they agreed to comply with the SL's demands that communities govern without corruption. ²⁰¹

However, the end of this brief period of support came when Sendero led the peasantry to defeat against the Armed Forces, massacre, random disappearances, and a return of semi-feudal practices, such as in 1983 and 1984, when peasants were required to supply meat, fire wood, eggs, chickens, and even a valet service to Sendero personnel.

²⁰¹ See Carlos I. Degregori, Ayacucho 1969-1979: El surgimiento de Sendero Luminoso, (Lima, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1990).

²⁰² Finally, the SL leaders became the new mistis, the new mestizos and lords. The Shining Path had simply placed itself at the top of the existing the power structure, while the peasant masses, whom it considered in need of leadership remained at the bottom.

Moreover, the founders of Sendero form part of a long tradition of provincial elites who rose up against a system that concentrates everything in the capital, and who embraced "indigenismo", that is, the glorification of Indian customs and traditions, as a reaction against the "hispanismo" of the Lima upper classes. Since the mid-century, such elites, have adopted Marxism in many parts of the country, most often combining it with a re-evaluation of their links with the Indian tradition. ²⁰³

The 1960's marked the end of the Castroist guerrilla groups such as Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR), a group that split away from the APRA and that was led by Luis de la Puente Uceda until his death in 1965, then by Ricardo Gardea. Another such group was the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), led by Juan Pablo Chang Navarro. On the other hand, the differences between China and the Soviet Union in 1963, had repercussions in the PCP, which

²⁰² see Anonimo, "Ideologia", en Revista de Ciencias Sociales, No. 10, 1987.

²⁰³ See Carlos I. Degregori, and et. al., Tiempos de ira y amor: Nuevos actores para viejos problemas, (Lima, Desco, 1990).

divided into "moscovitas" and "pekineses". The crisis centred on the question of translating the Chinese experience to the Peruvian situation.

... On this occasion, however, the guerrillas survived less than six months, and were crushingly defeated by December, 1965. Among other causes, the reasons for this lack of success lay in their poor preparation, bad organization, the "Costeño" composition of many members of the guerrilla columns (resulting in a superficial knowledge of sierra conditions) and a misreading of the national political situation.

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Maoist tendencies within the PCP accused the party leadership (Saturnino Paredes) of abandoning a revolutionary strategy in favour of Moscow's new policy of a "peaceful transition to socialism". As a result, a new split into pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese arose in 1964. Named after their newspapers, the parties became known respectively as the Peruvian Communist Party Unity (PCP-U/Unidad), and the Peruvian Communist Party Red Flag (PCP-BR/Bandera Roja).

... This group left to form a new organization the PCP -Bandera Roja - taking with them the majority of the PCP's youth organizations and several regional committees. The pro-Moscow members included a majority of the national leadership and these retained control over the Party's apparatus, as well as the external finance coming from Russia. ²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ Lewis Taylor, Maoism in the Andes: Sendero Luminoso and the contemporary guerrilla movement in Peru, (Liverpool, Centre for Latin American Studies, 1983), p. 1.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

Bandera Roja took shape around a Maoist inspired analysis of the semi-feudal and semi-colonial nature of Peruvian society, and championed a protracted "people's war" which would move from the countryside to the city. This organization, however, did not hold together for long. Accusations began to fly, and it was claimed that the Central Committee was not making any effort to construct the military apparatus needed to wage revolutionary warfare in Peru. Three years later, as a result of the disputes, the party became split. The Bureau of Communist Youth led a splinter group to form the Peruvian Communist Party-Red Nation (PCP-PR/Patria Roja). The outcome was that in 1970 Abimael Guzmán left Bandera Roja to form the PCP-Sendero Luminoso.

At this stage, Sendero Luminoso was concentrating its organizational efforts on the student movement, founding the revolutionary Front for the "Shining Path of Mariátegui". Furthermore, the Communist Party once again called itself the vanguard of the proletariat, capable of leading it to the seizure of state power. Using the political space offered by the government of Morales Bermúdez (1975-1980), the revolutionary left was able to significantly increase its influence among the peasantry and among landless labourers, developing the Confederación Campesina del Perú (CCP).

However, Sendero Luminoso refused to participate in the 1978 Constituent Assembly elections, going against all other established Marxist parties. The PCP emerged as the country's third major political force, behind Acción Popular and APRA. ²⁰⁶ Also, it announced its split with Deng Xiaoping and the rest of the Chinese leadership, declaring its support for the "Gang of Four". Therefore, May 17 1980 saw the re-establishment of revolutionary insurgency by the PCP-Sendero Luminoso; an insurgency based on the same Marxist-Leninist thesis that fifteen years earlier had reinforced the guerrilla actions of the MIR and EPL.

The Left's participation in electoral politics was significant for Peru for several reasons. Firstly, the Left Unity coalition (IU) has provided significant representation for large sectors of the population, with its local and regional strength reflected in the leadership of key population organizations and large numbers of elected officials. Secondly, parties of the Left have been outspoken defenders of civil and political liberties. Finally, the legal Left has been a significant bulwark in the struggle against the Shining Path; where Left wing organizations are strong, Sendero has made few inroads. For

²⁰⁶ The national vote for the Left wing between 1978-1981 was between 14 and 30%. See Fernando Tuesta, Perú político en cifras: Elite política y elecciones, (Lima, Fundación Elbert, 1987).

these reasons, the SL has made the legal Left a target in its guerrilla war.

By appearing to understand Peru's massive underclass situation, and by promising that this situation can be altered by military action, Sendero had been able to establish support bases in Ayacucho, Apurímac, and Huancavelica. Once built, these support bases have served as launch sites for guerrilla warfare. This stage of the insurrection was employed three strategies: sabotage, terrorism, and guerrilla warfare. Through the collective application of these three mediums, the movement had weakened the State.

Sabotage involved the destruction of property, either public or private, and resulted in a decline in economic production. Sendero's principal target for sabotage was the economic infrastructure, such as roads, rail links, and electricity lines. Insurrection concentrated on sabotage for both economic and psychological reasons: it forced the government to repair or replace pipelines, bridges, roads, electrical equipment, etc., and exhausted funds set aside for relief, social programmes, and regional investment.

Terrorism threatened and caused death among innocent non-combatants for the purpose of achieving political goals. Sendero's reliance on terrorism served two purposes. On the one hand, the movement claimed it was exercising justice by

destroying the "enemy of the people", that is, the bourgeois elite (merchants, landowners, high government officials, and others who cooperate with these people). On the other hand, terrorism put a psychological stress on the populace. Living under the constant threat of violence demoralized the citizenry, and even further undermined their trust in the government. ²⁰⁷

Hence, the new party was established with the belief that the conditions necessary for radical revolution were already present, and the potential only needed to be unleashed. In the first phase of its development (1970-1979), the SL achieved the construction of a party apparatus through a popular training centre and through university student organizations, all of which concentrated on the study and diffusion of Mariátegui's thought. In its second phase, (1977-1980) the SL concentrated its efforts on the new task of reconstructing the party. This aimed at the creation of a political and military apparatus that would be capable of carrying out armed struggle.

The internal debate within the SL was concerned with defining the armed strategy that would be followed. One group, led by Abimael Guzmán, proposed a prolonged rural guerrilla war that would originate in the countryside, but eventually encircle the towns and force their collapse. A

²⁰⁷ See Manuel J. Granados, El PCP-Sendero Luminoso y su ideología, (Lima, EAPSA, 1992).

second group, supported by Luis Kawata and other members of the Central Committee, was far giving equal weight to armed actions in towns and the countryside. This group took the Albanian Line as its model. ²⁰⁸

In the early 1980's, Sendero absorbed a number of small groups, or factions, such as: the Victoria Navarro Local Committee of the previously active MIR, a Castroist rural group founded in 1962 and based in Chosica (north of Lima); the Núcleos Marxistas-Leninistas, which split from Bandera Roja in 1975, and was based in Chimbote; the Puka Llacta (Quechua for Red Land), which operated originally in Cerro de Pasco, La Oroya (Junín); the Mantaro, which had emerged in 1979, after a split in the Trotskyist Patria Roja, and was operating in the Azángaro and Ayaviri provinces of Puno; and Julio Mezzich's VRPC, based in Ongoy in the Andahuaylas Province of Apurímac. After 1979 the VRPC adopted the Quechua name Huaccaycholo, and the Vanguardia Revolucionaria Político-Militar (VRPM), a Marxist-Leninist group based in Lima.

At the time of Guzmán's arrival in Ayacucho, the university was known as a communist centre, although the only organization there was the Revolutionary Student Front (FER), in which Communist, Socialist, and Christian Democrats worked together, and were more concerned with

²⁰⁸ See Cynthia McClintock, Peru Sendero Luminoso: Rebellion, origins and trajectory, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1989).

consolidating democracy than fomenting revolution. Sendero Luminoso's emergence and consolidation as a political force was the result of a decade of effort devoted to forging a military organization to engage in a permanent people's war. The first step in this process was to establish absolute discipline within the party by purifying the party line (PCP-SL). The second step was to establish the organizational basis for the war; the "organismos generados" (1973).²⁰⁹

The SL rejected the idea of giving the masses the leading role in the revolution and decided instead to give it to the party. It was directed by the National Central Committee composed of Guzmán and a few lieutenants. The Committee's responsibilities included setting the ideology, strategy, and policy for the entire organization. The organization consisted of six regional committees beneath the National Central Committee: the Northern, Central, Southern, Primary, Eastern, and the Metropolitan. Each of these regional committees covered various departments and their subdivisions. The only exception was the Metropolitan committee, comprised solely of Lima and Callao. As Lima's population approached seven million, the Metropolitan

²⁰⁹ The Organismos Generados were defined by the Party as "natural movements generated by the proletariat in the different organizational fronts". They included the Popular Women's Movement (MFP), the Class Workers' and Labourers' Movements (MOTC), the Poor Peasants' Movement (MCP), the Popular Intellectual Movement (MIP), and the Neighbourhood Class Movement (MCB) set up in Peru's urban shanty towns with the idea of building bases of support and a pool of young recruits.

committee was of special importance. As a result, the insurgency's emphasis was, after 1989, on urban strategy; the Metropolitan region had become the focus of the movement's political and terrorist activities. ²¹⁰

Sendero was assisted in Lima by a wide array of local support organizations. These groups were organized to recruit city residents from all walks of life. The most significant grassroots support movement was the group called "Popular Aid of Peru", which first came to the attention of the police in 1987. Under this umbrella organization a number of small support groups operated that provided multiple types of assistance and service to the insurgency and those associated with it. Founded in 1982, Popular Aid furnished medical, legal, and other professional advice to the movement and assisted with fund-raising, transportation, food, and housing.

The Shining Path had unquestionably been strengthened by the recruitment of female members. Since the movement started women have played an important role, quite different from their historical role in Peru. Although many women do pursue higher education, society largely relegates them to more traditional, secondary, passive roles. Most are restricted to keeping house, caring for men, and

²¹⁰ See Roggerr, U. Mercado, El Partido Comunista del Perú: Sendero Luminoso, (Lima, La Mano Izquierda, 1987).

raising children. ²¹¹ Therefore, for women, Sendero offered an escape by promising to treat males and females equally. In addition, the Shining path emphasized women's liberation within its own ranks, that is, to say that women were encouraged to hold such key positions as the secretariat of the Metropolitan regional committee. Female militants they were often assigned the most ruthless of all terrorist assignments.

The SL adopted Maoism as the principal of its proletariat ideology as its third stage for the Shining Path. Abimael Guzmán's application of a mixture of Marxism, Leninism, and Maoism to the situation in Peru was based on the works of José Carlos Mariátegui (Ideology and politics) and, most particularly, on the sections on the Indians and on land problems in his "Seven essays on interpreting the Peruvian situation" (1928). The other major influence has been the writing of the agronomist and Sendero member Emilio Antonio Díaz Martínez (China: The agrarian revolution). His "Ayacucho: Hunger and expectation" (1969) contains much of what was to become Sendero's rural policy.

The Senderista version of Maoism is combined with the Left-wing "indigenismo" of José Carlos Mariátegui, founder of the Peruvian Communist Party and author of a major critique of Peruvian

²¹¹ See Deborah Poole, and Gerardo Renique, Peru time of fear, (London, Latin American Bureau, 1992).

Sendero's decision to pursue armed struggle was not only the product of a strategic and tactical evaluation. It also involved an ideological motivation. Sendero launched its adventure at a crucial moment in the history of both the Peruvian Left and the International Communist Movement. On the national level, it was a time of great social activism. 1977 and 1978, for example, were years of general strikes, when the Left became a mass political force for the first time in Peru's history. Sendero decided not to participate in these strikes. On the international level, Mao Zedong had died in 1976, the "Gang of Four" headed by his widow had been defeated, and the cultural revolution had come to an end.

Guzmán defined Peru as a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country in the death throes of "bureaucratic capitalism". He argued that sixty per cent of the population were peasants who through having too little land of their own were forced into servitude.

... In common with other Peruvian Maoist groups from Bandera Roja to the present, Sendero sees Peru as a semi-feudal and neo-colonial society, claiming that the Peruvian state is bureaucratic and landlord, dominated by a dictatorship of feudal landowners and the big bourgeoisie under

²¹² Roland H. Berg, Explaining Sendero Luminoso, (Cambridge, LASPAU, 1988), p. 4.

the control of imperialism. ²¹³

According to Lewis Taylor, this perception is hopelessly mistaken, because feudal landlords do not play a role in today's Peru, while large scale landlordism as an economic and political force was decimated by the military government's agrarian reforms between 1969 and 1976. Seeing the peasantry as the most exploited group in Peruvian society, SL logically assumed the peasantry would be the vanguard of the revolution, and the idea dovetails with Maoist ideology. ²¹⁴

However, for Carlos Degregori, Ayacucho, indeed Peru in general, has too much semi-feudalism. If the landlords do not exist today, caciquismo, coercion, and abusive activities persist. Therefore, the elite that formed the SL as an answer to a mercantile crisis seeing education as the only means of progress. It is quite understandable that the elite established the University of Huamanga, and that the most important civic movement has battled for the right to be educated. ²¹⁵

²¹³ Partido Comunista del Perú, "Desarrollemos la guerra de guerrillas", en Partido Comunista del Perú, Desarrollemos la guerra de guerrillas/No votar sino, generalizar la guerra de guerrillas para conquistar el poder para el pueblo, (Berkeley, Comité de Apoyo a la Revolución en Perú, 1988), p. 14.

²¹⁴ See Lewis Taylor, op. cit.

²¹⁵ See Carlos I. Degregori, "Return to the past", in David S. Palmer, Shining Path of Peru, (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1992).

Andean "messianism" was another factor in Sendero's political ideology. Everything that came from outside was a remainder of "dependency", and was something to be broken or destroyed. Furthermore, by "bureaucratic capitalism", Guzmán refers to capitalism as he perceives it: inflicted on under-developed countries by imperialist ones. In alliance with land owners, bankers, and the upper echelons of the bourgeoisie, the imperialists have, he maintains, imposed on Peru a bureaucratic capitalism that exploits the proletariat, the peasants, and the small bourgeoisie, while cramping the movement of the middle bourgeoisie.

Hence, Sendero Luminoso envisages three revolutionary phases: democracy, socialism and communism. The three objectives of the democratic stage are to wipe out imperialist domination, to destroy bureaucratic capitalism by confiscating monopolistic private and state capital, and to overthrow the big land owners and agricultural cooperatives in order to redistribute land.

The democratic revolution was to be developed by means of the "people's war", fought by the popular army of the proletariat. Thus, the SL affirms, the proletariat fights at three levels. Firstly, on a theoretical level, referring to Marxism, Leninism, and Maoism ideologies of world revolution, and applying Marxist, Leninism, Maoist and "Gonzalist thought" to the Peruvian situation. Secondly, in the political arena, committing itself to establishing a

communist presidency. Thirdly, in the economic status that applies to generate and foment demonstrations, union strikes into the masses.

... We think that the democratic revolution must confront three mountains: imperialism, mainly Yankee imperialism, bureaucrat capitalism, and semi-feudalism. ²¹⁶

The establishment targets that Sendero Luminoso attacked fell into two distinct categories. Firstly, anything that represented domestic power and privilege, such as the presidential palace, government ministries, police stations, Jorge Chávez international airport, newspaper offices, fashionable shops, local banks, and political party offices. Secondly, symbols of foreign imperialism, which frequently included ex-Communist country embassies as well as Western embassies and interests. Sendero attacked the University of Huamanga's experimental agricultural farm, for example, because it was partly financed by Dutch technical assistance.

Guerrilla warfare was at the centre of the SL's armed action. Other forms served to aid it and push it forward. Thus, the military line is the axiom that drives the SL's "people's war". It consists of three elements. Firstly, the popular war itself, which in Peruvian circumstances, develops in the countryside. Secondly, the assembling of

²¹⁶ El Diario (Newspaper), Interview with chairman Gonzalo, (Berkeley, Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru, 1991), p. 73.

revolutionary forces, which in Peru's case means the popular army. Thirdly, a strategy. In the case of SL, this is the application of encirclement and extinction campaigns. ²¹⁷

Guzmán and his movement refer to the proposed system as the "República Popular de la Nueva Democracia". In essence, the Popular Republic is a Communist state based on the revolutionary theory of Mao and the indigenous institutions that Mariátegui had visualized. In theory, the New Democracy would serve as a transitional system for interim period, during which the colonialism and feudalism that had existed in Peru could be wiped out. ²¹⁸

Mao's New Democracy combined three elements: new democratic politics, new democratic economics, and new democratic culture. In this way, Mao affirmed, the New Democracy would introduce authentic equality among the populace and clear the way for the advent of communism. Guzmán approached the Peruvian situation differently. Although he clearly based his "New Democratic Republic" on Mao's conception, he also differed radically from it, by not planning for a moderate interim stage between the fall of the existing state and the advent of communism.

²¹⁷ See David S. Palmer, Shining Path of Peru, (London, C. Hurst, 1992).

²¹⁸ See Partido Comunista del Perú, Sobre el Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoísmo, (n.c., Bandera Roja, 1988).

Guzmán refused to recognize the importance of a capitalist period of growth to developing the country. Mao considered this essential. Instead, Guzmán planned for Peru a direct step into a Communist society. Therefore, the primary difference between the two systems is economic. Mao's New Democracy entails nationalizing the largest capitalist enterprises, Guzmán anticipated the nationalization of all means of production.

The Guzmán's strategy consisted of throwing Peru into a political and military struggle by creating a popular war. Its primary offensive weapon was the popular guerrilla army, whose members were to be drawn from the rural and urban underclasses, but always best under the direction of the Communist Party.²¹⁹ Popular war looks to "destabilize the standing socio-economic order" through a variety of strategies, both psychological and military. To accomplish this, Sendero designed a program that was intended to raise class consciousness, especially that of peasants and workers.

Thus, Guerrilla warfare allows the insurgents to terrorize some sectors of the population into complicity, punish others that support the government, and protect areas already sustained by the movement. It develops in three stages. Firstly, the initiation of the guerrilla war;

²¹⁹ See The Communist Party of Peru, Develop the people's war to serve the world revolution, (Berkeley, The Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru, 1988).

secondly, the securing and expanding of support bases, and thirdly, the development of further support bases; These steps are not chronologically separate, as they blend together and mesh with political programs to advance the movement's objectives.

The initiation of the guerrilla war depended upon political success in a target area. Its main objective was to buttress a popular education initiative with military action. Aside from destabilizing the incumbent power of the region, the guerrilla actions reinforced the teaching of the popular schools, translating classroom rhetoric into regional reality.

Support bases were secured and expanded in those regions where early Sendero initiatives were well received. They were soon pushed towards becoming full support bases. This phase involved consolidating the existence of bases and using them to spread SL control throughout the remainder of the nation, though the SL had not yet won overall control of any part of Peru.

Following Mao's strategy, the "Final Stage" of the armed struggle, calls for a united rural population to rise up and encircle Peru's cities. As large economic centres fall, the existing State and government structure would topple in

upon itself, and Sendero would be free to construct its own state. ²²⁰

In consequence, Guzmán's new Peru would be a collective system under the joint dictatorship of workers, peasants, and the petit bourgeoisie, all of them directed by the PCP. Sendero utilised apocalyptic Inca myths relating to the overthrow of the world and also those telling of the conquering emperor Pachacuti, who reigned from 1423 to 1471, and under whom the Inca empire reached its zenith. ²²¹ Sendero draws on such traditions and maintains that the Indians should rule Peru once again as the Incas did in the past.

Sendero began rural operations ten years before starting its armed struggle. This preparatory work, and propaganda that accompanied it ensured rural support and recruitment for the movement. The SL was the only Latin America guerrilla group to have a "positive" response from the peasantry. The communities that tend to accept Sendero's directives are those that depend essentially or exclusively on agriculture. Thus, in towns where the population is composed of Indian-farmers, located in the highland of the Andes SL doctrine is not usually received favourably. On

²²⁰ See James Anderson, Sendero Luminoso: A new revolutionary model?, (London, Institute for the Study of Terrorism, 1987).

²²¹ See Alder J. Mason, The ancient civilizations of Peru, (London, Pelican, 1968).

the other hand, communities that are characterized by agricultural occupations, indigenous backgrounds, and that are to be found at low altitudes in the Andean range, are usually sensitive to Sendero's message.

However, Sendero's identification of the State as the enemy and the government as the agent of bourgeoisie, makes it unwelcome in some communities. The State is the provider of schools, where the new generations learn Spanish. It is the constructor of the road that signifies the end of isolation and the access to the city and markets. It does not matter how lethargic the State is in responding to such demands. It continues to be the institution that brings "modernity" to those areas.

For Marx, contradictions are manifested in the struggle between opposing classes in society. In a capitalist society, the principal contradictions are those between wage labour and capital, and between money and the commodity form. The fundamental characteristic of all these contradictions is that they are dialectical, because both terms of each contradiction presuppose the other. As such, social contradictions imply a form of inclusive opposition which must be resolved through human action and struggle. It is this battle which is, according to Marx, the "motor force of history".²²²

²²² See Hal Draper, Karl Marx's theory of revolution: The politic of social classes, Volume III, (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1978).

Guzmán departs from the Marxist-Leninist tradition in assuming that all contradiction is antagonistic. Here he rejects the Marxist principle of the "unity of opposites". He constructs his theory of contradictions on Kant's concept of "real or exclusive opposition". Kant suggested that oppositions are resolved only through the intervention of a "supra-human" agency (the divine).²²³ In the Kantian conception, the two poles of a contradiction remain in essence different from and external to each other, rather than being viewed, as in the Marxist dialectic, as two aspects of one and the same force, which are resolved through human agency. Guzmán concludes that the necessary and only solution to antagonism or contradiction existing between such irreconcilable poles is through the eradication of one of them.

As an inevitable outcome, the PCP-SL's armed struggle is presented as an act of destiny. Building on Kant's theory of "causal necessity",²²⁴ Guzmán sees the party and its armed struggle as a necessary consequence of all past events leading up to this moment. Thus, the SL understands violence as a natural and universal fact which must be elevated into the guiding principle for political action,

²²³ See Denis Savage, "Kant's rejection of Divine revelation and his theory of radical evil", in Philip J. Ross, and Michael Wreen, Kant's philosophy of religion reconsidered, (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1991).

²²⁴ See Allen W. Wood, Kant's rational theology, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1978).

revolutionary praxis, and the organization of a new society. The SL has introduced a double edged sword of terror to the countryside. On the one hand, there is Sendero's terrorism, and on the other the Peruvian Military Forces and their repressive regime. Thus, the rural population is caught in the middle, forced to choose one side of the confrontation, regardless of their desire to remain uninvolved. ²²⁵

Analysis.

One can not deny the fact that Sendero did and does have the support of certain sectors of the Andean peasant community. This is particularly evident in Ayacucho, where Sendero's sympathizers and militants have been greatly expanded by kinship, "compadrazgo" and "paisanaje", as well as by the undeniably authoritarian and violent methods through which Sendero have influenced voting behaviour and gained support. On the other hand, the peasant's perception of Sendero's military and political agenda is conditioned by his or her own experiences and knowledge of the Peruvian state, the national political parties, and the capitalist economy.

²²⁵ See Anita Fokkema, "There is no other way: An interview with Luis Arce Borja (the editor of El Diario)", in NACLA- Report on the Americas, Volume 24, No. 4, 1990-1991.

The nature of support has not only varied between sympathy, passive and active support, but has been dependent on changing circumstances. ²²⁶ Sendero has sometimes received initial support because of its capacity to redress popular local grievances through the execution of thieves, the destruction of cooperatives, the redistribution of property perceived as held illegitimately, the expulsion or punishment of abusive merchants, etc. However, this support could always be withdrawn if Sendero's demands began to transgress locally determined norms, such as "compadrazgo" with popular people, enforced taxes, authoritarian restrictions on local practices, etc. The continuation of support comes to depend more on coercion and the absence of the state. It is clear that Sendero had limited success in winning committed ideological support for its revolutionary programme.

Henri Favre ²²⁷ argues that the most isolated highland peasant communities were less likely to welcome Sendero because the party's cultivation-for-subsistence ethic deprived them of access to local markets and returned them to a resented state of dependence on hostile neighbouring valley villages that were more receptive to Sendero, for market produce. The highlanders were more dependent on, and

²²⁶ See Ronald H. Berg, "Sendero Luminoso and the peasantry of Andahuaylas", in Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs, Volume 28, No. 4, 1986.

²²⁷ See Henri Favre, "Perú: sendero Luminoso y horizontes ocultos", en Cuadernos Americanos, volume 1, No. 4, 1987.

had a favourable image of, the Peruvian state as the provider of education, technology, communications and legal protection. Furthermore, support for Sendero came rather from communities more affected by migration and semi-proletarianisation: a process of "descampesinización" and "desindianización". Degregori echoes Favre's analysis from a different perspective, elucidating the social composition of the Sendero organizational pyramid for the rural context prior to 1983. ²²⁸

Then the leadership nucleus was made up primarily of mestizo intellectuals. The second tier, that of the cadres, was composed initially of university lecturers and students recruited during Sendero's control of the university of Huamanga from 1969 to 1974. However, the majority of cadres were the children of the deceived. ²²⁹ Some came from the urban poor, but principally they came from the middle peasantry, who felt themselves caught between the Andean world of their parents and the urban "criollo" world which despised them, and who were searching for certainty and identity. They found them in the PCP-SL's ideology and in active membership of the party. Finally, the third tier, and the critical link between the party and the rural society, was made up of youths residing in the rural

²²⁸ See Carlos I. Degregori, "Jóvenes y campesinos ante la violencia política: Ayacucho 1980-1983", en Henrique Urbano, Poder y violencia en los Andes, (Lima, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1991).

²²⁹ See Carlos I. Degregori, "Return to the past", in David S. Palmer, Shining Path of Peru, op. cit.

communities themselves, perhaps at secondary school, seeking an escape from rural stagnation through activism in Sendero.

These elements suggest that while Sendero emerged against a generalized rural crisis, and exploited diverse manifestations of that crisis, the core support for the party was a product of the interaction between the urban and the rural spheres, during a period in which Peru shifted from a primarily rural society to an urban one, and in which the barriers between town and countryside were being broken down by better communications, the mass media, and, critically, by education.

On the other hand, the SL, a Marxist/Leninist/Maoist party of a new type, loyal to its principles and programme, has engaged in guerrilla war. Its justification is Mao Xedong's theory that the cadre party is "the conductor of all revolutionary classes and all revolutionary groups".²³⁰ Here David Palmer claims sociologically unique.²³¹ Firstly, it was the first revolutionary movement to seek a total change of system, rather than reforms which might better integrate the periphery (the grievant) into the

²³⁰ See Mao Xedong, "On people's democratic dictatorship", in Mao Xedong, Selected Works, Volume IV, (Peking, Foreign Languages Press, 1969).

²³¹ See David S. Palmer, "The Sendero Luminoso rebellion in rural Peru", in Georges A. Fauriol, Latin American insurgencies, (Washington, Georgetown University and The National Defense University, 1985).

centre. Secondly, it was the first movement to adhere to Communist, and specifically Maoist, principles. Thirdly, its programme invokes millenarian aspirations and primitive indigenous concepts of communism. Finally, it was the first movement to have a leadership that has worked with peasants but has educated itself in preparation for their violent "take-over" of power.

These distinctive characteristics were, according to Palmer, both novel and traditional. They both emerge from, and threaten the natural evolution of, Peruvian history and culture. This evolution is determined by the centrifugal modernization of Peruvian society: as the centre, that is the urban industrial coast, and especially Lima, becomes more modern, the rural peasant periphery reaps the benefits of that modernization. Sendero's Maoist principles threaten to upset that order by inverting the natural order of historical progress: the rural periphery, driven by Sendero's Communist principles, will encircle and eventually engulf the urban centre.

Thus, far from conforming to the classic Maoist barbarian encirclement about which counter-insurgency theorists fantasize, the integrating military and political logic behind Sendero's armed actions is instead determined by the party's strategic assessment of a national level, in which it had to compete against a broad range of well-established

peasant organizations, labour unions and leftist parties for peasant and worker support.

The role of the USA.

Peruvian-US relations were beset by numerous policy differences, particularly during the Alan García administration. Cooperation on programmes designed to reduce the production of, and traffic in, coca and cocaine paste was not only maintained, but also gradually expanded, though total resources were modest on the whole, ranging from about \$ 4 million in 1985 to \$ 10 million in 1990.²³² One basic problem was that coca production was the major, often the sole source of income for almost all of the approximately 300,000 farmers in the Upper Huallaga Valley (UHV).

United States anti-drug legislation has emphasized the eradication of the coca plant and has made its continued funding contingent upon certified proof, required annually, that progress is being made towards this end. However, local eradication teams have faced widespread hostility from growers and in 1989 were forced to suspend operations after a number of their members were killed. Furthermore, a potential synthetic substitute, "Tebuthiuron" or "Spike", which was originally designed to kill the coca plant

²³² See Carol Andreas, and Kenneth E. Sharpe, "Cocaine politics in the Andes", in Current History, Volume 91, No. 562, 1992.

without damaging other crops, provoked both a strong protest against its use from the Peruvian government in 1988, and the decision by its US manufacturer not to sell the product to the US government for use in Peru. ²³³ After 1989, attention shifted to seizures of the coca leaf and the eradication of seed-beds, a shift that in 1991 resulted in a very modest reduction, of 500 hectares, of the total area cultivated (from 121,500 hectares to 120,000 hectares). ²³⁴

An additional factor, and major impediment, complicating Peru's efforts to mount an effective anti-drug campaign, particularly in the Upper Huallaga Valley, has been the significant presence there of two guerrilla forces, the Shining Path, and the Tupa Amarú Revolutionary Movement (MRTA). This presence marks a sharp distinction between Peru and Bolivia, the other major coca-producing country in the Andes, which accounts for about 30 per cent of total production, and is second only to Peru. Both Sendero and the MRTA had been competing, off and on, for control of the Upper Huallaga since 1984, with the Sendero forces gaining a decisive advantage in 1989 and again in 1991. ²³⁵

²³³ See G. Bigler, Author conversation with Information Office (USIS), Lima, US Embassy, February 1990.

²³⁴ See US-DS/BINM (US Department of State - Bureau of International Narcotics Matters), International narcotics control strategy report 1994, (Washington, US Department of State, 1994).

²³⁵ See Jorge I. Gonzales, "Guerrillas and coca in the Upper Huallaga Valley", in David S. Palmer, The Shining Path of Peru, (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1992).

By protecting the coca-growing peasants of the Upper Huallaga Valley from joint efforts of Peruvian and US governments to combat the drug trade, Sendero believed it could gain additional support bases for its proposed "new democracy" in Peru. And by controlling as many of the estimated 120 landing strips in the Huallaga, Sendero was able to collect per flight from the traffickers, mostly Colombians, between \$ 6,000 and \$ 15,000 in return for the protection of their cocaine pick-up operations. Estimates of the annual revenue received by Sendero from its activities in the UHV range all the way from 10 to 100 million dollars. ²³⁶ It is widely believed, though not definitely proven, that this income has been used primarily to fund the organization's domestic operations throughout Peru, from salaries for its militants, to financial support for families of "fallen heroes", to fees for sympathetic lawyers to defend Sendero members in the courts. ²³⁷

On the other hand, rivalry between Peru's army and its police is one reason for the lack of coordination between the two forces in the Upper Huallaga. Each is dependent upon a different government ministry. The police force is under the Minister of the Interior, while the army is the responsibility of the Minister of Defence, and each has a

²³⁶ See US-GAO (US General Accounting Office), The drug war: US programmes in Peru face serious obstacles, (Washington, Report to Congress, 1991).

²³⁷ See Caretas, "Abimael y las drogas", en Caretas, No. 1218, 1992.

different mission: law enforcement in the case of the police; counter-insurgency in the case of the army. Furthermore, because police forces in the Upper Huallaga Valley were part of the joint US-Peruvian anti-drug effort, they received supplementary funding as well as special training by US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) personnel.

Therefore, US funds contributed to the construction, in 1989, of a new anti-drug operations base in the UHV, at Santa Lucía, complete with equipment including loaned helicopters and pilots. However, US anti-drug legislation does not permit the funding of counter-insurgency operations carried out by the Peruvian army. The dramatic difference in their levels of support only exacerbates the tension between the army and the police in the region.

An anti-drug programme, entitled "Operation Snowcap", was set-up by the Peruvian and US governments in September 1989. In April 1990 it was announced that elite US forces were to be stationed in the Upper Huallaga River Valley for the purpose of training Peruvian units in combating guerrillas and drug-traffickers. In July 1991 a new joint initiative to combat the production and distribution of illicit drugs was finalized. Under the terms of the agreement, Peru was to receive \$ 34.9 million in military aid, to be concentrated in the Upper Huallaga region, and \$ 60 million to be used for initiatives, such as crop

substitution, that would stabilize the economy. However, mounting international criticism of the continuing abuse of human rights in Peru prompted the US Congress to suspend payment of funding for the programme.

President Fujimori appeared to grasp, early in his administration, the complexities of dealing with the multiple challenge, posed by the presence of both drugs and insurgents in the UHV. Under its Andean strategy, the US was fully prepared to support his anti-drug efforts and expected him to accept the \$ 35.9 million in US military assistance which had been authorized in the fiscal year 1990. However, Peru's president turned the aid down in late September, following repeated conversations between the two governments in which US officials tried, but failed, to meet Peru's demands. ²³⁸ Fujimori based his rejection on what he saw as the US preoccupation with the idea of a military anti-drug strategy in Peru, a preoccupation that excluded all other concerns. The Peruvian president felt that aid should also deal with the economic side of the problem, more specifically, with alternative development assistance for the coca-growing farmer.

The practical consequence of this difference of opinion was that Peru forfeited the offer of new resources and a full

²³⁸ See US-DS (US Department of State - Office of Andean Affairs), An agreement between the United States of America and Peru on drug control and alternative development policy, (Washington, Department of State, 1991).

year of US funding for the Andean strategy. The imminent end of the US government's fiscal year (30 September 1990) did not allow time for further negotiations. The money allocated to Peru went to Colombia instead.

Conclusion.

The persistence of democratic institutions during the 1980s, even when democratic norms were being violated, resulted from the recognition, by economic and state elites, that the costs of returning to authoritarianism, which included international isolation and further political polarization, were far greater than the costs of maintaining the *status quo*. The capabilities of the Peruvian state have, traditionally, been limited throughout much of the period since independence. One legacy of Lima's having been the most centralized vice-royalty in South America, is that the state has been little present throughout most of the Andean highlands. What predominated until the middle of the twentieth century was a system of intimidation. Its key protagonist, the "gamonal", acted as a mediator between the central state and most of the population, that is, an excluded sector of Indians and mestizos. ²³⁹

²³⁹ See François Bourricaud, *op. cit.*; Fernando Fuenzalida, El Indio y el poder en el Perú, (Lima, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1970).

This low level of administrative state presence in much of Peru was accompanied by weak organizational capacities. As has often been pointed out, one of the most basic organizational functions of the modern state is to regulate and administer the economy. Yet historically Peru exhibited, like other developing-world states, low fiscal and monetary capabilities. As late as 1962, taxation, perhaps the most basic function of the modern state,²⁴⁰ was still being contracted out to a private firm. Moreover, until 1969 the directors of the central bank were appointed by the country's organized business sector, including the powerful Sociedad Nacional de Minería y Petróleo.

The historically weak economic policy-making structure, the lack of administrative autonomy, and the reliance on gamonal intermediation between state and society, began to be altered in the 1960's, first under the reformist government of Fernando Belaúnde (1963-1968), and then by the progressive military regime of General Juan Velásco Alvarado (1968-1975). Two trends illustrate this structural shift: the professionalization and growing cohesiveness of the military institution,²⁴¹ and the state's increasing intervention in the economy.

²⁴⁰ See Charles Tilly, The formation of national states in Western Europe, (New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1975); Michael Mann, "The autonomous power of the state: Origins, mechanisms, and results", in Archives of European Sociology, Volume 25, 1984.

²⁴¹ See Victor Villanueva, El ejército Peruano: Del caudillo al militarismo reformista, (Lima, Mejía Baca, 1973).

A second factor reducing state capabilities was the politicization of much of the state bureaucracy during the 1980's and the spread of partisan "clientelist" practices. Orthodox as well as populist economic policies of the period were implemented in ways that often seemed more responsive to ideological and political agendas than to any technical criteria. For example, several state industries, including fisheries, were deliberately neglected because of strong Left-wing unions, even though these industries had been reasonable profitable. ²⁴²

A third factor that has been impinging on state capabilities is the spread of insurgent violence during the 1980's. After twelve years in power, the Peruvian military entered the 1980's exhausted and seeking to restore its corporate unity. Instead, it was confronted with the emergence of Sendero Luminoso insurgency. From the beginning, the military tried varied and often contradictory approaches, none of which succeeded. Furthermore, differences over counter-insurgency strategy fostered factionalization along ideological, as well as tactical lines. While many officers believed that an Argentina-style "dirty-war" solution to the problem of insurgency was needed, ²⁴³ others saw the root cause of

²⁴² See Carol Wise, Peru post 1980: The political limits to state-led development, (New York, Columbia University - PhD dissertation, 1990).

²⁴³ See Martin E. Anderson, Dossier secreto: Argentina's desaparecidos and the myth of the "Dirty War", (Boulder, Westview Press, 1993); Eduardo L. Duhalde, El estado

insurgency as economic and thus requiring a developmentalist approach. ²⁴⁴

The fact that the mobilization project of the Velásco state elites failed, is not surprising. What happened in Peru was that the state lost control of the mobilization process it had unleashed, and the bureaucracy was soon overwhelmed by radical new demands. The masses found a means of expressing their demands not in the schemes designed by state bureaucracies but in those offered by the new Leftist, and particularly Maoist, political parties, unions, and federations, that were emerged in the early 1970's.

In the race to meet the demands for revolutionary change that were being made by Peru's masses, it was all but impossible for the military hierarchical and corporate institutions to compete with openly anti-system opposition. Therefore, new social conflicts generated serious implications for the state because the new political Left was more successful in organizing the masses. Though strikes and other kinds of protest, this anti-system opposition challenged not only the policies of the state but the very legitimacy of the state apparatus and the economic system.

terrorista Argentino, (Barcelona, Argos Vergara, 1983).

²⁴⁴ See Philip Mauceri, "Military politics and counter-insurgency in Peru", in Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs, Volume 33, No. 4, 1991.

Policy-makers had to choose between repressing this new sector or coming to terms with it, whether through co-optation or negotiated concessions. The successive administrations of General Francisco Morales Bermúdez (1975-1980) and Fernando Belaúnde's second term (1980-1985) opted for a mix of concessions and suppression. But the military's counter-insurgency campaign against Sendero Luminoso had transformed Peru into one of the hemisphere's worst offenders against human rights, with the highest number of forced disappearances in the world. But despite documented cases of torture and other violations of human rights by state authorities, the Peruvian military forces acted with the knowledge that they were virtually immune from prosecution. Although the weak consolidation of both democratic institutions and norms must be acknowledged as an important factor in the re-emergence of authoritarian rule in Peru, it does not suffice to explain the breakdown of democratic procedures.

ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, URUGUAY.

The instability of most Latin American countries derives, to a large extent, from the difficulty of incorporating the working class and other population strata into the political system. European countries had to face a similar challenge decades ago, but the central position they had in the international economic system helped to ease the tensions. In the Third World the problem is compounded by the fact that to the working class must be added large sectors of urban marginals, peasants and often the impoverished middle classes. These groups tend to form broadly-based parties which become the main contenders for power against the dominant establishment. They are placed in a somewhat similar position to that occupied in Britain by Labour and the Social Democrats, but they are based on different organizational and ideological elements, and their popular rather than working-class nature often involves strange coalitions.

One should note that it is often the case that in broad political coalitions some sectors are drawn from the upper echelons of society such as industrialists, clergy, military, professionals. These are then incorporated as leaders, though they represent a minority. In developing countries, middle and upper class minorities make up a far greater proportion of working-class parties than they do in

advanced industrial nations. Their presence, up to a point, is compatible with the nature of the popular parties; but if their numbers are excessive, or if they predominate, then one would be confronted with a different sort of political situation. This was the case with the Christian Democratic parties, the Argentine and Chilean Radicales, Peru's Acción Popular, and the Uruguayan Colorados and Blancos. ²⁴⁵

ARGENTINA.

Introduction.

The popular protest, popular revolt, and urban insurrection which shook Argentina's second industrial city, Córdoba, on May 29-30 1969, attracted the interest of scholars, ²⁴⁶ who struggled to explain the paradox of a violent urban uprising led by the best paid and presumably most privileged sectors of the Argentine working class. The

²⁴⁵ See Edward J. Williams, Latin American Christian Democratic parties, (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1967).

²⁴⁶ See Juan C. Argulla, Diagnóstico social de una crisis: Córdoba Mayo de 1969, (Córdoba, Editel, 1969); Francisco Delich, Crisis y protesta social: Mayo de 1969, (Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI, 1970); Ernesto Laclau, "Argentina-Imperialist strategy and the May crisis", in New Left Review, 1970; Robert Massari, "Le Cordobazo", in Sociologie du Travail, No. 4, 1975; James F. Petras, "Córdoba y la revolución Socialista en la Argentina", en Los Libros, No. 3, 1971.

"Cordobazo", as the uprising came to be known, defied the prevailing wisdom on working class politics in Latin America. Students of protest movements in Latin America argued that workers, especially in the more technologically sophisticated, capital-intensive industries such as automobiles (the very one which dominated the Cordoban economy), found their material needs and social mobility aspirations fully satisfied by the relatively high wages and sophisticated industrial relations systems that the modern corporation offered. ²⁴⁷

The explanations offered by sociologists, Argentine and foreign alike, owed as much to the respective authors' ideological and political inclinations as to any empirical inquiry. For some, the "Cordobazo" was the result of a particular model of economic development and a peculiar urban milieu, the social anomy caused by sudden industrialization and equally sudden industrial decline, the response of a labour elite to falling living standards and the frustrated expectations of social mobility. ²⁴⁸ For others, it was rather a testimony to the class consciousness-raising experience of employment in the most

²⁴⁷ See Henry J. Landsberger, "The labour elite: Is it revolution?", in Seymour M. Lipset, and Aldo Salari, Elites in Latin America, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1967).

²⁴⁸ See Juan C. Argulla, op. cit. This interpretation continues to be a favourite of non-Leftist scholars of the Argentine working class. Also see Peter Ranis, Argentine workers Peronism and contemporary class consciousness, (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992).

advanced sectors of imperialism, as a insurrectionist act in which the automobile workers played the role of vanguard. ²⁴⁹

Perhaps as important as these factors in explaining the massive, popular nature of the protest was the influence of the specific characteristics of Cordoban society and its political culture. Córdoba had an historic rivalry with Buenos Aires and had become impregnated with the radical currents germinating in Argentinean society throughout the 1960's, currents that grew even stronger after the 1966 coup.

The rebel ethos which characterized the city in these years affected many groups and classes, but unquestionably had its greatest impact among Córdoba's large university student community. The students comprised some 10 per cent of the city's population and since the 1918 "University Reform" the local student community had become accustomed

²⁴⁹ See B. Balvé, El'69: Huelga política de masas, (Buenos Aires, n.e., 1989). This interpretation by the school of Argentine Marxists assumes that a particular kind of economic development and the existence of a specific worker's condition resulted from employment in a determined economic sector. They minimize the special political circumstances which triggered a by no means, as such interpretations often seem to imply, inevitable protest. They overlook the other factors such as the development of a local militant trade union tradition, the formation of a unique "conciencia sindical" in the city's principal unions which heightened the identification between the workers and the union, and especially the important role played by other sectors of society, such as students.

to a high degree of self-government, university autonomy, and even a considerable influence in public life.

After 1966 the student community was placed under government control, classes were suspended for a year, the faculties purged, and debate and dissent were intimidated by an atmosphere of persecution. The regime responded predictably to the "Cordobazo" protests against its university policies; protests spearheaded by the Federación Universitaria de Córdoba (FUC), the principal organization which coordinated university student politics. The government intervening in the FUC and banned all political student organizations. ²⁵⁰

The regime's repressive measures only pushed student politics underground where it became even more radical. Anti-capitalist ideologies and the romantic appeal of revolution were already strong sentiments within student ranks. Student activists had powerful symbols such as the Cuban revolution, the exiled Perón, but especially Che Guevara, Córdoba's native son, to attract new militants and build up sentiment for resistance against the regime.

Guerrilla groups such as the Uturuncos, the Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas (FAP), the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación (FAL) had been active and won over student cadres in the years

²⁵⁰ See Ramón Cuevas and Osvaldo Reicz, "El movimiento estudiantil: De la Reforma al Cordobazo", en Los Libros, No. 21, 1971.

prior to the "Cordobazo". The Maoist Partido Comunista Revolucionario (PCR) and Vanguardia Comunista (VC), the neo-Trotskyist/Leninist Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), and the Peronist Left, Juventud Universitaria Peronista (JUP), for example, developed strongholds in various university departments.

Rather move of the underground student resistance was nevertheless to be found in two student organizations that emerged out of the proscribed FUC; the Peronist Frente Estudiantil Nacional, and the Marxist Coordinadora Estudiantil en Lucha. Both of these organizations based their opposition to the regime more on its university policies and the general lack of democratic freedoms in the country than on support for the establishment of socialism in Argentina.

While the students' participation in the "Cordobazo" was massive, only a relatively small number of them were members and even fewer were seasoned militants, of the revolutionary parties. By the time of the "Cordobazo", moreover, much of the Argentinean Left had temporarily adopted programmes giving immediate priority to ending the dictatorship and postponing the struggle for socialism. The radicalization of Córdoba's political life throughout the decade accelerated discontent with the regime, encouraged greater student militancy, and provided some with reasons to struggle. Yet the underground Left-wing student culture

would not find a full and tragic expression until after the "Cordobazo", when many of the student dissidents of the 1960's became the revolutionaries of the 1970's. Thus, the "Cordobazo" itself served to crystallize vague and loosely focused sentiments into a more purposeful ideological and political opposition.

Furthermore, this non-sectarian opposition also increased the opportunities for building links and developing a common cause with Córdoba's still far from radical Peronist working class. The "worker-student" alliance had actually been born in the early months of the regime, when engineering student and part-time IKA worker Santiago Pampillón was killed by police gunfire during a 1966 student protest and occupation of "Barrio Clínicas", a historic down-town neighbourhood and traditional stronghold of the university students.

Historical Background.

Following the overthrow of Juan Domingo Perón, Argentina entered another lengthy period of political instability. Political control continued to pass between civilian, mainly Radical, and military regimes during the late 1950's and 1960's. This period was also characterized by increasing guerrilla activity, particularly by the Montoneros, a group of Left-wing Peronist sympathizers.

The 1960's was a decade in which a whole generation of young Argentines became disillusioned with and disaffected from the political system - both in its ostensible constitutional form under the Radical governments of Arturo Frondizi, Arturo Illia, and under Juan Onganía. On the other hand, Argentina's model of dependent development was built in subordinate association with US foreign capital. By 1971, 66 of the leading 120 companies were owned or controlled by foreign interests and a further 18 were clearly linked to them. ²⁵¹

However, the emergence and growth of Left-wing tendencies within Peronism were irregular rather than steady. Before 1955, John William Cooke and those who identified with his political review "De Frente" were militants in as much to the methods which they advocated for the defence of the Peronist regime were militant. They also differed from more conciliatory sectors in that they were fervent nationalists. But the "Peronist Left", including all those Peronists positing socialism and popular sovereignty as goals, did not emerge until the late 1950's, when Frondizi's Intransigent Radical Government (UCRI) was elected with the indispensable aid of Peronist votes, replacing the regime of General Ricardo Aramburu.

²⁵¹ See NACLA (North American Congress on Latin America), Argentina in the hour of the furnaces, (Washington, NACLA, 1975).

When one examines the origins of the "Peronist Left", one figure stands out as its principal inspiration and elaborator: John William Cooke. After the Cuban revolution, Cooke adapted Guevara's foquismo to an urban setting, seeing guerrilla warfare as the best way to confront the national state power. In the Peronist Revolutionary Action (ARP), based in Buenos Aires, the same basic ideas were present: that is, that a small number of people could initiate a revolutionary struggle, with broad national repercussions, and could raise the collective consciousness of the masses.

The term "revolutionary Peronism" had been employed by Peronism to denote two phenomena. Firstly, it was used in the late 1960's to refer to the whole of the "Peronist Left", without differentiation. Secondly, and more specifically, it was applied to the Montoneros and their collateral organizations. Left Peronism was revolutionary in that it espoused a programme and strategy for radical social and political change. Structurally, it also offered an embryo of things to come, being composed of some trade unions, youth, secondary school and university student organizations. Furthermore it possessed an armed expression in the form of the Tacuara Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNRT). ²⁵²

²⁵² The parent Tacuara is of interest not only because it was the first Argentine urban guerrilla, but also because its political fragmentation reflected the early phases of the petty-bourgeois' movement towards Peronism in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

Circumstances in the mid-1960's were possibly influenced by a temporary amelioration of working-class hardship ²⁵³ and were certainly affected by the early repressive impact on the universities of the 1966 military "take-over" which brought Onganía to the presidency. Therefore, the Revolutionary Peronist Movement (MRP) dedicated their initial four years (1955-1959) of struggle to gaining control of the unions and resisting economic decline. ²⁵⁴ A second factor in the emergence of radical Peronist organizations was the government of Frondizi (1958-1962). In return for the support of Frondizi's UCRI party in the 1958 election, the Peronists were conceded a general amnesty, and a new law of professional associations, which provided a national reorganization of the labour movement, and a 60 per cent wage rise.

A third radicalizing factor was the need for militant Peronists to define their loyalties more precisely as "vandonismo", that is to the conciliatory trade union tendency associated with Augusto Vandor, which became dominant within the General Labour Confederation (CGT). Fourthly, Argentina, like the rest of Latin American, felt the impact of the Cuban revolution. The Cuban influence was

²⁵³ See Mónica R. Peralta, Etapas de acumulación y alianzas de clases en la Argentina 1930-1970, (Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI, 1972).

²⁵⁴ See Daniel James, "Power and politics in Peronist trade unions", in Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs, Volume 20, No. 1, 1978; Santiago S. González, El sindicalismo después de Perón, (Buenos Aires, Galerna, 1971).

evident, for example, in the 1959-1960 attempt to launch a rural guerrilla movement, known as the Uturuncos, in the provinces of Tucumán and Santiago del Estero.

For the educated middle-class, Orgaía's coup represented a violent attack on what they had traditionally regarded as their preserves: the universities and the world of culture in general. The congress, provincial legislatures, and the political parties were dissolved, the magazine "Tía Vicenta" was closed, sales of the radical Uruguayan review "Marcha" were banned. Above all, the national universities were subjected to government intervention and their autonomy was crushed.²⁵⁵ Political student activity was banned and their right to participate in the traditional tripartite system of university administration was rescinded. In theory a drive against communist infiltration, Orgaía's policies did much to push middle-class youth into the national popular opposition sector.

Thus, the radicalization process of the late 1960's and early 1970's, more often than not accompanied by "peronization", was quite extensive, most directly a product of political and cultural factors, and greatly stimulated by the authoritarianism of the military regime. On the other hand, middle-class radicals had considerable economic independence. Students whose university studies

²⁵⁵ See Peter G. Snow, Political forces in Argentina, (New York, Praeger, 1979).

normally lasted five or six years, had much more time available for the demanding life of the guerrilla. Not surprisingly then, urban guerrilla warfare in Latin America prospered most in Argentina and Uruguay, both highly-urbanized countries with large, culturally-sophisticated middle classes, increasingly affected by the curbing of liberties introduced by authoritarian regimes, and by unpopular economic measures. ²⁵⁶

The Guerrilla.

In Argentina, neither the Uturuncos in 1959/1960, nor Masetti's People's Guerrilla Army in 1963/1964, nor the FAP's 17 October Detachment in 1968, really got off the ground. None of them attracted significant popular assistance even in the provinces of Tucumán and Salta where they attempted to operate. ²⁵⁷ After the unsuccessful urban guerrilla warfare of 1968, the Montoneros acknowledged the geographical isolation of the rural cadres. Of Argentina's 28 million inhabitants, about 75 per cent were living in

²⁵⁶ See Richard H. Gillespie, "A critique of the urban guerrilla: Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil" in Conflict Quarterly, No. 2, 1980.

²⁵⁷ On the Uturuncos, see Emilio Morales, Uturuco y las guerrillas en la Argentina, (Montevideo, Sepe, 1964); on the EGP, see Jorge R. Masett, Los que luchan y los que lloran, (Buenos Aires, Jorge Alvares, 1969); Ricardo Rojo, My friend Che, (New York, Grove Press, 1968); Luis M. Vega, Las guerrillas en América Latina, (Buenos Aires, Paídos, 1969); for the FAP, see Anónimo, "Nuestros errores pueden servir de lección y ejemplo, pero no de negación de la única salida del pueblo ante la violencia gorila", en Con Todo, No. 2, 1968.

the cities. ²⁵⁸ Further, half of the population was concentrated in the city and province of Buenos Aires, and two-thirds in the adjoining provinces of Santa Fe and Córdoba. ²⁵⁹

Thus, the Montoneros set out to fuse urban guerrilla warfare, an adaptation of Che Guevara's "foco" theory, with the popular struggles of the Peronist movement. Founding members such as Fernando Abál Medina and Carlos Gustavo Ramos had, in the early 1960's, as a fourteen-year-old, both participated in the Right-wing Tacuara. Various efforts were made to bring these organizations together, and joint operations were conceived and executed, but the coordinating body established to promote unification, the Peronist Armed Organizations (OAP), never acquired a formal structure. The guerrillas could not agree over whether they should concentrate solely upon armed struggle or pursue an integrated strategy of multiple forms of action. The latter was the Montonero position.

Nationalism was stimulated and many young people, seeing the post-Peronist trend of the national bourgeoisie losing ground to an expansionist international bourgeoisie, raised the question of whether national development was compatible with the continued existence of capitalism in Argentina.

²⁵⁸ See James Scobie, Argentina: A city and a nation, (Washington, OUP, 1971).

²⁵⁹ See Peter G. Snow, *op. cit.*

However, though the impact of neo-liberal economic policies enhanced the attraction of nationalist alternatives, it is very doubtful that economic deprivation was a major factor in the middle-class radicalization of the 1960's and 1970's. In drawing together radical Catholicism, nationalism, and Peronism, into a Populist expression of Socialism, the Montoneros brought together a whole wealth of historical legitimacy, creating something which attracted civilians of diverse political denominations, such as Catholic militants, popular nationalists, the traditional Left, and combative Peronists.

The Montoneros presented their organization as a "champion of the people", in part because they were not working-class themselves, and rather than seek the workers state aspired to by the non-Peronist revolutionary Left, their central commitments were to national development, social justice, and popular power. ²⁶⁰ Those who founded and joined the Montoneros were convinced that armed struggle was the only effective means open to them. ²⁶¹

The Montoneros devoted many hours to attracting political support by drawing up documents. They also and the granted interviews in order to propagate their views. In a document

²⁶⁰ See Richard Gillespie, Soldier of Peron: Argentina's Montoneros, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1982).

²⁶¹ See FAR/Montoneros, El Descamisado, No. 22, 1973.

published at the end of 1970 ²⁶² they presented themselves as part of the final stage of an historical process which went back 160 years. Their historical revisionism portrayed Argentinean history in terms of a constant conflict between two major political currents: on the one hand, the liberal oligarchy, clearly anti-national and "vendepatria"; on the other hand, the people, forced to defend their interests against imperialism and the traditional Liberal agro-export structure of the country.

Neither Yrigoyenism (Hipólito Yrigoyen) nor Peronism had in fact attacked the power of the landed bourgeoisie, but had rather improved the position of the masses of society within the established social order. Neither had been prepared to mobilize or arm the people when threatened by the approaching military coups of 1930 and 1955. The examples of these guerrillas illustrated, for the Montoneros, that class conflicts were of secondary importance to nationalist struggles against foreign influence. ²⁶³

However, while the Montoneros aspired to take part in an integral strategy under a Peronist government, involving political, trade union, and student activity as well as

²⁶² See Montoneros, "Hablan los Montoneros", in Cristianismo y Revolución, 1970.

²⁶³ See Richrad H. Gillespie, The Peronist Left, (Liverpool, University of Liverpool - PhD dissertation, 1979).

armed action, they were clearly content to promote the guerrilla aspect themselves and to leave the remaining complementary activities to other sectors of the movement. Therefore, the chances of the strategy leading to the establishment of national socialism depended upon Perón and the rest of the movement being as revolutionary and progressive as the Montoneros believed them to be.

The Montoneros saw, in the return of Peronism and the advance of the Peronist Left, an opportunity to extend their political influence by concentrating on legal activity and operating on multiple fronts. They acquired the capacity to mobilize people legally, yet they still lacked grassroots organizational strength, and this, as much as the opposition of the political, trade union, and women's branches of the Peronist Movement, rendered the Juventud Peronista (JP-Montonero) unable to fill the 25 per cent share of political posts that Perón had allocated to the Youth. Yet since their strategy was to mark through and with the Peronist Movement, both within and outside the government, and thereby conquer as much political territory as possible. This failure severely limited their prospects.

Alongside their political work in this first period, the Montoneros built front organizations adapted to the needs of each of the major social movements. The JP-regionales, which now concentrated on activity at neighbourhood level, was joined by the Peronist University Youth (JUP), Peronist

Working Youth (JTP), Secondary Student Union (UES), Peronist Shanty-Town Dwellers Movement (MVP), the Evita group of the Feminine Branch (AE), and the Peronist Tenants Movement (MIP). Collectively these organizations became known as the "Revolutionary Tendency" of the Peronist Movement. This tendency rested upon two entirely unfounded premises and one exceedingly shaky one: Perón's alleged conversion to national socialism; a suicidal preparedness on the part of the bourgeois and bureaucratic sectors of Peronism to accept radical working-class leadership; and the possibility of maintaining a broad class alliance in office during the so-called "national liberation revolutionary" stage. ²⁶⁴

By 1974, the Montonero movement's strategy had demonstrably failed, the Left had been pushed out of the positions it had held in the Peronist movement and had, moreover, seen its influence disappear or decline in the national Congress, provincial government, and in university administrations. Thus, excluded from the official Argentine political system, the Montoneros turned violently against it. By 6 September 1974, they were underground again, having declared war on a government deemed neither popular nor Peronist.

²⁶⁴ See Ricardo Carpani, Nacionalismo, Peronismo y socialismo nacional, (Buenos Aires, Centro de Estudios Políticos, 1972).

No political radicalization was implied by the return to clandestine warfare. Though facing a government deemed pro-imperialist, and preparing to abandon the more nationalistic development strategy of 1973-1974, the Montoneros still aspired to the leadership of a national liberation movement, with an interest in the ending of dependency, and under a "working-class" leadership.

With the Montoneros' resumption of warfare, vengeance killing became an integral part of their repertoire of violence, which, though still discriminate, became more freely used against people.²⁶⁵ Thus, the danger for the guerrillas was that, civilians undisturbed by the acts of violence would see vengeance attacks as part of a private war between armed gangs. Such attacks did not contribute to the guerrillas' aim of transforming their combat units into a "people's army"; but it did contribute to a growing exchange of assassins' bullets between Left and Right, with those of the Right being, more often than not, the target.

Militarism then, became the dominant guerrilla tactic as strategic declarations not only outlined the guerrilla methodology, but also doubled for revolutionary theory. Armed struggle had developed a dynamic of its own, with Montoneros movement dictated, along with national political events, by two things: a theory of armed struggle which

²⁶⁵ See Richard H. Gillespie, "Armed struggle in Argentina", in New Scholar, Volume 8, 1992.

demanded periodic increases in the intensity of the warfare; and, as the death toll rose, the desire for vengeance. It was the latter, above all, which drew the guerrillas into what they termed a "dialectic of confrontation", that is, a reactive upward spiral of violence which tempted the Montoneros to increasingly respond to enemy activity rather than seize and retain the initiative.

A force established to operate in the mountains of Tucumán, the Fuerza de Monte del Ejército Montonero, began operations in 1975. However, the Montoneros were wandering deeper and deeper into a dilemma: should they stay with urban guerrilla warfare or begin to employ terrorism? They stood on the brink of what the press termed "collective terrorism". By then, Montoneros striking power was indisputable, and was being used with growing aggression against the security forces and their elite patrons.

However, the Montoneros lacked the capacity for direct engagement with the Armed Forces. Their jungle guerrilla, after a brief appearance in Tucumán, was disbanded towards the end of 1976. A small rural unit was established in Formosa and Chaco, but only as a token presence, jumping at shadows. ²⁶⁶ Urban guerrilla activity remained the norm, with the Montoneros, towards the end of 1976 and during the

²⁶⁶ See Cecilia Szusterman, "Soldier of Perón: Argentina's Montoneros", in Journal of Latin American Studies, Volume 16, No. 1, 1984.

first half of 1977, aiming selective blows at strategic military targets. In other words, the guerrillas were now radicalized by the crisis affecting Peronism and the national economy, with Marxist influences becoming more discernible in their political and organizational proposals. ²⁶⁷

Following all the introspection and self-criticism, the National Council meeting in April 1976 decreed the transformation of the Montoneros from a politico-military organization into a "revolutionary party", the Partido Montonero (OPM). The OPM then became the PM. This was, theoretically, a party of cadres whose organization was based upon the Leninist principles of democratic centralism, and that was committed to an ideology termed "Dialectical and Historical Materialism". ²⁶⁸ But the reality was that none of the Montonero proposals prospered, because the minimum demands, though they were those of millions of Argentines, failed to politically differentiate the Montoneros from the mainstream opposition forces which, in turn, all regarded association with the Montoneros as a

²⁶⁷ See Robert Moss, Urban guerrillas: The new face of political violence, (London, Maurice Temple Smith, 1972); Martin Oppenheimer, The urban guerrilla, (Chicago, Quadrangle Books, 1969).

²⁶⁸ See Anonymous, Footnote 1, in Vencer No. 2/3, 1979.

liability. The problem was that the Montoneros strove for a return to party political freedoms. ²⁶⁹

The role of the USA.

Argentine governments since the overthrow of Perón have oscillated between classic liberalism and pro-state nationalism. The former have had some economic success while the later have generated more popular support and national enthusiasm. ²⁷⁰ Argentina aimed at a favourable balance of trade, but it also sought to solve the problem of the flight of capital, a problem tied to political instability and resulting in a perpetually undermined currency. It has also a major Argentine goal to control the use of the foreign technology that it is forced to import.

This is an especially tough and continuing battle going on point of contention between Argentina and the US, whose firms part with their patents and controls with great reluctance. If a US firm can prohibit an Argentine subsidiary from selling its products in a given market, this may deprive Argentina of foreign exchange. For example, the last Perón government forced Argentine

²⁶⁹ See Kenneth Robert, The role of the Left in Latin America democracies: The search for a new identity, (Los Angeles, LASA, 1992).

²⁷⁰ See Edward S. Milenky, Argentina's foreign policies, (Boulder, Westview Press, 1978); Robert A. Potash, The army and politics in Argentina, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1980).

subsidiaries of US auto-makers either to sell cars to Cuba or be nationalized. Furthermore, Argentina has its own limited arms industry. It sold weapons to the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua in 1979, at a time when the US had frozen such sales.

Implicit in the Reagan Doctrine for Latin America was the notion that major social overhead capital investments, like the hydro-electric projects for Argentina, would have the "halo effect" of spreading socio-economic well-being, which, in turn, would provide the basis for the growth of democratic practices. But peace, economic growth, and stability, and not democracy as such, were seen to be the prime goals of the Reagan Doctrine. Even so, high investment in capital-intensive industrialization generated high levels of unemployment, and socio-political unrest. Suffice it to say that the Reagan Doctrine favoured generous military assistance to Latin America within the theoretic context of "the linkage", and that it was assumed that the recipients could best decide how such assistance should be used. ²⁷¹

The institutionalization of these political outputs provided the most parsimonious explanation of the reversal of development that occurred in Argentina. The social structure of the country was transformed by two policies

²⁷¹ See Kenneth F. Johnson, "Argentina: Pride and weakness", in Robert Wesson, US influence un Latin America in the 1980s, (New York, Praeger, 1982).

carried out in the post-war period: radical protection for industries orientated towards the internal market, and a corporatist strategy towards labour. These policies, in the context of a society characterized by a concentration on the ownership of land, and the absence of a large labour reserve, ultimately produced a sluggish and unstable economy, and an illegitimate polity.

Conclusion.

As Torcuato Di Tella and Guillermo O'Donnell have depicted the situation, ²⁷² political instability has been the consequence of a stalemate among the various social and political forces. Since none of the contenders or coalitions of contenders could accumulate enough power to overcome the other contenders or coalitions, and establish hegemony over them, illegitimacy and "praetorianism" resulted as the common practice in politics. On the one hand, agrarian interests and that section of the industrial bourgeoisie linked to them, such as international capital and that segment of domestic capital less dependent on protection, once more, has made up one coalition. The other coalition has consisted of the bulk of the industrial bourgeoisie, particularly its weaker segment, and the

²⁷² See Torcuato S. Di Tella, "Stalemate or coexistence in Argentina", in James F. Petras, and Maurice Zeitlin, Latin America reform or revolution?, (Greenwich, Fawcett Publications, 1968); Guillermo O'Donnell, Modernization and bureaucratic authoritarianism: Studies in South American politics, (Berkeley, Institute of International Studies, 1973).

labour movement. Various sections of the middle class participated in each alliance.

Beside this major line of cleavage, there were secondary conflicts within each bloc, such as the friction between agrarian business and big industrial capital that has flared up at various times since the 1960's, as the latter was becoming preponderant. There was also an intermittent cleavage between labour and the bourgeoisie as a whole. Relationships among the groups, and the relationships between some of the groups and the political parties that represented them, were very complex, and various alliances, with varying degrees of mobilization among their constituent members, were formed in particular circumstances or in relation to specific issues. The state apparatus, and especially the armed forces, has intervened in various situations either to arbitrate the conflict, or as the political representative of the agrarian business or big industry.

Furthermore, the limits of this oscillation were determined by social forces. Until the late 1970's, whenever the interests of one of the opposing coalitions had been affected beyond a certain point, the pendulum was pushed towards the other pole. The barriers faced by conservative measures were mainly political. The mobilization of the labour movement, segments of the middle classes, and that sector of the bourgeoisie that was hurt by these policies,

all raised the spectre of popular revolt. The obstacles to populist strategies were mainly economic; their implementation led to declines in agrarian output and crises in the balance of payments. Whenever this happened, labour and the less competitive segments of the industrial bourgeoisie were paralysed, and a segment of the middle class usually swung to the right, adding to the support for the reinstatement of conservative policies. Often, as a consequence of this, the military intervened and established an authoritarian regime. ²⁷³

The national elections of October 30, 1983, had a largely unexpected outcome: the victory of the Radical presidential candidate over the Peronista one. Thus the elections transformed what had been seen by the military as a relatively safe retreat, into a leap into unknown territory. For the first time, the Peronistas had been defeated in free elections. The Radical presidential candidate, Raúl Alfonsín, won a landslide victory against all odds. The Radical party that, had gathered no more than 25 percent of the vote for some time, obtained 52 per cent of the presidential ballots.

The Argentine political arena became truly two-party, with Peronistas and Radicals together collecting more than 92 per cent of the votes. The smaller parties, which had

²⁷³ See Aldo Ferrer, Crisis y alternativas de la política económica Argentina, (Buenos Aires, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1980).

performed an important role in Argentine politics in previous periods, either competing for the support of the proscribed Peronistas or trying to erode the middle-class constituency of the Radicals, practically vanished from the scene, with a few provincial exceptions. Furthermore, the military leaders had retreated from power without obtaining any guarantees from the Radicals and were in such disarray that it seemed impossible for them to attempt a comeback in the near future.

For the Left the problem was complicated. They claimed to speak for those who had suffered most under years of military rule; the working class and the "desaparecidos". Therefore, they campaigned for a truly national and popular force to be organized as a militia the existing "imperialist army of occupation". The dilemma between the need to capitalize on anti-military sentiment yet avoid policies that were too provocative and constraining was real. Their response was to accept the existing military as legitimate, while decreeing that its role would be apolitical.

Thus, the Argentine crisis is the long-term result of Peronist policies that, on the one hand, allocated economic and human resources in an inefficient manner and, on the other hand, increased the labour movement's level of mobilization and organization. A second process led to the formation of an "ungovernable" policy, in which military

rule became the response to the structural transformations generated by this new type of relationship with the international economy.

BRAZIL.

Introduction.

In contrast to earlier coups, where the military has returned power to civilians after a short period, in 1964 the predominant thrust was towards long-term intervention.²⁷⁴ Nevertheless, few regime leaders envisioned military rule as a stable, permanent solution; the military was to restore order and eventually return power to civilians. Despite incidents of torture and political assassination, the regime always maintained some significant institutions typical of liberal democracy.

Furthermore, in contrast to the authoritarian regimes of Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile, the Brazilian regime closed Congress only twice 1968-1969 and 1977, both times for relatively short intervals. Also in contrast to these countries, a party system functioned throughout the entire authoritarian period. The opposition party, the Movimento

²⁷⁴ See Alfred Stepan, "Military politics and three polity arenas: Civil society, political society, and the state", in Alfred Stepan, Democratizing Brazil, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1971).

Democrático Brasileiro (MDB), was created by the government in 1965. During the most repressive years, 1969-1974, the MDB had difficulty in functioning as an independent opposition voice, but it always served as channel for some opposition demands and, after 1974, became increasingly autonomous and important.²⁷⁵ Despite the fact that such democratic institutions served the military as a "façade", or as a way to facilitate the continuation of civilian support, they did maintain the existence of parties, elections, and a constitution, all of which offered the domestic opposition space in which to manoeuvre and provided at least a minimal continuity of democratic practices and leaders.²⁷⁶

The Political Parties.

Brazilian parties have historically been relatively secondary actors in the political system: they have not been leading actors in formulating policies, nor in articulating and representing different interests. Parties and even party systems have ephemeral existences. None of the current parties with more than 4 per cent of the

²⁷⁵ See David V. Fleischer, "Constitutional and electoral engineering in Brazil: A double-edged sword 1964-1982", in Journal of Inter-American Economic Affairs, No. 37, 1984.

²⁷⁶ See Juan L. Linz, "The future of an authoritarian situation or the institutionalization of an authoritarian regime: The case of Brazil", in Alfred Stepan, Authoritarian Brazil: Origins, policies, and future, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1973).

congressional votes, namely; the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB), the Liberal Front Party (PFL), the Social Democratic Party (PDS), and the Democratic Workers Party (PDT) existed before 1966, and only two, the PMDB and PDS, existed before 1979. Conversely, only one of the three dominant parties of the pre-1964 period, the Brazilian Labour Party (PTB) still exists, and it does so under a different guise, and as a minor party at that.²⁷⁷

Compared to the other three countries of the Southern Cone, Brazilian parties stand out for their dependence on the state. In Brazil, parties have often been the creation of the state.²⁷⁸ Two of the three main parties that functioned between 1945 and 1964, for example, were directly created by Getúlio Vargas, president and dictator for the final eight years of the 1930-1945 period, and from 1951 to 1954. Brazil stands out as an extraordinary case of party underdevelopment.

In Brazil, Argentina, and Chile, at least one major party encouraged the coups that led to the demise of democracy. In all three cases, party leaders believed that an alliance with the military would enable them to obtain positions of

²⁷⁷ See Torcuato S. Di Tella, "The popular parties: Brazil and Argentina in a Latin American perspective", in Government and Opposition, Volume 19, No. 2, 1984.

²⁷⁸ It is a stunning fact that there were no major national parties in Brazil between 1889 and 1945. See L. Deriz, "Política y partidos: Ejercicio de análisis comparativo entre Argentina, Chile, Brazil, y Uruguay", en Desarrollo Económico, Volume 25, No. 100, 1986.

power in the new government. In all three cases, this expectation was largely frustrated, even though in Brazil some politicians who supported the coup did indeed assume powerful posts in the new government. ²⁷⁹

Also, throughout Latin America, military rule created new problems for the leaders of political parties. The nature of the problems, however, varied considerably according to country. ²⁸⁰ The dilemmas for the opposition party in Brazil were unique because opposition party activity was legal, though circumscribed, because elections allowed the opposition to conquer more space and gain visibility through its election campaigns, and because congress gave it space to voice dissent. Thus, Brazil was unique in having an official government party, the Aliança Renovadora Nacional (ARENA) even though it was clearly subordinate to military government.

Nevertheless, the central problem for party development in Brazil involves responsiveness to popular demands. Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay have traditionally had the most egalitarian socio-economic and political systems in Latin America. In contrast, Brazil's political system has been highly élitist, and the socio-economic system highly unequal. In view of this situation, it is not surprising

²⁷⁹ See Scott Mainwaring, "Political parties and democratization in Brazil and the Southern Cone", in Comparative Politics, Volume 21, No. 1, 1988.

²⁸⁰ See A. Echeverry, op. cit.

that the Leftist Workers' Party (PT) has attracted considerable attention. Created in 1979, the importance of the PT goes far beyond its rather limited electoral base.²⁸¹

Margaret Keck emphasizes the tensions that the PT has faced. It is a political party, which involves formulating strategies for influencing institutional politics and inevitably involves compromise, but it also supports social movements, especially the labour movement. Winning votes would seem to require a certain amount of pragmatism and a multi-class perspective, particularly in Brazil, while remaining faithful to the labour movement often dictates eschewing such pragmatism and compromise. Thus, the PT has been caught between external exigencies and internal demands.

Parties often represent new political alignments, and yet also have ties to earlier party systems. For example, the two main parties, the pro-government PDS and the opposition party PMDB, inherit their parliamentary status from the two-party system imposed by the military government between 1965 and 1978. On the other hand, the PDS was stronger in the rural north-east states, where patriarchal families continued to give support to the established order and the military.²⁸² Thus, the party suffered from the defection

²⁸¹ See Margaret Keck, From movement to politics: The formation of the workers' party in Brazil, (New York, Columbia University - PhD dissertation, 1986).

²⁸² See David V. Fleischer, op. cit.

of conservative politicians and business-people who had become frustrated with government policies and formed the Popular Party (PP), known as the "bankers' party". The PDT is another splinter from the PTB, the consequence of a dispute between its leader, Leonel Brizola, and Ivette Vargas.

Historical Background.

The development of the masses in Brazil is marked by the absence of strong and independent institutions able to articulate truly working-class politics. Despite the massive influx to the towns and the very rapid industrialization of the post-war period, the Brazilian working class failed to produce a party capable of a consistent class line and of organizing the working class for struggle. In the crucial years of the late 1940's, neither the PTB, nor the Communist Party of Brazil (PCB) adopted such a role. ²⁸³

The PCB, during its brief period of legality (1945-1947), was unique in Brazilian politics as the only popular force independent of the ruling class, and its strength was further enhanced by the structural weakness of all rival parties. From the mid 1950's, the PCB followed a programme that consisted of the liquidation of the financial and

²⁸³ See Juárez R. Bandao, Sociedade industrial no Brasil, (Sao Paulo, Difusao Européia do Livro, 1964).

latifundist oligarchy, the expulsion of imperialism, the nationalization of key sectors of the economy, and universal suffrage.

Yet the PCP did not concentrate its efforts on building an independent workers' and peasants' alliance that would have been able to form an alliance with a national bourgeoisie in a national revolution. The only political current which seriously posed the question of revolutionary civil war was the "Jacobin Left", and particularly Brizola and his followers. Through his network in the PTB and the army, and then in 1963 through his radio station and his newspaper "O Panfleto", Brizola called for the formation of "Groups of Eleven", as the nucleus of a new revolutionary organization prepared to defend the masses against a counter-revolutionary offensive.

After the 1964 coup, the dictatorship proceeded to dismantle the union structure controlled by the PTP and the PCB. ²⁸⁴ The General Workers' Executive (CGT) was liquidated and the situation of the unions reverted to that of 1943. The union became one of the institutions with which the ruling class controlled the workers' movement. Their militarization was carried out partly by the appointment of soldiers as "mediators". In Argentina, the working classes were able to retain the benefits of

²⁸⁴ See Juan J. Linz, "The future of an authoritarian situation or the institutionalization of an authoritarian regime: The case of Brazil", op. cit.

Peronism even after Perón's fall, because they exercised a large measure of control over their own institutions. In Brazil, the workers lost even those gains that they had secured under Joao Goulart period, because they lacked any independence at all.

The lesson to be drawn from the workers' struggle of 1968 ²⁸⁵ was that a revolution needed a great deal of complex organization, at various levels. There was, first of all, the need for legal work within the unions themselves. Secondly, there was illegal work to be done in the mass organizations through factory committees. Thirdly, there was clandestine work, that is, the work of the revolutionary vanguard: to achieve the transition to armed struggle. ²⁸⁶

Furthermore, the Brazilian workers came to organize themselves as a group, and to take the leadership in the course of the struggle against the dictatorship and against imperialism itself. The first attempts to do this were the result of armed actions mounted by the "Jacobin Left" which grouped itself around the figure of Brizola. The

²⁸⁵ A movement known as the "against the freeze" was organized in a number of places in working-class circles. The strikers ignored the advice of the president of the Minas engineering unions, and established factory committees independent of the union apparatus with which to organize the strike. By the end of April nineteen factories were paralysed and 17,000 workers were on strike.

²⁸⁶ See Scott Mainwaring, "Urban popular movements, identity, and democratization in Brazil", in Comparative Political Studies, Volume 20, No. 1, 1987.

revolutionary nationalist had not been strong enough to respond to the counter-revolution of 1964; in Rio Grande do Sol, Brizola's rearguard action was a failure.

The Guerrilla.

Despite the Caparáo disaster,²⁸⁷ the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR) was able to retreat in good order without wasting its cadres. This is why MNR survivors could be found among the organizations that led the transition to direct action in 1968. With the exception of the breaking away of the Trotskyists, the PCB's political disintegration can be dated from the beginning of the 1960's. In 1961 the Workers' Politics (POLOP) was founded, which took over the old Trotskyist ambition of regrouping revolutionary Marxism outside official Communism. But in 1962 the break-up of the PCB began, with one group on the central committee founding the Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB) and drawing close to the so-called "Chinese position".

In December 1966 Carlos Marighela resigned from the executive committee of the PCB. The old leadership of the committee inclined towards constituting a new party, the Brazilian Revolutionary Communist Party (PCBR). Marighela

²⁸⁷ Their foco in the Carparáo mountains, on the border between Minas Gerais and Espíritu Santo, was surrounded by a battalion of the First Army and a whole guerrilla detachment was captured.

was completely opposed to substituting a new party for the old. What he considered necessary was to begin armed struggle. But the question of an immediate transition to armed struggle was not the only cause of the crisis that led, in 1967, to the formation of the PCBR on one side, and the Marighela grouping on the other. ²⁸⁸

Furthermore, the PCBR was concerned above all to criticize Marighela programme, while Marighela's group was rather to change the method of struggle. Finally, the POLOP opposition and the MNR, under the new name of the Armed Revolutionary Vanguard (VPR), started a struggle characterized by the following: the rejection of systematic work in the mass movement; the refusal of traditional forms of agitation and propaganda; the tendency towards limiting organizational structures to armed groups only; the adoption of the "foco" theory as was presented in "Revolution in the Revolution?". ²⁸⁹ Thus, the fragmentation of the Brazilian revolutionary movement made necessary two different, but mutually dependent, types of task: the construction of a national revolutionary organization, and the formation of a front against the dictatorship and imperialism.

²⁸⁸ See Donald C. Hodges, Philosophy of the urban guerrilla: The revolutionary writings of Abraham Guillen, (New York, William Morrow, 1973).

²⁸⁹ See Richard H. Gillespie, "A critique of the urban guerrilla: Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil", op. cit.

A similar process took place within the POLOP. Its origins and its predominant milieu, the student movement, predisposed it towards ideological criticism of the PCB's reformism, which stressed the historic role of the working class and the socialist character of the Brazilian revolution, without being able to develop a practice conforming to its theoretical positions. The theses adopted by the POLOP re-affirmed that the principal task of the vanguard was to construct the proletarian party, while not rejecting the principle of armed struggle. ²⁹⁰

In consequence, towards the end of 1967, the crisis in the Brazilian Left led to the break up of both the Communist Party and the POLOP. ²⁹¹ The splits were both on the question of strategy and on geographical lines. Differences of strategy focused around the question of armed struggle, but almost everyone was a supporter of direct action in principle. Thus, Marighela, the primary advocate of armed struggle, dominated the PCB in Sao Paulo. The opposition within POLOP, against the idea of armed struggle, was divided into the Minas Gerais and the Sao Paulo oppositions.

²⁹⁰ See Riordan, Roett, Brazil in the sixties, (Nashville, Vanderbilt University Press, 1972).

²⁹¹ See Maria D. Kinzo, Legal opposition politics under authoritarian rule in Brazil: The case of the MDB 1966-1979, (London, Macmillan Press, 1988).

However, the ideas of Debray together with the Cuban example, and the writings of Guevara, the Brazilian left a sound ideology upon which to base itself. Armed struggle would take the form of the rural guerrilla "foco" and its social base would be those strata that could be mobilized by a minimal anti-imperialist programme.²⁹² The basis of Guevara's position was that the bourgeois state is weakest in the countryside and it is for this reason that the countryside was the fundamental terrain for armed struggle. Guerrilla warfare, for Guevara, remained a war of the masses. The guerrilla detachment was the vanguard of the war.

Therefore, MLN actions were of two types. Firstly, these aimed at the maintenance and reinforcement of the organization's clandestine infrastructure, such as bank raids, expropriations of arms, etc. Secondly, actions that have been called "armed propaganda", that is, the occupation of radio stations, the seizure of prominent figures connected with the government and particularly hated by the population.

On the question of urban support, the Marighelists, who later became the main strength of the Aliança Nacional Libertadora (ALN), argued that the task of guaranteeing military and political support from the town must be

²⁹² In underdeveloped America, the countryside was the basic area for armed struggle. See Che Guevara, Guerrilla warfare, (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1961).

carried out by the guerrilla organization itself. They adopted the Peruvian model. In Peru neither the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR) nor the Bejar's National Liberation Army (ELN) started as the armed wing of a reformist party; nor were they based, as in Bolivia, on an artificial alliance with the official Left. ²⁹³

Towards the end of 1968, the POLOP/MNR under its new name of the VPR, started to fight internal over on these questions. The result was that the militarist tendency won control of the whole movement. The VPR wanted to confine the revolutionary organization on the armed nuclei; the contrary tendency, which formed the majority of the National Liberation Commando (COLINA), an armed organization formed in 1967 from Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro groups within POLOP, saw the urban and rural armed detachments as the embryonic form of the proletarian party, which was to be constructed in and through armed struggle.

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The complete disagreement between the two tendencies on these issues led to the fragmentation of the Brazilian revolutionary movement. This split produced two distinct, but mutually dependent problems: how would a national

²⁹³ See Donald C. Hodges, The Latin American revolutions: Politics and strategy from Apro-Marxism to Guevarism, (New York, William Morrow, 1974).

²⁹⁴ See Donald C. Hodges, and Robert E. Shanab Abu, NLF - National Liberation Fronts: 1960-1970, (New York, William Morrow, 1972).

revolutionary organization be constructed? Similarly, how would a front against the dictatorship and imperialism be developed? Ultimately, the political fate of the Brazilian fighting organizations was to be determined by the social classes whose historic interests they claimed to represent.

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The concrete tasks that confronted the revolutionary organizations at any particular moment could not easily be deduced from the general interests of this or that social class. The armed resistance and the mass struggle of 1968 claimed to express the undifferentiated aspirations and demands of all sections of the population oppressed by the dictatorship. The urban parties did not function as the vanguard of the working class, nor of the middle classes, and still less were they the vanguard of the peasantry. Rather, these parties were the vanguard of most advanced sectors of the masses. ²⁹⁶

In consequence, three positions began to dominate the debate within the Brazilian Left over its programme for revolution. The supporters of national-democratic revolution claimed that Brazil had not yet fully accomplished its capitalist development. The task of the

²⁹⁵ See Maria H. Moreira, "Building democratic socialism: The Partido dos Trabalhadores in Brazil", in Monthly Review, Volume 42, No. 4, 1990.

²⁹⁶ See Scott Mainwaring, "Political parties and democratization in Brazil and the Southern Cone", op. cit.

revolution for them was therefore to sweep aside the two major obstacles to full development: international monopoly capital and the landed oligarchy.²⁹⁷ The supporters of immediate Socialist revolution, on the other hand, maintained that Brazil was essentially capitalist, and that the major task of the revolution was to lead the workers in a struggle against the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The ultra-Leftists meanwhile, succeeded in avoiding the main issue by failing to distinguish between the struggle against the political then dictatorship and the struggle against the bourgeoisie's class dictatorship. The only difference as far as they were concerned between the military oligarchy and previous bourgeois regimes was one of greater unpopularity and greater exposure.²⁹⁸

The role of the USA.

Since 1964, US relations with Brazil have evolved rather steadily, straightforwardly, and perhaps more predictably than any relationship between the US and a Latin American country. Brazil has usually been the best friend of the US. There have been two obvious reasons for this: on the one hand, Brazil has long regarded itself as something of a Southern Cone counterpart of the US, and this perception

²⁹⁷ See James F. Petras, "Development and revolution: Contradictions in the advance Third World countries - Brazil, South Africa, and Iran", in Studies in Comparative International Development, Volume 16, No. 1, 1981.

²⁹⁸ See Meter McDonough, Power and ideology in Brazil, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1981).

has been shared by the US. Throughout the nineteenth century, Brazil was the only Latin America country to applaud warmly the Monroe Doctrine. On the other hand, Portuguese Brazil has always, although to a much lesser degree in recent years, felt itself more or less at odds with Spanish America. Brazil has been willing to support US policy in the expectation of being supported by the US in its relations with its neighbours, especially Argentina.

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The US and Brazil diverged when, on the one hand, Goulart was disappointed by the financial support offered by the US, and on the other hand, when the State Department became concerned over the leftism of his followers. Washington tended to make loans conditional on Goulart's stabilizing the economy, which required unpopular austerity measures, and the checking of the growing influence of communists and near-communists in the administration and labour unions. In 1963 he turned sharply to the Left, embracing neutral, indeed almost not pro-Cuban and anti-US positions in foreign affairs, appealing to anti-capitalist and anti-foreign sentiments.

A course that the US found alarming was reversed by the pro-American officers of the armed forces; primarily those

²⁹⁹ See Monica Hirst, "The United States and middle powers in Latin America: Mexico and Brazil", in Robert Wesson, and Heraldo Muñoz, Latin American views of US policy, (New York, Praeger, 1986).

who had shared in the battles of World War II. The welcomed the coup eagerly, and moved rapidly to assist the new government. Since then, the amenability of Brazil to US policies and influence has consistently ebbed. The anti-leftist or anti-communist impulse of 1964 gradually diminished.

The Nixon and Ford administrations got along very well with Brazil by simply accepting Brazilian foreign and domestic policies without criticism. Jimmie Carter, however, proposed to "re-moralize" US foreign policy, particularly in two areas: human rights, and the spread of nuclear weapons and the potential for making them. Policy directives in both of these areas were directed at many countries, and Brazil was an inevitable target. Carter sorely tested the US's influence in Brazil and pushed US-Brazilian relations to the lowest point since 1964.

In 1981, despite a greater ideological affinity with the Reagan administration, Brazil remained studiously, almost ostentatiously aloof. While cool toward the US, Brazil cultivated relations especially commercial relations, with other Latin America countries, with Africa, and even with the ex-Soviet Union and ex-communist Eastern Europe. Under these circumstances, the ability of the US to influence Brazilian policy was not great, and in particular matters of interest, such as commercial questions, Brazil may have had a bargaining advantage, because its government was more

integrated. No congress looks over the shoulder of the president in Brazil insisting on respect for this or that particular interest. ³⁰⁰

Conclusion.

In Brazil, the 1960's began with the euphoria of the early Janio Quadros government, saw the nationalistic enthusiasm of the Goulart period, but also saw a military government ride the crest of a wave of improved economic conditions while restricting liberal democratic institutions and generally repressing the population.

The assumption, whether cast in Marxist or pluralist terms, was that the real structure of influence and power could be discovered by examining the manner in which landowners, businessmen, workers, and peasants organize and act to promote their interests. Studies of the labour movement ³⁰¹ called attention to the importance of patronal relationships in factories, and to the extraordinary importance of the official syndical and social security structures initiated by Vargas. It was thought that less radical analysis, exploring the possibility of collective action among peasants and rural labourers, might discover

³⁰⁰ See Robert Wesson, "Brazil: Independence asserted", in Robert Wesson, US influence in Latin America in the 1980s, (New York, Praeger, 1982).

³⁰¹ See Juárez R. Bandão, op. cit.; José A. Rodríguez, Sindicato e desenvolvimento no Brasil, (Sao Paulo, Difusao Européia do Livro, 1968).

that they were likely to be caught up in special ties with patrons and that the political movements among them in the early 1960's were more like followings than class-based movements.³⁰²

Other interpretations highlight dependency relationships and find the hidden hand of the oligarchy defending its privileges. Anthony Leeds portrays the political structures as no more than members of the elite coming together in informal groups which cut across conventional interest-group categories and which co-operate together. They maintain their position by keeping in close contact, and by doing so manipulate both people and resources.³⁰³ Other scholars suggest that these patterns are characteristic of transitional societies. They call attention to such phenomena as the popularity of charismatic leaders such as Vargas, Carlos Lacerda, or Brizzola, and the prominence in politics of such institutions as the military.³⁰⁴

The basic proposition of this scholarship is that the fundamental ground for the crystallization of political

³⁰² See Charles Wagley and Marvin Harris, "A typology of Latin American subcultures", in American Anthropology, No. 57, 1955; Berno Galjart, "Class and following in rural Brazil", in America Latina, 1964.

³⁰³ See Anthony Leeds, "Brazilian careers and social structures: A case history and a model " in Dwight B. Heath, and Richard N. Adams, Contemporary cultures and societies of Latin America, (New York, Random House, 1965).

³⁰⁴ See Lucian W. Pye, Aspect of political development: An analytic study, (Boston, Little Brown, 1966).

groupings in Brazil and Latin America in general, lies not in the shared interests of their members, in a defined interest, common occupation or ideology, but in their relationship with authority and the interchange of values between subordinates and superiors. Groups that have crystallized around relationships of authority and domination (vertical groups) behave very differently from those groups that take shape around shared interests (horizontal groups). ³⁰⁵

The first and the most general point made by scholars, is that the vertical nature of groups in Brazil constitutes a form of élitism which is very common and durable. Inequality is built into any system, though this fact does not necessarily entail the sharp economic inequalities found in Brazil. Socio-economic elites often overlap with political ones and make use of their high-level status by assuming the key brokerage roles at the top of the various vertical hierarchies.

Furthermore, the absence of autonomous and strongly organized peasant groups, and of similar working-class organizations limits the progress of potentially egalitarian trends. Thus, groups in Brazil, as elsewhere in

³⁰⁵ Horizontal group might include autonomous trade unions, ideological political parties, civic associations, and manufacturers' associations. On the other hand, vertical groups might include urban political machines, clientele, the military, the followers of a rural patriarch, and the officially sponsored professional association.

Latin America, look to the government and to political processes for the satisfaction of a wide range of needs. Dependency of this type is synonymous with political weakness. It is sometimes said that labour syndicates, for example, are powerless because they are built into the official structure, a judgement which appears confirmed in contemporary Brazil.³⁰⁶

Mobilization of the masses has not resulted in horizontal mass organization, because elites have either channelled this mobilization through pre-existing structures or have created new ones of the vertical type.³⁰⁷ What is striking in Brazil is the very great variety of structures represented and the multiple levels on which, and axes along which, the political universe crystallizes. Indeed, there are relatively few cases, such as Chile, Uruguay, Colombia, Venezuela, in which an analysis of political parties would be a very significant contribution to an understanding of the major power contenders.³⁰⁸ The situation seems quite the reverse in Brazil. Just as one can find no enduring bases of differentiation according to class, there have been no rigidly drawn lines between power-contending factions.

³⁰⁶ See Francois Bourricaud, "El ocaso de las oligarquias y la sobrevivencia del hombre oligárquico", en Aportes, No. 4, 1967.

³⁰⁷ See Karl Deutsch, op. cit.

³⁰⁸ See Douglas A. Chalmers, Parties and society in Latin America, (Washington, Paper presented to The American Political Science Association meeting, 1968).

The masses in dominant capitalism enter the democratization struggle in various ways and driven by various imperatives. Nevertheless, the result is that the masses can take possession of the political space opened up by intra-bourgeois disagreement. The economic changes and stresses of capitalist development befalling the working class are far more perturbing than those shouldered by the domestic bourgeoisie. The result is urban proletarianization and related rural depopulation, the rise of technical and managerial occupations and decline of traditional and petty-bourgeois categories, and endemic unemployment.

Such structural changes unleash popular struggles which take various forms. They may be fairly particular in nature, for example, strikes, showdowns, or legal corporate challenges within the framework sanctioned by the law. However economic crises in capitalist systems is particularly devastating to the masses. The political struggles that can be triggered by such crises constitute an indirect assault on the state. This struggle against the leadership is tempered by the exceptional forms of state power found in dominated capitalism.

The basic pattern of Brazilian instability appears to be rooted in fluidity rather than rigidity. In contrast to Argentina and other Latin American countries, Brazil, at least since the expansion of political participation, has not been a country where the president could firmly

establish himself with the leaders of a few major segments of the society, and have a guaranteed, relatively secure, tenure. The president has to give continued attention to military leaders, supporting them and securing their positions within the military organization.

With regard to the procedures for handling conflict, the most obvious fact concerning Brazil's experience is the rapid changes of constitutional provisions over the last forty years. Congress, the party system, the pattern of elections, executive-legislative relations and the like have often been altered. The superficiality of the institutionalization of conventional Liberal-democratic institutions during Brazil's experiment with democracy from 1956 to 1964 was slowed not only by their limitation by the military after 1964, but by the failure of significant segments of the population to offer even token resistance or to protest against their virtual abandonment. ³⁰⁹

URUGUAY.

Introduction.

It is misguided to regard a single variable as decisive in bringing about military intervention while overlooking

³⁰⁹ see Thomas Skidmore, Politics in Brazil 1930-1964, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1967).

others or considering them to be secondary. In the case of Uruguay, one should certainly not underestimate the impact of the Tupamaros, also known as the National Liberation Movement. This opposition group was highly significant in the acceleration, if not the bringing about, of military intervention, not only because the Tupamaros provided the armed forces with a serious excuse for confronting an increasingly chaotic situation, but also because their presence was a itself source of trauma and insecurity in a country where political violence had all but disappeared in the course of the twentieth century. In resorting to revolutionary violence, the Tupamaros legitimized the use of equally violent methods by the armed forces. Their actions also led to the declaration of a state of emergency under which the civilian government called the armed forces out of the barracks and onto the streets. ³¹⁰

The presence of a weak and essentially anti-democratic figure in the presidency was another factor of paramount importance in the creation of a vacuum that led to the seizure of power by the military, which, nevertheless, kept Juan María Bordaberry as a figurehead until 1976. In this connection it is important to point out that the Bordaberry government enjoyed little popular support. On the whole, the Uruguayan public was apathetic toward it and thus happy to accept greater participation by "honest" officers in the

³¹⁰ See A. S. Kileman, "Confined to barracks: Emergencies and the military in developing societies", in Comparative Politics, Volume 12, No. 2, 1980.

national life. This is not an uncommon phenomenon; when the governing authority is thought to lack legitimacy, a group with greater coercive powers often gains the upper hand. In this case, the inhibited and indecisive Uruguayan military could not help but be encouraged to do so by the favourable results of certain public opinion polls. ³¹¹

Political Background.

The Uruguayan party system antedates that of several European countries, for the two main parties, the "Blancos" and the "Colorados" are as old as the country itself, dating back to the early nineteenth century. These parties originated in the intra-oligarchical strife that revolved around the cleavage of national and local power. Whereas elsewhere in Latin America, with the exception of Colombia, the traditional nineteenth-century parties disappeared, in Uruguay they survived, largely because of the adoption of a welfare style of development before the class structure was consolidated. This facilitated the survival of the traditional parties. ³¹² Both parties are relatively non-ideological, with no significant ideological differences between them. Both parties have been characterized historically, by a high degree of internal

³¹¹ See Luis E. Gonzalez, "Uruguay 1980-1981: An unexpected opening", in Latin American Research Review, Volume 18, No. 3, 1983.

³¹² See Juan Rial, "Las reglas del juego electoral en Uruguay y sus implicancias", en Documento CIESU, No. 88, 1985.

fractionalization, to such an extent that some analysts have argued that the "Blancos" and the "Colorados" are not really parties, but rather federations of parties. ³¹³

The immobility of the party system in practical terms, combined with the rapid deterioration of respect for civil liberties during Jorge Pacheco and Bordaberry's presidencies, created the ideal conditions for terrorists to propagate the idea that bourgeois democracy was a sham. ³¹⁴ That led proponents of change to resort to increasingly ideological denunciations of the system. Although the programme of the "Broad Front" was simple reform, the Left's rhetoric was revolutionary, and it frightened the upper class. Furthermore, the actions of the Tupamaros guerrillas had a corrosive effect on the Uruguayan party system, eroding tolerance for opponents and creating a polarized ideological climate.

Thus, traditional politicians became more and more convinced that the guerrillas represented a threat to democracy. President Oscar Gestido, for example, issued an executive order banning the Socialist party, which had openly advocated guerrilla warfare for "national liberation". He was succeeded by Vice-President Pacheco,

³¹³ See Otto Kirchheimer, "The transformation of the Western European party systems", in Joseph La Palombara, and Myron Weiner, Political parties and political development, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1966).

³¹⁴ See L. Deriz, op. cit.

who introduced non-party technocrats into the cabinet, began to rule by emergency decree, and used the military to repress strikes. In July 1969, the Pacheco administration announced curbs on media coverage of terrorism. In September 1971, the effort to repress the Tupamaros guerrillas led to the suspension of the right of *Habeas Corpus* on the grounds that an internal war was in progress. The following year the National Assembly approved the "Law of State Security and Public Order", permitting military trials of alleged subversives. ³¹⁵

It is in this context that one must consider the meaning of "anti-communism" in Uruguay. Its impact has been especially felt in two areas: the labour movement and electoral politics. As the economic situation deteriorated, labour organized to protect its interests. Unions have a long and proud history in Uruguay, dating back to the turn of the century. In 1966 a new and more powerful trade-union confederation, the National Workers' Convention (CNT), was set up under the leadership of the Communist Party (PCU).

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As purchasing power declined drastically in the face of a record 135 per cent inflation rate in 1967, public and

³¹⁵ See Francisco E. Panizza, Uruguay - Batllismo y después: Pacheco, militares y tupamaros en la crisis del Uruguay Batllista, (Montevideo, Prisma, 1990).

³¹⁶ See Richard Clutterbuck, Protest and the urban guerrilla, (London, Cassell, 1973).

private employees began to make direct demands on government for increases in real wages. The number of strikes and work stoppages skyrocketed, but the government's response hardened. Troops were used to break utility strikes, and this made for rapidly deteriorating labour-management relations. Uruguay's industrialists came to view the destruction of the trade union movement as the dictatorship's most significant accomplishment, far more important than the dismantling of the Tupamaros, whom the industrialists saw as a nuisance, but nothing compared to the threat that the Communist-led unions represented to their interests. ³¹⁷

The Guerrilla.

The genesis of the Tupamaros ³¹⁸ can be traced back to around 1960 when Raúl Sendic, as a member of the Socialist Party of Uruguay (PSU), devoted his energies to political and organizational work in the rural areas, which had been largely ignored by Leftist organizations which had traditionally directed their efforts at the urban masses. He understood that the only way to win the workers' confidence, to assimilate their problems, to speak their language, was to integrate oneself into their life and

³¹⁷ See Latin America Review of Books, Generals and Tupamaros: The struggle for power in Uruguay 1969-1973, (London, Latin American Newsletters and Books of Leeds, 1974).

³¹⁸ The name Tupamaro comes from Tupac Amarú, the famed Inca who during 1780-1781 fought the Spanish.

their work, and so he became a "peludo", as the local cane-cutters called themselves. After mobilizing and organizing the sugar-beet workers in the department of Paysandú, and the sugar-cane workers in Salto, both departments bordered by the Uruguay river which marks the frontier with Argentina, Sendic founded The Artigas Sugar Workers' Union (UTAA).³¹⁹

Among the Uruguayan Left it is understood that the group headed by Sendic operated as the armed branch of the Socialist Party, which had just emerged from an unsuccessful attempt in the elections, in alliance with nationalist elements of the petty bourgeoisie. Tupamaro membership was generally thought to be very diverse, ranging from semi-literate peasants to distinguished intellectuals and professionals, from unemployed and similarly socially isolated individuals to relatively high government officials, and from students in their late teens to mothers in their fifties. The Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN-Tupamaros) was a Marxist/Leninist organization, according to a "Manifiesto to Public Opinion" published in September 1970.³²⁰ In December of that year they announced their support for the "Broad Front", while also restating their conviction that it was impossible to achieve revolution through elections.

³¹⁹ See Huidobro E. Fernández, Historia de los Tupamaros, Tomo 1: Los orígenes, (Montevideo, Tae, 1988).

³²⁰ See Juventud Rebelde, La Habana, 8 June 1970.

The Tupamaros felt that the economic crisis that had resulted in productive stagnation, rising unemployment, and inflation, was caused by stagnation in the country's livestock and industrial sectors. The failure of the agricultural and industrial sectors to grow and expand was attributed mostly to inherent contradictions in, and malfunctions of Uruguay's primitive capitalist system. But the Tupamaros showed little interest in pointing to particular economic and political forces and circumstances, such as excessive and detrimental government tampering with market incentives and mechanisms, the burdens of heavy economic protectionism, the constraints of a small domestic market, and the existence of outdated economic institutions. They believed that little could be accomplished through minor administrative reforms. Rather, they proposed deep structural change that would affect the production, exchange, and distribution of the country's whole output. ³²¹

The Uruguayan Revolutionary Movement (MRO), created in April 1961 and one of the original members of the Frente Izquierda de Liberación (FIDEL), was declared illegal in December 1967 for advocating the overthrow of the government. MRO leader Ariel Collazo was repudiated by the FIDEL Executive Committee for allegedly supporting

³²¹ See Russell H. Brannon, The agricultural development of Uruguay, (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1969); Martin H. Finch, "Three perspectives on the crisis in Uruguay", in Journal of Latin America Studies, Volume 3, No. 2, 1971.

individual terrorist acts in November 1968, a charge he denied. Throughout 1970, Collazo was an outspoken advocate of a united front, though he stated in an interview with "Marcha", that armed and peaceful forms of struggle co-existed in Uruguay and neither had won out over the other. In December, the MRO commenced publication of its periodical "Liberación".

The PSU has existed since the early 1920's, but it was declared illegal in December 1967 when the government alleged that it had called for revolutionary violence at its Thirty-sixth congress. The PSU regarded itself as the party of the proletariat in Uruguay and was constantly at odds with the PCU, which also claims that distinction.³²² In 1969, disputes centred on the labour movement, with the PSU supporting the more militant minority line at the CNT congress. Late in December 1970, the PSU announced its support for the "Broad Front". According to José Díaz, the PSU expected the front to promote the social struggle, develop progressive ideas and popular organization's, and break down the structure of the traditional parties and the previous political system.

The Uruguayan Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARO) was founded in 1969. On 15 July 1970 the FARO released the first issue of its official organ, "El Guerrillero Oriental", which

³²² See Huidobro E. Fernández, Historia de los Tupamaros, Tomo 2: El nacimiento, (Montevideo, Tae, 1988).

contained the group's programme. It stated that two forms of struggle co-existed in Uruguay: traditional peaceful struggle, which it considered inferior; and the increasingly common use of firepower, which it considered by far the superior form of struggle. The programme called for revolutionaries to unite because only then would the working masses, who were still held back by reformism, also begin to join the people's war.

However, the Tupamaros considered violence to be legitimate since it was employed by a country's ruling elite to keep itself in power, the use of violence was a right of people who wish to revolt against their government.³²³ In this sense, political violence was viewed as an expression of society's internal power struggle and as a historically valid and natural way to achieve or retain political power. Violence was considered to be the most effective way to seize power in Uruguay. The Tupamaros felt that the objectives of their ideology were incompatible with the ideological goals of the government. Violence became the means for resolving that incompatibility.

In the context of the Tupamaro struggle, "guerrilla warfare" was seen as the most efficient way to channel violence in order to secure political power. Three main functions were assigned to it. Firstly, the destruction of

³²³ See Arturo C. Porzecanski, Uruguay's Tupamaros: The urban guerrilla, (New York, Praeger, 1973).

government forces through the demoralization and discrediting of the armed forces and the police. Secondly, the gathering of mass support for a popular uprising by cooperative tactics. ³²⁴ Guerrilla warfare was understood to be a temporary stage in the ideological confrontation between the Tupamaro movement and the government. The destruction of the government's forces was necessary before more strictly political battle could begin. Finally, guerrilla warfare was to prepare its manpower for the implementation of ideological objectives once the seizure of power was accomplished. This function involved the training of cadres in a close relationship with labour unions, which in Uruguay have traditionally been dominated by the Left. ³²⁵

The systematic use of violence through the actions of urban guerrillas was intended to facilitate the establishment of "power duality". This means that when the guerrillas established themselves in a position of power, they would not only represent a real threat to the *status quo* but also command loyalty and adherence from significant sectors of the population. In other words, this allows the organization to be seen as a parallel government. ³²⁶

³²⁴ See María E. Gilio, La guerrilla Tupamara, (La Habana, Casa de las Américas, 1970).

³²⁵ See Régis Debray, "Tupamaros: Aprender de ellos", en Casa de las Américas, Volume 12, No. 72, 1972.

³²⁶ See Omar Costa, Los Tupamaros, (México, Ancho Mundo, 1971).

Conclusion.

The Tupamaros first benefited from, and later were victimized by, the Uruguayan penchant for "myth-making". Extolling them for their efficiency, and given them a "Robin Hood" image, Uruguayans seemed proud that their guerrillas were the "best" in Latin America. However, after Mitrone's assassination this image deteriorated. With the onset of military dictatorship, Uruguayan public opinion began to blame the Tupamaros for the loss of democracy.

In fact, the Tupamaros were never as adept politically, ideologically, or tactically, as the public believed them to be, and they cannot be blamed for the dictatorship. The guerrillas must share responsibility for the escalating violence which increased the role, and so the political influence, of the armed forces in Uruguay. Yet they can not be held accountable for the theories and practices that were employed by Uruguay's rulers from 1973 until 1984. ³²⁷

In retrospect, the decision to refrain from their usual activities from October 1971 until April 1972 was a fatal error for the Tupamaros. Apparently wanting to broaden their base of support, the movement took a calculated risk and backed the Broad Front in the elections, but the Tupamaros never really believed that fundamental change

³²⁷ See María E. Gilio, The Tupamaros, (London, Secker and Warburg, 1972).

would occur in Uruguay through the ballot box. Their existence can be explained in part by their generation's frustration with electoral politics, the conservative nature of Uruguayan society, and the bleakness of their economic future.

When the Tupamaros finally escalated their offensive in April 1972, they faced a firmly entrenched administration backed by an increasingly well-equipped and adequately prepared military. Once they were given "carte-blanche" to get rid of the problem, the armed forces needed only three months to crush the guerrilla movement; by that time the latter had totally estranged itself from public opinion and was isolated from the liberal and leftist groups it had surfaced to support during the election.

Finally, as a general conclusion to our discussion of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, there are at least three principal explanations of the political processes that have occurred in the Southern Cone. The first two of these represent dichotomous positions: emphasis on the civil society and emphasis on the state. At one extreme, there are authors who highlight the determining weight of civil society and the pressures generated by its inherent dynamism. With this kind of explanation there distinct arguments can often be found.

Firstly, economic interpretations that attempt to link the erosion of the legitimacy of a regime to the effects of the economic crisis. ³²⁸ Thus, Cesar Caviedes emphasizes the importance of economic performance for the preservation of the legitimacy of these political regimes. ³²⁹ There is, however, a fundamental ambiguity in this type of economic explanation, because the existence of a recession or of stagnation presents policy-makers in an authoritarian regime with two alternatives: either to seek greater support through re-democratization or to move in the opposite direction, accompanying austerity measures with a tightening up and accentuation of its authoritarian control over political life. In Brazil, for example, the economic argument can hardly be accepted because growth rates under the Ernesto Geisel government were still relatively high, even if they were lower than during the Emílio Medici government.

Secondly, arguments that stress the pressures triggered by structural transformations of society, namely industrial modernization and rapid urban development. As a consequence of these changes in Brazil, there has been a great explosion of social and political demands throughout society and a revitalization of social movements. The

³²⁸ See Nicos Poulantzas, La crisis des dictatures: Portugal, Grece, Espagne, (Paris, Maspero, 1975).

³²⁹ See Cesar N. Caviedes, The Southern Cone, realities of the authoritarian state, (New Jersey, Rowman and Allanheld Publishers, 1984).

incapacity of the authoritarian government to cope with these new and more encompassing demands gave rise to feelings of dissatisfaction and distrust towards the regime. ³³⁰

Thirdly, the contention that of "transition from above" is distinct from "transitions by breakdown" and "transitions through withdrawal", because it refers to situations in which the government controls the whole process of liberalization. Eduardo Viola and Scott Mainwaring assert that Brazilian developments reflected the decision of the authoritarian elites, who were motivated by the desire to construct a legitimate political order and by the perception that the moment was particularly favourable for an open political system. ³³¹ The feasibility of this type of transition would depend on the kind of both the authoritarian political culture that prevails in Brazil, and its tradition of conflict resolution through inter-elite agreements and "conciliation from above".

Between these perspectives, there is a third principal explanation. According to this point of view, the

³³⁰ This kind of interpretation is very widespread among parties and political groups in the Opposition Front. See Luis C. Pereira, O colapso de uma alianca de classes, (Sao Paulo, Editora Brasiliense, 1978); Luis C. Pereira, "Seis interpretacoes sobre o Brasil", in Dados, Volume 25, No. 3, 1982.

³³¹ See Eduardo Viola, and Scott Mainwaring, "Transition to democracy: Brazil and Argentina in 1980", in University of Notre Dame, Working Paper, No. 21, 1984.

liberalization process was the result of two basic and confluent dynamics: a dynamic of negotiation and conciliation directed by the elites and a dynamic of social pressure, triggered by social demands.³³² These two dynamics were articulated by political organizations such as pressure groups, political parties, and civil associations. Thus, no matter how enlightened the Geisel administration might have been, its disintegration was in large part a response to the important and continuous opposition it face. In this way, electoral studies demonstrate the electorates capacity for resistance.

The so-called "political opening", reflects the fact that projects of political change are often conceived by the leaders of an authoritarian regime as a means to reconstitute its bases of support in a gradual and slow process of liberalization which it controls. The success of this strategy depends largely on the government's capacity to retain the power of initiative and by doing so damage the popularity of opposition groups. to the detriment of opposition groups.

The reconstruction of the regime through political transformation depends not only on the elimination of arbitrary and illegitimate legislation but also on the creation of a new legal and economic structure able to

³³² See Carlos Hneus, La transición a la democracia en España: Implicancias para América Latina, (Chapel Hill, University of Notre Dame, 1983).

incorporate fully the working classes and the masses of the society. Social pressure for a substantial expansion of citizenship rights must always generate questions about the legitimacy of any political order.

Military/authoritarian governments have, at various times, used three defences against the accusation of "illegitimacy". At first, they used "national security" doctrines and took advantage of the military's new professionalism.³³³ These doctrines were sometimes given a developmentalist bias; that is, development would change the social structure, stabilize the social order and so undermine subversive activity. In other cases, these doctrines were simply used to they simply justify counter-revolutionary suppression. In extreme forms, such doctrines do bear some resemblance to totalitarianism, with its emphasis on permanent warfare against the enemy within.

The military/political leadership in these countries was, after a few years, eager to base its rule on something other than suppression. Seeking some consent for its rule, the leadership looked for an alternative source of legitimacy while giving increased importance to the notion of legitimacy itself. One answer was developmentalism; the

³³³ The changed nature of military rule in Latin America is related to the changed nature of the military. The roots of this change go back many years; to the development of the armed forces of South America as highly differentiated institutional bodies. See Alfred Stepan, The military in politics; changing patterns in Brazil, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1971).

government was to be tolerated not so much for what it was but for what it did. A few years of rapid economic growth was enough for pundits to talk about the "Brazilian miracle". One of the reasons why military governments have been less able to sustain themselves in Argentina is perhaps that they have been unable to produce an "economic miracle" of any kind or, in the case of the post-1976 governments, to prevent a radical deterioration of the economy. Yet the Uruguayan regime, economically quite successful, also failed to gain popular support. The economic explanation should not be taken beyond its limits.

Growth itself then, was not enough. Once the state of siege years which followed the coup had passed, the political forces of the establishment were keen to see government put on a more ordered and regulated basis.³³⁴ Such order and regularity also appealed to those military leaders who wanted to keep the security police under control. In order to achieve this, a movement away from pure force is necessary, which, in turn, necessitates a degree of institutionalization. In two cases, the transition from pure authoritarianism to a system which was partially legitimized by a degree of popular support was made successfully: Pinochet in Chile won two plebiscites and the Brazilian regime acquired electoral underpinning of a kind.

³³⁴ See Meter McDonough, op. cit.; Manuel A. Garretón, Procesos políticos en un regimen autoritario: Dinámicas de institucionalización y oposición en Chile 1973-1980, (Santiago, FLASCO, 1981).

In each case, it was implied that full democracy could be restored at some future date if the electorate refrained from upsetting the process now with a negative vote. Thus, these regimes became explicitly transitional and sought to bargain with the moderate opposition on the basis that if things went smoothly, civilian rule could be progressively established.

In other cases this gambit failed. The Uruguayan authorities managed to lose their own plebiscite in 1980. They too had called for a very gradual return to a qualified form of democracy. Following this defeat, the military reluctantly accepted a more rapid return to democracy by elections. In Argentina, the military twice failed not only to prolong its rule, but even to exert a minimal degree of control over the transition.

The Onganía regime under-estimated the degree of opposition it faced and proved unable or unwilling to secure its position by repressing that opposition; between 1970 and 1973 the military sought to achieve first an alliance with organized labour and especially the Peronist organization, and then a return to democracy. It completely lost control of the whole process. The post-1976 regime began to try and win support for its rule under Roberto Viola, but his overtures to politicians fell victim to the severe economic crisis of that year. Finally, General Leopoldo Galtieri sought to win support for his regime with a campaign of

military conquest; this did not prove a success and the military regime broke up in disarray.

CHILE - BOLIVIA.

In the 1960's, there were major changes in the political institutions of many Latin American countries. Some assumed that economic progress and social development would gradually but surely bring about some form of liberal democracy in these countries; others, after the Cuban revolution, expected that the contradictions of Latin American society, exacerbated by its dependence on foreign powers and international economic structures, would lead to a socialist revolution and some form of popular democracy. But in the 1970's, as the military regimes set aside liberal democratic institutions and pre-empted or suppressed revolutions, "authoritarian-corporative" regimes emerged as the dominant form. ³³⁵

Repeated transformations imply that political institutions are considered tentative and are viewed as instrumental, and not as permanent fixtures. Many problems which might be resolved by reference to a fixed set of procedures or laws are likely to be dealt politically. ³³⁶ Without abandoning

³³⁵ See Philippe C. Schmitter, "Paths to political development in Latin America", in Douglas A. Chalmers, Changing Latin America, (New York, Academy of Political Science, 1972).

³³⁶ See Martin C. Needler, Latin American politics in perspective, (Princeton, Van Nostrand, 1963); Irving L. Horowitz, "Political legitimacy and the institutionalization of crisis in Latin America", in Comparative Political Studies, No. 1, 1968; Samuel

references to certain elements of an "ever-present conflict", each social class comes to define political legitimacy in its own way, emphasizing a particular groups's interests. In the traditional programme of the defensive or reactive type of military coup, a "holding action", is usually explained to the population as a necessary measure to deal with the solution to the problems of maintaining the regime. Furthermore, when dealing with a programme aimed at laying the groundwork for a new social order, attention must be directed to the capacity of any one group to achieve hegemony.

CHILE.

Introduction.

As in other Latin American countries, the debate about the transition from dependent capitalism to socialism has been a major theoretical problem for Marxists in Chile. Their discussion took a somewhat unusual form because pre-1973 Marxists in Chile opted to pursue the "peaceful route" rather than the insurrectionary route. This strategy has not been common in less developed countries, where the struggle for the seizure of power has most often taken the form of guerrilla warfare, as in Cuba, Nicaragua, and

Huntington, op. cit.

Colombia.

Despite basic agreement on the "vía pacífica", serious theoretical as well as personal and sectarian differences existed between the two largest Left-wing parties; the Communist Party (PC) and the Socialist Party (PS). The two parties had always clashed on a number of critical issues, and these clashes came to a head during the three years of the Popular Unity (UP) government. The limits of legality, the scope and speed of the transition process, and the role of the then Soviet Union in the socialist world, all became bones of contention. ³³⁷

The period from the 1930's through to 1973, was distinguished by a basic agreement among Left-wing parties. The transition to socialism was to be achieved peacefully, rather than through insurrection. Agreement on this central issue allowed Left-wing parties to work together, mainly through electoral alliances. Unity of purpose among the forces of the Left was understood to be necessary, as no one party could attain victory at the polls by itself. Thus, the formation of the UP coalition and Salvador Allende's election as president in 1970 was the culmination of many years of effort on their part to come to power

³³⁷ See Benny Pollack, Mobilization and socialist politics in Chile, (Liverpool, Latin American Centre of the University of Liverpool, 1980).

through the existing rules of the political game. ³³⁸

The PC consistently opted for a broad electoral coalition and was firmly committed to change through the electoral process. The PS, on the other hand, at times showed impatience with the legal route. The ideological differences, once they had developed, persisted through changes in party leadership, factional infighting and party splintering. ³³⁹ One issue over which serious differences emerged was the role of the ex-Soviet Union and the international stance of the parties. Another, heightened by the success of Fidel Castro, centred on the type of electoral coalition and class-base that would be necessary for the successful transition to socialism. The PS saw itself as an authentically Latin American radical party with ideological aspirations based on Chilean and South American needs and ideals rather than on foreign ones. ³⁴⁰ The PC, on the other hand, quickly acknowledged the Soviet Union as the head of the International Communist Movement. They had been prime movers in the formation of the 1938 "Frente Popular".

³³⁸ See Julio Faundez, Marxism and democracy in Chile: From 1932 to the fall of Allende, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1988).

³³⁹ See H. Timmermann, "The Communist party of Chile: History, current strategy, perspectives", in Osteuropa, Volume 37, No. 3, 1987.

³⁴⁰ See Julio C. Jobet, and Alejandro C. Rojas, Pensamiento teórico y político del Partido Socialista, (Santiago de Chile, Quimantu, 1972).

In the period after 1973, the Left confronted a new situation that had been largely created out of the earlier debate.³⁴¹ Yet immediate problem was not making the transition to socialism but ending the dictatorship in Chile. There were, however, signs of change in the 1980's: a new independent labour movement, led by Rodolfo Seguel of the copper miners' union, mobilized workers to press for labour rights and for an end to the dictatorship. The processes of democratization in neighbouring Argentina and nearby Brazil served as examples and encouragements but however, efforts in Chile took place in a different environment, where popular attempts to influence politics were met with clubs, water cannons, guns, and internal exile or detention.

Ideologically, the Chilean Left had completed a sinuous journey from the "resistance societies" and revolutionary anarchism of the turn of the century, through the mild reformism of the Popular Front (1928-1941) and creole populism of Carlos Ibáñez (1952-1958), to a socialism that combined Marxist/Leninist commitments, a Western European parliamentary model and the anti-imperialism and nationalism of a Third World revolution. Along the way, the Left had tried a variety of political strategies, with varying results. It had sponsored general strikes and a military coup, endorsed class coalitions and proletarian

³⁴¹ See Jeffrey M. Puryear, Thinking politics: Intellectuals and democracy in Chile 1973-1988, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

unity, formed national labour confederations and local community organizations, relied on élitist vanguards and mass parties, engaged in guerrilla warfare and parliamentary politics, embraced ideological purity and programmatic compromise, proffered revolutionary zeal and popular promises. ³⁴²

Some of these strategies had brought the Left transitory gains and even governmental participation, but none had won them power. Some of them had secured their working-class supporters modest increases in living standards, but none had brought them socialism. Others had failed utterly and on several occasion had provoked the ruthless suppression of leftist movements and their mostly working-class supporters.

Historical Background.

The First World War brought great prosperity to Chile, due to record sales of copper and foodstuffs. It swelled the numbers of the middle-class, who began to act as a counterweight to the aristocracy and found its political expression in the radical party. Towards 1920 then, it was possible to distinguish three clear social classes in Chile: the peasantry cultivating land that did not belong to it; a skilled urban working-class, fully class-conscious and already organized into trade unions; and, right at the

³⁴² See L. Deriz, op. cit.

bottom, drifting between the countryside and the town, a vast class of illiterates doing all sorts of jobs or none at all. ³⁴³

Modern Chile very soon developed a political spectrum similar to that of France: a Communist Party strictly obedient to Moscow; a Socialist Party that began by being reformist but became Marxist in 1948 and then Leninist in 1967; a Radical Party which was Masonic, progressive and anti-clerical; and, finally, after the Second World War, and at the same time as such organizations became common in Europe, a Christian-Democratic Party. Comparisons with France are not unjustified. As early as 1938, barely two years after France, Chile had its first "Popular Front" it was formed, like the French one, by an alliance between the radical, Socialist and Communist parties, and with the support of the unions. ³⁴⁴

In the presidential elections of 1938, the Front brought its candidate, Pedro Aguirre Cerda, to power, with 39 per cent of the votes. The Popular Front won again with Juan Antonio Ríos in the 1942 presidential elections, with 41 per cent. Dissatisfied with what they thought of as Ríos' weakness, the Socialist-Communist bloc succeeded in replacing him in the next elections with a man with more

³⁴³ See Carlos Altamirano, Dialéctica de una derrota, (México, Siglo XXI, 1977).

³⁴⁴ See Jeffrey M. Puryear, op. cit.

backbone, Gabriel Gonzáles Videla. He discovered to his cost the reality of Communism, that is, the meaninglessness of signatures at the bottom of alliance agreements. The Communists entered such agreements solely in order to further their own cause. He dismissed his Communist ministers on 30 September 1948, and passed through Congress a "Law in Defense of Democracy" which outlawed the Communist party. Thereafter, the Communist Party remained underground for ten years, until, in 1958, the then president, Carlos Ibáñez del Campo, abolished the law and once again legalized the Communist Party.

The Right-wing voters in the 1958 elections managed, after having three radical presidents, to bring into office their own candidate, Jorge Alessandri. Yet the "Popular Front" had still won 44 per cent of the votes. Alessandri's term, despite its many and varied achievements, failed to bring about a long-term Right-wing government. The Christian-Democrats, under Eduardo Frei's leadership, moved to the Left, and there was a strong slide to the Left within the Radical party, under the influence of the Communists.

Frei's first concern was nationalization and buying back the mines from the American companies who were operating them. A social security system like that of France was set up. Those trade unions that had allowed themselves to be absorbed into the Communist-controlled Central Unitaria de Trabajadores received the regime's approval. The

universities were staffed with more progressive professors. Under the slogan of "all land to those who work it", a start was made on a great land reform by confiscating with compensation all estates of more than 80 basic hectares. These lands were distributed without payment to the farmers who worked them. Large sectors of the middle-classes moved to the Left, in the belief that it was in this direction that history was heading.

The historical development of capitalism in Chile had produced a phenomenon also to be observed in the rest of Latin America; a decrease in the peasantry, an increase in the middle-class sectors of society, and a small growth in the proletariat.³⁴⁵ A distinct middle class emerged in Chilean history, when it offered its support for Alessandri's modernizing programmes. This enabled him to transform the oligarchical state, which had existed in Chile for almost a century. Their political instability however, led them subsequently to support the governments of the Radical Party, only to abandon this party in favour of the Christian-Democrats, who then became the most powerful. Indeed the Christian Democrats increasingly shifted towards being the representative of the mass movement which began appearing within the anti-UP

³⁴⁵ In 1930, Chilean industry took up 15.7 per cent of the labour force, while the service sector accounted for 19.6 per cent. In 1970, the percentage taken up by industry had grown slightly, to reach 16.6 per cent, while the service sector had developed substantially, reaching 28 per cent of the Chilean labour force. See Carlos Altamirano, *op. cit.*

opposition. ³⁴⁶

The incorporation of the middle class into politics allowed a system to developed, in which they acquired a series of privileges which strengthened their position. The expansion of the state involved the building up of an extensive bureaucracy, and public investment in education led to an enormous increase in the professional sector. All this had economic repercussions in the service sector, which in turn increased the number and the importance of the middle sections of society. At the same time, the industrialization process enabled the influence of the middle classes to extend over sections of the working class. ³⁴⁷

Specialized strata of the working classes, protected by powerful trade unions, attained incomes well above the average, and acquired privileges denied to their fellow members of the working classes. They adopted patterns of consumption similar to those of the professional classes. Their voting habits also began to change. The workers in the copper mines for example, who, while electing Communists or Socialists for their trade-union leadership, knowing that these would protect their economic interest,

³⁴⁶ See Scott Mainwaring, "Political parties and democratization in Brazil and the Southern Cone" op. cit.

³⁴⁷ See Verónica Schild, "Recasting popular movements: Gender and political learning in neighbourhood organizations in Chile", in Latin American Perspectives, Volume 21, No. 2, 1994.

would frequently vote, in presidential elections, not for the Left, but for the Right-wing or reformist candidates.

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In the period of the "Popular Front", the middle classes supported policies of state intervention for industrial development and advanced social legislation. However, once they attained the leading positions in the state and in industry, their commitment to the maintenance of the existing order became more solid, neutralizing those tendencies towards evolutionary social change. In consequence, until the 1960's, the middle classes were chiefly linked to the service sector, generating a demand for technicians and professionals.

The Guerrilla.

With the successive shift of governments that began to characterize Chilean politics, Leftism had reached its extreme limit. The Christian-Democratic party itself was split when its extremists broke away to form the Movement for United Popular Action (MAPU). But other groups also emerged. The most notable of these was the Left Revolutionary Movement (MIR), which was to play a very

³⁴⁸ See Peter Winn, Weavers of revolution: The Yarur workers and Chile's road to Socialism, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1986).

important role under the Allende government. ³⁴⁹

The Chilean Communist party is the oldest and most experienced Communist party in Latin America, with between 30 and 40,000 members, 50 per cent of whom were working-class, organized in "cells" and "districts". The Socialist Party, formed in 1931, was composed, in the main, of primary school teachers, large numbers of civil servants and white-collar workers, a few skilled craftsman, idealistic young members of the bourgeoisie, and some farmers. During the 1960's it was the Socialist Party that developed into the principal "hot-bed" of revolutionary thought. ³⁵⁰

The combined strength of the Socialist and Communist parties would not have been sufficient in itself to bring the "Popular Front" to power in Chile. The Radical party had always been a traditional party with its principal power base among the progressive middle/classes. As early as the end of the nineteenth century, it had begun to compete for power with the Conservative and Liberal parties. It advocated free enterprise and was against economic collectivism. Its heart was to the Left and its wallet to the Right. For the Radical party the state stood

³⁴⁹ See Mireya L. Villa, La república socialista de Chile: De 1932 y sus proyecciones, (Caracas, Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, 1975).

³⁵⁰ See Charles Bergquist, Labour in Latin America: Comparative essays on Chile, Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1986).

above the social classes and played the role of impartial arbiter. It was active in promoting a non-religious and compulsory public education system.

The MAPU, the Christian-Democratic Left and the MIR all used inflated rhetoric and feverish violence. These groups were accepted as full partners in the Popular Unity Front, and were given seats in the government. The MIR remained outside the government, but established close links with it, and provided it with the "cheerleaders". The MIR was a military party, organized in a pyramid with "cells" at its base, operational rather than deliberative. It created three organizations, each one specializing in different activities: the Movimiento de los Pobladores Revolucionarios (MPR), which worked among the inhabitants of the shanty towns; the Frente de los Trabajadores Revolucionarios (FRT), operating principally among the workers in the industrial belt of Santiago; and the Movimiento de Campesinos Revolucionarios (MCR), which concerned itself with dispossessing the landowners.³⁵¹

The MIR's development can be divided into two stages: before and after Allende's 1970 victory. It arose as a result of the Left's electoral defeat of 1964, and began as a small group which developed exclusively among intellectuals and so in isolation from the masses. Between

³⁵¹ See Allan Angell, Politics and the labour movement in Chile, (London, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1972).

1967 and 1970, it carried out at least fourteen armed actions, which gave it a certain "romantic image". However, its links with the masses remained extremely tenuous. Not yet presenting even the remote possibility of posing a threat to the main Left-wing parties, its growth was nevertheless watched anxiously by the PC, which, from the earliest moments attacked the MIR strongly, rejecting any contacts or agreement with the new movement and refusing entrance to MIR members.

The relationship between the institutions and the population at this time can be illustrated by the fact that the institutions which maintained the highest degree of internal cohesion were precisely those which retained strong representational links to particular social blocs. This was the case with the government, which expressed the views of one side in the conflict, and equally with the Judiciary, which exclusively stood for the other. However, it was not the case with Parliament, in which the two blocs confronted each other, but the fact that the opposition held a majority in Congress enabled it to use this organ for its own ends.

Therefore, the traditional practice of the Chilean Left and the strategic option chosen by the UP made it clear that the ideological, political, and economic conditions in Chile were considered inappropriate for an insurrectionary or guerrilla strategy. The UP had opted to go in an

institutional and political direction. ³⁵² Juan Garcés described Allende's initial tactical proposals and their discussion within the UP's political committee. Allende urged that together with the public presentation of its socio-economic project the UP should seek the means to implement it through the dissolution of Parliament and the holding of fresh elections or through a referendum to amend the Constitution. ³⁵³

Already by July 1971, the increasing polarization of social forces in Chile had started rapidly to reduce the scope for intermediate groups to manoeuvre. They began to coalesce around the two principal poles. The emergence of the Christian Left (IC) was a prelude to the split of the Radical party, affecting the alliance between the working class and the middle sectors affiliated to the UP. The withdrawal of the Left-wing from the Christian-Democratic party abolished the centre which had existed in the space between the traditional Right and the UP. ³⁵⁴

On the other hand, after 1970, the commitments of the intellectual Left changed. This reflected the internal

³⁵² See Juan E. Garcés, El estado y los problemas tácticos en el gobierno de Allende, (Buenos Aires, Siglo XXI, 1973).

³⁵³ See Juan E. Garcés, Allende y la experiencia Chilena, (Madrid, Ariel, 1976).

³⁵⁴ See Allan Angell, Political mobilization and class alliances in Chile: 1970-1973, (Rotterdam, Institute for the New Chile, 1978).

dynamics of the pre-revolutionary situation. The intellectual Left was conditioned by the political changes being instigated by the UP. Through its intellectuals, the Left tried to find new cultural values for a social process in which the working class was becoming an actor for the first time. ³⁵⁵

To sum up then, several events in 1969 created the conditions that led to the formation of the UP. The Left-wing faction of the Christian-Democratic Party (PDC) quit the party and founded the MAPU on anti-capitalist principles. Then, the 16th Congress of the Radical Party, held in June, adopted a progressive line and expelled the right-wing elements of the party. In the same month, the National Plenum of the PS reiterated its position regarding the Chilean revolution, but amended it concerning the acceptance of other political forces in the Workers' Front. This made way for MAPU and PR, which accepted the need for Socialism, albeit from a Social-Christian and Social-Democratic perspective. On 7 October, in the declaration signed by Luis Corvalán and Aniceto Rodríguez, the PC and the PS made an appeal to the Radicals and Social-Democrats, while the Independent Popular Action (API) and the MAPU proposed the drafting of a common programme. ³⁵⁶

³⁵⁵ See Jeffrey M. Puryear, op. cit.

³⁵⁶ See Richard L. Harris, "Marxism and the transition to Socialism in Latin America", in Latin American Perspectives, Volume 15, No. 1, 1988.

In Chile the fundamental theoretical presupposition was that it would be possible to transform the social character of the state without destroying it. This assumed, of course, that the institutional order was sufficiently flexible to accept a Socialist transformation. Thus, the UP's political strategy was based on the view that the transition to Socialism would involve a series of steps. The first was to win an electoral majority on the basis of a programme which not only promised to respect the interests of small and medium-sized property owners, but guaranteed their advancement.

This programme was based on a narrow, economic view of the power of the bourgeoisie. It expected the destruction of the economic power of the dominant classes to be followed, automatically, by destruction of their political power. Therefore, the UP reassured institutions such as the armed forces, the Catholic church, and the professional organizations that their autonomy would be respected. Furthermore, the UP's political strategy hoped to isolate those who were considered as the principal enemies; the big landowners, the monopolist, and the imperialist, and to secure the support of important sectors of the middle-classes, eventually building a stable alliance with them.

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For the UP, a pre-requisite for the winning power was

³⁵⁷ See Julio Faundez, op. cit.

having control over the fundamental means of production, to be achieved through their expropriation. According to this conception, changing economical relations took priority over changing social relations. The political and ideological structure of society was viewed simply as a reflection of economic structures. In other words, in Chile, economic policy was seen as a way of conquering political power. Firstly would come the economic recovery in each of the three spheres of ownership: a nationalized sector, the mixed and the private enterprise sector. Secondly, the wage-earners' share of the national income would rapidly increase and a substantial expansion in public spending would follow. Thirdly, social and industrial relations would be remodelled along socialist lines, so that while the state would control the manufacturing and mining sectors, the latifundia would be abolished through a drastic implementation of the existing agrarian reform law. ³⁵⁸

However, for the PC the revolutionary process had two stages. In the first, the revolution had to concentrate on democratic, anti-imperialist, anti-latifundist, and anti-monopoly tasks. Then, in the second stage, which required a different programme and a new alliance, the UP government should be seen as only laying down the basic requirements for the transition to Socialism. On the other hand, the

³⁵⁸ See Colin Henfrey, and Bernardo Sory, Chilean voices: Activists describe their experiences of the Popular Unity period, (Hassocks, The Harvester Press, 1977).

majority of the PS viewed the process as consisting of a single stage, in which democratic and socialist tasks were articulated together. The Allende government was thought by the PS to provide the basis for the seizure of power. ³⁵⁹

The PC, the Radical Party, Allende himself, the Worker-Peasant MAPU (MAPU O-C), ³⁶⁰ and the API all adhered to the first of these two strategic approaches. These groups and individuals viewed the foreign capital, the industrial bourgeoisie monopoly, and the agrarian oligarchy as the dominating forces in Chilean society. These then were identified as the main enemies of the revolution, though medium-sized and small factions of the bourgeoisie played a secondary role. It was also believed that a consistently developed class struggle could modify the class content of the state, while leaving its form unchanged. ³⁶¹

Therefore, through the accumulation of positions within the state, the working class could advance in a process which would culminate in its establishment as a dominant class. In consequence, the armed forces were seen as adopting the ideologically motivated position of non-intervention in

³⁵⁹ See Augusto Varas, El Partido Comunista en Chile, (Santiago de Chile, CESOC-FLASCO, 1988).

³⁶⁰ MAPU Obrero-Campesino was the consequence of a MAPU split in 1973.

³⁶¹ See Morris J. Blachman, and Ronald G. Hellman, Terms of conflict: Ideology in Latin American politics, (Philadelphia, Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1977).

party politics and of supporting governments of legitimate democratic origin. The social origins of the officer corps, would not, it was thought, play a role.

The second of these strategic lines was supported by the PS and the MAPU, and outside the UP by the MIR. These groups rejected the idea that there could be any possibility of establishing an accord with a democratic or national sector of the bourgeoisie, asserting that this class as a whole had become a satellite of international capitalism. The state was seen as an instrument of oppression, regardless of the specific characteristics it assumed. The executive was seen as a mechanism for developing the class consciousness of oppressed sections of the population. Therefore, they needed to create forms of popular power that would be seen as alternatives to the state, a task which necessitated an autonomous military apparatus. ³⁶²

As far as economics were concerned, the first strategy envisaged a gradual transformation of the economy, the second approach favoured the decisive establishment of an area of social ownership encompassing every significant entity in production and distribution. This second tendency maintained a critical position towards the government, and asserted that a sufficient social base already existed to

³⁶² See Mario Zañartu, and John J. Kennedy, The overall development of Chile, (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1969).

enable a frontal attack on Congress and the Judiciary. ³⁶³

Finally, the reasons for the failure of the Chilean Left lay in its inability to harness effectively the motivation of the working class. When the confrontation eventually arrived, the structures of popular power could not be mobilized because of the extent of sectarian conflict within the Left. ³⁶⁴ The PC, which was strong at trade union level, accused the "cordones industriales" of being parallel institutions, and rejected the notion of popular power. On the other hand, the PS gave every kind of support to the cordon movement, the leadership of which was Socialist. The MIR, lacking any significant presence among the working class, promoted the "community councils" instead of the cordons. These councils were mainly composed of the unemployed, students, housewives, and semi-proletarians. Further, the MIR's policy was to pull the government towards its own position, imposing on it a policy of *fait accompli*. ³⁶⁵

The role of the USA.

³⁶³ See Federico G. Gil; Ricardo E. Lagos, and Henry A. Landsberger, Chile at the turning point, (Philadelphia, Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1979).

³⁶⁴ See Maurice Zeittin, The civil wars in Chile: On the bourgeois revolution that never were, (New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1984).

³⁶⁵ See Ricardo O. Zipper, Politics and ideology in Allende Chile, (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 1989).

The changes in US military relations with Chile and the rest of Latin America under the Kennedy administration were institutionally separate from the "Alliance for Progress" but conceptually related to it in its anti-Communist purposes. Arguing that earlier ideas about the need to have an effective means of defending the hemisphere from external aggression were no longer applicable, the State Department Policy Planning Staff and the Defense Department recommended that the Latin America military receive training in "counter-insurgency" to counteract the threat of Cuban-inspired guerrilla activity. ³⁶⁶

The US Caribbean Command in the Canal Zone was renamed the "Southern Command", and training programmes for the Latin American military were initiated at the newly renamed US "Army School of the Americas" at the Canal Zone's Fort Gulick. Besides the short courses at Fort Gulick, the Latin American officers also took technical courses at US military bases, such as Fort Bragg in North Carolina and Fort Ord in Kansas. Colonels and lieutenant colonels were also sent to the newly established Inter-American Defense College at Fort McNair in Washington, DC., for ten-month courses on strategy and social science. Of particular interest to the Chilean Navy was the initiation of "Operation Unitas", an annual exercise in which US Navy

³⁶⁶ See Heraldo Muñoz, and Carlos Portales, "The United States and Chile", in Robert Wesson, and Heraldo Muñoz, Latin American views of US policy, (New York, Praeger, 1986).

units sail south along one coast and north along the other and are joined by ships from each country for joint manoeuvres.³⁶⁷

Chilean participation in these programmes was substantial. In 1963 it received \$ 25 million in military aid for training and equipment, all of it in the form of grants rather than loans. Between 1966 and 1973 it sent 1,100 Chilean officers to the Canal Zone and the US for training, and since, initially, the military aid was free, it is not surprising that the US became Chile's principal supplier of military hardware. The expansion of military ties with Chile was accompanied by an increase in the activities of the CIA, because of the existence of a large Communist Party in Chile. The country had already become the object of CIA attention in the 1950's.³⁶⁸

The US has long been willing to fund political parties abroad. Such funding began in France and Italy after World War II to support Democratic Socialists and Christian Democrats as alternatives to the Stalinist parties in those countries. In the 1950's, the US again became willing to fund political parties, but this time in Latin American. In Chile this funding began as a response to the ex-Soviet-

³⁶⁷ See John Childs, Unequal alliance: The inter-American military system 1938-1978, (Boulder, Westview Press, 1980).

³⁶⁸ See Paul E. Sigmund, "Chile: Successful intervention?", in Robert Wesson, US influence in Latin America in the 1980s, (New York, Praeger, 1982).

funded international front groups such as the World Federation of Trade Unions, the International Union of Students, and the World Federation of Democratic Youth.³⁶⁹ Until 1967 this funding remained a well-kept secret, and it led to the development of links with influential internal groups in many countries, including Chile. The bulk of the CIA funds went to the Frei campaign, with \$ 3 million authorized and \$ 2.6 million spent by the Christian Democrats in the 1964 campaign, an amount the Senate report estimates at half their campaign expenses.

One the most striking aspects of the behaviour of the Nixon administration towards Chile in 1970 was its seeming indifference to the fact that Chile was getting ready to hold a presidential election. The "Forty Committee" of the National Security Council, the body responsible for monitoring covert activities overseas, authorized a total of \$ 425,000 to be used covertly during Chile's presidential campaigns. The funds were used to finance a propaganda campaign against the Left and the Christian Democrats.³⁷⁰

On 6 September 1970, the CIA produced an intelligence memorandum stating that Allende's victory would lead to

³⁶⁹ See Paul E. Sigmund, The United States and the democracy in Chile, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

³⁷⁰ See Nathaniel Davies, The last two years of Salvador Allende, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1985).

considerable psychological, political, and economic costs for the United States, but would not alter significantly the regional balance of power. On September 8, the CIA reported that the Chilean military was unable and unwilling to seize power, and that the US lacked the means to motivate or instigate a coup. ³⁷¹

President Nixon's decided to engage every conceivable resource, with the exception of direct US military intervention, to avert Allende's government. For Nixon, Allende's rise to power was a "second Castro" ten years after the first. On November 9, 1970, Henry Kissinger issued National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM-93), stating that the US should appear to maintain the type of posture expected by the Organization of American States (OAS). The CIA ordered its agents in Santiago to rebuild their contacts and remain close to the Chilean military officers in order to monitor internal armed forces development. ³⁷²

The steps taken by the Nixon administration were analogous to the measures adopted by the US in 1953 against the government of Guatemala, and in 1960 against the governments of Cuba. Yet, in 1960, the Eisenhower administration had waited until the Castro regime had

³⁷¹ See Ibid.

³⁷² See Henry Kissinger, White House years, (Boston, Little Brown, 1979).

enacted economic and foreign policies that were contrary to the interests of the United States before it chose to impose economic sanctions. In 1970, the Nixon administration did not wait for the Allende regime to launch its radical economic programme.

Another important difference between the measures adopted in 1954 and the steps taken in 1970, was the decision made by the Nixon administration not to consider mounting a covert paramilitary invasion of Chile. Unlike the situation in Guatemala, civilian control of the military in Chile had been the rule rather than the exception.³⁷³ In other words, Latin American advisors recognized that the structure of Chile's military precluded did not make necessary the launching of an attack from the outside. So Nixon and Kissinger decided to accept the assessments of their ambassadors, and to create the economic and political conditions in Chile that would enable it to justify military intervention.

The Military.

There is a certain consensus of opinion about which with regard to the features of the military regimes led to the idea of a "new authoritarianism" in Latin America. They emerged in countries with a particular level of

³⁷³ See Frederick Nunn, The military in Chile history, (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1976).

development, usually followed a relatively long period of broad popular mobilization, and were generally organized around the armed forces, who destroyed the previous regime and who played the predominant role; usually in alliance with the dominant economic classes. They ruled by appointing technocratic to state leadership positions and proposed a programme to restructure society in terms capitalist accumulation and distribution. They also proposed a political re-ordering along authoritarian, repressive, and exclusionary lines. ³⁷⁴

Various groups with conflicting interests converged in the overthrow of Allende. Right-wing forces grouped under the National Party pursued the establishment of an authoritarian state. The Christian Democratic Party was ultimately interested in the re-establishment of democracy following what it perceived to be an unavoidable military interlude. Bankers, dominant businessmen, and the elite sought a radical turn towards an economy based on the free market, international openings, and the control of labour. Organizations representing small businesses and independent professionals had an interest in the defense of property, and in the restoration of public order. ³⁷⁵ The armed forces reacted against Marxism and national disintegration,

³⁷⁴ See David Collier, The new authoritarianism in Latin America, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1979).

³⁷⁵ See Samuel J. Valenzuela, and Arturo Valenzuela, Military rule, dictatorship and oppositions in Chile, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

and were interested in improving their military capability via arms acquisition, renovation and the enhancement of the profession. The military sought an increase in their material power and the fulfilment of national security tenets. Placed at the core of this broad alliance, the military held the power to set the course of policy.

With the military "take-over" the armed forces established their own view of national defence policy. A consequence of this was the incorporation of military notions of domestic security into the defence system. The "Carabineers", a national police force which had been subordinate to the secretary of the interior since its creation, was transferred to the Ministry of Defence. Shortly after the *coup d'etat* the government created the Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional (DINA), later renamed the National Information Centre (CNI), which was presided over by an army general and was directly accountable to Pinochet. The imposition of military views on defence had resulted in increases in military spending, arms imports, and personnel. Military expenditure in 1980 was 75 per cent higher than in 1973.³⁷⁶ Furthermore, military expenditure as a percent of Gross National Product (GNP) went from 2.8 in 1972 to 4.8 in 1982.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁶ See Carlos Portales, and Augusto Varas, Estado y fuerzas armadas, (Santiago, FLASCO, 1982).

³⁷⁷ See Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World military expenditures and arms transfers 1972-1982, (Washington, ACDA, 1984).

Conclusion.

The paradoxical fact is that none of the major political players, from Pinochet to the Communist Party, were able to impose an absolute vision of change. Instead, each group had been forced to make concessions and compromises, to relinquish utopian dreams in order to achieve incremental progress, and to recognize that both the country and the world had changed.

The problem of political violence underscored the fragility of political party links with civil society. This was ultimately a major factor behind the opposition's inability to offer an alternative to the military regime. This inability, of course, meant that the opposition had no basis upon which to negotiate the regime's termination.³⁷⁸ Weakened by years of political suppression, political parties concerned themselves with rebuilding their ties with a Chilean society that itself had undergone important changes as a result of the military regime's socio-economic policies. For the radical Left, particularly the Communist party, any attempt to disassociate itself from the protest movement, or to disavow the strategy of mass rebellion before the transition was under way risked alienating its supporters in the shanty-towns.

³⁷⁸ See Philip Oxhorn, "The popular sector response to an authoritarian regime: Chilean shantytown organizations since the military coup", in Latin American Perspectives, Volume 18, 1991.

The centre, particularly the Christian Democratic party, faced a double challenge in this respect. On the one hand, it hoped to compete with the Left for the masses' allegiance, drawing on its historical legacy of mobilizing the urban poor during the Frei administration in the 1960's. On the other hand, its ties to Chile's middle classes were more tenuous than they had been in the past. This compelled it to adopt an unambiguous stance against political violence under all circumstances and reject any public understandings with parties of the radical Left in order to prevent the middle class from shifting its support to the Right and to the military, in the face of a perceived radicalization of the opposition.

The moderate Left tried to compete with both the centre and the radical Left for the support of people, and the issue of political violence helped the moderate Left to distinguish itself from more radical alternatives without alienating the progressive elements among the middle classes. While it advocated non-violent means of protest, the moderate Left resisted efforts to isolate the radical Left. Instead it tried to play the role of mediator in an effort to prevent a polarization that would inevitably undermine the opposition social base and its ability to pressure the regime for change.

Constant divisions within the opposition meant that, before 1988, it was never able to achieve the consensus needed to

initiate a genuine transition to democracy. To succeed, with or without mobilizations, the opposition needed to agree on a single strategy. Only this would have constituted the foundation for negotiations with the military regime over a fundamentally different political future for Chile. But the weakened links the political parties of the opposition and civil society helped prevent such a consensus from emerging. Moreover, this lack of consensus only exacerbated people's uncertainties and fears about what would happen if the opposition did assume power.

Ironically, their acceptance of the institutions and economic model established by the military regime became the core of a consensus among the opposition. As the deadline neared for a constitutionally mandated plebiscite, in which voters would either accept or reject the military junta's candidate for an eight-year term as president, the issue of political violence lost much of its polarizing potential as a direct result of the "July Protest" atrocity.³⁷⁹

The opposition's options narrowed as the military government began to establish the institutional

³⁷⁹ Tolerance of political violence within the opposition also declined in the aftermath of the attempted assassination of Pinochet in September 1986 by the Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front, a paramilitary organization with close ties to the Communist party. A state of siege was declared and repression increased, including the assassination of prominent opposition figures in what appeared to be the security forces' revenge for the deaths of several of Pinochet's escorts on the Front's attack.

infrastructure that would govern the pending electoral process. In particular, laws were passed covering voter registration and the legislation of political parties in 1987. The opposition now faced two alternatives: it could either continue to deny the *de facto* legitimacy of the military regime by boycotting the plebiscite and then challenging the validity of the inevitable victory of the junta's candidate, or it could unite to oppose the junta's candidate and take advantage of the opportunities opened up by the military's efforts to secure its political legacy.

The opposition's new electoral strategy contributed to the growing political marginalization of the masses, even while their votes remained crucial. Once a commitment was made to challenge the military regime in the 1988 plebiscite, political parties came to dominate citizen participation in politics. This virtual monopoly on participation was subsequently reinforced by the opposition's victory in the plebiscite and the resultant elections for president and parliament, in which political parties on the Right also played a prominent role. Political party elites were once again at the forefront of Chilean politics. In contrast to the 1970s, they now were endeavouring to project an image of modernization, conciliation, and pragmatism that could be seriously undermined by "uncontrollable" social mobilization and constant demands for the immediate redress of problems.

BOLIVIA.

Introduction.

In the Cochabamba Valley, from the end of 1959 and throughout 1960, violent clashes occurred between peasant section of the peasant population that followed Víctor Paz Estenssoro and groups that followed Walter Guevara Arze. Troops succeeded in keeping the adversaries apart and neutralized their activities, but the price paid was the weakening of political structures, and an increase in the importance of military power, and in many cases the subordination of the regional civil authority to military commanders who effectively occupied the valley in order to restore peace. ³⁸⁰ Furthermore, the US decision to break relations with Cuba in January 1961 had an effect in Bolivia too, as it did in all nations in the area. In June of the same year the Bolivia government requested that Cuba withdraw its diplomatic ambassador in Bolivia, Mauro García de Triana. He had violated, the principle of "non-intervention" in Bolivian domestic affairs. ³⁸¹

This measure drew the immediate opposition of the powerful

³⁸⁰ See James V. Kohl, "National revolution to revolution of restoration: Arms and factional politics in Bolivia", in Inter-American Economic Affairs, Volume 39, No. 1, 1985.

³⁸¹ See Jerry M. Knudson, Bolivia: Press and revolution 1932-1964, (Lanham, University Press of America, 1986).

Bolivian Workers' Union (COB), headed by the vice-president of the republic, Juan Lechín Oquendo. The labour organization sought to lead a people's movement in support of the Cuban envoy and in repudiation of the government's decision, but it failed because the bulk of the population was indifferent to the issue. Meanwhile, some subtle methods were being used to influence the country politically, notably the formation of cadres of student leaders who would be able to lead the masses in the future. To this end, since 1962 young Bolivians had been invited to pursue their studies at universities in Havana, with scholarships from the Castro government, under the guise of "co-operative programmes".

On the other hand, the so-called "Indian" population of Bolivia is distributed over the whole of the national territory. The largest groups, the Aymara and Quechua population, traditionally live on the plateau, at an altitude of more than 4,000 metres, and in the valleys of the high Andes. Another 35 to 40 ethnic groups are distributed over the forests and savannas of the lowlands of northern and eastern Bolivia. ³⁸² "Indigena" and "mestizo" are not biological but social categories; they are as much imposed by a specific socio-political context,

³⁸² See Pedro Plaza, and Juan Carvajal, Etnias y lenguas de Bolivia, (La Paz, Instituto Boliviano de Cultura, 1985); Javier Albo, "Los pueblos indígenas del oriente Boliviano", en Alex Contreras, Etapa de una larga marcha, (La Paz, Asociación Aquí Avance, 1990); Johnny Mercado, "Los pueblos indígenas de Bolivia y sus derechos", en Yachay, No. 11, 1990.

as they are cultural self-definitions.

However, the small "criollo" minority, seeing itself as white, continued to use the state to enforce its economic and political interests and thus dominated Bolivia, not only politically, economically, and socially but also culturally. Its aim was to solve the Indian problem by assimilating the Indians, eliminating their autonomous cultures and living patterns. The ideology of "civilization", "progress", and "modernization" was extremely well situated to propagate the cultural values of the dominant groups. Through populist discourse, promises, co-optation, corruption, and clientelism, the political parties largely succeeded in exerting a considerable influence over the independent organizational processes of peasants and ethnic groups. ³⁸³

The revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR), for example, had made the "mestizo" fundamental to the new consciousness of being a nation-state. The glorification of "Creole-mestizo identity" as the substance of the nation, was an essential part of the party ideology that became the ideology of the state. The Indian was now called "campesino" while the indigenous and traditional peasant cultures were made partly responsible for the country's backwardness, and the state set out to control inherent

³⁸³ see Carlos F. Torranzo, Las condiciones de violencia en Perú y Bolivia, (La Paz, ILDIS, 1990).

elements of resistance by assimilating itself into the dominant Western culture and by promulgating the increasing popular ideology of the mestizo. ³⁸⁴

During the 1940's, political opinion among the literate white and criollo population became steadily more radical. Radical Marxist parties of all types were organized, most of which demanded the nationalization of basic resources alongside various other modifications of Bolivia's capitalist economy. Three radical parties eventually emerged: the Trotskyite Partido Obrero Revolucionario (POR), with close links to the unionized miners; the Partido de la Izquierda Revolucionario (PIR), with powerful support among the middle class; and the MNR, a socialist and falangist amalgam which claimed both middle-class and union support. ³⁸⁵

Though all three parties were pro-labour, their differing international sympathies prevented them from merging into a single revolutionary force. Consequently, the traditional government was able to last for another decade, despite the basic weakness of the traditional parties and the continued

³⁸⁴ See Alberto O. Gutierrez, The tragedy of Bolivia: A people crucified, (Westport, Greenwood Publishers, 1981); George Psacharopoulos, "Ethnicity, education, and earnings in Bolivia and Guatemala", in Comparative Education Review, Volume 37, No. 1, 1993.

³⁸⁵ See James M. Malloy, Bolivia: The uncompleted revolution, (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh, 1970); Eduardo A. Smith, Veinte años de revolución en Bolivia, (Lima, Ediciones Raíz, 1960).

division, within the army, between radical and conservative elements.

As a result of the evident discrepancy between ideology and reality since the 1960's, a new consciousness that emphasized their own cultural identity began to develop among the peasants of the plateau. A peasant's organization emerged and a military-peasant pact, initiated by dictator René Barrientos in 1964, prevented it entering an alliance with the well-organized workers and miners. The movement remained a peasant's movement that demanded organizational independence. ³⁸⁶

Autonomous organizations emerged out of this situation that began to question the state ideology. However, the Unitary Union Confederation of Bolivian Workers and Peasants (CSUTCB) which eventually arose, did not entirely succeed in liberating its political practice from the influence of

³⁸⁶ This direction was taken by certain young Aymara peasant leaders within the official peasant organization who had grown up after the revolution and began to escape from the paternalism of the MNR government. Many of them belonged to the first generation of young Aymara who had studied in the big cities, where they came into contact with leftists, with democratic parties, and even with "Indianist" ideas such those of as Fausto Reinaga. The generalization of political demands for democracy and organizational independence was not without conflict, there was persecution, organizational fragmentation, and the founding of an alternative peasant association, the Independent Block.

the Left and the reformist wings of the workers' movement.

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Historical Background.

The formation of what was later to become a powerful Moscow-line Communist Party (PIR), serves as an example of the shifting innovative politics of the immediate post-Chaco years. Both José Antonio Arze and Ricardo Anaya, the leading figures of the PIR, had been key organizers of Bolivia's first National University Student Congress at Cochabamba in 1928, at which the Federación Universitaria Boliviana was founded. Alongside the welter of parties that matured in Bolivia during this period, the Partido Obrero Revolucionario (POR) was founded by exiles in Argentina in 1934. Though beset by factional strife and by the premature death of its leader, José Aguirre Gainsborg, the POR gained support for its Trotskyite programme of proletarian revolution and a worker-peasant government. ³⁸⁸

On the other hand, the Falange Socialista Boliviana (FSB), had always stood on the Right of the Bolivian political spectrum, though it was a non-traditional party in the sense that it was interested in the mobilization of

³⁸⁷ See Resley, Gill, Peasants, entrepreneurs, and social change: Frontier development in lowland Bolivia, (Boulder, Westview Press, 1987).

³⁸⁸ See James Dunkerley, Rebellion in the veins: Political struggle in Bolivia 1952-1982, (Therford, The Therford Press, 1984).

conservative groups. Founded in Chile in 1937 by Oscar Unzaga de la Vega, the FSB drew its greatest early strength from students and from the Catholic Church. After 1952 it came to express the frustrations of many middle-class Bolivians who felt they had been the losers in the national revolutionary process. ³⁸⁹

During the 1960's Bolivian politics saw the evolution and impact of one particular type of coalition: one that was both popular and dominant. Echoing a political formula which had been tried in a number of other Latin American nations, Bolivia's MNR based itself on a large multi-group coalition. ³⁹⁰ Led by a middle-class elite, the party developed a programme calling for social and political reform, the sharing of national political power with excluded lower-class groups, and the strengthening of national sovereignty. As a result, the MNR left a clear imprint on the structure of Bolivia's political society, and on the character and problems of the nation's subsequent military regimes.

During Major Gualberto Villarroel's two year presidency, the MNR took small steps towards bringing Bolivia's then

³⁸⁹ see Mario R. Anaya, Política y partidos en Bolivia, (La Paz, Juventud, 1966).

³⁹⁰ See Alistair Henness, "Latin America", in Ghita Ionescu, and Ernest Gellner, Populism: Its meaning and national characteristics, (New York, Macmillan, 1969); Torcuato S. Di Tella, "Populism and reform in Latin America", in Claudio Véliz, Obstacles to change in Latin America, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1969).

crucial tin industry under government control, and towards lifting the burden of near serfdom from the nation's peasant majority. Here an important choice was made: differences between social classes would be played down in favour of a multi-class alliance stressing common national goals. Parting ideological company with a good many Bolivian Marxists, who argued for a workers' uprising, the MNR argued that no single Bolivian social class was strong enough to bring about a revolution on its own. ³⁹¹

It has been observed that complex organizations may call on three basic forms of inducement, when seeking to encourage participation and conformity: material rewards, ideological persuasion, or the threat of force. ³⁹² When dealing with its many constituent groups, the MNR generally lacked the last two inducements. There was no reliable national army, and the party's blanket programme inspired very little discipline on the part of particular interest groups. Thus, rewards had to be distributed to the MNR's most powerful supporting interest groups.

This arrangement express completely or even neglected the

³⁹¹ See Robert J. Alexander, "Bolivia: The government and politics of the National Revolution", in Martin C. Needler, Political systems of Latin America, (Princeton, Van Nostrand, 1964); Liborio Justo, Bolivia: Revolución derrotada, (Buenos Aires, Juares Editores, 1971)

³⁹² See Amitai Etzioni, "A basis for comparative analysis of complex organizations", in Amitai Etzioni, A sociological reader on complex organizations, (New York, Rinehart and Winston, 1969).

fact that many groups had their own particular identities and concerns. The administration of Hernán Siles Zuazo (1956-1960), began to systematically set one interest group against another: peasants against labour unions, union against union, the army against peasants and urban dissidents. The aim was to safeguard the dominant political position of the MNR leadership.³⁹³

The legacy of the MNR was basically three fold. To begin with, the dominant issues in Bolivia now set social classes against one another, rather than calling forth a broader national coalition. The post-revolutionary middle-class has held an uneasy monopoly of governmental power. Seeing themselves as defenders of economic good sense, social peace, and national political unity, most Bolivian governments have tried to rally the middle-class against perceived threats from below to all these values.

Secondly, the MNR's handling of power bequeathed to Bolivia a strong tendency towards military rule. Dominance by a small middle-class in a highly mobilized society such as Bolivia's, puts a high premium on suppressive force as a political resource. The vigorous rebuilding of the Bolivian military began during Hernán Siles' term as president. In 1964 the armed forces, claiming their rewards for their

³⁹³ See Jerry, R. Ladman, Modern-day Bolivia: Legacy of the revolution and prospects for the future, (Temple, Centre for Latin American Studies-Arizona State University, 1982).

pivotal political role, overthrew the MNR civilians. And yet the coincidence of views between the post-1956 MNR leaders and the conservative military was made evident by the party's participation, for nearly three years (1971-1974), in the cabinet of Colonel Hugo Bánzer.

Thirdly, and somewhat ironically, Bolivian politics is now marked by very sharp and bitter divisions among the nation's social interest groups. Thirty years of middle-class politicians emphasizing group identity have left deep cleavages in all Bolivian social classes.³⁹⁴ One practical consequence of the MNR's historic failure to achieve cross-class alliances, is that they are now even more difficult to create.

A few movements towards participation and justice also appeared from among Bolivia's peasant majority, though they were often dependent on middle-class and urban support. The "radicalizing" impact of the Chaco War on the peasants, for example, has often been exaggerated, but leadership, in the few peasant organizations that did emerge, was often held by veterans of the war.³⁹⁵ If there was a pattern in the political evolution of these groups, most of which were on the Left, it was that they began as a small group of like-minded friends simply joining together to form a political

³⁹⁴ See James M. Malloy, *Bolivia: The uncompleted revolution*, op. cit.

³⁹⁵ See Robert J. Alexander, *The Bolivian National Revolution*, (New Jersey, Rutgers University Press, 1958).

"célula". Often they were brought together by having shared exile, office under an earlier government, or military service.

In sum, the MNR's formula for admitting deprived groups to political life while, at the same time, building mass support for itself was brilliantly and elegantly simple: to form a coalition including every group in Bolivian society that would join in supporting a vague reformist and nationalist political programme. The MNR put itself in a strong position to take advantage of the group loyalties which were already abundant, and the discontent that was clearly evident. The many potential disagreements among groups were played down in favour of a broad programme to which few newly active social groups objected.

The Guerrilla.

The decision to set up a training centre for guerrillas in Bolivia that could later become a foco generating armed struggle all over the South American continent was made in the last phase of the "Tricontinental Conference" held in Havana in January 1966. This meeting saw the definitive alignment of the Cuban government with the Soviet Union, saw the drawing of lines for the battle against imperialism. Armed struggle was explicitly advocated. ³⁹⁶

³⁹⁶ The Conference also saw the creation of the Latin American Solidarity Organization (OLAS), which would had its seat in Havana. See The Agenda of the Tricontinental

The plan proposed by Che Guevara stressed the need to establish common borders in South America and an international base that would serve as a continental training centre from which revolutionary columns would set forth after being trained. Their first goal would be to take control of the base country, then they would penetrate the neighbouring countries to reinforce existing focos or to create them where necessary. ³⁹⁷

The choice of countries finally boiled down to Bolivia and Peru. The decision, imposed by Cuba, was to begin the struggle in Bolivia and to later move onto Peru. This decision rested on a number of factors, such as the failure of armed struggle in Peru, which had ended in the deaths of Hugo Blanco and then of Luis de la Fuente. Events in Peru had given rise to the belief that leaks or infiltrations had existed that threatened Che Guevara's presence in Peru. Although at first the decision to begin the struggle in Bolivia irritated the Peruvian delegates, it was finally accepted with the proviso that select Peruvian elements would participate in the training and the initial operations alongside the Cubans.

However, the Cuban group did not behave honestly towards its Bolivian counterpart. While discussing the continental

Conference.

³⁹⁷ See Francisco R. Bello, "El reposo de los guerreros", en Repertorio Latinoamericano, volume 6, No. 42, 1980.

character that they wished to give to the movement, they failed to outline the role that the Bolivian Communist Party (PCB) was to play.³⁹⁸ The whole operation was explained simply as a means of "co-operating" with the Bolivian insurrectional movement. When Mario Monje became aware that a subversive apparatus was being formed, he refused to become involved with it and asked to travel to Cuba once again for an interview with Castro that would clarify the situation.

The second task of the advance group was to determine which zone would best serve the purposes of the master plan. Once the first contacts were made and the first evaluations completed, four areas were discussed as the most appropriate: Alto Beni, the la Paz Yungas, the tropical zone of Cochabamba, and southern Santa Cruz.

A guerrilla foco in the Alto Paragua region of the Santa Cruz department, which in imitation of the Castro model intended to lead the resistance against the government, was set-up in July 1963 under one of Che Guevara's closest collaborators, José María Martínez, who arrived in La Paz with a Colombian passport. He had already carried out a mission in Guatemala during the "October Crisis". This time, Che Guevara had given him the job of establishing an operations and supply base at Tarija, in southern Bolivia,

³⁹⁸ See Anonymous, "Bolivia will be Socialist or it will never be a modern country", in NACLA-Report on the Americas, Volume 8, No. 2, 1974.

for his Argentinean friend Jorge Masetti, the former director of "Prensa Latina" in Havana, and his guerrilla group, the Ejército Guerrillero del Pueblo (EGP).³⁹⁹

Che Guevara's immediate objective in Bolivia was not to seize power, but to build up a popular organization with its own autonomous military force. In his view,⁴⁰⁰ the establishment of a popular organization took precedence over the seizure of power in Bolivia. Indeed, it seems as though, until mid-1966, Che Guevara saw Bolivia as a point of departure for Peru, where he hoped to join the guerrilla forces already established there.

The precarious condition of the guerrilla band was evident from the first. Its limitations arose because, after the first ambushes, they could not depend on a secure base, having no supply chain or route to guarantee their survival. This meant that at no time could the guerrilla band mount an offensive against a military installation. The ambushes and armed encounters that were undertaken were mainly aimed at slowing down the advance of the regular troops. If attacks had been made on military posts in the operations zone, a situation of fear and insecurity could have been created that might have influenced the final

³⁹⁹ See Fernando L. Torres, "Un místico cristiano de la guerrilla", en Comunidad (Mexico), Volume 6, No. 32, 1971; Emilio Q. Suri, "El mejor hombre de la guerrilla", en Casa de las Americas, Volume 21, No. 124, 1981.

⁴⁰⁰ See Régis Debray, Che's guerrilla war, (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1975).

outcome.

On the other hand, the guerrillas did not win the cooperation of the people, at least in any practical sense. In the nomad phase of the guerrilla war it was rare indeed that any kind of relationship with area residents was established, and it was necessary instead to detain the farmers in order to prevent them from denouncing the presence of the insurgents to the army.

The guerrilla band at Nanchahuazú was made up of all types of people.⁴⁰¹ Leaving aside the foreigners, who were in the struggle for other reasons, the only one of the Bolivians who admitted to being a "campesino" was Eudol León, a native of Beni, who in any case had not done farmwork. All the rest were students or miners and artisans used to the cold climate of the plateau and the mountains, who had to go through a period of suffering and desperation in order to adapt to the tropics and their inconveniences.

The point that has been effectively demonstrated twice in the period since 1960 is that, in Cuba and Nicaragua, strongly motivated popular forces were able to destroy the armies of the government. Yet both of these governmental military structures reflected, in their organization and methods, all the corruption and despotism of the tyrannies

⁴⁰¹ See Luis T. Reque, "La campaña de Nanchahuazu", en Signo, No. 35, 1992.

that they upheld. They did not amount to anything more than praetorian guards intended to keep their leaders in power and to protect their interests. They did not fight for a national cause, and their cadres did not participate in the social or political life of the community. These forces felt no identification with the people or with their aspirations. In contrast, the armies that have had to confront guerrilla movements in Bolivia, Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela, for example, have managed to find sufficient support among the native population to render the guerrillas ineffective and to reduce them to a local problem contained within a remote mountainous area.

The insurrectional focus created in Latin America have not been able to provoke the popular revolutions or the changes they promised. It is true that they have spilt blood throughout the continent, but they have done so without provoking a confrontation with the colonial power by involving it directly in the fighting. This, after all, was their first goal. They have caused the destruction or weakening of communal systems of production, transport, and energy production. The examples of El Salvador and Peru are clear and pathetic. But Che Guevara's guerrilla warfare in Bolivia did not create revolutionary conditions. Instead it contributed to a long process of political and social disorientation that has convulsed the country and the Latin America region for many years, in which the real crux of the problem has been lost among the discrepancies between

Furthermore, the minimal preparation of a support system, the secrecy necessary for the first stage of organization, and the concealment of the true aims of the guerrilla foco, which is to say the international character of the struggle, drained effectiveness from the movement. When the guerrilla band went public, its "foreign character" prevented open support from Leftist political organizations. To have done so would have been to lose their own support. Thus, the insurgents in the southeast were cut off and abandoned to their fate.

The political error that stunted the development of the guerrilla band and markedly reduced its possibilities, originated in two interrelated events. Firstly there was the attempt to conceal the true aims and objectives of the guerrilla war from the upper levels of the PCB. From the first, the coming of Che Guevara and his companions was presented to Mario Monje, Jorge Kalle, and Simón Reyes, as a support action for the struggle undertaken by the Bolivians against the Barrientos government; aimed at creating conditions favourable for a general insurrection. They were never informed, not at Nancahuazú nor on the occasion of Monje's interview with Guevara, nor even on Kalle and Reyes' visit to Fidel Castro, of the

⁴⁰² See Robert F. Lamberg, "El Che en Bolivia: La revolución que fracasó", en Revista Conservadora del Pensamiento Centroamericano, Volume 26, No. 126, 1971.

international nature of the struggle, and their intention to create the multi-regional training centre.

Secondly, the social characteristics of Bolivians, and especially their ardent nationalism, were researched. Intentionally or not, Che Guevara did not received complete, well-rounded information about the true political situation in the country, nor about the progress achieved in the years following the revolution of 1952. The Cubans were led to believe that Bolivia was ripe for violent change and that its political and labour organizations would plunge into the struggle in support of the guerrillas. It should therefore, be no surprise that the secretary of the PCB, Monje, vehemently stated his disagreement with the Cubans' approach and argued the necessity of giving the guerrilla a "national command".

The role of the USA.

Bolivia's social relations with the US after 1952 bore the imprint of the struggle between two fundamental social forces that had emerged from the tomb of the old order. The first of these forces was that of the mining and urban proletariat. The second was the increasingly assertive industrial and commercial bourgeoisie. Neither was sufficiently developed to achieve a nationwide dominance, but both became strong enough to elicit the episodic

allegiance of various regimes. ⁴⁰³ Their economic immaturity allowed the use of force to be prolonged, though a minimum level, that is; military rule, the suppression of dissent, and counter-insurgency. In addition, the battle of wills between the two states was an uneven one. US foreign policy did not favour the establishment of a revolutionary state, leaning instead towards those forces whose interests lay in accommodating the world political economy. ⁴⁰⁴

The US's preoccupation with security prompted the Kennedy administration's two pronged response to social revolution in Latin America. Through the "Alliance for Progress", the US could encourage social reform within existing political systems, and through counter-insurgency programmes, the US government could sponsor the elimination of rebel movements that threatened political stability. The policy was the result of Kennedy's tenuous assumptions about the "Soviet connection". ⁴⁰⁵

Through AID a public safety programme was launched under which Latin America's internal security, along with its police forces, were provided with a variety of arms and

⁴⁰³ See John D. Martz, United States policy in Latin America: A quarter century of crisis and challenge 1961-1986, (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1988).

⁴⁰⁴ See Fredrick B. Pike, The United States and Latin America: Myths and stereotypes of civilization and nature, (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1992).

⁴⁰⁵ See Cole Blaisier, The hovering giant: US response to the revolutionary change in Latin America, (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976).

special equipment. Military advisers provided special training in counter-insurgency operations, and the State Department established an "International Police Academy" to offer training in modern methods. ⁴⁰⁶

On the other hand, Bolivia's history naturally militated against Che Guevara's choice in any case. As a result of the 1952 revolution and the subsequent thorough agrarian reform, Bolivia had no significant land problem. Despite the prevailing rural poverty, the peasantry had become essentially conservative in defence of its land. Che Guevara had also underestimated the popularity of General René Barrientos' government. Barrientos had been elected president in 1966 with 62 per cent of the vote. He spoke Quechua and constantly visited remote Indian settlements to firm up his support among the rural population.

In July 1986, the government was strongly criticized by opposition groups and trade unions when 160 US soldiers arrived in Bolivia to participate in a joint campaign with the Bolivian armed forces to eradicate illegal coca plantations. The government was accused of having contravened the Constitution and of compromising national sovereignty. The allocation of US aid, however, was to be conditional upon the elimination of Bolivia's illegal

⁴⁰⁶ See Arthur M. Schlesinger, "The Alliance for Progress: A retrospective", in Ronald G. Hellman, and Jon H. Rosenbaum, Latin America: The search for a new international role, (New York, Sage Publications, 1975).

cocaine trade. In October the US administration agreed to provide more than \$ 100 million in aid to continue the drug eradication campaign, and US troops were withdrawn, so that the Bolivian authorities could assume responsibility for the campaign.

Further measures to reduce the production of coca were taken during 1988. An anti-narcotics department was established in April, and the drug control troops, Unidad Móvil de Patrullaje Rural (UMOPAR), were provided with greater resources and were further supported by a coca limitation law, restricting the area of land allowed for coca production, and limiting the use of leaves to traditional purposes only. In May 1990, the military forces of Bolivia accepted \$ 35 million in military aid from the US, which it made the US involvement in Bolivia increasingly belligerent. In April 1991, the approval by Congress of the use of US military personnel in training Bolivian troops for drug-enforcement operations received widespread disapprobation. In July the government announced a decree granting a period of amnesty, lasting 120 days, for drug-traffickers to surrender voluntarily. In return, they were offered minimum prison sentences and the guarantee that they would not risk extradition to the United States. ⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁷ See US-DS/BINM (US Department of State - Bureau of International Narcotics Matters), International narcotics control: Strategy report 1994, (Washington, US Department of State, 1994).

The Military.

Until 1950, the Bolivian armed forces, composed of the national army and the air force, were equipped with material acquired by the nation for the "Chaco War" (1932-1935). The slow task of military recovery began in 1954, when the first military aid agreements with the US were signed. They became effective in 1958, when the first officers were sent to the Panama Canal Zone to study the equipment the country was planning to acquire. In 1959 the first shipment of American arms, intended to outfit one infantry battalion, arrived in Bolivia.

These weapons, which included of M-1 Garand 30-calibre rifles, M-1 carbines of the same calibre, automatic rifles, Browning light machine guns, 60-mm mortars, 3.5-inch rocket launchers, and 57-mm recoilless rifles, which had been used by the US in World War II and were being replaced in the US army, were sent to nearly all Latin American nations to improve their armed forces' equipment and training, with a view to establishing a common military doctrine against the threat from the European Eastern bloc. ⁴⁰⁸

In 1961, carrying out a previously drawn up plan, the commander of the Southern Force of the US Army made visits

⁴⁰⁸ See Luigi Einaudi; Hans Heymann; David Ronfeldt, and Cesar Sereseres, Arms transfers to Latin America: Toward a policy of mutual respect, (Washington, US Department of State, 1973).

to several South American countries, among them Bolivia, to receive on-site information about the military programme that was being developed. The emphasis was placed on what would become the military part of the "Alliance for Progress" launched by President Kennedy. It was called "civic action", and it consisted of using of soldiers, machines, and military vehicles, along with the technical abilities of military professionals, in the effort to economically and socially develop in the region. ⁴⁰⁹

In Bolivia the armed forces, adopted a clearly anti-communist policy, and in the "Sixth Meeting of Army Commanders", held in 1965 and concentrating on "Preventive action against subversion", they received full information on what was happening in the hemisphere. This served as a basic preparation for maintaining a watch over leftist political forces, who up to that time had seemed neither capable of, nor interested in, armed struggle against the military government. ⁴¹⁰

The reintroduction of political democracy in 1982 forced the military to give up direct rule. It also represented a victory of civil society, because society became engaged in an open-ended attempt to subordinate and win control over

⁴⁰⁹ See Adrian J. English, Regional defence profile No. 1: Latin America, (London, Jane Publishing, 1988).

⁴¹⁰ See Gary S. Prado, "The defeat of Che Guevara: Military response to guerrilla challenge in Bolivia", in Hispanic American Historical Review, Volume 71, No. 4, 1991.

the military. ⁴¹¹ Events in Bolivia suggest that as far as the military was concerned, two conditions were needed for the successful transition to democracy. While they were in power, serious divisions existed within the armed forces about how to overcome a pressing political crisis. One faction would usually back a return to democratic forms of government, even at the risk of damaging the military's institutional cohesion. The other faction once political democracy was re-established, the next step was to weaken the anti-democratic faction by punishing its officers.

In Bolivia, that punishment mainly took the form of forced retirement. This was, of course, purgative as well as punitive increasingly authorities based their judgments on moral and ethical grounds. Meanwhile, the military had to accept their punishment and lend credibility to their claim to be cooperating with the newly installed civilian authorities.

Conclusion.

Re-democratization in Bolivia has been associated less with the institutional task of establishing a constitutional polity than with the expression of starkly contrasting social and economic policies. On the one hand, the coalition government of the Union Democrática y Popular

⁴¹¹ See Augusto Varas, Democracy under siege: New military power in Latin America, (Westport, Greenwood Press, 1989).

(UDP; 1982-1985) led by Siles Zuazo may be viewed as typically populist, in that its essential thrust was towards deficit financing, acquiescence in labour demands, radical rhetoric, and a notable respect for human rights. On the other hand, the MNR government led by Paz Estenssoro (1985-1989) responded to an extraordinary economic crisis, exacerbated by the Unión Democrática Popular (UDP), with an exceptionally severe and rigidly orthodox adjustment programme, by forming an alliance with Hugo Bánzer's Right-wing Acción Democrática Nacionalista (ADN), by displaying a complete disregard for the fuero sindical, and with a clear disposition to reduce the state, encourage private capital, and collaborate with the international status quo on issues such as the debt and the cocaine trade.

The sense of a fundamental continuity with the pre-dictatorial era was sustained by the enduring dominance, in political life, of the MNR party; a dominance led from the Right-wing by Paz Estenssoro, and from the Left-wing by Siles Zuazo. However in the Bolivian case this sense of continuity was peculiarly enhanced by the fact that the two post-dictatorial presidents were themselves the principal architects of the state born of the 1952 revolution.

Indeed, the passage of time and changing circumstances determined that they could no longer conduct themselves as they had done twenty or thirty years earlier, a fact most evident in the need to form coalitions and to leave the

more energetic aspects of "caudillismo" to younger generations. Paz Estenssoro, who had nationalised the tin mines, introduced agrarian reform, and applied highly inflationary policies in the first years of the revolution, now sought to dismember the state mining company the Corporación Minera de Bolivia (COMIBOL), announced a substantial revision to the agrarian reform, and conducted a rigorously deflationary economic policy. Siles Zuazo, by contrast, entered into a decisive conflict (1956-1957) with the trade unions grouped in the COB, precisely by applying an orthodox stabilisation plan that cut real wages, increased unemployment and reduced state expenditure to the requirements of the IMF and Washington.

These reversals of prior practice were not, in fact, as simple as depicted, but they did throw into sharp relief the trajectory of individuals that even in the 1989 presidential election were dominating the political landscape: figures that had dominated the 1970's like Hugo Bánzer and Jaime Paz Zamora of the MIR, and figures that had come to prominence in the 1980's like Sánchez de Lozada and Carlos Palenque of Conciencia de Patria (CONDEPA), were still the political alternatives in the 1990's. And yet it is easy to underestimate the degree to which the Bolivian political arena had changed during the previous 35 years.

Debate over the defeat of the Left has long been over-dominated by disillusioned "fellow-travellers" and closet

reactionaries. Both they and the celebrants of the collapse of radicalism may properly identify the causes of this defeat in the Left's own terms, and in the structures and discourses that were prominent from 1917 and 1952. Yet these causes must also be assessed in the light of various Right-wing weaknesses and of those features of the new conservative order that have preserved the need for mass mobilization at the same time as they have altered its forms.

The defeat of traditional radicalism was given a definitive character, first by the association of both the COB and the parties of the Left with the chaos of the UDP period, and then by the effective disintegration of the miners union the Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia (FSTMB) following the 1985 tin crash. Yet the moral authority of the Left has been far less damaged than has its social project. An apparently minor compensation that might even be deemed inherent in such decisive setbacks in the game of power-politics, this is a matter of considerable consequence in a country where the state and the civil society overlap, where the Left has a minimal tradition of violence, and where the Left's failings were seen to result from its methods being out of date rather than its ideas being.

Finally, and as a general conclusion, competing ideological positions, in Chile and Bolivia, as elsewhere in Latin

America, all appear to assume the desirability of some form of mass politics. Differences concerning expansion of the suffrage, forms of election, types of group representation, and forms of decision-making, reflect the historically specific short and medium-range interests of the groups involved, and are likely to change when the circumstances change. Groups may consistently identify with some political value-system, such as egalitarianism, law and order, state action for development. Yet these value-systems are not consistently identified with any one particular regime.

Parties on the Left and Right will demand honest elections and expanded franchises when they are out of power and be strongly sympathetic to the plight of potential voters, and yet will impose a far more authoritarian mode when they are in power. Advocacy of the regime, in general terms, varies, too, with the commitment of the group in question to the international bloc as it is understood and represented by those regimes: a single regime may be advocating US institutions one moment, Soviet-like ones at another, and some kind of indigenous authoritarianism or populism whenever a "third position" is needed.

Politicization contributes to, and is reinforced by, the central role of the state in Latin American society. The state is the beneficiary of a tradition which awards the state's representatives a greater degree of responsibility

for the welfare of the community than such representatives have in liberal societies. Officials are expected to take the initiative in social and economic affairs, and their decisions, whether crassly self-interested or generously disinterested are accepted as part of the social process. Political structures are absolutely central to social life.

Therefore, the control and even the manipulation of the state apparatus are major elements in the political struggle. The effort to manipulate it in such a way as to promote the power and goals of one group rather than another is a major part of the political game. Being in power is very important because it gives the leader wide patronage and the authority to establish government programmes to benefit existing supporters and to attract new ones. He can rewrite electoral laws and modify "decision-making" processes to favour government supporters more than leaders in institutionalized systems can.

CONCLUSION.

Latin American countries share a common Iberian heritage, which includes a bureaucratic centralist tradition based on hierarchy. Within this hierarchy, electoral contests may turn factions of the same class against each other, and in particular, divide the elite. This may occur even when class-rooted economic grievances lie at the base of the politicization. Behind the social-climbing servants are the political writers, lawyers, and civil service employees who, in such a legalistic society, are the only people who could bestow legitimacy and a degree of efficiency on the administrative and political apparatus. Yet inter-party warfare dominates the most notorious example occurred in Colombia in the 1940's, when, during "La Violencia" period, peasants turned on one another in support of the political party with which their patron was affiliated.

Real power is rarely vested in formal political institutions, and even when peasants, workers, and the urban poor enjoy formal political rights, they lack access to the effective, informal channels of influence. Businessmen, or other members of the upper class, who in Latin America rank among the top income earners, rarely take to the streets because they generally can rely on

these effective informal political channels of influence. The middle classes tend to be favourably predisposed towards democracy only when their economic interests have been jeopardized. In El Salvador, in the early 1980's, members of the bourgeoisie defied democracy to such an extent that they were the point of financing Right-wing death squads. They did so to subvert moderate government-backed social reforms and to quell a broadly based guerrilla movement that threatened their class interests.

Central America's dilemma is that the contending parties increasingly represent smaller sections of the population. Perhaps this has occurred because the region has always had distinct ideological differences that translate into distinct conservative and liberal parties formations. Such party distinctions were particularly acute before the 1930's, but collapsed as the Depression forced dominant groups together to protect their mutual interests. Since the 1940's, traditional parties have not been able to collect together emergent new interests. ⁴¹²

Weiners' ⁴¹³ four types of political party in Central America can be discussed in turn. Firstly, the traditional

⁴¹² See Jorge M. García, *op. cit.*

⁴¹³ See Myron Weiner, "Empirical democratic theory", in Myron Weiner, and Ergun Ozbudun, Competitive elections in developing countries, (Washington, American Enterprise Institute, 1973).

parties, which were, by and large, passing from the Central American scene. Even while they often articulated a coherent political and ideological philosophy, they tended to be riven with self-interest and "caudillismo". In practice, they existed for patronage and for clientelistic purposes. Examples include the National and Liberal parties of Honduras, the Conservative party of Nicaragua, and El Salvador's Party of National Conciliation.

Weiners' second type of political party is the modernizing party, which is characterized by an European-orientated ideology. Such parties were in power in Costa Rica (the National Liberation Party), and in El Salvador (the Christian Democratic Party). These parties have rarely captured over 50 per cent electoral support and have normally encountered strong opposition because of their "sedentary" tendencies. While fostering a programmatic, mobilizational image, in practice they have had to content themselves with a mixture of programme and patronage.

Weiners' third type is the extremist party. This type has been characterized by militant dogmatism and a willingness to use violence to achieve their ends. Extremist politics often leave little room for differentiating between conservative (Right-wing) and radical (Left-wing) movements. Both extremes often show little faith in democratic procedures and even less confidence in

"centrist" politicians. Both can undermine political compromise and both push politics towards the extremes of the spectrum that are not fully committed to any type of political governance. By doing so, they make governance itself increasingly tenuous. Examples of this kind of party include the National Liberation Movement and the Authentic National Centre, both Guatemalan.

Weiners' last type is the dominant mass party. These have tended to dominate not only government, but also and non-official elements of public life. Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has been the model for this kind of party. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in Nicaragua is the most recent example, but the Partido de Coalición Nacional (PCN) of El Salvador aspired to this type of political leadership before it lost its momentum in the 1970's.

Central America's political parties then, tend to be characterized by charisma and factionalism. The tendency towards party factionalism is not perhaps as extreme as in other Latin American countries such as Bolivia, where a reported 323 political parties have competed for power since 1958. ⁴¹⁴ Factionalism is, nonetheless, a major

⁴¹⁴ See Raúl P. Rivadeneira, "Partidos políticos, partidos taxi y partidos fantasma: La atomización de los partidos en Bolivia", en Nueva Sociedad, No. 74, 1984.

problem because it directs political competition inward rather than outward. Moreover, factionalism reinforces the tendency towards internal competition and conflict resolution, rather than on purpose and problem solving. In this context, "play-offs", such as political favours, jobs, unequal access to limited resources, result in privileged minority groups competing for power, rather than governments looking to benefit the majority of society.

However, there is a larger issue, because many of the region's emerging Christian and Social Democratic leaders were originally members of more traditional parties. They came to recognize that these parties could not or would not expand beyond their own narrow and traditional interests to accommodate the new middle class that emerged in the post-World War II years. The efforts of these men and the new parties they have led have had very high costs: in Guatemala, key leaders have been assassinated; in El Salvador they have been exiled and/or assassinated; in Honduras they have been marginalized; in Nicaragua, both before and after Somoza, they have been harassed and menaced. In contrast, where parties representing minorities have emerged, such as in Costa Rica, they have either been successful in articulating their interests through the unicameral national assembly or they have joined, in coalition, with one of the traditional parties.

Furthermore, with the exception of the Sandinistas, (particularly during their first two years in power), few parties have had the skill or the wherewithal to mobilize large groups of people. The absence of charismatic political figures is complicated by the fact that Central America's military establishments, along with and the Left- and Right-wing death squads, have made open political mobilization dangerous. Thus, a more important tactic for the establishment and maintenance of power is to seek accommodation with one another.

The most common form of public accommodation in Latin America has come about through the articulation of "pacts" between parties and other political groups. They have been essential elements in the evolution of social "peace" and democracy in Colombia and Venezuela, ⁴¹⁵ and have had their equivalents in Central America in Nicaragua and Honduras in the early 1980s and in El Salvador in the 1990s. While such pacts may be political devices which actually enshrine expediency and *ad-hocism*, they may also be essential to

⁴¹⁵ See Harvey F. Kline, "The National Front: Historical perspective and overview", in Albert Berry; Ronald G. Helman, and Mauricio Solaun, Politics of compromise: Coalition government in Colombia, (New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1980).

achieving the currently fashionable concept of democracy as the best option. ⁴¹⁶

This resistance goes with Washington's policy of bestowing or withholding economic and military aid, blocking or expediting needed loans from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank; and increasing, decreasing, or totally cutting off access to US markets and products. It can and does use the CIA, the National Endowment for Democracy, and other institutions and resources such as the AFD, AID, etc., serve their own purposes. By manipulating local media, they have managed to create support for their interests, by laying claim to these institutions and resources.

In sum, distinctive conditions, traditions, and histories have given rise to various in expressions of politically rooted defiance among Latin American countries, ranging from guerrilla activity, to support for Left-wing parties, from public defiance of the law to more subtle and covert activity, including the political equivalent of electoral sabotage.

⁴¹⁶ See Dankwart Rustow, "Transition to democracy: Toward a dynamic model" in Comparative Politics, Volume 2, No. 3, 1970.

Since democratic governments claim to rule in the name of their citizenry, and since they must regularly hold elections, they must be, at least to some extent, responsive to popular demands. If they are not, the electorate may shift its allegiance to an opposition party. A regime's responses to protest determine whether or not rebellions occur. On the one hand, when regimes have responded to demands and protests with ameliorative policies and with low or modest levels of force or suppression, protest has subsided, as in the example of Honduras. On the other hand, where regimes have rejected demands for improvement policies, and have responded by suppressing any protests with the public security forces, protest, opposition organization, and resource mobilization has increased and rebellion has occurred, as in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

Protest, of course, is more likely in politically "open" societies because the risks are smaller and the likelihood of success is greater. Democratic regimes that identify with the labouring classes are particularly vulnerable to pressure from below. Workers' movements in Chile, for example, especially among textile workers, have followed national elections that labourers perceived as Leftist victories. ⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁷ See Peter Winn, *op. cit.*

However, since the 1960's, extreme levels of terror, as Wickham-Crowley has asserted,⁴¹⁸ seem to have been the undoing of a number of urban guerrilla movements. As long as the state's repressive capabilities are materially or ideologically limited, and as long as the guerrillas can, and are willing to, move their bases of operations, force will not curtail opposition movements. Latin American governments do not have the material capability to employing force on a large scale unless they are financed from abroad, and the democratic countries in the region cannot, for ideological reasons, rely on prolonged and extensive use of force to rule.

However, the critical problem for the analysis of social change in Third-World countries is not stagnation and under-development. Rather, it is the conditions under which the process of capital accumulation takes place and its impact on class structure.⁴¹⁹ The conditions that affect capital accumulation include the nature of state policy, and class relations. Class relations include the process of surplus extraction, the intensity of exploitation, the

⁴¹⁸ See Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, Winners, losers, and also rans: Toward a comparative sociology of Latin American guerrilla movements, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1989).

⁴¹⁹ The fact that a country's level of development itself creates problems in the capital accumulation process, these are of secondary importance in the context of the distinct problems that confront Third World societies undergoing periods of rapid industrialization.

level of class struggle, and concentration of the work force.

The effects of capital accumulation on class structure are as follows: i) Class formation and conversion. This includes a shift from small property to proletarianism, from rural proletarianism to urban sub-proletarianism, from being a landlord to being a merchant, from being an merchant to being an industrialist, or from being a national industrialist to being a branch plant manager in a multinational corporation. ii) Income distribution. Capital accumulation will naturally affect the concentration, redistribution, and reconcentration of income. iii) Changes in social and labour relations such as free wage and trade union bargaining. Here we are dealing with political and social controls, and with coercive governmental measures.

Social revolutions always fuse together a multiplicity of objectives. The transformation of the economic structure and the construction of a new kind of political power involves a variety of diverse efforts, such as the development of the labour force through the creation of new relations of production, the establishment of a new order open at all levels and in all instances to the participation of the population, the effective guaranteeing of personal and collective freedom, and the development of

new norms of social equality. In neo-colonial societies like those found in Latin American countries, social revolutions also involve an anti-imperialist struggle, which is directed at bringing external domination to an end, and at defending the new social order against attacks from the old colonial power.

"Anti-imperialism" can also include any hostile action or expression that becomes part and parcel of an indiscriminate attack on the foreign policy, society, culture, and values of the United States. In Latin America, anti US feeling has a venerable intellectual tradition, but the depth of Third World resentments, and the willingness of the Third-World to resort to violence are a new development, and the charges levelled against the US are numerous. The US has, for example, been accused of supporting oppressive regimes and of encouraging acts of subversion against progressive ones. The list does not end here, but goes on to include neglect and favouritism when apportioning foreign aid nor are the changes all directed at the US government, US banks and multinational corporations have frequently been accused of exploitation.

Third-World grievances over the operations of US capitalism vary greatly in intensity from one region to another. Anti-imperialism often takes the form as a pattern of outbursts directed against the policies and actions of the US

government. Latin American's anti-imperialism is historically rooted in hostility to US interference in the region, especially in Central America. As far back as the early nineteenth century, and the promulgation of the "Monroe Doctrine", Latin American elites resented the US's implicit assumption of hemispheric hegemony. On the other hand, a more ideological anti-imperialism derives from the belief that the United States is the world's villain, and that American society epitomizes bourgeois decadence or godless materialism.

Social revolutions in dependent societies are also revolutions of national liberation. Therefore, in neo-colonial societies, they always try to involve the proletariat, the peasantry, the inhabitants of the urban slums, the rural poor, the student movement, the petty-bourgeois intellectuals, and even elements of the local bourgeoisie antagonized by the political regime. On the other hand, the importance of national liberation to a social revolution varies according to the strength of support for revolutionary movement.

The emergence of "popular" mass movements takes place within a political-ideological process that to some extent is determined by class, but not entirely. Laclau ⁴²⁰ has

⁴²⁰ See Ernesto Laclau, Politics and ideology in Marxist theory, (London, Verso, 1977).

pointed out the importance, for these unproletarianized masses, of ideological considerations when deciding upon their political position. These considerations most often concern the way in which they are being assimilated into capitalist modes of production. Furthermore, as Gramsci argues,⁴²¹ these unproletarianized groups and factions are the determining factor in the development any social revolutions. Therefore, in these societies, democratic, patriotic, religious, and in general, ideological considerations have enormous relevance in determining the political definition and alignment of the masses, and in the processes by which they become a subject of political action.

Nevertheless popular groups and stubbornly independent revolutionary factions do remain subordinated to the dominant class. This explains why, according to the circumstances, the masses can often oscillate from one political pole to the other. In El Salvador, researchers such as Samaniego and Cabarrus⁴²² have pointed out the identical nature of the social basis of organizations as

⁴²¹ See Antonio Gramsci, Il Materialismo Storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce, (Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1977).

⁴²² See Carlos L. Samaniego, "Movimiento campesino o lucha del proletariado rural en El Salvador?", en Estudios Sociales Centroamericanos, No. 25, 1980; Francisco C. Cabarrus, Génesis de una revolución, (México, CIESAS, 1983).

different as the Federación de Campesinos Salvadoreños (FECCAS), an organization of peasant co-operatives with a revolutionary orientation, and counter-revolutionary and para-military groups such as ORDEN. In Nicaragua, research conducted on a group of ex-members of Somoza's National Guard,⁴²³ suggests similarities between its sociological profile and that of the protagonists of the popular insurrection against Somoza. The difference between the two sides seems to have been fundamentally political and not sociological.

Agrarian reform has been one of the basic tasks of any social revolution in Latin America. A strategy of agrarian reform that places its main emphasis on state farms is a proletarianizing strategy that has little appeal when the dominant social group in the countryside is the peasantry. Indeed the incorporation of the peasantry into the revolution is often carried out only as a result of contradictions, such as the need for land, the need to balance-out prior exploitation that resulted from commercialization, and the lack of an infrastructure, etc. The Cuban revolution provides an example of agrarian reform centred on large state-owned units of production, and based on a previously attempted programme aimed at the broad

⁴²³ See Manuel A. Bolaños, and et. al., Delincuencia no convencional y control social: El caso de los ex-guardias nacionales Somocistas, (Managua, V Seminario de Criminología Comparada, 1985).

proletarianization of the labour force in the countryside, especially in the most strategic area of agro-exports.

On the other hand, a strategy aimed at proletarianizing the peasantry can be developed if capitalism has already set this process in motion prior to the revolution. Under these conditions, new state institutions may seem to the peasantry like an extension of the pre-revolutionary situation: a private landlord can simply be replaced by a state landlord, and an usurious merchant can be replaced by state institutions that demand commercialization, and so forth. The Sandinista's agrarian reforms reflect the necessity of joining together an area of state production on the one hand, that is based on salaried labour, on the other, a vast peasantry based either on a co-operative system, or a market system. To make matters more complicated, strengthening (or increasingly strong) Indigenous communities, who had no concept of either salaries or co-operative systems, also had to be assimilated.

However, peasant support is not sufficient to ensure the revolution is success, though it is almost a necessary condition. The guerrilla movements of the 1960's, in Venezuela, Colombia, and Guatemala, all received peasant support rivalling that of Castro in Cuba. In Latin America, village structures have shaped revolutionary movements and

influenced the way in which aggrieved rural people have responded to revolutionary situations. ⁴²⁴ Zapata's peasant rebellion centred on that a region of Mexico where corporate village life prevailed, and his followers fought for the restoration of collective land rights and the preservation of their communities. In Cuba, on the other hand, the sugar economy had eroded community life long before Castro organized his rural guerrilla movement. Consequently, Castro's initial rural support came from peasant squatters, to whom he promised individual land rights. Furthermore, Castro based his guerrillas in an area where land security was an issue and agrarian capitalism had not proletarianized the labour force.

It is not enough simply to note that variations exist in the levels of peasant support, and to describe those variations. One must also understand the social conditions that contribute to such variations. Firstly, in particular types of agrarian social structures there is a clear correlation between relatively high levels of sharecropping, squatting, and migratory labour and high levels of peasant support for guerrillas. It is certainly possible to see the connection between sharecropping or

⁴²⁴ See Theda Skocpol, States and revolution: A comparative analysis of France, Russia, and China, (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1979; Eric R. Wolf, op. cit.; Joel Migdal, Peasants, politics, and revolution, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1974).

squatting and peasant radicalism that existed in Cuba, Venezuela, and Colombia during the 1960's. In Guatemala, it is tenancy, that is linked to radicalism. In Peru and Bolivia it has been the opposite. There is a clear relation between secure peasant possession of land and low levels of support. In the events of 1970's and 1980's, it is possible to discern a clear link between high levels of squatting and radicalism in Nicaragua, and similar links between large numbers of migratory workers and radicalism in Guatemala and El Salvador. There is no such relation in the case of Peru's Sendero, because it was based in peasant small-holder villages in the Sierra.

Secondly, particular changes in agrarian systems result in peasant dislocation and a concurrent radicalism in Latin America. This occurred in Cuba, Colombia, and Guatemala in the 1960's, and again, later, in Guatemala and El Salvador. In Bolivia and Peru, where guerrillas failed to obtain peasant support, the peasantry consolidated its control over the land, while Venezuela fails to fit this theory altogether, despite a widespread land reform by the government, in the 1960's.

Thirdly, guerrillas often took root successfully in an area that had a tradition history of rebelling against federal authorities. They often failed where such cultures of rebellion were absent. In Cuba, the Oriente Province, and

particularly the Sierra Maestra, had been the scene of revolts, anti-Spanish rebellions, civil war, and anti-government movements since the 1860's. In Venezuela, the guerrilla centre in the Falcón State had been an area of anti-government resistance since Bolivar's time. In Colombia civil war and violence have largely been limited to the coffee growing area, and has been especially common in the departments that later became FARC guerrilla strongholds, such as Tolima and Caldas.

Throughout South America, there are instances of this tendency, on the part of rebellious regions, to support revolutionary forces. Colombia's ELN guerrillas intentionally began operations in South Santander, for instance, because earlier Liberal guerrillas had operated successfully there during the "La Violencia" period. In Bolivia the plateau and the Cochabamba valley had a long history of peasant movements. In Peru, "La Convención" was an area of recent settlement and had seen a recent peasant struggle against landlords. The guerrillas headed straight for it, but the peasants had won that struggle by the time they arrived. Finally, the Junín and Ayacucho departments have had a typical Andean history of sporadic peasant revolts, and guerrillas have won support in Junín by siding with the Indians, who sought the return of stolen ancestral lands.

Moving to the 1970's and 1980's the major centres of Sandinista support in Nicaragua were the areas that had been centres of Sandino's own resistance fifty years before. In Peru, the centre of initial support for Sendero lay in or near the area of Héctor Béjar's guerrilla foco of 1965. El Salvador and Guatemala are the exceptions that prove the rule. El Salvador's massive 1932 peasant revolt and subsequent massacre known as "La Matanza", occurred in the western coffee districts, but this area has not been a centre for the recent guerrilla movements. Similarly likewise the Guatemalan east has not seen a strong recurrence of guerrilla activity since the terror of 1966-1967.

Fourthly, strong organizational ties linking peasants to guerrillas or to the status quo either blocked or facilitated attempts to build "peasant-guerrilla" alliances. In the 1960's, good linkages between communist parties in various countries favoured radical alliances like that between Cuba's Orthodox Party and the Guatemalan PGT. Ideological conflicts between revolutionary groups could, at times favoured individual guerrilla groups, but could equally disadvantage the revolution as a whole. Examples of such disintegration could be found in Colombia and Venezuela. On the other hand, linguistic barriers proved formidable for guerrillas in Guatemala, Peru, and Bolivia. Oddly however, such linguistic obstacles were

became advantages in Guatemala and Peru in the 1970's because, by living and working among the peasants, the guerrillas learnt local dialects while government officials did not. The commitment of local rural authorities, including peasant leaders and the sons of land-holders, empowered guerrilla organizations in Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia, Guatemala, and Peru in the 1960's, while in the 1970's the conversion of entire villages, though slow, usually favoured the process of organising peasant support.

However, the root causes of protest in Latin America tend to be inequalities and injustices that are structural in origin. Peru has some of the deepest roots of any Latin American country. This is a legacy of the high level of culture attained by the pre-Hispanic civilizations, combined with the fact that Peru was the centre of Spanish colonial power in South America. An additional factor is the undeniable survival of indigenous structures, systems, traditions, and habits despite colonial development. Federalism was transplanted to Peru by the Spanish Conquest of the sixteenth Century, and various forms of slavery were introduced with the importation of African people during the eighteenth Century. Despite these influences, the indigenous feudal regime grew even stronger, in the first decades of the nineteenth Century following Peru's independence. By the second half of that century US penetration had begun. The result is that, in contemporary

Peru a hybrid system exists that could might be described as a feudal/bourgeois/imperialist regime.

Local institutional arrangements and cultural traditions are not the only contextual features that influence aggrieved people to seek individual or collective forms of protest. Economically subordinate groups, in both the city and the countryside, are more likely to defy conditions they dislike collectively if they have the support of more advantaged individuals or groups. This support may come from the more economically well to do, political parties of considerable standing, or religious leaders. Better situated individuals help arouse the masses and shape the demands of the masses in a way that allows individual discontent to be collectively channelled.

The better situated, firstly, may induce lower-status people to consider as unacceptable conditions that they otherwise might tolerate. Secondly, they may provide ordinary people with the leadership skills and the material resources they might otherwise lack. Thirdly, their involvement may minimize the elite's use of force against the masses, because elites are much more reluctant to use suppressive measures against the middle class than they are to use them against the lower classes. Yet Wickham-Crowley

shows, ⁴²⁵ guerrilla movements in Latin America were begun, typically, by educated university students.

The collective strength of an armed guerrilla force depends on external support, internal finance, and internal solidarity. Internal solidarity is the final critical element that influences the outcome of a guerrilla war. This is the case whether one refers to the solidarity of the guerrilla forces or to the willingness of the armed forces of the state to stand by the regime. Guerrilla wars are not simply battles between purses, but also of morale and solidarity.

Within the insurgent forces, solidarity against the government has usually been strong. However, the Colombian ELN and the Peruvian MIR's Cuzco foco were torn apart from within. ⁴²⁶ Guerrilla solidarity often broke down at the organizational level, with the continual splintering off of more and smaller guerrilla groups, and with allegations of heresy on either side. Only occasionally were such divisions later overcome and effective unity restored, as in the mending of the splits among the Sandinistas. The

⁴²⁵ See Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, Guerrillas and revolution in Latin America: A comparative study of insurgents and regimes since 1956, (Princeton, Princeton, University Press, 1992).

⁴²⁶ See Jaime Arenas, op. cit.; Norman Gall, "The legacy of Che Guevara", in Commentary, No. 44, 1967.

Cuban guerrillas never entirely splintered, holding together quite well in comparison to other movements. In Cuba, the Directorio Revolucionario de Guerrillas never competed with Castro's M-26 for mass loyalty.

The successful Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions were also like each other politically, yet unlike other cases in Latin America. In each case a dictator responded with inflexibility and intransigence to a revolutionary challenger. The revolutionary opposition reacted in turn by securing cross-class and multi-institutional allies and support. In neither case did one or two classes carry out a revolution against the resistance of a third class, for in the end, virtually all Cubans and Nicaraguans supported the end of the dictatorships.

In El Salvador, massive guerilla-cum-peasant resistance to the government has often allied itself to radical working-class opposition, yet has failed to come to power.⁴²⁷ The Salvadorean business sector has either stayed firmly in the government's camp, or has moved to the Right of the government and armed itself. But in Cuba and Nicaragua, guerrillas won cross-class support for a programme of radical reforms with Marxist and anti-imperial rhetoric,

⁴²⁷ See Enrique A. Baloyra, El Salvador in transition, (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

and not by highlighting the ousting of the new dictator and the restoration of democracy.

The literature on revolution presumes that state/class transformations resolve rural conflicts, especially when peasants gain legal rights. Yet land ownership may generate new tensions after a revolution under the pressure of government policies and market dynamics that directly effect the peasant beneficiaries of land reforms. Post-revolutionary peasant concerns will vary, and will depend upon how the market is experienced and on government tax, credit, and pricing policies. For example, not all peasants who gained land rights in the 1952 revolution in Bolivia, have remained quiescent.

Even under Socialism, market dynamics can be a source of conflict. When private economic activity is prohibited, the very presence of market activity represents a form of quiet defiance. In this context, conflict is not rooted in market relations, but market activity expresses a protest against the state or against specific state policy. In Cuba, for example, market activity has varied as a direct result of official economic options. Small farmers who have been angry about the low prices that the state pays, have kept their output down or diverted production to the more lucrative black market.

Throughout Latin America, market dynamics have also been a source of tension in the cities. Since urban jobs have not expanded commensurately with the rate of growth of the urban labour force, even city-dwellers and propertied peasants seek to supplement their income with petty entrepreneurial ventures. The urban self-employed, far from being revolutionary, simply protested against "government imposed" decreases in their purchasing power. Yet Latin America's incomplete proletarianization is not merely a product of state policy, it also reflects the peasantry's refusal to work for someone else. Peasants usually opt to engage in their own labour intensive small-scale commerce and petty commodity production, rather than in large-scale operations where they would be working for some anonymous employer.

Furthermore, Latin American governments have implemented austerity programmes that eliminate food and transport subsidies, freeze wages, and dismantle state owned enterprises. They have done so largely under pressure from foreign creditors, above all the IMF, and with the support of certain segments of the local bourgeoisie. The austerity measures have prompted street demonstrations, riots, strikes, looting, political rallies, attacks on government property, and street violence. In Nicaragua, for example, the Sandinista government has been faced more with defiance of commercial regulations than with consumer protests over

official prices. As a consequence, the loci of conflict today has shifted from "relations of production" to the realm of distribution.

Latin America's bureaucratic centralist tradition, in turn, is undoubtedly a moulding influence on protest movements in the region. It has minimized overt movements against authority and given to many movements a statist component. Further, protest movements in the region have been inspired more by indignation over injustice than inequality; protest movements do not necessarily and inevitably emerge out of the contradictions in economic or other structural arrangements, even when subordinate groups perceive their situation to be unsatisfactory and unjust. Better-situated individuals help arouse the masses and shape their demands so that individual discontent is collectively channelled. Nowhere, in Latin America, for example, have peasants pressed for an egalitarian distribution of land. More egalitarian societies may have resulted from the defiant acts of guerrillas, but concern over equality has not been the "motor force" behind protests in the region.

Throughout the region, relatively open elections led to the decline of guerrillas; a decline often acknowledged by the revolutionaries themselves. In Venezuela, following the elections of the 1960's, and more recently in Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Peru, dishonest elections have

instead triggered rebellions such as Mexico 1910; Bolivia 1952; Colombia 1970, and Nicaragua 1974. Formal rights may incite protests if citizens feel elections to be fraudulent or electoral choices limited. Electoral defiance has a particularly long history in Argentina, where citizens have for decades been quietly expressing their protest at the political options available by voting "en blanco". Such electoral defiance peaked in 1960, when about 20 percent of all voters cast blank votes.

On the other hand, guerrillas have typically provided the regions they declare under their control with various public services, such as health, the teaching of literacy, policing, and administrative functions.⁴²⁸ Such activities commonly led peasants to accept the guerrillas as a legitimate authority. However, central governments could and did attempt to reduce the regional influence of guerrilla movements by competing against the insurgents for peasant loyalties. To this end, central governments have build schools and civic centres, dug wells, conducted periodical health check-ups, and even carried out local land reforms.

⁴²⁸ See Ramón L. Bonachea, and Marta San Martín, The Cuban insurrection 1952-1959, (New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1974).

The Colombian military, for example, became well practised in such civic strategies. Army violence might produce new recruits for the guerrillas, while civic military action could instead produce supporters of, and collaborators with, the established order. In Colombia, such civil action did seem to have some impact in reducing guerrilla activity in the 1960's.⁴²⁹ A similar process took place in Guatemala in 1966/1967, where a combination of terror tactics and civic action programmes led to a considerable loss of peasant support for the insurgents. Indeed it even led to betrayals by former supporters.⁴³⁰

Where guerrillas have not succeeded in seizing power them, governments have improved their claims to legitimacy through elections, rural reforms, welfare measures, and military civic action programmes. Conversely, guerrilla movements remained strongest where such government activities were most restricted, such as in Colombia from 1975 to 1982, and in El Salvador and Peru from 1979 to 1984. Guerrillas and governments compete with proposals and policies for mass loyalty.

⁴²⁹ See Richard L. Maullin, Soldiers, guerrillas, and politics in Colombia, (Toronto, Lexington Books, 1973).

⁴³⁰ See Camilo Castaño, "Avec les guérillas du Guatemala", in Partisans, No. 38, 1967.

Where governments refused to compete, as in Cuba and Nicaragua, the dictatorships eventually fell. Where governments did enter the political lists, they enjoyed the distinct advantage of their incumbency when making additional claims to legitimacy. Governments typically lost legitimacy wherever military and death squad terror alienated the civilian populace, often producing new guerrillas. The outcome depends not only on the rage, ideology, and tactics of protesters, it also depends very much on whether the subversive act undermines the legitimacy and the economic base of the government.

Violence, in Latin American politics, undermines stability and produces changes. If political stability is conceived as a polity which is functioning regularly in accordance with the norms it posits for itself, then the frequency of major outbreaks of political violence is a measure of political instability.⁴³¹ In a normally functioning stable polity, policy is the end product of a process involving what Pye has called "interest articulation and aggregation".⁴³² Interests are articulated and aggregated by a series of structures including pressure groups, political parties, and legislative bodies. A notable

⁴³¹ See Martin C. Needler, Political development in Latin America: Instability, violence and revolutionary change, op. cit.

⁴³² See Lucian W. Pye, "The non-Western political process", in Journal of Politics, 1958.

characteristic of Latin American politics is the weakness of intermediary structures (pressure groups).

In Latin America, socialism has been portrayed as an alternative system by revolutionary movements (in Cuba, Bolivia, and Nicaragua, for example), as well as by non-revolutionary movements attempting to achieve a transition to Socialism such as those (in Chile between 1970 and 1973; in Guyana between 1970 and 1985; in Jamaica from 1972 until 1980, and in Surinam from 1980 to 1983). Leaders of non revolutionary movements have repeatedly faced the problem of trying to install a new system while the existing system was still viable, and while various groups in society were battling for control over that existing system. To complicate matters, the interaction between the state and the international system would often play a significant role in such situations.

Socialist parties of Latin America that were no longer anti-Communist, and that broke with traditional European Social Democracy constituted the "new Left" in Latin America. This new Left-wing was made up of heterogeneous groups which had directly or indirectly responded to the influence of Fidel Castro and the Cuban revolution. In consequence, during the 1960's the radicalized Socialist parties of Chile, Uruguay, Ecuador, Peru, and Argentina acquired new younger leadership under the Fidelist example.

The first Latin American Communist insurrection took place in El Salvador in January 1932, closely followed by the Brazilian insurrection of 1935, which in many ways was similar to its predecessor in El Salvador, and was led by Luis Carlos Prestes. However, in Latin America today it appears that few official Communist parties, indeed few Leftist organizations, are the exclusive vanguard of the masses in their countries.⁴³³ The Nicaraguan and Salvadorean revolutionary movements offered good examples of unity between distinct vanguard elements, and of combining armed organizations with mass-based organizations.

Nicaragua's official Marxist/Leninist Party, and the Nicaragua Socialist Party have played an insignificant role in the revolutionary process, though they were part of the Leftist opposition to the Sandinista government.⁴³⁴ The revolutionary regime on the other hand did not describe itself as either Socialist or Marxist/Leninist, but rather as anti-imperialist, representative of the masses, and democratic.⁴³⁵ The revolutionary vanguard in Nicaragua was

⁴³³ See William Bollinger, "Learn from others, think for ourselves: Central American revolutionary strategy in the 1980s", in Review of African Political Economy, No. 32, 1985.

⁴³⁴ See Gary Ruchwarger, op. cit.

⁴³⁵ See Richard L. Harris, and Carlos M. Vilas, Nicaragua: A revolution under siege, (London, Zed Books, 1985); Carlos M. Vilas, "El debate interno Sandinista", en

the FSLN, which had evolved from a guerrilla movement into a political party that combined Leninist, electoral, and mass party characteristics. It adhered to its own ideology of Sandinismo, an electoral mixture of revolutionary nationalism, Marxism, Liberation Theology, and socialism.

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In El Salvador, the revolutionary movement is engaged in a "national democratic revolutionary struggle" that is based upon an alliance between the lower working classes. The leadership of this movement sees the revolutionary project in their country as involving a democratic, an anti-imperialistic, and a social revolution. In the case of the Cuban revolution, the extent of US ownership in the Cuban economy was so great that the new revolutionary regime was unable to initiate any reforms without coming into conflict with the interest of US capital and the US government.⁴³⁷ The revolutionary regime had to nationalize important sectors of the economy to break the American stranglehold on Cuban economic life.

Nueva Sociedad, No. 113, 1991.

⁴³⁶ See Tomás Borges; Carlos Fonseca; Daniel Ortega; Humberto Ortega, and Jaime Wheelock, Sandinistas speak, (New York, Pathfinder Press, 1986).

⁴³⁷ See Edward Boorstein, The economic transformation of Cuba, (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1968).

As a result, within two years, most of the industrial sector had been nationalized by the new state. The best agricultural land had also been nationalized, as well as the banks, the railways, the telecommunications system, the utilities, airlines, ports, major retail outlets, big hotels, and export/import firms.⁴³⁸ The *sui generis* example of peasant insurgency under the Communist Party can be found today in Colombia. This case demonstrates that armed rebellions and revolutionary situations, can become an integral aspect of a country's politics, a virtual way of life, a profession even for rebels and their supporters (welfare system), while the revolutionaries themselves can become simply one more pressure group in the political arena.

The common political line taken by Latin American Communist parties is to stress an intransigent anti-imperialist agrarian revolution that follows a Leninist tradition. This line was first proposed at the Comintern's Sixth Congress. It was reformulated to suit a national democratic revolution at the Moscow meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1960. The Comintern's Seventh Congress marked the beginning of a new strategic line, favouring co-operation with all forces against native fascism and imperialism. This co-operation would include the right or

⁴³⁸ See Carlos R. Rodríguez, Cuba en el tránsito al Socialismo 1959-1963, (México, Siglo XXI, 1978).

centre parties, but on the basis of a strategy of simultaneously preparing for armed insurrection alongside legal and parliamentary battles.

In consequence, most Communist parties on the continent have opted for the parliamentary road to power and the peaceful transition to Socialism, instead of Lenin's dual strategy of preparing for both legal and illegal struggles. Furthermore, most Latin American Communist parties agree with Lenin's, rather than Marx's interpretation of the subjective conditions of revolution, arguing that the proletariat does not have to become the majority class prior to assuming political power. Thus, they represent a peculiar combination of Lenin's politics and Marx's strategy.⁴³⁹

On the other hand, the principal point of the Chinese line on Latin American politics has been the prevalence of anti-imperialist sentiments, feelings based on their dealings with the United States and Western European countries. Mao Zhe Dong held the idea that there must be a Marxist/Leninist party to direct the organization of the people's army and the political mobilization of the masses. Several points should be made regarding these parties.

⁴³⁹ See Donald C. Hodges, The Latin American revolutions: Politics and strategy from Apro-Marixsm to Guevarism, op. cit.

Firstly, they insist that a guerrilla movement can be led only by a genuine Marxist/Leninist party. This insistence has alienated not only the Castroists but also the Trotskists, resulting in their isolation from other revolutionary groups.

Secondly, in some countries the sectarianism of the pro-Chinese forces has resulted in schisms within groups. Such forces become extremely influential. In Peru and the Dominican Republic, for example, the Maoists were reported to be more powerful than the pro-Soviet parties. Thirdly, in their effort to eradicate bourgeois and revisionist ideas from their thought, they have controlled one of the major tasks of the party, that is, the mobilization of the masses in the form of a "united front". Fourthly, the Marxist/Leninist parties supported by Mao Zhe Dong insist on building a "people's army", seeing it as a necessary condition for victory in accordance with Mao's theory on the Subject. ⁴⁴⁰

Debray's and Castro's revolutionary theory modifies classical Marxist/Leninist doctrine in the following ways. Firstly, it re-interprets the class struggle as a "people's war" against imperialism and internal colonialism. For Castro, the guerrillas fight for the anti-imperialist and

⁴⁴⁰ See Cecil Johnson, Communist China and Latin America 1959-1967, (New York, Columbia University Press, 1970).

potentially Socialist revolution, and not for the demands of the peasantry, which are usually opposed to Socialisms. In fact, the peasant is a petty-bourgeois who wants to have land and become rich by selling its products. The guerrilla does no more than try to mobilize the peasants, and win their support, and enlist some of them into the armed forces. ⁴⁴¹

Secondly, Debray and Castro assert that the people's army is the most revolutionary force. The army therefore takes over the role of the working class in classical doctrine. According to orthodox Marxism/Leninism, insurrectional armed struggle presupposes the existence of an objectively revolutionary situation out of which it grows as the last stage in the struggle for power. This is reversed by Castroism, ⁴⁴² which holds that the armed struggle is the first stage of the revolution, and creates the objective revolutionary situation.

Thirdly, in Debray's and Castro's revolutionary theory, the role of vanguard was taken over by the core of the revolutionary army, the guerrilla focus. For the orthodox Marxist/Leninist, armed struggle is fundamentally a mass

⁴⁴¹ See Gregory J. Oswald, and Anthony J. Stover, The Soviet Union and Latin America, (New York, Praeger, 1970).

⁴⁴² See Fidel Castro, Guerra de guerrillas, (La Habana, Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1960).

struggle, but for the Castroist it is begun and implemented by a small band of guerrilla fighters which in the course of time may grow into a popular revolutionary army. Lastly, in a Castroist revolution, the leader of that revolution is the leader of the guerrillas. His dual military and political role destine him to continue the tradition of the charismatic Latin American caudillos. ⁴⁴³

There are also several features that distinguish Fidelism from Guevarism. Guevarism emerged as a distinct tendency during the second stage, that is, after the "Moncada Battle", aligning itself with positions that Che's followers have since neither abandoned nor surmounted. Che did not contribute to the Populist politics and strategy of the July 26 Movement, nor did he live long enough to assess the revolutionary potential of the Peruvian military and Allende's government of "Popular Unity". Real differences became increasingly apparent. During the second stage, for example, Fidelism attached considerable importance to the unity of all actual and potential forces for revolution. Che sought popular support for the guerrillas in a peasant-worker coalition, but categorically denied a revolutionary potential might exist in national petty-bourgeoisie and student movements. Fidel included them in his final coalition.

⁴⁴³ See Fidel Castro, "Revolución en la revolución?", en Cuadernos de la Casa de las Américas, No. 1, 1967.

Nowadays, the erosion of the traditional Communist parties and of the national revolutionary movements has led to a new relationship between forces and to multiple realignments of the Left. Currently, the Left seems to be converging on a new type of revolutionary vanguard, independent of Havana, Moscow or Peking. But as Robin Blackburn points out, the collapse of the Soviet model was so thorough that it not only closed communism down as a viable political and economic alternative, but seriously tainted other visions of socialism as well. ⁴⁴⁴ These new movements of "national liberation" are deeply rooted in their own historical and national traditions. Indeed, it has been noted that the Left has undergone a significant re-evaluation of political democracy in response to painful experiments with authoritarian rule and often violent political suppression. ⁴⁴⁵

In marked contrast to the 1960's and 1970's, there is today a virtual consensus across the Latin American Left that it is important and necessary to participate in democratic institutions, and imperative to make democratic norms an integral component of any project for socio-economic transformations. The global process of political evolution

⁴⁴⁴ See Robin Blackburn, "Fin de siècle: Socialism after the crash", in New Left Review, No. 185, 1991.

⁴⁴⁵ See Norbert Lechner, op. cit.; Robert Barros, "The Left and democracy: Recent debates in Latin America", in Telos, No. 68, 1986.

has developed several distinctive features in South and Central America, due to the specific characteristics of Latin America society, the historical experiences, and the development of the Latin American Left.

Firstly, the starting point for any process of political development is the presence of a Left-wing with a powerful Leninist heritage and a relatively weak social democratic legacy. ⁴⁴⁶ At the same time, the traditional Latin American Left has long been noted for its imitative character and its cultural and ideological dependence upon the European Left. The early twentieth-century schism in Europe between revolutionary Marxism/Leninism and social democracy had relatively little impact on the Latin America Left. Populism came to occupy the political space that social democracy filled in Western Europe, because the Left in most Latin American societies came to be dominated by one or another variety of Leninist orthodoxy. ⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁶ See José Arico, *op. cit.*

⁴⁴⁷ Social Democratic or Democratic Socialist Parties have played important roles at specific historical conjunctures, especially in the Southern Cone countries of Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay, but most of these parties were unable to sustain their political influence or democratic socialist trajectory over time. For example, Argentinean socialism ceded working class support to the Peronist phenomenon, and the Chilean Socialist Party experienced a process of ideological "Leninization" in the 1960's which seriously compromised the party's commitment to Chile's democratic institutions.

Secondly, the patterns of change within the Latin American Left have been shaped by repeated political defeat. The 1960's were an optimistic period for the Left, with the inspiration of the Cuban revolution. However, the debate among the Latin American Left between "reformist" and "revolutionary" paths in the 1960's did not pit Leninists against Social Democrats. Rather this debate occurred among Leninists, that is, between followers of the Moscow-line and the Maoist or pro-Cuban "new Left". Thirdly, the Latin America Left exists in a state of existential and teleological uncertainty, and continues to operate in a political and socio-economic context that has the potential for radical change.

Latin America remains a decidedly weak link in global capitalism; the region experienced economic crisis when debt plunge most nations into "hyper-inflationary recession". Moreover, recent changes in the Latin American Left have coincided with the democratization of the region. This process has given to the Left a new appreciation for the civil and political liberties that can be protected by democratic institutions, as well as for the political space for popular organizations and oppositional representation.

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⁴⁴⁸ See Angel Flisfisch, "El surgimiento de una nueva ideología democrática en América Latina", en Angel Flisfisch, La política como compromiso democrático, (Santiago, FLASCO, 1987); Tomás Moulian, "Dictadura,

An individual or group may decide to participate in the existing political system in order to gain access to governmental responsibility, in order to mobilize opposition to the political authority, to consolidate, destabilize, or transform existing political institutions, to promote social concentration or class struggle, or to promote pragmatic programmes of gradual reform or more sweeping projects for the transformation of society. These various aims can be divided into two groups. Those that are specifically political, and those that are economic.

Among political aims, a further distinction would be made between those of the Left-wing parties, who continue to view politics as a form of class struggle, and those aims which prioritize some type of multi-class political consensus. On the other hand, a further distinction must also be made between the economic aims of Left-wing parties which continue to advocate a structural transformation of Capitalist relations of production, economic strategies which accept Capitalism, either tacitly or explicitly, and opt to promote distributive policies within the parameters of the prevailing mode of production.

The Left-wing position is clearly on the ideological defensive with the global crisis of Socialist thought and

Democracia y Socialismo", en Umbral, No. 2, 1980.

practice, yet these parties retain a belief in the necessity of fundamentally changing property relations, alongside a belief in the regulative preeminence of market mechanisms. In contrast, the alternative position is clearly a retreat from the classic ideological vision of Socialism as an alternative mode of production. While this position may retain commitments to the more abstract values of socio-economic equality, they are content to promote as a means of achieving that equality, gradually modifying or reforming Capitalism, thus dissociating equality or social justice from the teleological vision of an alternative mode of production.

The pairing of political and economic aims yields a four-fold model of how Left-wing parties might approach the relationship between democracy and socio-economic change.⁴⁴⁹ The first approach would be to maintain a revolutionary orientation, and is the most closely wedded to the traditional Marxist/Leninist ideological norms which predominated until recently among the Latin American Left. The approach has been associated with a rejection of formal bourgeois democratic institutions and a refusal to participate within them, either through a boycott or the adoption of forms of revolutionary armed struggle. Therefore, the political orientation is confrontational,

⁴⁴⁹ See Kenneth Roberts, *op. cit.*

with an emphasis on class conflict and the mobilization of lower sectors of society against established structures of political power. On the other hand, the economic orientation aims at a revolutionary transition to Socialism, and a fundamental ideological rejection of Capitalism.

The second approach, which retains an emphasis on class conflict and the confrontational mobilization of the lower classes for socio-economic change. However, its economic orientation is highly econometric rather than ideological, that is, it relaxes the ideological emphasis on the revolutionary construction of Socialism, while favouring diverse distribution policies, which modify, but do not supplant, Capitalism. Left-wing parties adopt this approach when they perceive their role as one of representing mass interests and demands within the political system. Their intention is to mobilize pressure, from below, and direct it at democratic institutions to ensure that they respond to mass demands for wage increases, land reform, or other social benefits. Thus, they frequently encourage labour strikes, property seizures, or other forms of oppositional mobilization to confront established hierarchies and maximize the leverage for change.

The third approach to the question of democracy and socio-economic change offers a process of renewal without

demanding a complete break with the past. The political emphasis here is on the democratic election of a new leadership that will push radical changes. This, of course, necessarily requires a multi-class electoral majority, and so also requires a broad political consensus. It eschews the Marxist Left's traditional emphasis on class conflict, arguing that such an emphasis has a segregative effect which inhibits political alliances between the working class and middle class, while endowing political struggle with a bellicose and militaristic logic. ⁴⁵⁰

Therefore, it retains the ideal of revolutionary change, but does not conceive revolution as a single conquest of state power. Rather, revolution is conceived as a prolonged democratic process that extends the norms of equality and sovereignty from the political sphere to the realms of social and economic relations. On the other hand, the economic orientation of this approach aims at a gradual transformation of Capitalism in the direction of Socialism. Proponents frequently challenge the traditional teleological idea that Socialism is an alternative, pre-defined model of society, arguing that Socialism can only

⁴⁵⁰ See Tomás Moulian, Democracia y Socialismo en Chile, (Santiago, FLASCO, 1983).

be understood as a creative and open-ended process of social transformation.⁴⁵¹

The final approach represents the sharpest break with the traditional ideals and identities of the Latin American Left, as it explicitly seeks to reconstruct the Left's project on a new conceptual and ideological foundation. This approach is manifestly post-Marxist, post-revolutionary, and post-Gramscian, and it whole-heartedly embraces Liberal Democratic norms and institutions. It envisages a pragmatic and gradually reforming Capitalism that is not necessarily cumulative in the sense of constructing a Socialist state. In consequence, it believes that democratic stability in pluralistic societies requires a process of political negotiations and compromise between competing interests and projects.

To sum up, these four types of revolutionary project all have implications for the way in which a Left-wing party will participate in democratic institutions. The first approach tends to create opposition against the regime then tends to utilize its mechanisms to resolve basic problems or disputes. An example could be seen in Peru in the late

⁴⁵¹ See Manuel A. Garretón, "En qué consistió la renovación Socialista? Síntesis y evaluación de sus contenidos", en Manuel A. Garretón, La renovación Socialista: Balance y perspectivas de un proceso vigente, (Santiago de Chile, Valentín Letelier, 1979).

1980's, when the crisis of APRA and the temporary weakness of the Right enabled the Unified Left Coalition (IU) to emerge as a serious contender for national power.

The second approach is also inclined towards generating political resistance, as its strength lies in the mobilization and articulation of socio-economic demands from sectors which are normally on the margins of political and economical power. However, when these demands succeed in carrying a party to power, they are difficult to contain, and too many demands can very quickly strain to breaking point the regime's ability to respond. The structural redistributive constraints on Latin American Capitalism magnify the problem. The revolutionary Sandinista movement in Nicaragua was defeated in 1990 by a combination of external US support and national economic crisis. The FSLN was forced back into political opposition, although it continues to collaborate with sections of the Chamorro government in a limited number of policy areas.

The objective of the third way is to transform the social majority, that is the subordinated the lower classes, into a political majority. There is also the challenge of transforming decentralized base-level social organizations into a political basis for the exercise of power at the national level. This requires the articulation of a viable over-all project to aggregate and synthesize highly diverse

and often fragmented and competing interests and identities. The Brazilian workers' party (PT) can be used as an example; as it successfully unified the different unions under its umbrella.⁴⁵² This approach is vulnerable to the classic dilemma of any gradual democratic transition to Socialism. The state remains structural dependent on capital, and so vulnerable to any attempt by capitalists to provoke an economic crisis. Such crises undermine the state's ability to democratically reproduce any political project.

In contrast, the final type of revolutionary project defuses the teleological dilemma by renouncing any commitment to the construction of Socialism, and it partially evades the problem of a structural dependence on capital by accepting it as a political reality. The emphasis of this approach on political and economic pacts flows from its concern for stability, and from the belief that democratic procedures provide mechanisms for conflict resolution which facilitate the peaceful co-existence of contending interests. The Chilean Socialist party (PSCh), has discovered that such an approach can facilitate a Left-wing party's ascension to governmental office.

⁴⁵² See Kurt Weyland, Obstacles to redistributive reform under democracy: The case of Brazil, (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1991).

Finally, in Latin America, revolutions have modified state structures in ways that have influenced subsequent responses to grievances. The patterning of post-revolutionary protest has varied, in part, with the nature and strength of the states to which the upheavals have given rise. Yet Latin America must be distinguished from other parts of the Third World because of its urban bias. The bias against the peasantry has exacerbated migration, shifting the loci of conflict to the cities. It has transferred the role of protagonist from the peasantry to urban labours especially those in the "informal sector".

In consequence, Left-wing parties in Latin America are wrestling with a series of common dilemmas which are not necessarily new, but which have taken new forms as a result of the historic experience of the Left during the 1990's in Latin America and around the world. Perhaps the first and most fundamental dilemma involves the relationship between political democracy and socio-economic change. The experience of the Partido Unificado Mariateguista (PUM) in Peru demonstrates how ambiguous and tenuous a party's commitment may be to any given democratic regime, and how contingent such a commitment may be upon the durability, efficacy, and performance of specific institutions.

The sobering reality for the Latin American Left is that most of the continent's new democratic regimes, whatever

progress they have made in the areas of civil liberty, human rights, political participation, and representation, have been profoundly "conservative" on socio-economic issues. The new regimes almost universally inherited severe debt problems and macro-economic instabilities, and the common response has been some variant of neo-liberal austerity programmes, albeit, on some occasions, after populist interludes. Neo-liberalism has yet to demonstrate its long-term electoral viability in Latin America. In cases like Argentina, Peru, and Venezuela, elected officials implemented neo-liberal programmes after campaigning against them, and recent events in Peru and Venezuela have cast doubt on neo-liberalism's ability to reproduce itself democratically.

Ironically, for all the discussion about the "reevaluation" of democracy, the Latin American Left has yet to engage in a serious analysis of the opportunities for social change under liberal democratic institutions. In general, political democracy has been embraced by the Left on two levels. Firstly, after the trauma of political violence of the 1960's, and the governmental oppression of the 1970's, democracy has been valued as a means of constructing a more consensual political order, and of establishing norms and rules to regulate political competition and facilitate the mutual co-existence of competing interests.

Secondly, after authoritarian exclusion of the 1970's and 1980's, democracy has been valued as a means of allowing the articulation and representation of social interests in the political realm, and of restoring the notion of citizenship. However, neither of these processes assumes progressive or redistributive socio-economic change, nor have they considered the enjoinder that democracy should be extended to all levels of society.

A second dilemma, which pertains to political agenda under new democratic regimes, is that although authoritarian regimes have generally closed formal channels of political participation and suppressed certain forms of popular organization, it cannot be presumed that re-democratization will be associated with a proliferation or strengthening of mass movements. Indeed, recent experiences demonstrated that the exact opposite may occur, and that mass movements often reach their zenith in the struggle against authoritarian rule, and then disintegrate during the process of democratic transition.⁴⁵³

Paradoxically, it is the exclusive and oppressive nature of authoritarian rules that frequently provide an impetus for popular mobilization, since the closure of formal

⁴⁵³ See Guillermo O'Donnell, and Philippe C. Schmitter, Transitions from authoritarian rule: Tentative conclusions about uncertain democracies, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

representative institutions may redirect political energies towards the social arena, may politicize social and economic issues, and provide a negative referent against which to organize and unify.⁴⁵⁴ In contrast, democratization may have a demobilizing effect, as political parties and formal representative institutions displace, fragment, or co-opt social movements. These demobilizing effects are only compounded when democratization corresponds with economic crisis and market-based structural adjustments, which have invariably weakened labour movements, eviscerated the state's role in social programmes, severed its links to social organizations, and encourage the atomization of social relations.

The dilemma then, is that the Left may be deprived of the social, political, and organizational basis required to develop democracy in Latin America into something more meaningful. To date, the Left in Latin America has systematically failed to devise a formula for the social and political organization of the masses which is capable of counteracting the atomizing effects of political and economic liberalism. If the party centred vanguardism of Leninist orthodoxy was tried and found wanting, grass-root,

⁴⁵⁴ See Philip Oxhorn, Democratic transitions and democratization of civil society: Chilean Shantytown organizations under the authoritarian regime, (Cambridge, Harvard University - PhD dissertation, 1989).

decentralized social movements have proved equally incapable of constructing a different social order. Indeed, they have failed to exert sufficient civil pressure to sustain an ethos of democratic equality and community in a context of political hierarchy, market individualism, and crisis-induced social disintegration.

Therefore, the internal fragmentation, heterogeneity, and competitiveness of lower class interests have progressively eaten away at the material and interactive basis of collective action, severely complicating the construction of a common, national Left-wing political project. The appeal of ideological identities is weakening, and the lower classes threaten to abandon Left-wing parties and move to the terrain of populist alternatives. The challenge remains, then, of creating a material and programmatic foundation upon which to sustain the collective identity of "lo popular", one which is capable of aggregating and synthesizing diverse interests and a host of decentralized community organizations behind a new articulation of a democratic project for social and economic change.

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