May 1965

LTC No. 35

THE LAND TENURE CENTER
310 King Hall
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

THE PEASANTRY AS AN EMERGING POLITICAL FACTOR IN MEXICO, BOLIVIA, AND VENEZUELA

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The author is presently with the Department of State. This paper was submitted as his thesis for the Master of Arts degree while he was studying at Columbia University. While the author has had no connection with the Land Tenure Center, we feel this paper deserves distribution among those concerned with agrarian reform in Latin America.

The views and interpretations expressed in this paper are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the views of either the Land Tenure Center or the Department of State.

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INTRODUCTION

In a few countries of Latin America where barriers restricting participation in the political process have been removed, an element of society previously largely ignored is beginning to play a political role. The peasantry is emerging as a new political pressure group.

The peasantry represents a large potential political force. In the socially undeveloped countries of the Andes, the rural population is nearly two-thirds of the total (Bolivia--63 percent, Peru--59 percent, Ecuador--66 percent).[1] In Central America, the percentage of rural population is even greater (e.g., Guatemala--70 percent). In Latin America's two largest countries, the rural population approximates half or more of the total (Brazil--63 percent, Mexico--49 percent). Even in countries with a smaller rural population (Venezuela--39 percent, Cuba--45 percent, Chile--34 percent), the peasantry constitutes a significant factor related to political change.

Nevertheless, political control in Latin America has been traditionally exercised by a narrow elite which has dominated a semi-feudal political and social structure. Until 1900, although countries like Argentina, Chile, Colombia, and Brazil experienced parliamentary government, the electorate was restricted largely to an elite of landowning gentry, in some cases joined by a growing commercial and industrial urban elite. Other countries like Mexico, Bolivia, and Venezuela were frequently dominated by dictators, such as Porfirio Díaz, who practiced the not uncommon art of continuismo.

After 1900, with the growth of middle sector groups and of organized labor, political power passed to the urban areas in most of the more important countries but largely on the understanding that the oligarchy be left alone in its control of the land.[2] In some countries, however, feudalistic conditions prevailed, as, for example, in the Andean nations or in Venezuela, where Juan Vicente Gómez enjoyed a 27-year dictatorship until 1935. Although after 1900 the urban lower classes began to participate in the political process, the peasant remained largely outside of the national society and the national polity. As Blanksten has observed, "with

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[1] These figures and those following are for the year 1960 and are taken from Victor Urquidi's Viabilidad Económica de America Latina, Mexico, D.F., 1962, Table 2, p. 158.

[2] Alexander, R.J., "Nature and Progress of Agrarian Reform in Latin America," in The Journal of Economic History, Vol. XXIII, December 1963, p. 560.

the exception of the landowners and the Church, few interests arising in the rural areas are capable of making themselves heard in national politics."[3]

The political process exists as the principal mechanism through which interests may be articulated to influence the allocation of national resources in order to meet the political, economic or social needs of particular interest groups. As has been mentioned, organized labor became gradually more effective in winning recognition of the needs of the working man. But no structure existed to represent the interest of the peasantry. If the political process is denied to an interest group as a means for obtaining redress for social and economic grievances, then the interest group, by itself or in combination with others, will look for a solution to its needs outside the political process--through force. The peasantry gained access to the political process in Mexico, Bolivia, and subsequently in Cuba through violent revolution which destroyed the old order and made room for a new. Although none of these revolutions was a peasant revolution, the peasantry either served as a catalyst in the revolutionary process or became drawn in by the resulting maelstrom. While two coups prepared the ground for the incorporation of the peasantry into the political process in Venezuela, the old order was not destroyed but was brought to accept the right of the peasantry to a role in the new political system.

This paper undertakes case studies of three Latin American countries in which the peasantry has already been incorporated into the political process--Mexico, Bolivia and Venezuela. The paper's purpose is to examine the nature of the peasantry's new political role with the hope of drawing conclusions or observations meaningful in terms of the country's own political development as well as for other countries where the peasantry may eventually play a political role as the result of either revolution or reform.

Mexico, Bolivia and Venezuela serve as good comparative case studies of the peasantry as an emergent political factor because of the different kind of revolutionary change that has introduced the peasant into the political process and because of the different types of political systems which developed subsequently. The three countries provide the opportunity to study the development of the political role of the peasantry as it is affected both by

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[3]Blanksten, G., "Politics in Latin America," in The Politics of Developing Areas, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1960, p. 477.

a democratic, competitive multi-party system which has arisen as the result of gradual change, as in Venezuela, and as it is affected by a dominant, authoritarian one-party system which is the child of violent revolution, as in Mexico and Bolivia.

The fact that the revolutionary periods in the three countries cover different time periods does not hinder comparison but enriches it. While the Bolivian Revolution[4] dates from 1952 and revolutionary change in Venezuela only from 1958, both revolutions are contemporaneous in origin and in stage of development today. Since the Mexican Revolution is the only one of the three which has endured long enough to permit a new political system to become firmly institutionalized, there has been sufficient time and development to evaluate it soundly and to better gauge its future. On the other hand, because the Mexican Revolution occurred a generation ago, different factors may have influenced its development than have affected revolutionary development in Bolivia and Venezuela. Furthermore, because the Mexican Revolution is well-established and has reached a stage of dependable political stability, it is not threatened by the maneuverings of the Cold War and of Castro as have been the governments in Bolivia and Venezuela. The Mexican experience is therefore perhaps not quite as valid for other countries today as are the examples of Bolivia and Venezuela. Nevertheless, all three revolutions occurred for similar reasons, have been motivated by similar goals and face similar problems today. In any case, the main emphasis of this paper will be on the comparison of how these countries' political systems function today and the role of the peasantry within these systems.

In discussing the peasantry, this paper deals largely with what Wagley describes as the "mestizo peasant," whose biological heritage is unimportant, who speaks some Spanish, and whose awareness extends beyond his community to the nation socially, politically and economically.[5] This peasant, or campesino, may be a small landowner, a communal farmer such as an ejidatario in Mexico, a sharecropper (including a renter or colonist), or a rural laborer.[6] The campesino is sometimes close to the Indian and sometimes much

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[4]By the term "Bolivian Revolution" is meant the period from 1952 until President Paz was ousted in 1964. The term "Mexican Revolution" covers the period from Porfirio Díaz' resignation in 1911 to the present.

[5]Wagley, Charles, "The Peasant" in Continuity and Change in Latin America, ed. by John J. Johnson, Stanford U. Press, Stanford, 1964. p.26.

[6]Adams, Richard N., "Rural Labor" in Ibid., p. 49.

more advanced. Technically speaking, the above definition would exclude some four million unintegrated Indians in Mexico[7] as well as others in Bolivia, where the peasantry is less developed than in Mexico and Venezuela. The Venezuelan campesino is probably more advanced than the peasants in either of the other two countries. Politically speaking, the term peasantry as used in this paper includes Indians on the assumption that they would in many cases follow the political lead of their more evolved peasant brothers.

The nature of the political role of the peasantry and its potential political influence can be gauged by examining various criteria. The criteria used in the present case studies are the peasantry's relationship to political parties and to organized labor, its role as a mobilized political action group, the role of peasant leadership, and the effect of the peasantry's electoral influence. Peasant influence through the national congress has not been included as a separate criterion, partly because the congress does not play a strong role in any of the three countries and partly because information is not readily available on peasant congressional participation, except to some extent for Mexico. Two main criteria have been used to gauge the degree of influence of the peasantry in the political process. One is the peasantry's influence on the determination of the control of political power; the other is its influence on the determination of policy once power is held.

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[7]Scott, Robert E., Mexican Government in Transition, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1959, pp. 65-66, 70-71.

Part I

The Peasant as an Emerging Political Factor in Mexico

I. Introduction

The Mexican Revolution was the first real political revolution in modern Latin America. It preceded the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia by seven years and similar revolutionary change in Bolivia and Venezuela by at least one generation. As a result, sufficient time has elapsed since the Mexican Revolution burst forth in 1910 to provide an ample framework for examining the course of the Revolution and to judge its progress. While some 50 years of development have succeeded in institutionalizing the Mexican Revolution, the Mexican peasantry, though represented by an official organization since 1938, has not assumed as important a political role in the post-1917 political process as has the peasantry in some respects in both Bolivia and Venezuela.

The main concern of the governments since 1917 with regard to policy toward the peasantry has been to maintain political control over the campesino by giving him land and carrying out other aspects of agrarian reform. Even though the campesino has been incorporated into the government party, the peasantry has not wielded the influence within the party that its formal organizational structure would imply. This has been due partly to ineffective campesino leadership but even more to how the party has functioned in practice. Within the Partido Revolucionario Institutional (PRI) today, the politically more sophisticated and articulate Popular and Labor Sectors predominate at the expense of the Campesino Sector. Because of the control exercised by the executive branch of the government over the whole PRI apparatus, the peasantry's role as an active interest group and as a voter has, in effect, been neutralized.

Since the beginning of the Adolfo López Mateos administration in 1958, however, increased attention has been given by the government to the Campesino Sector. This attention was long overdue since during the 18 years of the three previous administrations the rural areas had not kept up with the economic and social progress experienced by the rest of the country. At the same time, the López government began to attach greater political importance to the need for minimizing rural unrest.

Because of the problem presented in comparing the long time span covered by the Mexican Revolution with the shorter periods of revolutionary change in Bolivia and Venezuela, Part I will treat the history of the development of the Mexican peasantry as a political

factor only to the extent needed to provide a framework for comparison. The main emphasis of Part I will be on the contemporary political role of the peasantry in the Mexican political process. For the purpose of comparing the political roles of the peasantry in Mexico, Bolivia and Venezuela, it is the functioning of the political systems today which serves as the best common denominator.

A study of the contemporary Mexican political system shows that the peasantry plays its main political role through the official party's Campesino Sector. For the reasons mentioned above, however, the peasantry is now probably the least influential of the several major interest groups in Mexico. It appears likely that as time goes by the campesino may gain some additional political influence in the political process. As long as the government adopts policies assuring sufficient economic development of the agricultural sector of the economy, however, the campesino's political role will probably remain restricted for the foreseeable future because of the neutralizing effect of the official party organization on the peasantry.

II. The Peasant Emerges

In 19th century Mexico, much of the land belonged either to the large hacendados or to the Church; most of the rural population was landless. This situation grew out of the encomienda system during the colonial period. Although steps were taken under the administration of Benito Juárez (1855-1876) to break up the extensive Church landholdings, these reforms were never effective. During the reign of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911), many small landowners and Indian ejidatarios lost their land as a result of the land law of 1883, which permitted "surveying companies" to gain control of lands not covered by legal title.[8]

Although not the only source of discontent which led to the fall of Díaz, the landless peasntry constituted an important element in the outburst. Even before Díaz' downfall, Emiliano Zapata, an illiterate sharecropper on a sugar plantation in Morelos, led the largely Indian peasantry against haciendas in 1910, burning and killing, seizing horses and guns, under the banner of "tierra y libertad." Francisco Madero's challenge to Díaz during the 1910 elections set the stage for various discontented groups--the downtrodden peasantry, the abused worker, the outraged intellectuals--to rise up in revolution.[9]

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[8]Herring, Hubert, A History of Latin America, A. Knopf & Co., New York, 1961, p. 346.

[9]Ibid., p. 350-351.

Unlike the coups which quickly and neatly overturned the old order in Bolivia in 1952 and in Venezuela in 1945 and 1958, the Mexican Revolution was launched not by military or political groups with a clear idea of what they wanted but by disparate interests which soon started fighting among themselves. Consequently, the peasantry became much more inolved in the revolutionary process itself in Mexico than in Bolivia and Venezuela. Campesino influence was felt in various ways. As the revolution broke down into see-saw fighting between the rival generals--Huerta, Carranza, Villa, Zapata, Obregón--relative strengths of competing armies came to play an important role in the field. These armies were made up, in large part, of campesinos[10] whose involvement thus affected the outcome of the civil war and at the same time further influenced the goals of the revolution.

By 1914 Carranza and his aides recognized the need to generate popular support, particularly to offset the appeal of the agrarian programs announced by Zapata and Pancho Villa, such as in the Plan de Ayalá and in subsequent decrees. Consequently, among the first decrees signed by Carranza from Vera Cruz was the Agrarian Law of January 6, 1915, drafted largely by Luís Cabrera. This law provided for the expropriation of land in order to return the ejido domains to the despoiled Indians; it said nothing, however, about breaking up or limiting the great haciendas. Carranza intended the law as "a propaganda weapon to defeat the Conventionist armies of Villa and Zapata."[11]

The Constitution of 1917 is ample evidence of the claim made by the peasantry on the revolution. The basis for Mexico's agrarian reform, Article 27, which was later amplified by legislation in 1934 and 1937, ratified Cabrera's Agrarian Law of January 1915 and added provisions for the division of the great latifundios.[12] Specifically, Article 27 provided for restitutiton of lands to peasants illegally dispossessed, for rotation of lands to those without them, for recognition of existing small private farms, for the limitation of the size of rural property holdings, for the

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[10] During the revolutionary years (1911-1917), "the condition of the workers on the haciendas (was) so unbearable that thousands of them joined the armies as the only remedy against starvation. That was, very often, the strongest argument in favor of fighting, nor did it make much difference on which side they fought if they were promised land." Clark, Marjorie Ruth, Organized Labor in Mexico, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1934, p. 151.

[11] McNeely, John H., The Politics and Development of the Mexican Land Program, Ph.D. Dissertation, Univ. of Texas, Austin, 1958, pp. 36-38.

[12] Ibid., p. 43.

breakup of the hacienda system, etc.[13] As Scott puts it, this was "the first constitution in Latin America to recognize the necessity of seeking solutions to essentially non-political problems as part of the search for orderly and popular government."[14]

As nascent political groups competed for power during the post-revolutionary period, they recognized the campesinos as a potential source of strength and competed for campsino support. The Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana (CROM), formed in 1918 by Luis Morones, and the Partido Nacional Agrarista, formed in 1920, were two of the early principal competitors for campesino support. Although the CROM included for a while a large number of campesinos within its ranks, it drew no real distinction between the problems of the agricultural and industrial worker, organizing both together and thus failing "to recognize the absolutely fundamental importance of the peon in the entire labor situation of Mexico."[15] The Partido Nacional Agrarista was basically a political organization, but it was the first organization of any kind in Mexico to make its primary appeal to the "peons."

When it became clear from the way in which land distribution was carried out that Obregón favored the Agraristas over the CROM, the latter lost ground steadily among the campesinos.[16] Both the CROM and the Agraristas lost out in the struggle for campesino support to the growing independent state leagues of agrarian communities.[17] The Liga de Comunidades Agrarias del Estado de Veracruz, formed in 1923, was the first successful step in the development of the ligas. This liga, through the leadership of Ursulo Galván and in conjunction with 15 other state ligas, succeeded in forming the Liga Nacional Campesina in 1926.[18]

Although the post-revolutionary period from 1920 until the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas in 1934 was dominated by Alvaro Obregón and Plutarco Elías Calles, it was a time of shifting

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[13] Brandenburg, Frank, The Making of Modern Mexico, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1964, p. 55.

[14] Scott, op. cit., p. 102.

[15] Clark, op. cit., p. 152.

[16] Ibid., pp. 153-154.

[17] The "community" was the smallest campesino group that could attain legal status as a recipient under the land distribution program. Ibid., p. 154.

[18] Ibid., pp. 154-156.

political alliances as each leader sought to establish a firm base from which to govern. Accordingly, opportunity existed for agrarian interests to play a role. During the years 1921-1923 a farm group, the Partido Nacional Cooperatista, appeared to be gaining the upper hand over the Partido Nacional Laborista, formed in 1919 as a political supplement to the CROM, until the former supported the unsuccessful revolt of General de la Huerta.[19] Subsequently, to counterbalance the Laboristas and Luís Morones, Obregón turned to the Partido Nacional Agrarista for additional support in 1924. This diverted Laborista support to Calles. The Agraristas lost their direct influence during Calles' administration, though they continued to support Obregón and his re-election in 1928. Finally, when the new Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PNR) was formed in 1929, Calles was able to split the Agraristas, purge his opponents and add the party to the PNR coalition.[20] At the same time, the Liga Nacional Campesina, which had affiliated with the Mexican Communist Party the same year, split into two main groups, one of which assumed an independent status under the name, Liga Nacional Campesina "Ursulo Galván" while the other entered the PNR.[21]

The formation of the PNR marked the demise of a competitive political system under which an agrarian party might have developed an increasingly important role. It also signalled the end of the independent status of campesino groups and ushered in the beginning of the single official government party which has effectively neutralized agrarian interests as a pressure group ever since.

As a result of the first 15 years of the revolution, the Mexican peasantry could boast neither marked economic or social progress nor the attainment of significant political influence. Marjorie Clark commented in 1934 that "It is difficult to see where, except in isolated instances, the Revolution has brought any visible improvement in the material condition of the Mexican peasant. Students of

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[19]Needler comments that the failure of the de la Huerta revolt "marked the beginning of the atrophy of revolution as a Mexican institution. For this result, Mexico had to thank the labor battalions and especially the organized peasants. So, labor and the ejidatarios gave substance to their claim for an equal voice with the military in the councils of the Revolution." Needler, Martin, "The Political Development of Mexico" in The American Political Science Review, Vol. LV, 1961, pp. 309-310.

[20]Scott, op. cit., pp. 119-122.

[21]Clark, op. cit., pp. 156-158.

the situation agree that the Mexican peasant is probably worse off today, materially, than he was in the colonial epoch."[22] Only under the presidencies of Obregón and Emilio Portes Gil had any real interest been shown in the lot of the peasantry and in implementation of the agrarian reform.[23] Although the peasantry played a more important role in the actual revolt in Mexico than in Bolivia and Venezuela, curiously enough it played a far less significant role in the post-revolutionary period.

Not until the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) was a serious effort made to realize the agrarian goals of the revolution as embodied in the Constitution of 1917. First of all, Cárdenas established a firm political base by organizing a new labor and campesino movement.[24] Between 1935 and 1938, he brought together the already existing autonomous peasant leagues to form the Confederación Nacional Campesina (CNC), which became the Campesino Sector of the new government party, the Partido de la Revolución Mexicana (PRM), together with the other Labor, Popular and Military Sectors.

At the same time, Cárdenas launched a broad program of land distribution in order to re-establish the traditional ejido system and to build up the peasantry as a solid social and political foundation of the revolution. Every ejidatario automatically became a member of the CNC. Cárdenas' motives were twofold; while he wanted to realize the social goals of the revolution, at the same time he saw the need to counterbalance the various political elements competing for power, particularly labor, by strengthening the position of the peasantry. Each motive complemented the other. In recognizing the potential base that could be created by using increased land distribution and expansion of the ejido system as an institutional mold, Cárdenas became the first in Latin America to realize the potential for relating agrarian reform to political ends. Development of the CNC under Cárdenas is comparable to the organization

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[22] Clark, op. cit., p. 164.

[23] "It was not until 1920 when Obregón became President, that any effort was made to put the provisions of Article 27 into effect, and even as yet the amount of land actually returned to the Indians is so inadequate and insignificant as to leave the agrarian policy entirely unsolved....The legislation of 1917 did little for the agricultural workers who were not entitled to grants of land." Ibid., pp. 149, 151.

[24] The first step had already been taken before Cárdenas' election when, under the auspices of the PNR, the Confederación Campesina Mexicana was formed by joining the agrarian leagues from six states in preparation for the 1933 presidential nominating convention of the PNR. Brandenburg, Frank R., Mexico: An Experiment in One-Party Democracy, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1955, p. 169.

of the peasantry in Bolivia under Paz Estensorro and particularly in Venezuela under Betancourt. Common to this recruitment of the campesino in all three countries was the fact that the organizing process was carried out not by campesino leadership spontaneously but by outside agents directed from above using land reform as a catalyst.

The period following Cárdenas from 1940 to 1958 was one of rapid economic development for Mexico, during which the influence of the Labor Sector and of the Popular Sector, particularly business, became predominant in the government and in the PRI. Government policies became more conservative, especially under Miguel Alemán, and the Campesino Sector was largely ignored. While receiving the benefits of a decelerating agrarian reform program, the peasantry was gradually becoming an economically discontent segment of society. As Ifigenía de Navarrette has pointed out in her 1960 study, the real income of the bottom 20 percent of Mexican families deteriorated both relatively and absolutely between 1950 and 1957.[25] Even so, during this period the peasantry remained politically passive. In spite of the peasantry's incorporation into the political system through the PRI, it did not play an influential political role. The economic condition of the peasantry and its secondary political role is not materially different today from what it has been since 1940.

Since 1958, however, the Mexican government has become more aware of the potential political problems posed by the latent discontent of the campesino and has attached greater significance to the political role of the peasantry. This increased awareness has been brought about by a series of land invasions, mostly in northern Mexico, by landless campesinos organized by leftist groups. As a result, the Mexican government has recognized the importance of adapting its policies to better meet the needs of the campesinos in order to keep the peasantry within the PRI and to retain its political support. The administration of Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964) placed

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[25]Glade, William P., Jr., The Political Economy of Mexico, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1963, p. 215, quoting from de Navarrette, Ifigenía M., La Distribución del Ingreso y el Desarrollo Económico de México, Mexico, 1960, p. 85.

a new emphasis on land distribution,[26] and the newly inaugurated President, Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, paid particular attention to campesino grievances during his campaign. Such steps were necessary not only for political reasons but for economic reasons as well since it was realized that bottlenecks in the economic development of parts of the agricultural sector acted as a drag on over-all national development. Consequently, it appears that Mexico may be entering a new period in which the peasantry may exert political influence and be restored to a position of importance within the nation closer to that which Cárdenas originally envisaged for it.

III. The Peasantry as a Political Factor

A. The Incorporation of the Peasantry into the Political Process

As has already been explained in the previous section, the Mexican peasantry has developed as an interest group separate from labor--as a counterbalance to labor. This was true under Obregón, in the PNR under Calles, and in the PRM under Cárdenas. The Mexican experience has been quite different from that of Bolivia in the early post-revolutionary period and of Venezuela. In both the latter countries the peasantry was organized by labor and incorporated into the existing labor organization, although in Bolivia the peasantry subsequently split away from labor and developed as a completely separate interest group, as in Mexico. Today, the Mexican peasantry is still organized in the PRI as a sector separate from labor. Consequently, the peasantry exerts influence as an interest group in contemporary Mexico almost entirely through the PRI. The only exception to this is in those cases where the wage-earning campesino or the small land-holding campesino is affiliated with the Labor Sector or the Popular Sector of the PRI rather than with the Campesino Sector. While there are other parties and labor organizations in competition with the PRI, none of these is sufficiently large or influential to provide campesino groups outside the PRI with any significant political role.

1. Political Parties

The only two parties besides the PRI which have made serious efforts to mobilize campesinos are the PPS and the PCM.

PRI: For a description of the PRI and the Campesino Sector, see Section III-B.

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[26] For comparative figures on land distribution under the different presidential administrations, see Table I.

TABLE I

LAND DISTRIBUTED TO EJIDOS IN MEXICO (1915-1961)

(expressed in hectárea units)

According to Presidential Informes (includes definitive and provisional titles)		According to the Agrarian Affairs Department (lands given with definitive title)	
Carranza	224,393	1915-20	172,997
De la Huerta	157,532		
Obregón	1,677,067	1921-24	1,556,983
Calles	3,195,028	1925-28	3,045,802
Portes Gil	2,065,847	1929	1,749,583
Ortiz Rubio	1,203,737	1930-32	1,520,139
Rodríguez	2,094,637	1933-34	1,924,149
Cárdenas	20,072,957	1935-40	17,609,139
Avila Camacho	5,327,942	1941-46	3,335,575
Alemán	4,057,993	1947-52	3,998,807
Ruiz Cortines	3,664,379	1953-58	3,198,780
López Mateos (to Sept. 1, 1961)	6,674,053	1959-61 (Sept. 1)	6,674,565[a]
	50,415,565		44,786,519

[a]Unverified. By September 1963, López Mateos claimed that his administration had distributed in excess of 10,000,000 hectáreas.

Source: Brandenburg, The Making of Modern Mexico, p. 254.

PPS: The Partido Popular Socialista is the party of Vicente Lombardo Toledano, former labor czar under Cárdenas. Founded as the Partido Popular in 1947, the party enjoyed its greatest strength at the time of the 1952 elections when it brought together a variety of diverse political groupings, including communists, socialists and liberals as well as a fairly large labor element.[27] The PPS continues today as an officially recognized opposition party, which Brandenburg classifies as a member of "the independent left."[28]

The political arm of the PPS in the rural labor field has been the Unión General de Obreros y Campesinos Mexicanos (UGOCN), founded in 1949 under the leadership of Jacinto López, a follower of Lombardo Toledano, as a competitor to the PRI Labor Sector's Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicanos (CTM). At the outset, the UGOCM was made up primarily of sugar, agricultural and mining workers and numbered about 20,000 members in 1952.[29] According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the UGOCM's membership is estimated at less than half this figure now.[30] Although the UGOCM is not legally registered and does not have trade union bargaining rights in Mexico, it serves as the action branch of the PPS for stepping up the pace of government distribution of land among small farmers and agricultural laborers.[31] The UGOCM has been involved in recent years in promoting land invasions by landless campesinos. The efforts of the UGOCM to mobilize the campesinos against the PRI have been sufficient to alarm the government but not to seriously challenge the allegiance of the Campesino Sector as a whole.

PCM: The Partido Comunista Mexicano is the traditional, Moscow-oriented Communist party formed in Mexico in the early 1920's.[32] Its principal support in the 1920's lay among the campesinos. The

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[27]Scott, op. cit., p. 189.

[28]Brandenburg, Making of Modern Mexico, pp. 124-126.

[29]Poblete Troncoso, Moisés and Burnett, Ben G., The Rise of the Latin American Labor Movement, Bookman Associates, New York, 1960, p. 105.

[30]Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Labor Law and Practice in Mexico," BLS Report No. 240, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., 1963, p. 35.

[31]Ibid., p. 15.

[32]Two communist parties were formed in Mexico after the 1917 revolution in Russia. The party known as the PCM today was officially recognized as such by the Comintern in 1923. Brandenburg, Making of Modern Mexico, p. 44.

PCM actually controlled the National Peasants League in the late 1920's until a party split forced out many of its agrarian leaders. In spite of reduced ties with the peasantry during the early 1930's, the PCM legalized in 1935 for the first time in a dozen years, made new gains among the campesinos under Cárdenas, particularly in the Laguna area. Cárdenas' recognition of the PCM's growing strength among the campesinos led him to establish the CNC, with the result that PCM influence among the peasantry gradually declined thereafter.[33]

Following the advent to power of Fidel Castro in Cuba and an apparent increasing communist emphasis on developing peasant support, the PCM seems to have launched a new effort directed toward the peasantry in Mexico. Toward the end of 1961 a new leftist grouping was organized called the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN) under the titular leadership of Lázaro Cárdenas. The MLN was apparently meant to serve as a front for joining different leftist groups together in opposition to the PRI. In late 1962, MLN leaders established a new agrarian organization called the Central Campesino Independiente (CCI) to challenge the dominance of the PRI.[34] Before the 1964 elections, the PCM was also active in establishing the Frente Electoral del Pueblo (FEP) as a new political party with the goal of obtaining the 70,000 signatures needed for registration, thus permitting FEP candidates to appear on the ballots at election time. The FEP did not meet the requirements for registration, however, and ran during the elections on a "write-in" basis. The FEP encompassed members of both the MLN and the CCI but not the UGOCM, which is a rival of the CCI.[35] While the CCI has probably had some success in attracting campesinos disappointed by the lack of effectiveness of the CNC in pushing actively for a solution to the basic problems of the agricultural sector, like the UGOCM it, too, has undoubtedly alarmed the national government without seriously challenging the hold of the PRI over the Campesino Sector.

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[33]Alexander, Robert J., Communism in Latin America, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1957, Ch. 15.

[34]BLS Report 240, p. 15.

[35]Interview with Mr. Harry Bergold, Mexican Desk Officer, Department of State, Washington, D.C., April 1965.

2. Labor Organizations

In addition to the CNC, which will be treated below, and the UGOCM and the CCI, which have been discussed above, there are several labor confederations which claim a total membership of nearly 130,000 campesinos. These include the Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana (CTM), the Confederación Revolucionaria de Obreros y Campesinos, the Confederación General de Trabajadores (CGT), and the Confederación Revolucionaria de Trabajadores (CRT). Of these, only the CTM has any sizeable campesino membership. Brandenburg gives the campesino membership of the confederations as follows: CTM--100,000, CROM--12,000, CGT--10,000, CROC--7,000, CRT--indeterminate.[36] Many of the rural workers affiliated with these organizations are probably only part-time or marginal rural workers who, when not gainfully employed in industry, commerce, or the services, seek work as day laborers in farm areas close to industrial communities.

CTM: The Confederación de Trabajadores de Mexico is the largest, most important labor federation in Mexico. With a membership of nearly 1,300,000, the CTM makes up the largest part of the PRI's Labor Sector.[37] Formed in 1934 by Lombardo Toledano under the guidance of Cárdenas, the CTM once included labor groups which no longer adhere to it today, such as the campesinos now in the CNC. The CTM's principal campesino membership is derived from the agricultural wage laborers who are members of the sugar workers' union, the Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Industria Azucarera, which has a membership of about 40,000.[38] In total, the CTM includes only about 100,00 campesinos within its ranks, and therefore cannot be counted as a labor organization with significant campesino membership. Even so, Brandenburg points out that at least until 1949 the CTM's seven-member National Executive Committee included one agrarian union leader.[39]

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[36]Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 223-225.

[37]American Embassy, "Fact Sheet on Labor Organizations in Mexico," Mexico City, Oct. 1, 1963.

[38]Bureau of Labor Statistics, Directory of Labor Organizations: Western Hemisphere, Vol. II, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., May 1964, p. 26.13.

[39]Brandenburg, Mexico, p. 177.

B. The Campesino and the PRI

When the PRM was organized in 1938, it was made up of four sectors--labor, campesino, popular, and military. At the time the PRM became the PRI in 1945, the Military Sector was dropped, so that the PRI today is made up of only the Popular, Labor, and Campesino Sectors. Although the great majority of Mexico's campesinos are incorporated into the PRI through the Campesino Sector's CNC, nearly 130,000 are members of the PRI's Labor Sector, as described above. In addition, about half a million campesinos are attached to the PRI through the Party's Popular Sector.

Control of the small farmers' branch of the Popular Sector is in the hands of the Confederación Nacional de la Pequeña Propriedad Agrícola (CNPPA), which claims a membership of 750,000. Of these, however, 250,000 are ejidatarios who own small farms in addition to a share in ejidal lands. This status gives them membership in both the CNPPA and the CNC. In addition, another 150,000 small (or medium-sized) farmers have ignored the CNPPA's affiliation with the PRI and have joined instead opposition political parties.[40]

Besides the three sectors described above, Brandenburg identifies a sort of fourth sector, or "Revolutionary Family," which is actually partly within and partly without the PRI. Within the "Revolutionary Family" are found those leaders of the three official sectors, key members of Congress, a few powerful state governors,, and those top business and professional leaders who, with the president, make the final determination on important policy questions.[41] The only campesino representative eligible to be included in the "Revolutionary Family" is probably the head of the CNC.

1. The Campesino Sector (CNC): The Confederación Nacional de Campesinos is the official campesino organ of the PRI and comprises its Campesino Sector. The CNC includes today small landholders, agricultural laborers, and, nominally, all ejidatarios. When Cárdenas began to organize the campesinos

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[40]Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 260-262.

[41]Brandenburg, Making of Modern Mexico, pp. 3-5.

after 1935, however, his original idea was to establish a rural base by incorporating only ejidatarios into the PNR. By excluding small farmers and laborers, Cárdenas felt that a campesino organization based solely on ejidatarios would have a greater singleness of purpose and would thus avoid the conflicting interests of different campesino groups. The ejido thus became the fundamental organizational unit of the CNC with legal basis in both the law of the land and in CNC statutes. Both the Constitution of 1917 and the 1934 Agrarian Code provided for the three-member ejido commissariat, while the latter also provided for a three-man ejido vigilance committee. Even though the CNC has in practice accepted as members campesinos other than ejidatarios, more than 90 percent of CNC membership is still composed of ejidatarios.[42]

The total membership of the CNC is difficult to compute exactly because many ejidatarios remain outside the CNC, and some small landholders and laborers included on CNC rolls may be more effectively incorporated into other sectors of the PRI. In computing CNC membership, Brandenburg uses a figure of 1,552,926 ejidatarios, based on the ejidal census of 1950. In addition, he lists 100,000 more campesinos who are laborers or small farmers and who belong to unions affiliated with the CNC. Finally, he adds the 3,500 members of the Sociedad Agronómica Mexicana, a CNC affiliate which draws its membership from the graduates of the government's agronomy schools and which was added to the Campesino Sector in 1952. The total of these elements is 1,656,426.[43] Using more recent figures based on the 1956 agricultural census, Scott lists 2,332,914 ejidatarios, 150,000 union members, and 10,000 agronomists, thus arriving at a total of 2,660,000.[44]

Brandenburg also points out that CNC influence extends beyond its official membership. Other campesinos who are not necessarily members of the CNC may be subject to the whims of CNC leaders for political purposes. On this basis, he list 1,016,294 campesinos who are members of ejidatario families working lands without pay and 517,766 peons and journeymen employed on ejidos. These additional 1,500,000 persons would raise the total number of campesinos influenced by the Campesino Sector to between three and four million.

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[42] Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 173, 179, 182.

[43] Ibid., pp. 182-3.

[44] Scott, op. cit., p. 166.

Finally, Brandenburg comments that the political importance of the ejido is further enhanced by the fact that ejido families account for nearly one-fourth of the total Mexican population.[45]

The pyramidal nature of the CNC organization, from the municipal level up through the regional and state levels to its National Executive Committee, can be seen from a glance at Table II. The state ligas represent the strongest, most important organizational level of the CNC. As has already been pointed out, the CNC was formed in 1938 by bringing together under national leadership the independent state campesino leagues. There are 32 such ligas today, known as Ligas de Comunidades Agrarias y Sindicatos Campesinos. These ligas are made up of state regional committees representing ejido groups and campesino unions representing laborers and small farmers.

These regional campesino committees represent four main groupings: the ejido communities, other communities petitioning land, agricultural colonies whose members pay the government for the individual plots received, and urban colonies in ejido communities where younger ejidatarios have received land for building their own houses. The unions affiliated with the state liga are generally either unions of small property owners with less than 50 hectares of land or unions of workers in industries related to agriculture, such as sugar, coffee, or henequen workers.[46]

The 512 regional campesino committees vary in jurisdiction and in representation. Some committees may have jurisdiction over several municipalities, while others have jurisdiction over only one, depending on historical, political, and geographic factors. The five-man regional committees are elected every three years by representatives from each ejido commissariat within the given region. In addition, a state convention attended by the members of each regional committee is held triennially for the purpose of selecting the liga executive committee.[47]

At the national level is the CNC National Convention, made up of the executive committees of all the state ligas. The sole task of the National Convention is to select the 14-member CNC National

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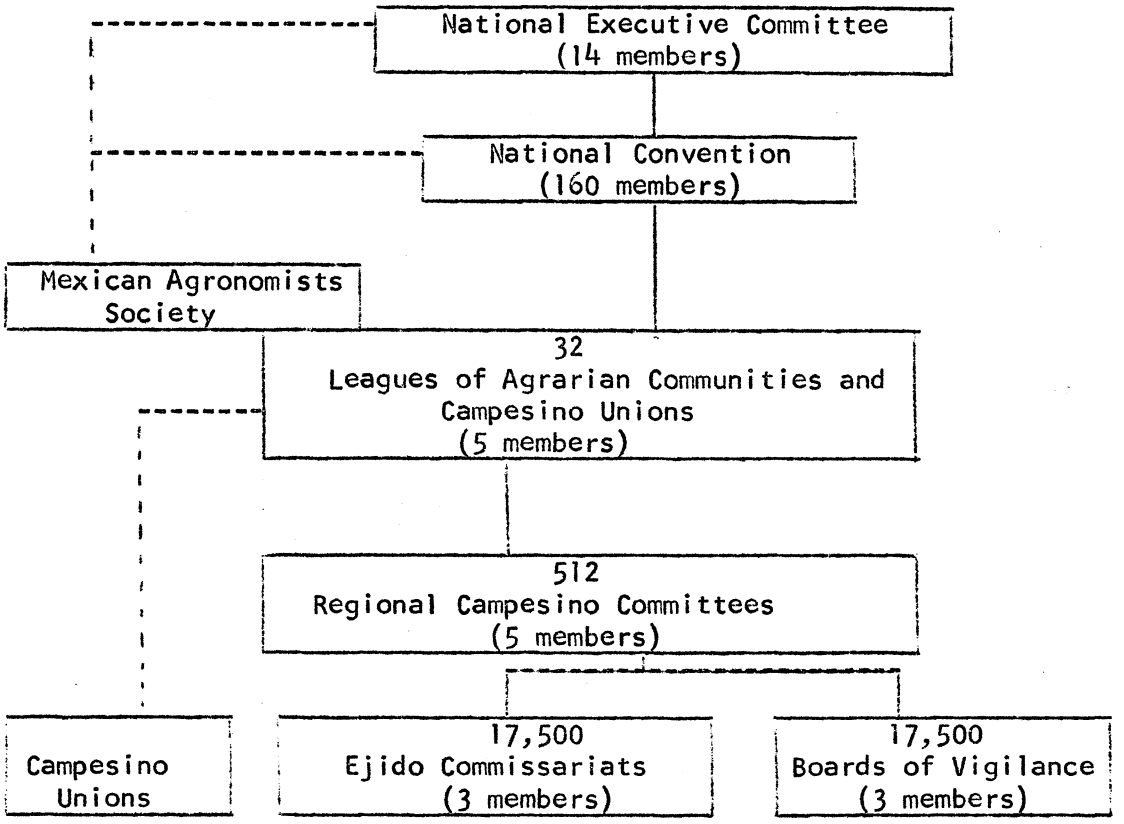
[45] Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 182-184.

[46] Padgett, Leon Vincent, Popular Participation in the Mexican One Party' System, Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, Evanston, 1955, pp. 192-195.

[47] Ibid., pp. 195-196.

TABLE II

THE STRUCTURAL ORGANIZATION
OF THE CNC



Source: Brandenburg, Mexico, An Experiment in "One-Party" Democracy, p. 178.

Executive Committee. The most important member of this committee is the secretary general, who acts as the national spokesman for the CNC.[48] Although the secretary general is the highest representative of the Campesino Sector, he is not necessarily a member of the "Revolutionary Family." This depends on his relationship to the president and on the president's attitude toward the sector in general. The present secretary general, Javier Rojo Gómez, who has held this office since 1962, appears to be more influential than his predecessor but he probably has no more than a foot in the door of the "Revolutionary Family."

Padgett describes the strong competition within the CNC at the local level, particularly for membership in and control of the regional campesino committees. Control of a regional committee is important to the president of a municipal council since it can give him a better chance to name his successor and to develop his own political machine. On the state level, the regional committees are important to the governor since they elect the liga executive committee, which can be a principal force in the success or failure of the governor. In addition, local landholders who have given up trying to oppose the CNC have tried instead to manipulate it by seeking to control the CNC regional committee. In general, the CNC National Executive Committee, rather than interfering unduly, has permitted local political competition with considerable freedom, intervening largely as a referee to help reach a compromise in troublesome situations.[49]

A recent study has commented on the high degree to which Mexican campesinos are mobilized into politics, "perhaps more effectively than any other groups except the residents of the capital city and workers in heavy industry," and has explored the reasons therefor.[50] The study identifies the material incentives available through the administration of the ejido and migratory worker (bracero) programs as the chief factors in the campesino's political mobilization, which, accordingly, is manifested more in terms of participation than in political attitudes.

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[48] Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 180-181.

[49] Padgett, op. cit., pp. 197-203.

[50] Mirin, Linda, and Stinchcombe, Arthur L, "The Political Mobilization of Mexican Peasants," Paper presented to the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association in Montreal, September 1964, pp. 12-15. This paper is based on a study of campesinos in the Sate of Aguas Calientes.

One may conclude that it is these incentives--land, credit, employment, and the countless other services which the campesino demands--which have tied the campesino to the CNC. They have also provided the CNC system with a currency which has served both as a reward and as a tool to those who naturally aspire to political power. These two factors together, political ambition and material incentives, have allowed the CNC to function effectively in meeting campesino material requirements and in permitting some campesino participation in the political system at least at the local and regional level. The significance of campesino participation in the CNC cannot be gauged accurately however until we examine the relative influence of the CNC within the PRI as well as the CNC's role within the government.

2. Relationship of the Campesino Sector to the PRI

The PRI is organized in a pyramidal structure which is largely paralleled by that of the CNC. Since the PRI is made up of the three party sectors, each organizational level of the PRI normally provides for some sort of representation of each sector, though each sector does not necessarily claim a whole third of the committee concerned.

At the top of the PRI organization (see Table III) is the powerful seven-member Central Executive Committee, on which the different sectors each have at least one representative. A high degree of authority over the PRI's affairs is lodged in the Central Executive Committee since it passes on almost all party activities and appointments. The two other national bodies of the PRI are the ten-member Grand Commission and the National Assembly of about 1,000 delegates, both of which are divided equally among the three sectors. The National Assembly meets only every three years and is manipulated by PRI and sector leadership. The Grand Commission is subject to call by the Central Executive Committee between meetings of the National Assembly. At the state level are the 32 seven-man regional executive committees, on which each sector has one representative. At the local level there is a five-man municipal committee for each municipality in a state. Municipal committeemen are drawn from those sectors which have functional organizations at the municipal level.[51]

The relationship between the CNC and the PRI can be observed to a certain extent by examining the manner in which electoral candidates are chosen. Brandenburg comments that since the PRI

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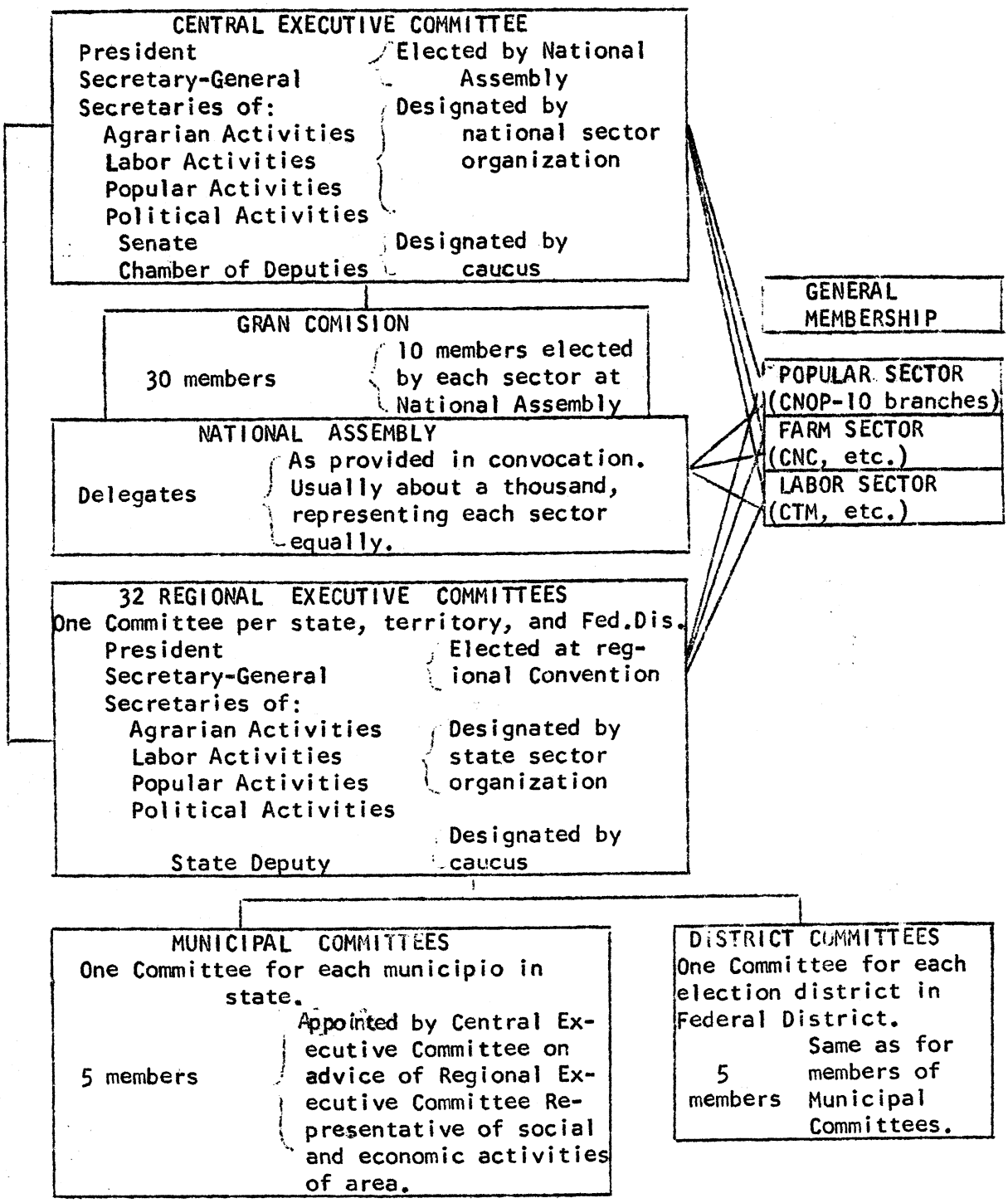
[51]Scott, op. cit., p. 155-161.

TABLE III: THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PRI



Source: Scott, Mexican Government in Transition, p. 158.

organization at the municipal and regional level, while not confined to precisely the same area delineations as the ejido commissariats or the regional campesino committees, is in large measure superimposed upon the latter, this parallel structure affords the CNC the opportunity to participate in the deliberations and elections of the PRI. The ejido commissariats select the Campesino Sector nominees in elections for party officers and for mayors (presidentes municipales), town councils, and country attorneys. Likewise, regional campesino committees participate in the selection of local deputies, state deputies, federal deputies, and district party officers. At the state level, the ligas initiate the electoral process on behalf of the Campesino Sector for nominating governors and senators.[52]

Brandenburg goes on to point out that the PRI sector from which a candidate for party or public officer will be finally nominated depends on a number of factors relative to each electoral district. Generally speaking, the sector representing the greatest portion of the effective electorate wins the intra-party primary and hence the right to select the party's candidate. In areas dominated by ejidos, the CNC can be expected to control the nomination. Merely because an area is predominantly agricultural however is no assurance that the party candidate will be selected by or from the Campesino Sector. In areas where there are large numbers of small farmers and perhaps large landholders who belong to the Popular Sector or numerous agricultural laborers belonging to the Labor Sector, the Campesino Sector may not be successful in nominating its candidate. Furthermore, in some areas where CNC-PRI relations are not close because ejidatarios favor opposition parties, PRI leaders frequently override the local CNC organization and bestow nominating rights on one of the other two sectors.[53]

The structure of the PRI clearly provides for equal participation of the three sectors in the party organization, except at the local level, where the sector in the majority is expected to predominate. At the same time, it is obvious that the different PRI organizational levels can be weighted to favor particular sectors, through the non-sector committee positions, depending on the sector interests or perhaps the governmental interests which may predominate. For example, if the "secretary of political activities," the state deputy, and the president of a regional executive committee are all associated with the Popular Sector, this sector will clearly control the committee at the expense of the other sectors. Thus the PRI retains the ability of limiting sector participation and influence,

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[52] Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 186-187.

[53] Ibid., pp. 187-188.

particularly at the higher levels, and of imposing policy decisions, especially at the national and state levels. In order to determine the balance within the PRI structure, we must try to measure the relative influence of the three sectors.

3. Relative Influence of the Campesino Sector within the PRI

According to Scott's membership chart of the PRI sectors, the different sectors rank numerically as follows: Campesino--2.6 million, Labor--2.1 million, and Popular--1.8 million.[54] As he points out, however, because of overlapping sector membership and other uncertinaties in computing sector membership totals as well as other factors besides membership which have a bearing on sector roles, efforts to measure the relative political influence of each sector are not likely to be very fruitful.

Various examples of overlapping sector memberships can be found. For example, ejido members may also have small landholdings and thus be members of both the CNC and the Popular Sector's CNPPA. Furthermore, while most of the 250,000 persons who belong to a very small consumers, producers, or service cooperative are thus members of the Popular Sector's National Cooperative Federation, their principal allegiance is to an organization in the Campesino or Labor Sector. Another roughly quarter of a million persons belong to opposition parties despite nominal membership in the sectors of the PRI.[55]

An examination of the membership of the Mexican Congress shows that sectoral representation there is out of all proportion to the sectoral membership totals given above. The Popular Sector is by far the most influential sector in the Congress. Since the creation of the Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Populares (CNOP), which united the ten functional branches of the Popular Sector in 1943, the Popular Sector has dominated Congress. In 1943, the CNOP elected 78 deputies out of a total of 147, while the Campesino Sector elected 46. The Campesino Sector's strength in Congress decreased in 1952 when it elected only 36 deputies out of a total of 161. In the same year the Popular Sector elected 75 deputies and the Labor Sector only 35. Brandenburg attributes this decline in the Campesino Sector's congressional representation to

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[54] Scott, op. cit., pp. 166-167.

[55] Ibid., p. 172.

the growing strength of the Popular Sector and to ejidatario support for opposition parties. In the 1958 elections, the Popular Sector was allotted 78 out of the 162 deputies, while the Campesino and Labor Sectors divided the remainder.[56]

In the Senate, the Popular Sector has enjoyed an even greater predominance. Although the Popular Sector won a bare majority in the 1943 elections, in 1952 it won 39 out of 58 Senate seats, while the Campesino Sector won 14 seats and the Labor Sector five seats. In 1958, the Popular Sector was allotted 39 out of 60 Senate seats, while the Campesino Sector received none and the Labor Sector the remaining places. The Popular Sector has an advantageous electoral position in Senate races since it usually predominates over the other two sectors on a state-wide basis, whereas it is frequently outnumbered by ejidatarios and labor union members in the smaller districts from which deputeis are elected.[57]

Scott states that as a general rule of thumb election records show that the Popular Sector names some 40 percent of all elective officers, the Campesino Sector another 40 percent, and the Labor Sector only about 20 percent.[58] Since it is the elective officers at the top, however, which perhaps reflect better the relative strengths of the three sectors, Brandenburg's judgement that the best criterion of comparative sector strength is the relative congressional representation of each sector is probably valid.[59] Scott goes on to comment that although the Campesino Sector played a dominant role under Cárdenas and though it is still the most numerous sector in the PRI, it is by no means the dominant power in the Mexican political process. After agreeing that the Popular Sector plays the most influential role of the three sectors, he concludes that the Labor Sector tends to get a much higher share of political and economic benefits relative to the Campesino Sector than the Labor Sector's numbers would warrant.[60] In any case, it

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[56]Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 188, 283-284; Tucker, William P., The Mexican Government Today, Univ. of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1957, p. 100.

[57]Ibid., pp. 284, 191, 232; Scott, op. cit., p. 227.

[58]Scott, op. cit., p. 89.

[59]Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 283-284.

[60]"Industry, commerce and transport workers combined totalled about 2.5 million persons in 1955, while agriculture and associated activities had some 5.5 million workers, but the two very nearly equated in government councils..." Scott, op. cit., pp. 70-75.

it appears that both the Campesino and Labor Sectors are far less influential than the Popular Sector, while the Campesino Sector, even though its relative size would imply considerably more influence than the Labor Sector,[61] may in fact have less.

4. Participation of the Campesino Sector in the Governmental Process

Since most observers agree that the Mexican governmental process has a base broader than the PRI organizational structure alone, one that includes interest groups which are affiliated with the PRI or are outside it, such as business and professional groups, we must study the role of the Campesino Sector in a broader context than just the PRI in order to determine the degree of its influence. To do this we will examine the degree to which the Campesino Sector participates in the selection of office holders, particularly at the upper level, as well as its particiation in governmental decision-making.

Although the sector participation in the nomination process for local and regional offices, as described above, is generally valid, the process which selects the nation's most important officers --the president, the federal senators and deputies, the governors, and even the sector leaders--is quite different. The selection of these officers is determined largely by the "Revolutionary inner circle." While candidates are judged to some degree by their ties with the different PRI sectors, their inter-group and inter-personal relationships outside the PRI and with the "Revolutionary Family" can be the deciding factor. In discussing the selection of congressional candidates, Brandenburg writes that "since 1940 the president of Mexico and the president-designate have hand-picked about 20 percent of the deputies; governors and regional caciques have selected approximately 15 percent; opposition parties have been given almost five percent; and the remaining 60 percent has emerged from sectors in the official party. Invariably candidates picked outside the official party sector arrangement have been conveniently made the choices of the popular sector."[62]

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[61] "But it is obvious that the peasants have derived far less in terms of material advantages from PRI government than has any other group, and it may therefore be supposed that, despite the fact that the peasantry is the mainstay of the government's power, the farmers exercise less influence on official policy-making than does any other group." Mirin, op. cit., p. 21.

[62] Brandenburg, Making of Modern Mexico, pp. 155-156.

Padgett feels that the sector organizations have had an important voice in selecting party and public office holders, particularly at the municipal level, and that in the competitive process for determining the successful candidate for local and regional office is found the real nature of Mexican democracy. While admitting that this is not true representative democracy in the Western sense, he argues that it does constitute an "acceptance of pluralism and liberty of choice as valid principles in the conduct of politics and in decision-making." In this way, the PRI sector system offers an "opportunity for limited but nonetheless noteworthy participation by the rank and file in the decision-making process."[63]

One the other hand, Brandenburg, in his recent book,[64] questions Padgett's as well as his own earlier interpretation of the Mexican political system by arguing that the actual decision-making process resides not in the structure of the PRI but rather in the "Revolutionary inner circle" and in the formal governmental apparatus. He writes:

> "The actual Mexican political system is far removed from theory and legality. The presidential, gubernatorial, and legislative nominating process varies greatly from the theory of official-party operation, effective political opposition, and legal norms. Fifty years of Revolution suggest that the appearance of effective interest groups and political parties unimpeded by constant governmental intervention is wishful thinking...
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> 'From prenomination to inauguration, the gubernatorial succession is controlled from Mexico City. The president of Mexico selects, the minister of government oversees, and the defense minister enforces. The theory of official party sector nomination simply never enters the picture."

The conclusion that one must deduce is that at the local and regional levels the PRI structure functions more or less as it was intended to, with active competition between the three sectors for public and party office, as described by Padgett. At the state and national levels, however, the PRI and the "Revolutionary Family" frequently impose a pre-determined candidate. Thus, the Campesino Sector participates in the nomination process at the local

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[63]Padgett, op. cit., pp. 184-185, 190, 267.

[64]Brandenburg, Making of Modern Mexico, pp. 144, 150, 164-165.

level where such participation is most obvious and perhaps most important to the campesino but only indirectly at the higher levels where the important government policy decisions affecting the Campesino Sector are made.

If the Campesino Sector does not fully participate in decisions affecting nominations for high office, the same is true for other important policy decisions. Oscar Lewis has commented:[65]

> "The present government is...much more representative of the various sectors of the Mexican population than was the paternalistic government under Diáz, although its base of popular participation is less broad than it was under Cárdenas. The new upper class, though small and not well organized, has become increasingly influential in determining national policy, while the influence of organized labor and the ejidatarios has declined sharply."

Campesino Sector views are probably given little attention in determining national policy except when agrarian considerations are concerned. Decisions regarding land distribution, irrigation, or colonization of new lands, availability of credit, etc., may well stem from pressures from the Campesino Sector and involve consultation with CNC leadership. But one may well ask if some decisions along these lines in recent years have not been prompted rather by illegal actions, such as land invasions by campesino groups outside the CNC.

Basically, the source of both the strength and the weakness of the CNC is its monopoly over campesino interests. As the principal spokesman for most campesino interests, the CNC has successfully mobilized the peasantry and given it influence on a par with organized labor, and made it into a force recognized even by the other diverse interests which make up the Popular Sector. At the same time, because of the dependence of the CNC on the central government for financial support, for land through the Department of Agrarian Affairs and Colonization, and for credit through the Ejidal Bank, and because the CNC must compete with the other two sectors for the government's resources, the central

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[65] Lewis, Oscar, "Mexico Since Cárdenas," in Social Change in Latin American Today, Council of Foreign Relations, Harper Brothers, New York, 1960, p. 342.

government effectively controls the apparatus of the Campesino Sector. Since there is no really competitive benefactor for the campesino besides the CNC in the PRI one-party system, there is therefore no real alternative for the peasantry. In effect, the peasantry is neutralized.

C. The Influence of Campesino Leadership

In order to understand the nature of Campesino Sector leadership and to appraise the role it plays in the Mexican political process, it is necessary to study this leadership at its different functional levels. This section examines the leadership of the Campesino Sector at local, regional, and national levels, looks at the sources of this leadership, appraises its quality and effectiveness, and finally gauges its influence relative to the other sectors and in the political process as a whole.

Leadership at the local level is drawn from different sources, depending on the campesino group involved. Agricultural workers generally belong to campesino unions and look to union leadership for direction. The small landowner may be subject to the leadership of the local or regional cacique, who may be a larger landowner or else a political boss, such as a municipio president. The most prevalent form of local leadership however is the comisario ejidal. This is not surprising when we remember that 90 percent of CNC membership is drawn from the ejidos and that the ejido was originally intended to be the sole source of CNC leadership. Ejido leadership is embodied in the three-member commissariat and in the three-man vigilance committee, which was established as a check on the commissariat. The president of the commissariat, the comisario ejidal, is the most powerful element of ejidal leadership.[66]

The quality of local leadership is generally very poor. Because of the lack of education and training and the general absence of ambition among ejidatarios, leadership material is very restricted. The ejidatarios have little interest in seeking ejidal office because of the general feeling that the rewards do not usually compensate for the additional responsibility.[67] Those who do seek

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[66] Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 179-180.

[67] Padgett writes that the three important considerations in achieving ejido office, especially the comisario ejidal, are: (1) the inter-personal and inter-group relations of the candidate within the community--his reputation, prestige, and influence; (2) his connections with the zone chief of the Agrarian Department and with the regional and liga executive committees of the CNC; and (3) the degree of his ambition. op. cit., p. 205.

office are frequently motivated by personal gain rather than by civic conscience. Because the degree of popular participation in the choice of ejido officers has been exceedingly low, the ambitious or self-seeking campesino has not found himself restrained, unless his performance in office is sufficiently out of line to incite the ejidatarios to remove him from office.[68]

Ejidal leadership then, although it may be the only level where genuine campesino leaders are found, is likely to be sadly deficient. Other forms of local leadership are not likely to be much better. From the illiterate cacique who dominates a community, usually with brute force, to the slightly educated and unscrupulous comisario ejidal who toadies to the district supervisor to whom he owes his job, to the minor officials of the unions emulating their regional and national leaders who have made fortunes while in office, the picture of the leadership available to the Mexican rural masses is bleak.

At the regional and state level, leadership may be drawn partly from campesinos who have moved up through the ejido ranks and partly from non-ejido sources. Since the regional campesino committees are chosen in large part by the ejido commissariats, the proportion of ejido-evolved campesinos on these committees is probably fairly high. In the state ligas, and to a lesser extent on the regional committees, is found an increasing percentage of leadership drawn from outside campesino ranks.[69] Since politicians and landowners exert influence on the make-up of regional committees and ligas, as has already been described, CNC leadership at these levels is likely to include agronomists and perhaps some talent drawn from the Popular Sector or from the bureaucracy. This may be particularly true of CNC representation at the PRI regional and state organizational level.

It is rare that governors are chosen from campesino ranks. Governors chosen from the Popular Sector predominate. When a governor is chosen from the Campesino Sector, he is usually someone with a background as an agronomist or as a politican. The selection of Javier Rojo Goméz, present CNC Secretary General, as Governor of Hidalgo in 1935 was undoubtedly due more to his political

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[68]Padgett, op. cit., p. 206.

[69]Scott, op. cit., p. 68; Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 187-188.

acceptability to Cárdenas than to his general acceptability to the campesinos in the state, although the latter may have been a partial factor. The example of Magdaleno Aguilar, who rose from an ejidatario to governor of his state of Tamaulipas, is unusual.[70] The governor or perhaps a regional cacique usually determines sector representation in the state legislature, sometimes choosing all the legislators personally.[71]

The poor quality of campesino leadership becomes even more apparent at the regional and state level where increased responsibility and the bright limelight make more evident deficiencies in education and training as well as a propensity toward corruption. Padgett comments that "The sector secretaries of the regional committees...frequently have been secondary persons in their federation, labor, agrarian, or popular, who wish an honorific title."[72] Brandenburg observes that when both Campesino and Labor Sector leaders attain legislative office, the "rank and file receive nothing. The leaders use the new prestige and extra money to live better and to facilitate their upward mobility in the Mexican political system and captive union network."[73]

One of the reasons for the lack of qualified leaders from the Campesino Sector is that those sector members who evolve above ejidatario status and who become successful small farmers may find that their interests are better served by political action outside the Campesino Sector. Thus this source of potential leadership is likely not to be available at the middle and upper Campesino Sector organizational levels where it is badly needed. As a result campesino leadership is frequently left in the hands of professional and bureaucratic leaders who come from the middle class rather than campesino origin.[74]

Campesino leadership at the national level includes the National Executive Committee of the CNC, the CNC representatives in the PRI hierarchy, and the federal senators and deputies chosen from the Campesino Sector. At this level more than anywhere else

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[70]Brandenburg, Mexico, p. 186.

[71]Brandenburg, Making of Modern Mexico, p. 153.

[72]Padgett, op. cit., p. 146.

[73]Brandenburg, Making of Modern Mexico, p. 154.

[74]Scott, op. cit., p. 70; Mirin, op. cit., p. 21.

CNC leaders are likely to have no strong ties with their campesino base and are frequently drawn from the middle and upper classes outside the Campesino Sector. These leaders, particularly the Campesino Sector representatives in the Congress, are often accused of having no real understanding of Mexican rural society and of the lives and problems of the campesinos. Many of them have no agricultural background whatsoever and are simply politicians who have seen in the representation of campesino interests an avenue for personal political advancement or who have been designated to their positions by the PRI as a political reward or because of their political connections.

Not all leaders chosen to hold high CNC positions are necessarily unqualified. However, Brandenburg has observed: "Uneducated and poorly trained ejidatarios fill some of the most important public offices in the nation. Attempts to place responsible members in public office and at the same time choose these individuals from their own ranks have led CNC directive organs to rely heavily upon the affiliated Mexican Agronomists Society."[75] This becomes apparent by looking at the CNC representatives who have filled the position of "secretary of agrarian activities" on the PRI Central Executive Committee. The six CNC representatives between 1939 and 1953 were all agronomists.[76] Of the six persons who held the office of Secretary General of the CNC during the period between its founding in 1938 and 1956, two have been agronomists.[77]

The Campesino Sector leadership appears to be considerably less effective compared with that of the other two sectors,[78] although the selection of agronomists to hold important CNC offices keeps the balance from tipping too far. The influence of campesino leadership is restricted for a number of reasons. First of all, its representation in Congress is not important because of the weakness of the legislative branch in Mexico, because of the predominance in Congress of the Popular Sector, and because the CNC

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[75] Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 185-186.

[76] César Martino (1939-1940), Sacramento Joffre (1940-1942), Fernando Cruz Chávez (1942-1945), Francisco Martínez Peralta (1945), Jesus Molina Urquídez (1945-1950) and Vicente Salgado Páez (1951-1953). Ibid., p. 186.

[77] Roberto Barrios (1947-1950) and Manuel Gandara (1950-1952), Ibid., p. 181.

[78] Scott, op. cit., p. 68.

representatives there frequently do not have strong ties with the Campesino Sector. More important in the Mexican governmental system than the Congress, however, are the administrative offices and the executive organs of the CNC and the PRI at the national level. As we have observed, good Campesino Sector leadership at the level of state governor is the exception rather than the rule, even in those states which are predominantly agricultural. The examples of Magdaleno Aguilar and Javier Rojo Gómez can be classified as exceptions. The effectiveness of the agarian secretary on the PRI Central Executive Committee is limited, in any case, since he is only one of seven members. The most influential Campesino Sector position is that of CNC Secretary General. When it is filled by a weak leader, as is generally the case, the Popular and Labor Sectors can be expected to dominate the Campesino Sector.

The Campesino Sector since its formation has lacked really forceful, outstanding leadership to champion its cause. To really assert itself, the Campesino Sector needs a leader who would combine the zeal of a Zapata with the intelligence of a Graciano Sánchez and the organizational talent of an Ursulo Galván. Actually, Cárdenas, the founder of the Campesino Sector, has been the only real champion it has had. Even so, Cárdenas was a general and a politician, who did not owe his political strength to the campesinos, although he came from a campesino background.[79]

In conclusion, it can be stated that what influence the Campesino Sector does exercise in the Mexican political process is due only in small part to the quality and effectiveness of its leadership. The importance of the Campesino Sector appears to lie in its size and in its organizational weight rather than in its leadership. Ambitious and capable leadership, however, could exploit the potential of this organization and give the CNC far more weight than it enjoys in the political process today.

D. The Influence of the Peasantry as a Political Action Group

The peasantry's influence as an action group has been amply illustrated by its role during the revolutionary upheaval after 1911, as described in section II. At that time, the armed peasantry was influential in shaping the revolution and in keeping it on its course

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[79]According to Herring, Cárdenas' father was a small landowner with a tiny corn plot of his own--"a bunch of rocks," as Cárdenas himself described it. Op. cit., p. 376.

subsequently under Obregón. Once the revolution became institutionalized in the political machinery set up under Calles and Cárdenas, however, the peasantry became subordinated to the system. Both Obregón and Calles had attempted to disarm the campesinos, but had found it necessary to re-arm them in order to counter the de la Huerta revolt in 1923. Even though the government made a determined effort in 1933 to disarm the campesinos in those parts of the country where campesino allegiance was doubtful, Marjorie Clark could still write in 1934 that the peasants constituted probably the largest single armed force in Mexico.[80] Not until the Cárdenas administration, was the government finally able to disarm the campesinos.

Under the CNC, a system developed whereby the campesinos could find recourse for the settlement of disputes and for removing unsatisfactory leaders or altering their policies. The Agrarian Code of 1934 established a code for the administration of ejidos and assigned the Agrarian Department responsibility for carrying it out. "Vigilance committees" were set up to keep watch on the ejido commissariats, which frequently neglected the interests of ejido members in their own quest for power. CNC leadership generally helped to exert a moderating influence on ejido politics also. With a fairly effective machinery established to resolve his grievances, the campesino thereby came to expect more favorable results from peaceful rather than violent methods of resolving problems. In fact, as Padgett points out, it is more important to the campesino to have satisfactory recourse for removing bad leadership than to participate in the selection of this leadership. In sum, then, the Campesino Sector has given up its influence as an action group in favor of influence it can exert through the CNC in other ways to solve its problems.[81]

Since 1958, however, Mexico seems to have entered a new phase in which elements within the peasantry have begun to resort again to the pressures they can bring to bear as an action group through extra-legal activities. These acts have been carried out largely by campesinos influenced by political components of Mexico's leftist opposition, the PPS and the PCM. In early 1958, agitators from the UGOCM, led by Jacinto López, precipitated a series of invasions of privately-owned farmlands by landless campesinos in the northern

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[80] Clark, op. cit., p. 163.

[81] Padgett, op. cit., pp. 206, 265.

and western states of Baja California, Sonora, Sinaloa, and Colima.[82] In 1961 and 1962, the UGOCM continued to foment illegal occupation of private landholdings by landless and jobless campesinos sufficient to require military intervention.[83] Further illegal land seizures were instigated by the UGOCM in 1963 and 1964 in the northern states, particularly Coahuila. While much of the land invasion was politically motivated, some of it even led by leftist students, spontaneous invasions by landless campesinos also occurred.[84] Both the CCI and the UGOCM were reported to have been involved in using the water problem in northern border areas as leverage in competing for campesino membership.[85]

Because of the many landless and jobless campesinos still to be found in Mexico, the low rural standard of living, and the shortage of credit, water, and other necessities, large numbers of the peasantry are discontent and constitute a potentially revolutionary group which has no stake in the status quo. The land invasions since 1958 represent in large part the recognition by the radical left of the potential for once more developing the peasantry into a political action group to serve the radical left's own political ends.

The Mexican government, in its turn, is well aware of the political importance of the peasantry in this respect and has responded by assigning a higher priority to the Campesino Sector. During his administration, López Mateos distributed more land to the campesinos than had been done since the Cárdenas administration. Díaz Ordaz' presidential campaign during the first half of 1964 focused to a large extent on the needs of the Campesino Sector. At the same time, the government has emphasized new colonization and irrigation projects for the Campesino Sector. The attention paid to the peasantry both by the left and by the government is an indication of the political importance each attaches to the peasantry. The significance of UGOCM efforts to incite the peasantry can be appreciated by considering the implications in the event of similar agitation on the part of the CNC to gain political ends as an action group.

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[82] Scott, op. cit., p. 237.

[83] BLS Report, No. 240, p. 15.

[84] Bergold Interview.

[85] New York Times, June 7, 1964.

E. Campesino Electoral Influence

The electoral process is not signficant in a one-party political system like that of Mexico. Padgett observes that in Mexico "the role of organized groups and unorganized interests alike has been of only minor significance in so far as public or constitutional elections have been concerned. In other words, participation of either organized or potential groups has not involved the ballot as a central factor."[86] National elections serve only as a rubber stamp of approval for candidates already pre-determined by the PRI, with an allowance for some insignificant represetnation for the opposition.

Brandenburg contends that PRI sector nomination is a fiction, that from pre-nomination to inauguration, gubernatorial succession is controlled by the governor, his designate, or the regional strongman:

> "Some governors arbitrarily select all state legislators; others turn over the entire nomination apparatus to regional strongmen, and still others permit union bosses, ejidatario leaders, local caciques, and politicans in the official party to designate candidates. The last procedure results in local labor and ejido bosses grabbing as many seats as they can for themselves...
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> 'Whether official party sectors cut up the electoral pie or someone outside the party does it for them, no effective power is at stake anyway: a state legislature obsequiously follows the state leader, be he governor, regional strongman, or governor-designate."[87]

Even so, it is clear that the official party system does provide for some degree of competition. Even if there is no real electoral race, there is some competition between the sectors to name their candidates. Although the nominating process may not work in practice as it is designed to in theory, the sectors vie with one another using all sorts of maneuvers from brow-beating to bribery. While the decision on a sector and a candidate may be imposed in the end by a few influential persons, the pressures exerted by the sector rivalries will have affected the decision in some way. We have already pointed out that campesino membership

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[86] Padgett, op. cit., p. 260.

[87] Brandenburg, Making of Modern Mexico, pp. 150, 153.

overlaps between different sectors and that the sectors compete for this membership. To the extent the Popular Sector succeeeds in drawing the small farmer away from the Campesino Sector in between elections, the more chance it will have of nominating its own candidate in a given area.[88] In some cases, one sector may receive temporary support from a special group, thus adding a new competitive note to sector rivalry. For example, a specialized farm interest group called the Frente Zapatista de la Republica has allied itself with the Campesino Sector temporarily for electoral purposes in the past.[89] In general, it can be said that sector competition is likely to be more real for local and regional offices than for state and national office where the candidate is more likely to be imposed.

Few of the opposition parties have made a serious effort to win campesino support at election time in order to challenge the PRI. For the most part, the CNC is able to muster the great majority of the campesino vote and deliver it in support of the PRI candidates at election time. In 1952, however, a vociferous faction within the CNC made up of Cárdenistas who favored accelerated distribution of more ejido lands exploited campesino dissatisfaction and recruited tens of thousands of campesinos into the Federation of Mexican Peoples' Party in support of the presidential candidacy of General Henriquez Guzmán.[90] In the 1964 elections, the FEP ran on a "write-in" basis with the hope of capitalizing on campesino discontent and winning wide rural support with the help of the CCI and the FLN, but the electoral support it received was unimpressive.[91]

It is obvious that the Campesino Sector has little electoral influence in the present Mexican political system. At the same time, though, it should be recognized that if the PRI should lose the campesino vote or even a part of it to an opposition group, PRI strength and political control would be seriously threatened. It is the realization of this fact and recognition of the increasing awareness by the campesinos that their position has not improved as much as that of other segments of Mexican society, that have undoubtedly led the government and the PRI to place increasing emphasis on seeking solutions to the most pressing problems of the campesinos.

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[88] "Elective offices in regions where small farms constitute the prevailing mode of agriculture will more likely be held by nominees of the Popular rather than the Agrarian Sector of the Revolutionary Party." Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 260-262.

[89] Scott, op. cit., p. 163.

[90] Brandenburg, Mexico, pp. 195-196.

[91] Bergold Interview.

Keith Botsford commented recently that it is doubtful whether more than 10 or 15 percent of the Mexican population is actually interested or involved in the electoral process, and that in spite of compulsory registration, only about 31 percent of those eligible vote.[92] This lack of electoral participation presumably reflects apathy on the part of the Mexican masses, especially the rural masses, who are enough discontent with their lot not to endorse the PRI with their vote. Unless the PRI actively seeks the vote of all Mexicans, rather than merely accepting the vote of a third of them, competing groups may eventually interest the campesinos in voting for the opposition in sufficient numbers to seriously challenge the PRI. At such a juncture, campesino electoral influence might become an important factor in the Mexican political process.

IV. Conclusions

As has been shown, the principal role of the peasantry in Mexico today is played not through the electoral process, or as a result of strong leadership, or directly as a political action group, but as an organized interest group of its own through the political party machinery of the PRI. The Campesino Sector has thus become an institutionalized part of the revolution. Although the peasantry has a well-defined, accepted channel for participating in the political process, its role is restricted by the nature of the Mexican one-party political system. In the competition between the three sectors of the PRI, the Campesino Sector has been losing out since the end of the Cárdenas era.

Considering the some 50 years of revolutionary progress in Mexico and the development of stable new political institutions, one may ask why the peasantry has not evolved into a more effective political force, particularly considering its large numbers. The answer lies basically in the lack of educational and social development of these large numbers of campesinos and in the lack of resources available to the nation. While the revolution liberated the campesino from the inequitable system of land tenure prevailing before 1910, it did not necessarily provide him with the opportunity to improve his economic and social condition, partly because of limited availability of good land and partly because of limited ability of the government to provide the training, the technical services, and the credit required. As a result, while

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[92] Botsford, Keith, "Mexico Follows a 'Solo Camino,'" in The New York Times Magazine, April 26, 1964, p. 69.

the CNC apparatus became firmly institutionalized as the machinery through which the campesino might express himself and might receive in return a limited amount of assistance, the system in effect froze the peasantry at an early stage of development from which it might progress only very slowly as long as the resources available for the Campesino Sector remained limited. Thus, although the campesino may enjoy relatively more political fredom than he did before the revolution, his economic and social status in many cases is little changed, as Ifeginía de Navarrette has pointed out.

As the Mexican economy has developed rapidly since the early 1940's, it has been the Labor Sector and particularly the Popular Sector which have reaped the economic rewards and have gained the higher social standing and greater political power which have accompanied this rapid development. As Scott observes, "we find in rural Mexico an almost classical example of the ineffectual position in the political process of large numbers of unaware, unorganized, and unintegrated people in competition with much smaller but politically acute and organized groups."[93] Consequently, it is obvious that revolution does not necessarily mean significant economic, social and political change and progress for all elements of society, even after 50 years, unless there are sufficient resources available.

The Mexican Revolution is old enough so that the outlines of a cycle are almost visible. First comes revolutionary change (1911-1917), the emancipation of the peasantry, and the building of new political institutions with the peasantry represented (Obregón and the Agraristas). This stage is followed by political stability (1924-1934) and uneven economic development in which not all sectors of society share, especially the campesinos. When the peasantry begins to become restless again (Liga Nacional Campesina "Ursulo Galván"), revolutionary steps are taken to appease the peasantry (Cárdenas' distribution of ejido lands), and the campesinos are given a greater role in the revolutionary institutional structure (formation of the CNC). When the process repeats itself with continued political stability (1935-1958), further economic development (1940-date) and renewed campesino unrest (UGOCM-instigated land invasions in northern Mexico), the government once again grants a higher priority in resource allocation to the Campesino Sector (López Mateos' land distribution and Díaz Ordaz' campaign promises) in recognition of the importance of the peasantry as a stable political base.

This cycle suggests that until the peasantry becomes sufficiently evolved economically, socially, and politically to participate more effectively relative to the other sectors within the PRI apparatus, which will take another generation or more, the greatest potential influence of the peasantry may lie in its role as a political action group.

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[93] Scott, op. cit., p. 71

Part II

The Peasantry as an Emerging Political Factor in Bolivia

I. Introduction

Bolivia provides a case study of a peasantry which has evolved in a relatively short time from its status as one of the most oppressed elements of society (before the 1952 Revolution) to a position where it has played perhaps amore decisive political role than any other peasantry in Latin America. This development is significant because the peasantry played no role in the 1952 Revolution itself, which was a revolt of the middle class and labor. Only after the old traditional institutions were swept away did the peasantry emerge from the resultant vacuum as a political factor. Particularly in recent years, as the revolution has failed to achieve political consolidation and economic progress and as the peasantry has become better organized and its potential political strength more recognized, has the peasantry emerged as an important new element in the Bolivian political process.

While the peasantry has now been recognized as a significant political force, its political role is far from being institutionalized, as it has been in Mexico and as it is becoming in Venezuela. Rather, this role is still in a formative stage. One reason for this is that although the Bolivian peasantry may potentially become a single interest group, it is now a fragmented rather than cohesive element in Bolivian society. The campesinos are torn by conflicting regional interests and by political and personal rivalries which sometimes lead them to armed combat. Their original unity of purpose at the time of the revolution, which was in many ways more nominal than real, has been somewhat eroded. After achieving the goal of land ownership, the most immediate purpose of the campesino syndicates has been accomplished, and the subsequent tendency to focus on local issues and needs hampers their effectiveness as a national interest group.

As a result, the influence of the peasantry on the course of the Bolivian Revolution is still far from certain, particularly since the military coup of November 1964. Because of the poverty and underdevelopment of the country in terms of resources, income, and education and because of the gigantic social and cultural step between "Indian" and "campesino" which the country's masses are now taking, progress of the revolution has been slow. The course of the revolution and the peasantry's part in it were still being fought out between the competing interests of different leaders, political

factions, and labor, when the military intervened. Because of the peasantry's size and political potential, its role has been and presumably will continue to be important in shaping Bolivia's evolving political system. Until the military intervention, both the vote and the armed strength of the peasantry granted it a decisive political role.

II. The Peasantry Emerges

According to the 1950 Bolivian census, of a total population of about 3.1 million persons approximately 1.7 million were classified as "Indian." Although the criteria of classification were not explicit, the language spoken and community lived in appeared to be the two most specific.[1] After the 1952 Revolution, the term indio with its feudal connotation of the Indian as a serf was replaced by the word campesino, a man of the countryside, an equal.[2] It is in the sense of an evolved rural citizen that the term peasant or campesino is used here. Thus, the term campesino is likely to include the rural mestizo as well as the Indian.

The peasantry constitutes by far the largest element of Bolivian society. By 1962, the population of Bolivia was estimated to be about 3.7 million persons.[3] About 63 percent of the population is rural. Only four Latin countries in the Central America and Caribbean area have a higher proportion of rural population. The two other countries where the peasantry plays a signficant political role, Mexico and Venezuela, have a rural population of only 49 percent and 39 percent respectively.[4] Thus, it is obvious that because of its numbers along the peasantry constitutes a dominant segment of the Bolivian population.

In spite of its size, the peasantry remained outside national political life before the 1952 Revolution. Because voting privileges

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[1]Patch, R.W., "Social Implications of the Bolivian Agrarian Reform," Ph.D. Dissertation, Cornell University, June 1956, pp. 3-4.

[2]Patch, R.W., "Peasantry and National Revolution: Bolivia" in Expectant Peoples, ed. K.H. Silvert (Random House, 1963) p. 112.

[3]Schmidt and Burks in Evolution or Chaos estimate the population at 3.6 million (p. 263), while Victor Urquidi in Viabilidad Económica de America Latina estimates 3.9 million (p. 157). Unfortunately, Bolivia has not conducted a national census since 1950.

[4]Urquidi, op. cit., p. 158. Figures given are for the year 1960.

were restricted to literates, the political process was controlled by a small upper class elite. The Indian majority, constrainted by a semi-feudal social system in which the Indian was little more than a serf, was effectively kept from improving either its economic or social position through recourse to political action. Instead, the Indian remained sullen and withdrawn within his own society, unintegrated into national life, a latent though potential political force.

Although the peasantry was not one of the generating forces of the April Revolution, the Revolution quickly altered the peasant's relationship to society and awakened his political potential. Basically, the revolution was a middel class revolt led by the Movimiento Nationalista Revolucionario (MNR) supported by urban elements and by labor, especially the miners. Once the MNR had succeeded in destroying the traditional authority of the army and the landowners, a power vacuum resulted, and a breakdown of law and order, particularly in the countryside, ensued. The peasantry became actively involved in the revolution by seizing lands in the Cochabamba Valley. As Patch has described it, the agrarian syndicates which had been growing slowly since the Chaco War "took no direct part in the 1952 Revolution, but with the breakdown of army and police authority in the provinces after April 1952 the organizations spread widely and rapidly among the Quechua speakers, mainly in the heavily Indian Department of Cochabamba....Finally, the syndicates were strong enough to challenge the landowners, many of whom resisted the full implications of the revolution for several months in 1952. When the challenge broke into open battle, the major landowners were driven into the cities or into exile."[5] These campesino uprisings in the Cochabamba area were the first real sign of the degree of peasant dissatisfaction and of the peasants' revolutionary potential.

The background of peasant organization before the revolution has been described by Patch. As early as 1936 after the end of the Chaco War, campesinos of the Province of Cliza in the Department of Cochabamba established an agrarian "syndicate" (sindicato) in order to lease their holdings from the landlords and thus free themselves from the feudal obligations of service. Thwarted in this initial attempt, the sydicate was revived by 1947 in the community of Ucureña in the Province of Cliza under the leadership of José Rojas. In 1949 MNR members sought to expand their base through a new campaign to identify themselves with campesinos. During this time, though, Rojas, who was attracted by the Marxist Partido de la Izquierda Revolucionario (PIR), resisted MNR affiliation. Although the Ucureña syndicate

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[5]Patch, "Peasantry and National Revolution: Bolivia," p. 111.

did not take part in the 1952 Revolution, it emerged shortly after the revolution as the spokesman for the majority of the Cochabamba Valley campesinos. Ucureña's resistance to the MNR attempt to take over the leadership of the Cochabamba campesinos resulted in the final recognition by the MNR of Rojas' leadership, and Rojas in turn began to cooperate with the MNR.[6] In parts of Bolivia other than the Cochabamba Valley, virtually no peasant organization existed before the revolution.

Closely related to the campesinos' support of the MNR has been the government's land reform program. Land reform rapidly became a basic part of the revolution, in fact sooner than the MNR had apparently anticipated. Interpretations differ as to the real impetus behind the government's land reform program. According to Patch, the MNR was far from being committed to agrarian reform, since there was little mention of it during MNR participation in the government between 1943 and 1946 or even during the 1951 election campaign. He observes that it would be a mistake to over-emphasize the government's intent or to minimize the role which the Indians themselves played in organizing and precipitating the reform after April 1952. Patch insists that the government's part in the reform was limited to providing the machinery for the resolution of disputes and the formalization of land distribution, while it was the unexpected organization of the Indians, their warfare on the landowners, and their expropriation of land which furnished the driving force behind the reform.[7]

On the other hand, Carballo, while recognizing that the position of the MNR was mild and ambiguous in the 1940's, feels that Patch inaccurately gauged the mood of the campesino movement as a whole in 1952 by exaggerating the example of the Ucureña sindicate. Carballo suggests that the government was turning to land reform officially before campesino pressure had mounted on a large scale, creating much of the subsequent pressure itself, and that the violence and agitation in the Cochabamba Valley only forced the government to move more swiftly in drawing up a program than it had originally intended.[8] Alexander also disagrees with Patch's interpretation. He feels that the enactment of the agrarian reform law was due not as much to campesino pressure after April 1952 as to an earlier MNR commitment to land reform.[9]

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[6]Patch, R.W., "Bolivia: U.S. Assistance in a Revolutionary Setting," in Social Change in Latin America Today, (Harper Bros., 1960), pp. 120-122.

[7]Patch, "Social Implications of the Bolivian Agrarian Reform," p. 51; "Peasantry and National Revolution: Bolivia," p. 110.

[8]Carballo, Manuel, "Agrarian Reform in Bolivia," Senior Thesis, Princeton University, 1963, pp. 55-58.

[9]Alexander, R.J., "Nature and Progress of Agrarian Reform in Latin America," in The Journal of Economic History, Vol. XXIII, December 1963, pp. 567-568.

In any case, the agrarian reform program served as an important agent in facilitating organization of the campesinos. They were eager to get land. This distribution of land constituted the basis of campesino support for the MNR and for its personificiation, Paz Estenssoro. Even though the agrarian reform program has proceeded at an alpaca's pace (or slower), once the initial distribution of land was completed, the mere fact that the campesino received his land has been an important factor in keeping the campesinos' support behind the MNR. Tangible reform progress at a faster rate, however, will probably be necessary eventually in order to assure the MNR of broad campesino support.

It is from the 1952 Revolution, then, that the emancipation of the campesino and his entry into national life as a growing political force dates. Part III will attempt to examine the nature of the political role of the campesino as it has developed since the revolution and the different ways in which this role is played.

III. The Peasantry as a Political Factor

A. The Organization of the Peasantry

The peasantry was organized after the revolution primarily by agents of the MNR, who set up campesino syndicates on a labor union model. While the intention of the MNR was to incorporate these syndicates into the national labor confederation, campesino organizational ties are stronger with the MNR than with labor. To a certain extent, particularly at the local level, the syndicates have functioned independently of either party or labor ties.

1. Party Ties: The extent to which the Bolivian peasantry is organized is due basically to efforts exerted by the political parties. As the MNR has dominated political life in Bolivia since the revolution, so it has a virtual monopoly on the organized campesino. Although the MNR had made little progress in organizing the campesino before the revolution, it exerted great effort to incorporate the campesino into the MNR structure after April 1952. Because the MNR has controlled the national government since the revolution until 1964, party and governmental efforts to organize the campesino have complemented and coincided with each other toward the creation of an ever-growing campesino base of support for the MNR. One result has been to create local centers of political power which reside in the local campesino organization (usually MNR) rather than in the local governmental administration. A second result has been the generation of contending campesino factions within the MNR instead of the creation of a monlithic MNR campesino organization. (This MNR factionalism will be treated in section III/B.)

One of the agents of campesino organization after the April Revolution was the Sindicato Campesino de Ucureña del Valle, which, as has already been seen, assumed the leadership of the campesinos of the Cochabamba Valley under the direction of José Rojas, who recognized that the political future lay with the MNR. The Ucureña sydicate organized task forces of campesinos and university students from Cochabamba to set up sydicates modeled after that of Ucureña throughout the rural areas and to ensure their loyalty first to Rojas and secondly to the MNR.[10]

Another source of campesino organization was the new Ministry of Campesino Affairs, established shortly after the revolution. According to Alexander, Indian miners who could speak the native languages were sent out to establish peasant unions on the haciendas of the Bolivian altiplano. At the same time, the new peasant union members were brought into the MNR.[11]

In those areas where the Ministry was not active, Carballo says that the campesinos were organized by the parties--MNR, Partido Obrero Revolucionaria (POR), and to a lesser degree the PIR. The government provided teachers and the necessary nationalism, he says, while the syndicate decided on membership with the MNR, the POR, or the PCB. Almost all syndicates were politically homgeneous. Even with the MNR, the whole syndicate normally allied with one party faction. The MNR organizational efforts among the campesinos were led by the left wing of the party since most of the miners who were active organizing for the government were controlled by the MNR's left wing. Within five months to a year after the revolution, most of the haciendas on the altiplano had already been organized into syndicates.[12]

The Trotskyite POR seems to have been the only other party besides the MNR which made any headway in organizing the campesinos. Because of its control of several industrial and railroad unions in the Cochabamba Valley, the POR also controlled for a time the Cochabamba Federation of Workers, in which peasant unions played a leading role. After the POR peasant unions had led land invasions against local landlords, the government arrested a number of POR

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[10]Patch, "Bolivia: U.S. Assistance in a Revolutionary Setting," p. 122.

[11]Alexander, R.J., The Bolivian National Revolution, 1958, p. 60.

[12]Carballo, op. cit., pp. 47, 54-55, 119-125.

leaders and organizers in early 1953, and the MNR regained control of the Cochabamba Federation. By mid-1953 there were said to be only five POR peasant unions and no communist-controlled unions at all.[13]

Frequently, the campesinos were organized into syndicates more by force than by volition, as ambitious local leaders or caciques saw an opportunity to enhance their position and their power in a given area.

The structural nature of the agrarian syndicate has been described by Carballo.[14] Because the agrarian syndicates were in many cases organized as a bargaining agent by the miners for the campesinos, they grew along labor union lines. Such syndicates were formed on each hacienda to initiate suits on behalf of the campesinos for the land. Once the campesinos became owners of the land, however, the syndical nature of the sindicato became a fiction, but the structure remained.

The syndicates of a canton (county) were formed into a larger organizational unit known as a sub-central provincial. In the Department of La Paz there were about 30 syndicates to a canton. These county units were, in turn, combined into a central provincial at the provincial level. Finally, at the departmental level the provincial organizations were joined into the Departmental Federation of Campesino Workers. The highest central organizational body is the Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos Bolivianos (CNTCB).

The original function of the syndicate during the transitional state of revolution from 1952 to 1954 was to obtain land for the hacienda campesinos. Subsequently, the syndicate developed a much broader role and became, within its limited sphere, the polity of the countryside:

> "Members of the syndicates lived in a society all their own, in which the syndicate was the predominant element. It provided the organization needed to build schools, roads, and sometimes trenches. It offered security and patronage, when it was available. It created and enforced rules which included dues, sentry duty, and, where needed, work regulations. It organized a major form of community activity: rallies and political meetings

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[13]Carballo, pp. 54-55; Alexander, The Bolivian National Revolution, p. 61.

[14]Carballo, op. cit., pp. 119-125.

> of one form or another. During a painful transitional stage, the syndicate provided the charisma and the leadership needed in such times. And, ultimately, in the syndicate the campesino found a voice that articulated his interests and made them heard in the nation's highest councils for the first time in memory. As a result, the syndicate replaced or absorbed the local government...although it did not usurp the functions of government totally." [15]

Since the revolution, the agrarian syndicate has become the predominant form of social and political organization, forming the major locus of political power outside the cities.[16]

2. Labor Ties: As has already been pointed out, the 1952 Revolution was carried out by middle class leadership with labor support. Until recently, labor, especially the miners, has played a dominant role in post-revolutionary developments in Bolivia. In April 1952, virtually all the country's trade union groups met to establish a new central labor organization, the Central Obrera Boliviana (COB). As Alexander points out, the COB was of key importance in carrying out the revolution. The revolutionary government was based from its early days on a joint partnership between the MNR and the COB. All major decisions, such as the nationalization of the mines, the agrarian reform decree, and the reorganization of education, were considered by the COB before being promulgated by the government. Furthermore, four cabinet posts were normally filled by labor representatives nominated by the COB.[17]

Although the MNR was the strongest single element in the COB, the COB also represented the Communist Party and a branch of the POR. In addition, the PIR and the larger branch of the POR merged with the MNR after the revolution. Consequently, the COB included

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[15]Carballo, op. cit., pp. 124-125.

[16]Special Operations Research Office (SORO), Area Handbook for Bolivia, American University, Washington, D.C., 1963, pp. 337, 339.

[17]The four ministries were Mines and Petroleum, Campesino Affairs, Labor, and Transportation. The ministers were normally representatives of the federations of miners, campesinos, factory workers, and railroad workers.

a number of different factions and rival groups, so that the COB-MNR partnership did not result in completely harmonious government. Even so, the government depended heavily on labor for political support. During President Siles' term, for example, labor leaders made up a majority of the members of the Chamber of Deputies.[18]

The COB structure is made up of three principal sectors--the wage-earning proletariat, the rural worker, and the middle class employee. These three sectors are in turn divided into seven central councils (consejos centrales) representing the major labor categories, one of which is the agricultural workers.[19] National labor federations are associated with one of these seven central councils. Most individual trade unions are affiliated with the COB both through their own national federation and through regional organizations set up in each of the country's nine departments. The largest national federation is the Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros Bolivianos (FSTMB). In 1960 the COB had 26 affiliates associated with its seven central councils of which nine were campesino federations, one from each department.[20]

At the top of the COB administrative organization is the executive secretary, who has been Juán Lechín since the COB was first established. The active governing body of the COB is the National Executive Committee (CEN), members of which are elected at the National Workers' Congress, which is supposed to meet every two years.[21] In 1960 the CEN was composed of the executive secretary and one representative from each of 14 different federations, including the agricultural workers. The third governing organ of the COB is the National Assembly which theoretically serves in place of the national congress between sessions. The National Assembly is composed of the CEN members, the central councils, and the four labor ministers. Of 83 assembly delegates, agricultural workers account for 12, second

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[18]Alexander, The Bolivian National Revolution, pp. 121-132.

[19]The others were: proletariat--miners, industrial workers, and transport and communication workers; middle class--employees, intellectuals, and popular organizations.

[20]Llosa, J.A., Nuevo Manual de Sindicalismo, La Paz, 1962, pp. 151-153; Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Labor Law and Practice in Bolivia," U.S. Department of Labor, 1962, pp. 17-18.

[21]Actually, the congress has met in 1954, 1957, 1960, and 1962.

only after the 14 delegates accorded workers in the extractive industries.[22] The estimated membership of the COB in 1956 was about 200,000 workers.[23]

The number of campesinos actually organized into the syndicates described in the previous section, let alone their real relationship to the COB, is difficult to determine with any accuracy. If we compute Bolivia's total labor force using Urquidi's figure of 40 percent of the population as being economically active,[24] then we get a figure of nearly 1.5 million persons. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, about 62 percent of the labor force is engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry.[25] This gives us a rural labor force of about 900,000 persons.[26] On this basis, the Bolivian government's claim seems preposterous that there are 2.5 million agricultural workers and that 900,000 are organized.[27] President Paz Estenssoro's claim in a 1956 speech that 500,000 campesino heads of family had become land proprietors[28] is probably a better indication of the number of campesinos fitting even loosely into the agrarian syndicate organization.

The Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CNTCB), the overall campesino organization, which was set up--at least on paper--on July 15, 1953,[29] appears to be more a name than a really coordinated force. Carballo comments that although the CNTCB is in theory affiliated with the COB, in reality the CNTCB has no meaning at all, nor does its tenuous link with organized labor (COB).[30] Thus, it is apparent that although the campesino

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[22]See note 20.

[23]U.S. Bureau of International Labor Affairs, Directory of Labor Organizations--Western Hemisphere, Vol. I, Washington, D.C., 1960, p. 6.3.

[24]Urquidi, op. cit., p. 159.

[25]Bureau of Labor Statistics, op. cit., p. 7.

[26]This figure compares favorably with that of 950,000 mentioned by Alejandro Magnet in "Biografía de Tres Revoluciones" in Mensaje, Santiago, October 1963, p. 660, and to the 750,000 rural workers in 1950 referred to by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, p. 8.

[27]Bureau of Labor Statistics, op. cit., p. 17.

[28]Alexander, The Bolivian National Revolution, p. 66.

[29]Llosa, op. cit., p. 148.

[30]Carballo, op. cit., pp. 119-121.

is theoretically organized through the COB, the influence of the organized campesino is not exerted primarily through the COB but rather by other means. The agrarian syndicate has greater meaning in terms of the MNR than in terms of the labor movement.

When the COB and CNTCB organizational frameworks were established shortly after the revolution, the labor movement was dominated by industrial labor, especially by the miners. Even though the peasantry constituted by far the largest numerical element in the labor spectrum, the campesino at that time was far from being organized and articulate. Consequently, industrial labor dominated the COB structure. Although the agricultural workers were given a voice in the COB assembly second only to the miners, in reality their representative in the CEN was only one of 15. The campesinos were definitely a minority in the COB organization and administration, overshadowed by the more articulate wage-earning proletariat and salaried white collar workers.

To a certain extent, the campesino organizational channels developed outside the COB in a direction more closely related to the government through the Ministry of Campesino Affairs. As the peasantry has come to represent more and more a coordinated and powerful political force, it has at the same time developed in opposition to the other sectors of organized labor within the COB. To the extent that the CNTCB does function as a part of the COB, it has served to offset the Lechín-CSTMB forces. With the break between President Paz, who has broad campesino support, and Lechín toward the end of 1963, this became apparent when, with the help of campesino support, Paz forces set up a new COB. The government recognized the new COB and declared the old, Lechín-dominated COB dissolved on December 11, 1963.[31]

3. Independent Status: To a certain extent the campesino has become organized along lines independent of party, labor, or even governmental structures. This has already been hinted at by Carballo's description of the campesino syndicate as a rural polity. Patch describes this development in even greater detail:

> "After the revolution of April 1952, and particularly after their success in the campaign for an agrarian reform, the rural syndicates of the campesino communities became the dominant political organizations outside of the larger cities. Their strength and solidarity of organization varies, but in the zone of the Quechua-speaking

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[31]Hilton, Ronald, ed., Hispanic American Report, Vol. XVI, p. 1181.

> population, the syndicates provide the effective government. The influence of the constituted authorities of the national, departmental, and provincial governments is largely but not entirely limited to the cities and towns, while the syndicates confine themselves largely, but again not exclusively, to the affairs of the campesino...
>
> 'In most places they form an organization parallel to the normal provincial and departmental governments, and are largely independent of them. The influence of the provincial and departmental officials upon the officers of the agrarian syndicates is almost entirely limited to a personal level. A show of force by the government authorities would be unthinkable....
>
> 'The syndicates have taken on a police function and have entirely removed themselves from the jurisdiction of the national civil guard. Some have even taken on judiciary functions, settling civil and criminal disputes and disruptions."[32]

Usually, however, these campesino syndicates or communities will look for leadership and assistance to a certain political leader or to one faction of the MNR. For example, in the period after the revolution, campesino organization in the Cochabamba Valley proceeded under the guidance of the Ucureña syndicate and largely outside government and MNR control, giving allegiance to José Rojas rather than to the MNR leaders.[33] The rivalry which grew up in the Cochabamba Valley between the campesino centers of Ucureña and Cliza and which erupted in long periods of violence centered on the struggle between two leaders representing two different factions of the MNR.

The extent to which campesino groups have remained outside of any real central control reflects the lack of institutionalization of the revolution and the still primitive state of organization of the campesino. While it shows that the campesino is an influential factor in determining the outcome of these political

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[32]Patch, "Social Implications of the Bolivian Agrarian Reform," pp. 144, 186-187.

[33]Patch, "Bolivia: U.S. Assistance in a Revolutionary Setting," p. 122.

power struggles, it also means that the influence of the campesino as a unified pressure group is being wasted on political squabbles rather than being concentrated on more constructive efforts which could improve the campesinos' economic and social lot.

B. The Campesino and the MNR

As has already been shown, the MNR, through its own organizational efforts and through its control of the national government, succeeded in dominating the campesino movement after the revolution. For a number of reasons, though--divisions within the MNR, rivalry between campesino groups, lack of governmental resources--the MNR has never succeeded in completely integrating the campesino movement into the Party as a cohesive, disciplined base of support. As Patch has observed, the "MNR has never been able to command the movement, nor fully absorb it into a loyal organ of the party....Through the failure of their (campesinos) own organization and the inability of the government to fully incorporate them into the government party, the social changes are not yet paralleled by corresponding political changes."[34]

The peasantry has never really been completely incorporated into the Party structure because the campesino syndicates are usually stronger than the Party apparatus at the local level. The MNR Party structure is made up of a pyramidal arrangement of comandos at the local, provincial, and departmental levels. These comandos come together at the top of the pyramid in the form of the Comité Político Nacional. At the local level, the comando jefe of the MNR is supposed to form part of the local power hierarchy together with the sindicato dirigente and the local government official, thus associating the syndicate with the Party.[35] In practice, however, the syndicate leader frequently dominates the others. In some cases, there is little difference between the comando and the sindicato. As a result, the outlines of the Party and CNTCB structures tend to blur at the local level; they may be fused, closely linked, or entirely independent of each other. There is usually some kind of tie, however, since the syndicate in most cases serves as an arm of the MNR.

In some cases, the interlocking membership and leadership of the sindicato, comando, and local government has resulted in the rise of regional war lords whose personal control reaches all three organizations but is usually most firmly based on the syndicate. Frequently,

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[34]Patch, R.W., "Bolivia Today," American Universities Field Staff Report, 1961, pp. 14, 16.

[35]SORO, op. cit., pp. 351-353.

through energetic cultivation of local sources of power, these warlords have built positions nearly independent of both the national government and the MNR.[36]

Because of the nature of the one-party system in Bolivia, the peasantry has come to play a significant political role not in terms of different parties competing for power but rather by being drawn into the factional disputes within the MNR itself. This process has involved to a large degree the manipulation of a still politically unaware peasantry by local or regional leaders who hold a strong grip over local groups of campesinos and who bargain this campesino support to the highest bidder among those competing for political power at the national level. This new role thrust upon the peasantry has involved its mobilization as an armed force between rival leaders or groups at the local level, its use as a counterbalance against the miners in the MNR power struggle, and its decisive support in the final split in the party's national leadership in late 1963.

Ever since the revolution, the MNR has been a "movement," as the name implies, rather than a party. It has absorbed elements of the far left, the moderate right, and the center--communists and Trotskyites from the PIR and POR, nationalists of various shades, political opportunists, members of the upper middle class, and military officers. The MNR soon became divided into a left wing, a right wing, and moderates in between. The left wing was made up largely of the labor unions, including the campesinos, led by Juan Lechín and Nuflo Chávez. The right wing consisted largely of professional men and intellectuals such as Walter Guevara Arze. In the center were outstanding leaders such as Victor Paz Estenssoro and Hernán Siles Suazo. These different factions have been constantly vying for power with one another.[37]

Chávez and the left made a strong bid to organize the support of the campesinos during the first term of Paz' presidency (1952-1956), when Chávez was Minister of Campesino Affairs. During the early part of President Siles' term (1956-1960), however, Chávez, who had become vice-president, over-stepped himself when his resignation was accepted in a showdown between the left and the center under Siles' leadership. In spite of the close ties he had developed with the campesinos, especially with the Rojas leadership in the Cochabamba Valley, Chávez did not command sufficient campesino or other support to preserve

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[36] SORO, op. cit., p. 340.

[37] Ibid., p. 9; Alexander, The Bolivian National Revolution, pp. 52-55.

his position. Consequently, he lost much of his influence,[38] and at the same time the MNR left wing lost one of its close linkes with the Cochabamba campesinos.

Toward the end of Siles' term, the right wing also tried to assert itself, sought campesino support in the struggle, but overstepped itself, and lost its position in the Party. As the 1960 elections approached, Walter Guevara Arze, who was then Minister of Interior in the Siles government, sought to provide a counterbalance to the growing influence of the MNR left wing and Juan Lechín, who appeared a likely prospect for the MNR 1960 presidential candidate. In September 1959 Guevara Arze formed the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionaria Autentico (MNRA) with the intention of presenting himself as a presidential candidate.[39] In his attempt to establish a base for the MNRA, Guevara sought the support of the campesinos in the Cliza area, led by Miguel Veizaga, who had long been rivals of the Ucureña group of Rojas. This led to a prolonged period of violence between the two rival campesino organizations in the Cochabamba Valley, lasting for more than a year until December 1960, well after the June 1960 elections were over. In the elections, the MNRA won 5,000 votes from Veizaga's campesinos in Cliza while Rojas' organization voted for Paz' candidacy.[40] The Cliza campesino support helped Guevara, but it was not enough. The MNRA won only 14.3 percent of the vote,[41] and Guevara and the right wing found themselves outside the MNR and without power.

As the cleavage between the moderate center, led by Siles and Paz, and the left, led by Juan Lechín, has grown since 1956, the peasantry has begun to play an increasingly important role in supplying Paz' moderates with support against Lechín's miners. Siles found the campesino militia decisive in breaking a miners strike at Oruro in March 1959, after he had made José Rojas Minister of Campesino Affairs.[42] Paz' use of the campesino militia against the miners at

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[38]Patch, "Bolivia Today," pp. 14, 16.

[39]Hispanic American Report, XII, p. 504.

[40]Carballo, op. cit., pp. 123-124.

[41]Hispanic American Report, XIII, p. 403.

[42]Patch, R.W., "Bolivia: Decision or Debacle," American Universities Field Staff Report, 1959, p. 5.

Catavi in December 1963 forced the release of four American hostages. Campesino backing for Paz has been important in his recent showdown with Lechín. As has already been pointed out, this support contributed to the government's establishment of a new COB against the older, Lechín-dominated COB. The second national campesino congress held in Santa Cruz in March 1963 lined the campesinos up in favor of Paz' presidential candidacy in the 1964 elections rather than for the candidacy of Lechín.[43] Manipulation of campesino support also presumably played a strong part in Paz' nomination at the MNR national convention in January 1964. Paz' ability to control campesino backing at these crucial moments has constituted a definite reversal for Lechín and has illustrated the growing political power of the campesinos at the expense of the miners.[44]

It can be seen, then, that the status of the peasantry has advanced from that of an unorganized, inarticulate group at the time of the revolution, when industrial labor and the miners played a dominant political role, to a sufficient degree of organization with determined allegiances so that its superior numbers can be mobilized to give it a more powerful political role than the labor nucleus of the COB in introducing decisive influence in the MNR factional battles. At the same time, this shows that the most important aspect of the peasantry's role is as an interest group asserting itself through power plays rather than through the more orderly, established channels of a functioning democratic system. This means that the peasantry is serving the interests of leaders or factions in seeking or maintaining power rather than in meeting its own more immediate needs. It also indicates that rather than exerting influence upward the campesino is being used by others to serve their own purposes. The use of the peasantry as a military arm tends to emphasize the paternalistic relationship between the campesino and his leaders, his party, or his government.

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[43] Hispanic American Report, XVI, p. 283.

[44] According to the Hispanic American Report (XVI, pp. 383-384), the MNR was divided into five factions by 1963. From right to left, they included (a) a "socialist" faction backing the presidential candidacy of Siles Suazo, (b) a Paz Estenssoro faction, (c) the Frente de Unidad Nacional, supporting Paz' presidential candidacy, (d) the "Intransigeants" under the leadership of Nuflo Chávez and Frederico Alvarez Plata, and (e) a leftist faction backing Lechín's presidential candidacy.

C. Influence of Campesino Leadership

Campesino influence has been slow to play an important political role in Bolivia and has still not reached its greatest potential because the campesinos have never really been united into a cohesive force due partly to the lack of effective national leadership. The fortunes of campesino leaders have surged and receded again as the leaders have vied among one another for power at the local levels. National political leaders have also sought to assert themselves by developing ties with campesino leaders at local levels but few have succeeded in developing any real campesino backing over a long period of time. Only Paz Estenssoro has been able to count on widespread campesino support when he needed it, and this is derived not from any ties as a real campesino leader but rather from conscientious efforts to mobilize this support as well as from his position as the father of the Bolivian Revolution.

Because of the oppressed status of the peasant in the feudal society before the revolution, little incentive or opportunity existed to develop rural leaders out of the rural Indian or mestizo. José Rojas, the son of a latifundium colono who became active in organizing the peasants around Ucureña in the late 1940's, was one of the few exceptions. Otherwise, the only Indians who began to evolve into positions of responsibility and leadership before the revolution were found among the miners. As has already been pointed out, the government drew heavily on these miners in its efforts to organize the campesinos. Subsequently, the peasantry began to generate its own leadership and organizers, especially in the Cochabamba Valley.

As Alexander points out, "By the time of the 1956 elections a few Indian leaders were of sufficient distinction to justify their becoming MNR candidates for Congress. A handful of people were elected to the Chamber of Deputies who spoke only their Indian language and knew no Spanish. By the end of 1957 the Indians were still playing a minor role, insofar as the leadership of the National Revolution was concerned. Although a truly peasant leadership was developing at the local level, it would be some time before there would be Indians qualified to become important figures on a national scale." [45] As recently as 1962, Carballo observed that campesinos objected to the fact that there were no Indians in high government positions. Even after ten years of revolution, campesino leadership has still not evolved to the point where it commands the support and influence suggested by the size of the campesino mass. This can be explained

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[45] Alexander, The Bolivian National Revolution, p. 83.

mainly by the obstacles which regionalism, factionalism, racial differences, and lack of education have placed in the way of a coordinated national campesino organization.

Of the various individuals who have vied for campesino leadership, probably José Rojas is the only one who can count on a fairly steady, broad base of campesino support. Under the tutelage of Nuflo Chávez, Minister of Campesino Affairs from 1952 to 1956, Rojas apparently consolidated his position of leadership in the Cochabamba Valley and also came to speak for the campesinos of the departments of Cochabamba, Tarija, Chuquisaca, Santa Cruz, Beni, and Pando. In 1959 Rojas served as Minister of Campesino Affairs. His apointment brought into the open the schism between his followers and the campesinos of the departments of La Paz, Potosí, and Oruro, who opposed him. In general, there has been little feeling of fraternity between the Aymara-speaking campesinos of La Paz and the Quechua-speakers of the other departments, particularly Cochabamba. While in the cabinet, Rojas' authority became weakened in the Cochabamba area when it was challenged by a rival leader, Miguel Veizaga. After his resignation from the government in November 1959, Rojas returned to Ucureña, where the two rival campesino factions became involved in open warfare for more than a year. After a period of diminished authority for several years, Rojas appears to have finally consolidated his position once more. Although Rojas formerly owed allegiance to the MNR left wing of Chávez and Lechín, in the more recent struggle between Paz and Lechín, Rojas has supported the Paz forces.[46]

Miguel Veizaga has been another prominent campesino leader in the Cochabamba area. During 1959 and 1960 he led the campesinos of Cliza, traditional rivals of the Ucureña campesinos, in open warfare against Rojas' hegemony. Unfortunately for Veizaga, he sided with Guevara Arze and the MNRA at the time of the 1960 elections, thus losing out in one of the MNR power struggles. By September 1963 Veizaga was apparently again challenging Rojas, this time with the backing of the MNR leftist faction, possibly also in alliance with Guevara Arze's PRA.[47] Veizaga would appear to be a good example of a local campesino leader caught between the MNR factional in-fighting.

Various national political figures have at one time or another attempted to form ties with the campesinos. Nuflo Chávez, who was

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[46]Patch, "Bolivia: Decision or Debacle," p. 11; "Bolivia Today," pp. 14-15; Hispanic American Report, XVI, pp. 283, 899-900.

[47]Patch, R.W., "Bolivia's Developing Interior," American Universities Field Staff Report, 1962, p. 4; Patch, "Bolivia Today," pp. 14-15; Hispanic American Report, XVI, pp. 899-900.

Minister of Campesino Affairs until 1956, sought to establish close ties with Rojas and the Cochabamba campesinos, but he overstepped himself against President Siles in 1957, as has already been discussed. Vicente Alvarez Plata, a Minister of Campesino Affairs under Siles, tried to organize the Aymara-speaking campesinos of the altiplano but was killed when he reverted to force rather than persuasion.[48] His brother, Frederico Alvarez Plata, also tried to organize the altiplano Aymara-speakers as a counterbalance to the Rojas organization, which was strong among the Quechua speakers.[49]

Of the national leaders only Paz Estenssoro has been constantly successful in bidding for the allegiance of the campesino populace. This may be due in part to the fact that more than any other figure Paz represented the revolution, which has emancipated the campesino, given him land, and tried to help him. Paz' image is probably less tarnished in the campesinos' eyes than in the miners', because the campesino has lost nothing by the revolution and only gained, even though it be at a snail's pace. The 1956 stablization program, for example did not hurt the campesinos though it did the miners.[50] Campesino support for Paz was an important if not a decisive factor in the final outcome of his showdown with Lechín during the 1964 election campaign.

Because campesino organization is not yet solidified and because the campesinos are not yet incorporated completely into the existing political structures of the country, the opportunity for leadership in the campesino movement is great. The extent to which factionalism or even simple caciquismo exists in the countryside today and the degree to which strong leadership has not yet manifested itself to unite the campesino movement illustrates the looseness and fluidity of campesino organization at the present time. The need to solidify the organization of the campesinos and to develop strong leadership is urgent. Otherwise the constructive strength of the peasantry as a positive force will be wasted and its influence will only be dissipated instead in continuing political power struggles.

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[48] Patch, "Bolivia Today," p. 15.

[49] Patch, "Bolivia: U.S. Assistance in a Revolutionary Setting," p. 136.

[50] Alexander, The Bolivian National Revolution, pp. 211-212.

D. The Influence of the Peasantry as a Political Action Group

The manner in which the peasantry has come to exert perhaps the greatest influence on Bolivian political development is through its role as an armed militia. As such, the mobilized campesino has come to constitute a powerful force capable of challenging both the army[51] and the labor militia. The armed peasant is also a force used by the rival factions within the MNR in their never-ending power struggle.

Following the revolution, the MNR armed both the already existing and the newly formed labor and campesino unions. With the army destroyed as an institution by the revolution, the new government came to depend on these militias for the armed support necessary to maintain itself in power against counter-revolutionary attempts by the ancien regime or by disaffected elements. When rebels seized the city of Cochabamba in 1953, a peasant militia marched on the city and recaptured it for the government. On the occasion of a threatened coup against the government shortly before the 1956 elections, militiamen were brought to La Paz and stationed on the rim of the altiplano above the city, successfully thwarting the challenge to the government.[52] According to one report, 55,000 guns were in the hands of the people in 1956; the peasants formed 15 regiments, the miners had 10,000 men, the rail workers 2,000, and the factory workers 3,000.[53] According to a recent estimate, however, total militia strength, which may have reached a peak of 50,000 to 70,000 armed men earlier, did not exceed 16,000 men in 1963. About half of this number was said to be made up of campesino militia.[54]

The militias were originally established as a counterbalance against any remnants of the old armed forces as well as against any

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[51] One reason given as to why the peasant militia did not challenge the military at the time of its takeover in November 1964 is that Paz recognized the destructiveness of the civil war that would result and decided to accede to the military rather than to unleash the peasant militia.

[52] Alexander, The Bolivian National Revolution, p. 148.

[53] Ostria Gutierrez, A., The Tragedy of Bolivia, Devin-Adair Company, New York, 1958, p. 123.

[54] SORO, op. cit., p. 660.

new military subsequently provided for. While the militia did serve effectively to thwart coups against the new government, as explained above, ironically enough the main role of the campesino militia evolved instead as a counterbalance to the influence of labor, especially the miners' militia. When President Siles was faced in 1959 with a miners' strike at Catavi and a railroad workers' strike at Huanuni, together with an attempt by the COB to form a miner-peasant coalition against the government, he resisted labor's challenge by appointing José Rojas to the cabinet as Minister of Campesino Affairs, thus averting the miner-peasant coalition and inevitable defeat for the government. With the main campesino organization thus following Rojas in supporting Siles, the government sent campesino militia units to Catavi and Huanuni and forced the strikers to capitulate.[55]

Patch mentions that the Ucureña syndicate maintains a standing armed militia quartered in barracks. Five hundred men are said to be ready for mobilization in a matter of hours, and as many as 10,000 could be armed and ready to march in a few days. This militia is responsible to no one except the immediate campesino leaders.[56] Such a militia gives a strong leader like José Rojas considerable power, which he may use at his discretion to support the government or, if he feels that government action is not in his interest, to thwart the government.

The most recent example of the use of campesino militia against the miners was in December 1963 when the mobilization of the campesinos seemed to be the turning point in backing down the miners at the Siglo XX mine at Catavi and forcing them to release the four American hostages.

The best example of how the peasant militias have been used by different factions within the MNR to gain the upper hand was the armed conflict that erupted in the Cochabamba Valley in the fall of 1959 between the Ucureña and Cliza campesino groups, led by Rojas and Veizaga respectively. In addition to stemming from a campesino rivalry that had existed since the revolution, this new outburst of violence also reflected the struggle between the MNR's right wing led by Walter Guevara and the rest of the MNR,

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[55] Carballo, op. cit., pp. 84-86.

[56] Patch, "Bolivia: Decision or Debacle," pp. 5, 8. Patch's statement in "Peasantry and National Revolution: Bolivia" that the Ucureña syndicate is able to mobilize 500,000 armed men at short notice seems preposterous (pp. 120-121).

including the Paz and Lechín wings. During the year of open fighting that ensured, as many as 50,000 campesinos were said to be mobilized and armed, fighting from trenches and using guerrilla tactics learned from the Chaco War. As the result of some outbreaks of violence, as many as 50 campesinos were killed.[57] A later example of a facional dispute occurred as recently as September 1963, when two campesino groups in the Cochabamba Valley again resorted to violence over the determination of the vice presidential candidate in the approaching 1964 elections. It took one of the candidates himself, General Rene Barrientos, to intervene and settle the dispute.[58]

It is apparent that the peasantry through its role as a mobilized political action group recruited by particular political factions and leaders will exert great influence on the course of the MNR, the government, and the revolution. As long as the governmental structure controls this potential armed forced within the broad framework of some form of more or less competitive democracy, then this campesino force can play a constructive role. Should the campesino force become stronger than the political system itself, though, it might destroy the system, replacing it by a more authoritarian one. It is important that this force be channeled along constructive lines stabilizing the political situation rather than turning it into anarchy. It is necessary to accomplish the transition from the concept of the campesino sydicate as a weapon to the concept of the syndicate as an element in education, production, and orderly political development.

E. Campesino Electoral Influence

One of the most revolutionary changes accomplished by the new MNR government after it came to power in April 1952 was the establishment of universal adult suffrage. A presidential decree of July 21, 1952 extended the vote to all Bolivian men and women over the age of 21 if unmarried, or if married, over the age of 18, except for certain undesirables.[59] In 1951 in the last elections before the revolution, out of a total population of about 3,200,000 persons only 215,000 were registered and only 126,000 voted.[60] But in the elections

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[57] Carballo, op. cit., pp. 89-93; Hispanic American Report, XIII, pp. 198, 819.

[58] Hispanic American Report, XVI, pp. 899-900.

[59] Alexander, The Bolivian National Revolution, pp. 80-82.

[60] Magnet, op. cit., p. 659.

of 1956, 1,119,047 Bolivians were registered, and 958,016 voted.[61] The registered electorate was thus increased from seven percent to 32 percent while the number actually voting has grown from four percent to about 30 percent. When it is considered that about 63 percent of the total population is rural and that therefore much of the increase in voted percentage can be attributed to peasants voting for the first time, the new importance of the campesino vote can be readily appreciated. As Carballo observes, "the basis of the MNR electoral power is the large majority turned in by the campesinos in the countryside...the rural body that constitutes over 60 percent of the electorate."[62]

It should be pointed out, however, that because of the nature of Bolivia's virtual one-party system, campesino electoral preference plays its most crucial role not so much in the actual national elections but instead beforehand through internal competition within the MNR by lending decisive support to one of the party's factions whose chosen candidates will in the end represent the party at the national elections. The MNR factions are aware that without the support of the campesinos, their chances for dominance of the party or for victory at the polls are poor. Consequently, factional struggles involving competition for campesino support through coercion, bribery, personal pressures, rigging of conventions, ballot box stuffing, etc., are a normal MNR phenomenon preceding election year.[63] The maneuver at the second national peasant congress in Santa Cruz in March 1963 by pro-Paz campesinos led by José Rojas to squelch leftist faction support for the presidential candidacy of Lechín, previously referred to, is an example.

Once the contending forces within the MNR have been resolved and campesino support for the party slate assured, the outcome of the elections themselves have really been pre-determined, since the opposition parties in the past have not wielded sufficient electoral strength, especially among the campesinos, to challenge the MNR at the polls. The competition in Bolivia's version of democracy, then, occurs more within the MNR than in the national elections themselves.

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[61] Hispanic American Report, IX, p. 351; XIII, p. 403. Statistics issued by the Bolivian government, such as election results, should normally be viewed with caution.

[62] Carballo, op. cit., p. 119.

[63] SORO, op. cit., pp. 372-373.

During the 1964 election campaign, the basic competitive character of the Bolivian political system appeared to be going through some alteration, however. The split in the MNR represented by the withdrawal of Lechín and the MNR left wing, the formation of two parallel COB's, the forming electoral alliance between the Lechín faction[64] and other opposition parties, all seemed to signify the advent of a more competitive party system.

The campesinos' electoral role is far from being institutionalized or even defined. Patch has commented that "at present the Government can command this (campesino) power only in block voting in national elections, which are events of no great moment to most campesinos, and through the still great influence and popularity of President Victor Paz."[65] Not only does this statement imply that the campesino vote is undisciplined and must be fought for within the party before election time, as described above, but it also indicates that the campesino is as yet little attuned to the real meaning of the value of democracy and of the individual vote.

The meaninglessness of the vote to the campesino is illustrated by the number of campesinos actually voting. In both the elections of 1956 and of 1960, slightly under one million votes were case, the figure rising from 958,016 in 1956 to 970,635 in 1960. Of the 1960 total, 723,296 votes were for the MNR.[66] Of this 1960 MNR total, the campesino vote probably accounted for some 500,000 votes, similar to the number of organized campesinos already estimated. This would indicate that there are probably 400,000 more members of the potential rural electorate who have not yet participated in national elections, most of whom have not yet even registered as voters. So, a substantial number of potential voters exists, awaiting exploitation by whatever interest groups can mobilize them.

While the MNR was dominant and controlled the existing campesino vote, this so far unincorporated campesino vote was of little import. More important to the MNR was the development of better organization and leadership of the already partially

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[64]According to the Hispanic American Report (XVII, pp. 65, 157), after Lechín was officially expelled from the MNR at the Party's national convention in January, he formed his leftist MNR faction into a new party, the Partido Revolucionario de la Izquierda Nacional, in February.

[65]Patch, "Bolivia Today," p. 14.

[66]Hispanic American Report, XIII, p. 403.

incorporated campesinos in order to make possible more disciplined and reliable direction of these campesinos. Improved organization has gradually been increasing the MNR vote, as shown in the June 1962 congressional elections, when the total vote increased by nearly 10 percent over 1960 to 1,066,480 votes, the MNR winning 83.1 percent as compared with 74.5 percent in the 1960 congressional contest.[67] But should the Bolivian political system become more competitive, both the organized and not yet organized campesino vote could come to play an increasingly important political role.

IV. Conclusions

In spite of the fact that the Bolivian Revolution was already more than 12 years old at the time the military coup suspended it in 1964, the revolution had still not become institutionalized. The new revolutionary elements and the new political forces which had replaced the old traditional institutions had become channeled along certain lines though their direction was far from fixed. A major reform in land tenure had altered society, the state largely controlled the economy, and the MNR, based on broad electoral support, controlled the state; but the new society, economy and political system were still feeling their way, and their final form was still far from sure.

The primitiveness of peasant organization and the little progress that had been made in incorporating this basic social element into the national economy and the national political system was merely a reflection of the slow rate of progress of the revolution as a whole. The peasant movement's strongest link to the national polity was through the MNR, though the peasantry was not really a disciplined part of the MNR. Nor was the peasant movement really integrated with the labor movement in the COB, where functionally it should have belonged. The virtually independent role played at times by some peasant groups, especially as a militia, was indicative of the little progress made in channeling this new element of society along lines constructive to the welfare of both the peasant and the nation.

The role of the peasantry was still evolving and assuming greater importance, even before the nature of the framework within which it was to evolve further was defined. Such basic questions

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[67] Hispanic American Report, XV, p. 640.

vital to the development of the revolution and to the role of the peasantry as whether or not the political system was to continue to be a one-party system, whether the course of the revolution was to be determined by the moderates or the radicals, or whether labor-based or peasant-based factions were to be predominant were left unanswered when the Paz government was overthrown. To the extent that these questions were being decided by power struggles revealed the fact that revolutionary conditions still existed and that the revolution was not yet firmly consolidated. Bolivia needed to advance from the revolutionary stage in which the peasantry played its most influential role as an armed and active militia to the institutionalized stage where the campesinos' influence can be exerted instead through formalized party or labor organization, and ultimately through its voting power.

Part III

The Peasantry as an Emerging Political Factor in Venezuela

I. Introduction

Venezuela has undergone neither a gradual opening-up of the political process, in the Chilean or Argentine sense, nor violent change, in the Mexican or Bolivian sense. Rather, it has evolved through a process of moderate social and political revolution since 1945, interrupted only by the Pérez Jiménez interregnum (1948-1958). Middle sector groups, labor, and the peasantry have all been introduced into the political process more or less simultaneously since 1945 without destroying the traditional forces of the military, the conservatives, or the Church.

This unique accomplishment--the only one of its kind in Latin America--has been achieved partly because of the weakness of conservative forces in Venezuela and because of the reaction to the Pérez Jiménez dictatorship but even more because of the new climate favoring political and social reform created by the threat of a communist Cuba and by the Alliance for Progress. Agrarian reforms, for example, may have been the straw that broke the conservatives' back in Venezuela in 1948, but the reform was accepted in the new climate of 1959-1960. The Venezuelan revolution has shown, then, that the peasantry's introduction into political life can be accomplished through a Western democratic and constitutional structure and that it does not necessarily imply a form of peasant socialist state.

Because of the political parties which sprang up in Venezuela during the 1940's seeking a popular base, the political activation of the peasantry was already underway when these parties finally gained permanent access to the political system in 1958. The introduction of the peasantry into the political process in Venezuela, then, was not a sudden and unplanned development as it was for the most part in Mexico and Bolivia. As the political parties have established and participated in a broad, new competitive political system, the peasantry has been drawn into the process in a relatively orderly manner through its association with the parties and the growing labor movement. Because of these associations the peasantry has come to be an influential electoral force which plays an important role in determining the control of political power in Venezuela. If this competitive political system thrives, the peasantry may play an increasingly important role in it.

II. The Peasantry Emerges

Until 1945 participation in the political process in Venezuela was restricted to a political elite. Following the long, exclusive dictatorship of Juan Vicente Gómez (1907-1935), the succeeding governments of Eleazar López Contreras (1936-1940) and Isaías Medina Angarita (1941-1945) broadened this political elite somewhat but the control of political power remained centralized in relatively few hands. While the years 1936-1945 formed a transition period during which middle sector opposition groups were sporadically permitted to organize, these new political elements were kept entirely outside the political process. The president of the country was chosen indirectly by the national congress, which was in turn chosen by state legislators and municipal councilmen voted for by an electorate restricted by the 1936 Constitution to literate males 21 years of age or more.[1]

It was during this period following 1936, however, that middle sector leadership first began to organize a popular base and present an opposition to the existing government. The beginnings of campesino organization date from this time. Martz points out that although organization of the peasantry before 1945 was minimal, future campesino leaders Ramón Quijada and Tomás Alberti, as well as Rómulo Betancourt himself, began to make themselves known in the interior during these years, thus laying the foundation for Acción Democrática's future labor and campesino movements. The forerunner of AD, the Partido Democrático Nacional, which was founded in October 1936, had a peasant movement secretary (Francisco Olivo); the first national AD convention in June 1942 selected among its national officers a director of labor and agriculture (P.B. Pérez Salinas).[2] By 1945, there were 77 legally operating peasant syndicates with a membership of 6,279 campesinos.[3]

The year 1945 marked the advent of lasting political change in Venezuela. The October coup ushered in the beginning of government by political party and of the electoral enfranchisement of the people. The AD-controlled revolutionary junta introduced a new

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[1] Martz, J.D., III, Acción Democrática: The Evolution of a Modern Political Party, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of N. Carolina, 1963, p. 49.

[2] Ibid., pp. 298, 388-389, 39, 83-84. Pérez Salinas came from the graphic arts union.

[3] Powell, John D., "Preliminary Report on the Federación Campesina de Venezuela," Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1964, p. 5.

electoral law in March 1946 providing for universal suffrage, thus removing voting restrictions against women and illiterates.[4] The 1947 Constitution permitted the election of the president and Congress directly by the people. The new constitution also guaranteed the right to organize. The revolutionary junta had already established the first Ministry of Labor in October 1945 and was encouraging the organization of both agricultural and industrial workers.[5] Thus, the framework was laid not only for the electoral participation of the masses but also for the organization of the worker and the peasant as new political pressure groups. New elements had been introduced into the body politic.

During this first period of AD power from 1945 to 1948, the beginnings of incorporating the peasantry into the political process were made, though progress in organizing labor outstripped that of organizing the campesino. With encouragement from the Ministry of Labor, AD's new campesino leaders--Ramón Quijada, Tomás Alberti, Carlos Behrens, Daniel Carías--began to organize peasant leagues from 1945 on. The original leagues were set up by Quijada in the states of Aragua and Carabobo, and others were soon formed in Sucre.[6] By 1948 there were a total of from 300 to 500 agricultural workers' unions with a membership of as high as 125,000.[7] In November 1947 the first national campesino convention was held in Caracas, at which the Federación Campesina Venezolana (FCV) was formed. Ramón

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[4]Lieuwen, Edwin, Venezuela, Oxford University Press, New York, 1961, p. 71.

[5]Ibid., pp. 74-78.

[6]Martz, op. cit., p. 389.

[7]R.J. Alexander, in his Prophets of the Revolution, (MacMillan, 1962, p. 127) mentions that by the middle of 1948, there were some 300 agricultural workers' unions and that the total number of union members rose to 125,000. The International Labor Office's "Freedom of Association and Conditions of Work in Venezuela," Report No. 21, Geneva, 1950, pp. 104-5, quotes figures supplied to its Mission by the Venezuelan Ministry of Labor in 1949 which indicate that by 1948 agricultural trade unions numbered 515, with a membership of 43,302, although it observes that union sources claimed that total trade union membership was more than double this figure.

Quijada was elected president of the FCV, and its National Executive Committee included Alberti, Behrens, Carías, and Luis Moreno.[8]

In the elections for constituent assembly in October 1946 about 36 percent (1.4 million) of the population voted compared with the five percent before 1945. AD won about 80 percent of the vote. In the presidential and congressional elections in December 1947 the vote was slightly smaller with about 1.2 million persons voting. This time AD won about 74 percent of the vote.[9] Even at these early dates the rural vote probably already played an important part in the election results,[10] constituting perhaps as much as one third or more of the total vote.[11]

Apart from its important contribution to AD's electoral victories in 1946 and 1947, the peasantry did not play a significant role during the 1945 to 1948 period. The rural organization at that

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[8]Martz, op. cit., p. 389. Armando González, current FCV president, in his chapter on agrarian reform in The Caribbean: Venezuelan Development, edited by C.A. Wilgus (Gainesville, 1963, p. 227) states that the FCV was established in June 1947.

[9]Martz, op. cit., p. 123; Lieuwen, op. cit., pp. 73, 76; "Venezuela: Election Factbook," Institute for the Comparative Study of Political Systems, Washington, D.C., 1963, p. 17.

[10]Betancourt, in his Venezuela: Política y Petróleo, (Mexico, 1956, p. 355) claims that AD won these elections because of "massive rural support."

[11]This estimate is based on the following reasoning. Alexander states that by 1948 campesino unions with a membership of 125,000 numbered about 300 (n. 7) out of a total of 900 labor unions with a membership of about 300,000, AD controlling the great majority of the unions (Communism in Latin America, Rutgers, 1957, p. 263). Martz states that AD party membership was about 400,000 in 1945 and more than 500,000 in 1948 (op. cit., p. 143). According to these figures, campesino membership constituted slightly more than one third of AD party membership. Since the total AD vote in 1946 and 1947 was more than double party membership, presumably at least one third of the national vote was rural, if one considers that at that time probably nearly half of the country's total population was rural and that AD leaders had been virtually the only party leaders extending their influence among the rural voters.

time can probably be described as embryonic at best. Although President Gallegos signed an agrarian reform law in October, its implementation was prevented by the military golpe one month later, so that the incentive to campesino organization provided by agrarian reform did not take effect. During these years labor became a more elaborately organized, more articulate, and more influential force than did the peasantry. Writing in 1963, Martz' description of the peasantry is pertinent:

> "The Venezuelan peasantry has always been a potential source of political power. Its sheer numbers are impressive, yet the backwardness of agricultural methods, regional and local isolation undisturbed by an adequate communications and transportation system, and calculated avoidance of the land problem by many governments, all these factors have combined to relegate the campesino to a politically negligible position. Only within the past generation has this begun to change, until today the support of the peasantry is one of the great pillars on which the Betancourt government relies."[12]

This process of change was well underway when the military stepped in on November 24, 1948 to end Venezuela's first experiment in popular government.

III. The Peasantry as a Political Factor

Whereas the campesino's incorporation into Venezuelan political life was temporarily dissolved by the hiatus of the military dictatorship between 1948 and 1958, during the following years the peasantry rapidly developed into an important political pressure group. The various ways in which the peasantry exerts political influence in the political process developed during the post-Pérez Jiménez period will now be examined.

Only to the extent that the campesino is organized into a cohesive group whose influence can be directed toward selected goals can it be effective as a real political pressure group. Otherwise,

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[12]Martz, op. cit., p. 387.

although the peasantry may constitute the single largest party of the country's population,[13] its potential for political action will remain latent, and the campesino will continue to be the pawn of an articulate and coordinated elite. In Venezuela, the campesino has been organized as an integral part of both the political party system and of the labor movement. The peasantry's political influence is exerted primarily through its role in the political parties and secondarily through its role in the labor movement. As the labor movement becomes more independent and less an extension of the political parties, the peasantry may eventually play its most important political role in a unified peasant organization within the labor movement.

A. The Campesino and the Political Parties

The peasantry constitutes an important base for any political party seeking national support. The struggle between AD and ARS over control of the FCV (see section B) is a direct acknowledgement of this. Because of the size of the rural population in Venezuela (39 percent), it is unlikely that any party will amount to a major, permanent entity in such a multi-party system without a substantial campesino base. Without access to their files, however, one can do no better than to estimate roughly the parties' actual campesino membership.

Acción Democrática is the party with the largest numerical membership in Venezuela. According to its own census in May 1962, AD had 903,283 members.[14] Since AD received 957,699 votes in the December 1963 presidential elections,[15] the census figure is probably fairly accurate though perhaps still somewhat inflated. AD may have a campesino membership of some 400-450,000 persons.

Since AD probably has the greatest proportion of campesinos of any of the parties and perhaps one of the best party organizations, it is worthwhile to examine briefly what degree of influence

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[13] Of a civilian labor force of about 2,500,000 persons in Venezuela, 34 percent (or 875,000 persons) is engaged in agriculture. "Labor Law and Practice in Venezuela," Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington, D.C., 1961, pp. 7-8.

[14] Martz, op. cit., p. 251.

[15] El Nacional, December 13, 1963, Caracas.

the campesino would appear to have within the AD party structure. According to Martz' description of the AD organization,[16] the party executive organ is the Comité Ejecutivo Nacional (CEN), which has about 20 members, one of whom is a secretary for agrarian affairs. In addition, one of the CEN's "political secretaries" appointed in 1961 was Ramón Quijada. The CEN has two sub-units: (1) a Buro Político, which is a policy-making committee and which has included an agrarian secretary only since 1962, and (2) a Secretariado Nacional, which has an administrative function and includes an agrarian representative. The CEN also has three functional bureaus concerned with labor, agrarian, and youth affairs. The first two meet both separately and jointly. They meet jointly each month to co-ordinate labor and agrarian policy.

The CEN represents the Comité Directorio Nacional (CDN), which has about 120 members and is made up of the CEN, the three functional bureaus mentioned above, the president of the national disciplinary tribunal, and two delegates from each state.

The CEN is the executive organ of the party, meeting biweekly or more frequently when necessary. The CDN meets less frequently, perhaps once every six months, when called upon by the CEN. The convention normally meets annually.

The basic organ, the Convención Nacional, is made up of about 700 delegates, the majority of whom are drawn from the 25 sectional conventions. These regional, or state, conventions are made up of representatives chosen at the local level by the party comités.

In the party councils, FCV leaders compete with other party sectors in forming party programs, determining the party's position toward government legislation and programs, and constructing a party position on the national budget for debate in Congress.[17]

From the above description it would appear that the agrarian sector of the party exercises greater voice in proportion to the greater size of the body. In the daily determination and administration of policy, as carried out by the CEN or the Buro Político, campesino influence is undoubtedly subordinated to general party interest. When the CDN is convened to decide matters of basic party tactics, such as election year strategy, the agrarian sector would seem to carry more weight than in the CEN. Finally, at the

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[16]Martz, op. cit., pp. 268-279.

[17]Powell, op. cit., p. 36.

party convention, campesino representatives are probably at their strongest. At the AD National Convention in July 1963, for example, campesino delegates must have played an important role in nominating Raúl Leoni as the party's presidential candidate over the recommendation of President Betancourt to defer the decision.

The Social Christian party, COPEI, also appears to have a strong campesino base. COPEI draws much of its support from the populous Andes, a predominantly rural area. Although the party had not made a point of organizing the campesinos during the period between its formation in 1946 and the military take-over in 1948, COPEI paid a great deal of attention to organizing campesino support after 1958.[18] Its participation in the government coalition, especially after the withdrawal of the Unión Republicana Democrática (URD) in 1960, and in the implementation of the agrarian reform undoubtedly helped COPEI win new allegiance among campesinos not only in the Andean states but also in other states where the reform was being carried out. COPEI won 589,372 votes in the December 1963 elections.[19] COPEI's party membership is probably in the neighborhood of 500,000 or slightly less. Of this, campesinos probably account for about 350,000.

The URD is the only other party with any degree of rural support in the country's interior. Unlike COPEI, URD has not had any one particular rural source of party strength. Since it is a party which has middle class, labor, and urban roots, and since after 1960, it did not enjoy a position within the government coalition from which it might have advantageously extended its influence in rural areas through a share in the administration of the agrarian reform program, URD's campesino base is probably weaker than COPEI's. Even so, URD drew enough electoral support throughout the country in last December's elections to show that it has a national organization and nationwide support sufficient to win 551,120 votes.[20] Its campesino membership may be estimated at about 100,000 persons.

Other Venezuelan political parties are not really national parties since they lack nationwide organizations and a rural base. ARS (a splinter group from the AD party) won only 2.3 percent of the vote in December 1963 because it failed to draw and keep any significant campesino vote away from AD. The parties supporting Arturo Uslar Pietri and

/ Wolfgang Larrazábal

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[18] COPEI created its first national agrarian secretary in 1958.

[19] El Nacional, December 13, 1963, Caracas.

in the last presidential elections won impressive returns, but their vote was nearly entirely urban. As new and personalist political movements, they did not have the opportunity to build up adequate national organizations capable of generating rural support. Though the Communist Party was not permitted to participate in the elections, it has not enjoyed wide rural support in the past, since it has chosen to concentrate its organizational efforts on building up labor and youth support. The lack of campesino support given to the FALN guerrillas in the interior is evidence of communist weakness in the countryside.[21]

Judging by the 1963 elections, then, the peasantry exerts significant influence only through the AD and COPEI parties. The near monopolization of campesino support by these two parties has been related closely to their partnership in the government coalition, and in the administration of the agrarian reform as well as their control of the CTV-FCV organization. Since the campesino's major interest is closely related to his living conditions and therefore to questions revolving around the administration of the agrarian reform, his immediate interests might seem to be met through his participation within the FCV. Even so, the campesino's closest identification is probably with his party. If he feels he is being discriminated against in the administration of the reform, he will look for redress through his party and the pressure it can bring to bear at higher levels. Other political issues which may not affect the campesino closely, such as foreign relations, he is content to leave to party leaders. When basic questions of party leadership are involved, the campesino sector will make its inclinations known through the party and may even exert sufficient influence to achieve its goal. In conclusion, the campesino probably exerts greater political influence through his own party than through the FCV, though when two or more parties may be in coalition, the campesino's coordinated action through the FCV will permit him to play a greater role than through his party alone.

B. The Role of the Peasantry in the Venezuelan Labor Movement

The Venezuelan labor movement formed itself into the Confederación de Trabajadores Venezolanos (CTV) in November 1947. Though the CTV was disbanded in favor of a government-backed labor organization

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[21] Alexander, Venezuelan Democratic Revolution, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 1964, p. 183.

during the Pérez Jiménez dictatorship, the CTV was reconstituted in November 1959, representing 1.1 million workers.[22] By 1962 the CTV included about 1,300,000 workers and was organized into 23 regional federations and 12 industrial federations.[23]

The FCV is incorporated into the CTV as one of its industrial federations. At the campesino congress in Caracas in June 1959, the congress' executive committee, presided over by Ramón Quijada, reorganized the FCV as part of the new CTV which was then taking form. According to June 1962 FCV figures, FCV membership included 743,725 campesinos organized into 3,124 syndicates.[24] Powell suspects, however, that this membership figure is exaggerated by FCV and AD leaders for political purposes and that the total number of campesinos belonging to the FCV is closer to 457,000.[25]

The FCV organization pyramids down from a National Executive Committee through the state organizations (seccionales) to the district and local level, where the local organizational unit may be a sindicato, liga, or some other designation. The FCV and party organizations are closely intertwined since state and local leaders frequently occupy parallel positions in both structures. Consequently, the same local campesino leader is the communication link between the campesino and the FCV, his party, and, in general, the government.[26] Control of the FCV organization at the various levels above the local level will depend upon which party has a majority of the affiliated syndicates.

The importance of the FCV as a component part of the CTV is apparent. Even if CTV and FCV membership claims are somewhat inflated, the FCV probably does represent about one-half of the total CTV membership. In 1961 the FCV got two-thirds of what

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[22]Martz, J.D., III, "The Growth and Democratization of the Venezuelan Labor Movement," in Inter-American Economic Affairs, Autumn 1963, pp. 8, 11.

[23]Martz, Acción Democrática, pp. 370, 379; Bureau of Labor Statistics, p. 320.

[24]Martz, Acción Democrática, pp. 393, 405. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (op. cit., p. 20.) lists FCV-claimed membership at 750,000.

[25]Powell, op. cit., p. 13.

[26]Ibid., pp. 26-28, 36.

the Ministry of Labor allocated from its budget to support the CTV.[27] Nevertheless, FCV influence within the CTV is not proportional to its numbers. Because of the nature of CTV organization, the FCV is co-equal with the other industrial federations even though the FCV outnumbers these federations by a large margin. After the FCV, the next in size is the federation of construction workers (125,000 claimed members). The petroleum workers claim only 40,000.[28] But regardless of size, each federation is represented on the CTV Executive Committee by only one member. In addition to being restricted within the CTV organization, FCV influence is also offset by the fact that the FCV is less articulate and co-ordinated than some of the other industrial federations. For example, because of their more advanced degree of organization, the petroleum, transport, port, or white collar workers are likely to exert influence within the labor movement beyond what their numbers would imply.

The labor movement in Venezuela is highly politicized. Since 1958 it has been an arena where the country's political battles have been fought out rather than a forum only for defending labor interests. Most of the political parties active in political life are projected, too, into the labor movement and have been represented in both the CTV and FCV organizations. Important labor leaders are likely also to be national figures in a political party. For example, José González Navarro has been both president of the CTV and labor secretary of the AD party Executive Committee, while Armando González has been president of the FCV and AD agrarian secretary.

In the early years of the Betancourt government, party rivalries on the national scale were often carried over into the labor movement. During the fall of 1960 tensions between AD, URD, the Partido Comunista Venezolano (PCV) and the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario (MIR) resulted in labor unrest and the threat of a general strike. The final showdown led to the withdrawal

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[27] In 1961 the Labor Ministry budget provided Bs. 1,252,000 ($373,731) for the FCV and Bs. 360,000 ($107,462) for the CTV, which according to the report of the CTV's Fourth Congress, represented 90 percent of its funds for that year. Area Handbook for Venezuela, Special Operations Research Office, The American University, Washington, D.C., 1964, p. 420.

[28] Bureau of Labor Statistics, p. 20.

of URD from the government and ultimately from the existing CTV organization, together with the PCV and MIR. The party shift within the labor movement is illustrated by the fact that in 1959, the FCV's 13-man executive committee was made up as follows: AD--seven, URD--two, PCV--two, COPEI--one, independent--one. By June 1962 the executive committee was controlled by a coalition of AD (seven members) and COPEI (four members).[29] But with only one vote in the CTV organization, the FCV does not play a large role in CTV politics. The struggle for political control of the CTV has been fought out in the other industrial and regional federations, where until 1961 AD did not enjoy the overwhelming support it did in the FCV.

As an organized labor group, however, the FCV can play an important political role independently from the CTV. Two examples are noteworthy. One of these was during the first years of the Betancourt government before the implementation of the agrarian reform program had had a chance to take effect, and the other was at the time of the ARS split from AD.

The role of the FCV in maintaining relative order in the countryside, especially at the beginning of the Betancourt administration, and in facilitating the implementation of the government's agrarian reform program made an important contribution to the survival of the Betancourt regime. After the January 1958 coup and until the agrarian reform program could begin to take real effect following its passage in March 1960, some peasant unrest and land invasions, apparently instigated in part by PCV followers, occurred in the western-central states where some of Venezuela's best agricultural lands and highest rural population concentrations are found. FCV discipline was responsible to a large extent for persuading the invading campesinos to withdraw from the private property on which they were squatting and to await rational land distribution under the agrarian reform program.[30]

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[29]From personal notes made by the author in Venezuela in 1962.

[30]Alexander, The Venezuelan Democratic Revolution, pp. 166-167. At the same time, it should be kept in mind that undoubtedly on some occasions, rather than returning the invaded property to its original owners, the FCV took advantage of the situation to extend its control over the land and campesinos involved.

The actual reform program relied heavily on the FCV organization not only in its administration but also in liaison with the campesino at the local level.[31] Because of the large rural population hitherto unincorporated into the nation's economic and social life and because of AD's reliance on broad campesino support, the agrarian reform program was one of the government's major programs. Without the assistance and discipline of the FCV organization, this program could not have been put into effect with the relative order and absence of disruption of over-all agricultural production which it enjoyed.[32] As it was, FCV President Quijada, who also served as one of the directors of the National Agrarian Institute--the central administrative organ of the program--differed with other directors of the program over questions of land expropriation and of the speed at which the program should be implemented,[33] with the result that some land invasions may well have taken place at his instigation. Even so, in spite of many difficulties, this revolutionary reform was implemented with remarkable order and restraint, especially after 1961--to a large degree because of the role played by the FCV. The agrarian reform and the FCV contributed mutually to political stability under the Betancourt government.

The political nature of the agrarian reform program and the importance of FCV support for the government and the reform was clearly illustrated when the ARS faction splintered off from AD in January 1962 and attempted to take with it AD's campesino base. This action split the FCV in half, with seven of the 13 members of the FCV directorate following Quijada and ARS, and 12 of the 23 FCV state sectionals also lining up with the dissidents.

Through the leverage of its government position and control of FCV subsidies, which then became denied to Quijada, AD was able to win back most of the FCV defectors and rebuild the FCV organization.[34] Had ARS been successful in maintaining strong campesino support, the complexion of the parties, of the government, and of the reform would have been markedly altered. This crisis, then, identified the FCV as basically the most important element within organized labor.

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[31] Penn, R.J., and Schuster, J., "La Reforma Agraria en Venezuela," Pan American Union, Washington D.C., 1963, p. 36.

[32] Wilgus, op. cit., pp. 203, 205, 217, 232-3.

[33] Martz, Acción Democrática, p. 396.

[34] Ibid., pp. 400-401.

C. Influence of Campesino Leadership

One manner in which any organized interest group may exert effective political influence is through extraordinary leadership which transcends the normal influence of the organization itself. Apart from two exceptions, campesino leadership in Venezuela is not of this transcendental nature. For the most part, campesino leadership owes itself to the party or CTV organization and is not independent of the organization. Although some of the campesino movement's top leadership--men such as Quijada, Alberti, Behrens, and Carías--have long been associated with campesino affairs, because of low levels of training and experience the campesino class has traditionally been short of articulate and capable leaders. Campesino leadership has, therefore, to a certain extent been drawn from other parts of the labor movement. For example, the senior COPEI officer in the FCV and one of the FCV vice presidents has been Alirio Cruz, who rose not from campesino syndicates but from the petroleum workers' unions.

In general, campesino leadership does not exert influence beyond the weight of its organizational base. Nevertheless, two leaders merit special attention--one who thought his influence was more powerful than its organizational base, when it actually was not, and one whose prestige is ostensibly national and above party.

Ramón Quijada is perhaps the only campesino leader to develop the ability and appeal to have made him for a while the charismatic leader of the campesino movement. Although from humble beginnings and with the appearance and manners of an uncouth campesino, Quijada also possessed a volatile and even aggressive nature which set him apart from his more typically withdrawn and apathetic comrades and, with the help of the AD propaganda machine as well as Betancourt's personal support, turned him into a leader and a demagogue. From 1959 until 1962 he was president of the FCV. Because of his flamboyant personality and ambitious, if somewhat radical, goals for the campesino, Quijada's figure appeared to embody the agrarian reform itself and to represent the campesino's wildest dreams of land and status. For a time his influence undoubtedly extended beyond the confines of the AD party and the FCV itself and embraced the campesino movement as a whole--both campesinos who were organized and those who were not. His image as a demagogic leader with an appeal to the masses was partly nourished by the revolutionary appeal of Fidel Castro, the liberator of the Cuban peasant, which was coincidental with the growing strength of the campesino

movement in Venezuela in the years following the end of dictatorship after 1958. In short, Quijada was a potential revolutionary capable of generating broad popular support.

Quijada's personality and impatience with the moderate approach to agrarian reform clashed more and more with AD and CTV-FCV discipline and led to his joining in the ARS split. He apparently also felt that the estimated half million rural votes for Betancourt in 1958 were actually his.[35] As it turned out, Quijada was no match for the pressure of the AD organization during the first half of 1962. Quijada's demagogic, personalist leadership, which had been so important in welding together the early campesino movement and reviving it again in 1958, gave way to younger and more orderly and sophisticated leadership after 1961.

Finally, Romulo Betancourt and his relationship to the peasantry deserves some comment. Though a middle class intellectual rather than a campesino, Betancourt has had strong ties with the country's campesinos since the early days of AD and before. His wide travels throughout the interior in the late 1930's and continued attention to the campesino movement and its organization subsequently, together with such reforms as rural housing and plans for an agrarian reform generated during the early years of AD government (1945-1948), have created a special bond and respect between the campesino and Betancourt. Martz comments that "the almost universal support for Betancourt in 1958 was less an indication of a monolithic peasantry than an overwhelming faith in one man, buttressed by additional trust in the familiar faces of Quijada and other peasant leaders" and that the agrarian reform program "means primarily Romulo Betancourt and secondarily the AD."[36] Although there is much truth in these comments, the situation is certainly changing, with the concept of the AD party as an entity in itself growing at the expense of personalist elements. Still, if there is any one leader capable of influencing the campesino along political lines, it is probably Betancourt, even though he is not a real campesino himself.

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[35] Martz, Acción Democrática, p. 399.

[36] Ibid., pp. 404, 405.

D. The Influence of the Peasantry as a Political Action Group

Another manner in which the peasantry can assume the role of a political pressure group is as an action force capable of either actual or potential mobilization. In Venezuela, the peasantry has exerted political influence from time to time as such a political action group, although its importance as such has always lain more in the potential of this role. While the peasantry is not really armed or organized into a formal militia, and while it has never been called upon to use active force, the ability of the government to mobilize the campesinos through the FCV against armed insurrection directed against the government has been demonstrated at various times.

When General Castro León organized a rebellion against the government in the state of Táchira in April 1960, campesinos in the area were mobilized and actually apprehended Castro León, who had taken refuge in the countryside.[37] At the time of a barracks revolt at the army cuartel in Barcelona in June 1961, campesinos from several surrounding states were mobilized, converged on Barcelona, and set up road blocks around the area in order to contain and suppress the revolt. Although the campesino is usually armed only with his machete or perhaps a few hastily-supplied rifles, the prospect of an aroused and mobilized countryside has thrown a noticeably wet blanket, psychologically, on ill-co-ordinated military golpes. At rallies commemorating national or party anniversaries, both AD and COPEI have used the opportunity to transport large numbers of campesinos from the countryside into Caracas to show party strength and to remind restless opposition elements of the deterrent represented by the organized campesino.[38] Another pertinent example of campesino mobilization against opposition forces, although in a different sense, has been the help of FCV-organized campesinos in localizing and denying support to the communist-inspired guerrilla movement in the country's mountainous rural areas.

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[37] Hispanic American Report, Vol. XIII, No. 4, June 1960, pp. 251-252.

[38] The author observed one such rally in the Plaza O'Leary in Silencio in the working class section of Caracas on February 13, 1962, on the third anniversary of Betancourt's inauguration, when the Plaza was filled with orderly if somewhat bewildered campesinos obviously just in from the campo.

While the government's ability to mobilize the campesino on short notice has obviously served as a deterrent to ill-planned and ill-co-ordinated military revolts, the ability of organized labor and the campesinos to carry out a general strike and their effectiveness against a full-scale military uprising has never been tested. The CTV-FCV organization did not challenge the military take-over in 1948. As labor and campesino forces have grown in strength, organization, and co-ordination, they have become an increasingly effective action group. They have made an important contribution to the Betancourt government's survival and to general political stability. The effectiveness of these forces as a political action group against determined opposition to the government in the future will depend in part on the attitudes of the parties now out of the government[39] as well as on the nature of the challenge.

E. The Electoral Influence of the Campesino

Because of the size of the rural population, the degree of organization of the campesino, and the high percentage of Venezuelans voting (about 38 percent), the campesino vote undoubtedly played an important part in both the 1958 and 1963 general elections.

In the 1958 presidential elections, 2.7 million voters participated (93 percent of an electorate of almost three million). AD won 49.2 percent of the vote (1,284,092 votes), URD, running Wolfgang Larrazábal as its presidential candidate, received 34.6 percent of the vote (903,479 votes), and COPEI got 16.2 percent (423,262 votes).[40] Before the elections, it was popularly believed in Caracas that Larrazábal would win the presidency and that URD would be carried to victory with him. The fact that AD placed third in the heavily populous Federal District, where the URD ticket won nearly 60 percent of the vote, indicates that AD, although losing in Caracas and some other urban centers, won by drawing strong support in the rural areas. Lieuwen gives the labor vote credit for accounting for more than half of the total

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[39] The solidarity of the AD-COPEI dominated labor and campesino movements could be adversely affected, eventually, by the fact that AD formed a new government without COPEI after the 1963 presidential elections.

[40] Institute for the Comparative Study of Political Systems, op. cit., p. 28.

vote, i.e., some 1.4 million votes.[41] Martz attributes party leaders with having estimated that at least 50 percent of the total AD vote came from the labor movement (600,000 votes). Subsequently, he refers to an estimate that Betancourt received 500,000 rural votes.[42]

In the 1963 presidential elections the campesino vote also appears to have played an important role. The results were as follows:[43]

Table IV

Leoni (AD)	957,699	32.8 %
Caldera (COPEI)	588,372	20.2 %
Villalba (URD)	551,120	18.9 %
Uslar (IPFN)	469,240	16.1 %
Larrazábal (FDP)	275,304	9.4 %
Ramos (ARS)	66,837	2.3 %

Since nearly all the support won by Uslar and Larrazábal came from the principal urban centers, this means that AD, COPEI, and URD had to rely almost entirely on the town and rural vote.[44] AD suffered its greatest losses in some of the western states where COPEI showed gains. COPEI increased its vote over 1958 in all of the 20 states except four (three being in the east) and the Federal District. Though losing heavily in the Federal District, URD made gains in both the east and west in states where AD lost votes. The 1963 elections, then, emphasized the importance of party organization in rural areas and the impact of such rural reforms as the agrarian program on the campesino vote. While COPEI gains over AD in western urban centers should not be overlooked, it would appear that

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[41] Lieuwen, op. cit., p. 165.

[42] Martz, Acción Democrática, pp. 370, 399.

[43] El Nacional, December 13, 1963.

[44] According to COPEI, the portion of the total vote received by these three parties which can be attributed to campesino support is as follows: AD--550,600, COPEI--353,600, URD--175,000 votes. This information was obtained from the Office of the Center for Christian Democratic Action, New York, Spring 1964.

COPEI manipulated the agrarian reform to greater party advantage than did AD and that AD's electoral loss was COPEI's gain.[45]

From evaluations of the elections of 1963, 1958, and 1946-47, some tentative observations on the nature of the campesino vote can be made, although due to the absence of specific figures with which to work no definitive conclusions can be drawn. First of all, in considering the campesino vote, a distinction must be drawn between the rural vote and the organized campesino vote. This is so because not all the rural vote is as yet organized (see note 13). It can be said that the organized campesino vote is gowing and will eventually more or less approximate the rural vote. In the meanwhile, the unorganized campesino, if he votes at all, will probably vote in a pattern similar to the organized campesino. At the same time, the relative rural vote is declining, and in the long run, both the rural and organized campesino vote (which may be roughly the same) will probably continue to decline as a percentage of the total electorate. This is likely because of the gradual urbanization of the society, although a successful agrarian reform program may slow down the process of rural-to-urban migration in the short run.[46] For the near future, at least, it is evident that the campesino and/or the rural vote will represent an important if not decisive voting block.

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[45] COPEI estimates that its 1963 electoral gains were due to a 40 percent increase in its urban vote and to a 60 percent increase in its rural vote. Office of the Center for Christian Democratic Action.

[46] The following vaguely approximate table is hazarded as being relevant:

	1946-47	PTV*	1958	PTV	1963	PTV
Total Rural Vote	400,000	30 %	1,000,000	37 %	1,000,000	33 %
Total Campesino Vote	150,000	12 %	500,000	19 %	700,000	23 %

* Proportion of total vote

The computation of the rural vote is derived from the fact that the rural population represents 39 percent of the total and by assuming that the greatest proportion of the non-voting electorate is among the rural population. Note 11 is applicable to both the rural and campesino 1946-47 vote. The former is lower as a percentage than in the subsequent election years because the rural population was probably less aware of its electoral opportunity in the 1940's than afterwards. The 1958 campesino vote is based on note 22, ascribing to the campesinos somewhat less than half of the 1.1 million CTV membership in 1959. The 1963 campesino vote is based on 1962 FCV membership (see note 24).

Next, the loss by AD of about 15 percent of its overall vote in 1963 may also indicate something about the nature of the campesino vote. An important reason for AD's diminished vote must be attributed to a loss in the campesino vote, since AD lost proportionally more votes in rural areas than in urban, where the party had not been strong in 1958 either. One would have thought that AD might have kept intact its strong rural support because of the modest accomplishments of the agrarian reform program. Martz' comment that if the AD party's appeal to the peasantry in the 1963 elections again proved dominant, it would rest in large part on the nominee rather than on the automatic delivery of votes by the FCV[47] may be valid considering that although Leoni is a commanding figure in the party, he lacks the prestige of Betancourt. Martz' further observation that the harnessing of the peasantry for political purposes by AD has only been partial[48] also seems valid if it is true that COPEI through its participation in the administration of the agrarian reform managed to take campesino support away from AD.

Finally, the 1963 elections seem to signify that in spite of the conservative, steady nature of the campesino and the impression that once the campesino has made his choice of party allegiance he will not change it easily, the campesino vote is in fact changeable. The elections also indicate that the campesino vote will become the object of increasing political competition, thus adding to the political process an element of uncertainty rather than permanence. Consequently, the campesino vote will continue to play a decisive role in a developing, competitive, multi-party system. Because of the size of the potential campesino vote, the party which secures the great campesino support can probably expect to wield the greatest political power.

IV. Conclusions

The basic channel through which the political influence of the peasantry is exerted in Venezuela is the political party system. Given the conditions of some inter-party co-operation, however, the peasantry is capable of exerting its greatest political potential through the role of the FCV in the organized labor movement. Once the labor movement becomes politically more independent from the

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[47] Martz, Acción Democrática, p. 404.

[48] Ibid., p. 406.

parties, this trend should be strengthened. Although the peasantry is now outweighed within the CTV by the industrial unions, and although the peasantry exercises a relatively minor role in day-to-day policy determination both within the CTV and party organizational structures, it is capable of playing a major role in basic policy decisions regarding agrarian or party matters. It may accomplish this both directly through the larger, more representative party organs and as an organized pressure group through the FCV or more indirectly through its role as a voter. As the political system becomes more competitive, and the campesino vote is even more sought after, the organized peasantry's decisive role at election time should increase its political influence in the decision-making process in between elections still more.

As long as the political process is able to arrive at a consensus of the political parties capable of forming a majority in the government and in the Congress which can assure political stability and a positive program anticipating the peasantry's needs, the political system will dominate the peasantry and channel its aspirations and energies along constructive lines through party and labor organizations. On the other hand, lack of political consensus accompanied by political instability and failure to accomplish a minimum agrarian program sufficient to retain campesino support could change the present role of the peasantry as a positive political factor to that of a negative factor. This points up the fact that the peasantry as a stable political factor plays a somewhat hidden role. Without disciplined campesino organization, a constructive agrarian reform program, and stable government, an unsatisfied and undisciplined campesino movement might loom as a much more apparent political factor than it seems today.

The political role of the peasantry will shift gradually over the long term as the rural population decreases in relation to total population. As Venezuela urbanizes and the middle sectors grow, the influence of the industrial labor and urban vote will increase at the expense of the campesino vote. But in the shorter run, at least for another generation, the importance of the campesino vote will increase as the peasantry becomes better organized and the political system becomes more competitive. During the crucial transition period of the development of the democratic party system in Venezuela, the peasantry should play a decisive role.

Part IV

Comparison of the Political Role of the Peasantry in Mexico Bolivia and Venezuela

A problem arises in comparing the political role of the peasantry in these three countries because of the different time factors involved. To facilitate the comparison, the analysis will use two comparative frameworks--one based on the emergence of the political role of the peasantry, thus compensating for the third dimension introduced by the time span of the Mexican Revolution, and the other based on the development of the political role of the peasantry as it exists today.

A comparison of the three countries on the basis of the first framework described above cannot be very exact. While there have been more similarities in the course of the development of the Mexican and Bolivian Revolutions than in the development of the new Venezuelan political system, it is difficult to compare the first two on an equal basis. One might say that the development of the Bolivian Revolution to the point of military intervention in November 1964 would correspond closely to the development of the Mexican Revolution only if one assumed that the Mexican Revolution had been interrupted at a similar point in its development, i.e., if the military had intervened against Cárdenas after his election to the Presidency because of his efforts to build up the peasantry as a strong political base.

On the other hand, it is easier to compare the periods of Bolivian and Venezuelan revolutionary change since they are contemporaneous. Both the MNR and the AD got their first experience in the problems of government in the mid-1940's. The period of actual political transition can be said to date from 1945 in Venezuela and from 1952 in Bolivia. Although the Bolivian Revolution dates from 1952, and the period of revolutionary change in Venezuela treated in this study dates from 1958, it is obvious that the political role of the peasantry is more sophisticated in Venezuela than in Bolivia. Consequently, it is clear that while the process of the peasantry's political emergence can be compared generally, the three countries cannot be compared on the basis of equal stages of political, economic, or social development of the respective peasantries.

For the purposes of this study, the comparison of the political roles of the peasantry is most valid in terms of the framework of the different political systems as they exist today. This is so because these three countries can be considered on an equal basis to the extent

that each one has been faced since 1958 with the same need to realize economic and social progress and political stability based on the participation of the peasantry in the political process, and to the extent that each has been faced with similar problems, stemming both from the aspirations of the peasantry for more rapid progress in these respects and from pressures related to the Cold War and to the advent of Castro-communism in Cuba.

I. Introduction of the Peasantry into the Political Process

In Mexico and Bolivia the peasantry gained entry to the political process through violent revolution; in Venezuela it was introduced as the result of a non-violent, evolutionary change which, in effect, accomplished a revolution. In Bolivia, the traditional governing institutions, such as the landowning elite and the military, were totally destroyed, while in Venezuela the traditional institutions co-exist today with the new forces ushered in through change.

Although the Mexican Revolution destroyed the political strength of the Díaz elite, the military, and the Church, the new political forces which assumed political power in post-1917 Mexico were still made up of generals, politicians, and landowners whose influence had pre-1910 roots rather than a middle class and popular base similar to that of the new political forces in Bolivia and Venezuela. The new political forces in Mexico fought for political control as they always had, seeking support, however, more from labor and agrarian elements than had ever been the case before. Although the Díaz clique and the Church lost much of their land, not all haciendas were broken up, and the economy was not interrupted to the extent that the Bolivian economy was after 1952.

Bolivia has had to develop new political institutions to replace the old. The government became based on a new partnership between the MNR and the COB. New armed forces, including the labor and peasant militias, were established to take the place of the former military; and the state took over the management of industry and agriculture from private hands. In Venezuela the job of reconstruction was much smaller. As in Bolivia the government was based on a new political party system associated with labor, but Venezuela did not have to create new security forces or completely alter the management of industrial and agricultural production.

The nature of the revolutionary change in each country had important implications on the kind of role the campesino was to play. Although the Mexican Revolution meant broad political, economic, and social change, this change was not effected as rapidly in Mexico as it was in Bolivia and Venezuela. One of the most significant differences between the Mexican Revolution and that of Bolivia and Venezuela, and

for that matter Russia, lay in the fact that it was accomplished without the participation of any political organization or ideology. Mexico had no MNR or AD or any pre-conceived ideological concept of what was to replace the ancien régime. In this sense, it was more similar to the French Revolution than to any other twentieth century revolution. The Mexican Revolution developed along entirely pragmatic lines.[1] The main factor which has prevented post-1917 governments from becoming more and more authoritarian with Díaz-like or even Peronista overtones has been their need to rely on labor and campesino support. Even so, the question of popular participation, particularly to include the campesino, was not as urgent in Mexico as in Bolivia and Venezuela, and no attempt was made to thoroughly organize the Mexican campesinos so soon after the preceding political system was destroyed as was the case in Bolivia and Venezuela. Nor was economic or social change as disruptive in Mexico as, for example, it was in Bolivia. Land distribution was gradual and did not interfere drastically with agricultural production. Industrial development was resumed, led by petroleum investment. The immediate social emphasis of the revolution was to restore lands to the traditional ejido communities gradually rather than to institute an entirely new concept of land tenure and social structure. It is obvious that the Mexican peasantry did not play as important a post-revolutionary role as did the Bolivian and Venezuelan peasantry.

Because Bolivia was faced with the monumental task of consolidating thorough political, economic, and social change, the job to be done and the roles to be filled were broad and varied. Although the need to set up a new and effective political structure dominated all else, the peasantry did not really develop into a major political factor until sometime after the revolution, even though the task of recruiting the peasant into the national political structure was recognized and attempted from the beginning. At the same time, land reform had basically altered the nation's system of agricultural production. The campesino rather than the landlord had to be depended on to free the country. Finally, the huge Indian population had to be integrated virtually overnight into the national society. With such major changes transforming such an underdeveloped country, where competent leadership of any kind, not to mention campesino leadership, was such a rare commodity, the scope of opportunity for any of the newly emergent political elements

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[1]Scott, pp. 99-101.

were so broad that without proper guidance the danger existed that the promises of the revolution would be smothered by confusion. As it was, a near state of anarchy developed in the countryside with the result that the campesino's main role developed as that of an armed militia rather than as a factor in agricultural production or in a rational new political organization.

In Venezuela the principal task (after 1958) was that of establishing stable and effective political government. Economic and social reconstruction did not constitute the problem in Venezuela that it did in Bolivia. To be sure, lack of confidence in the new government caused an economic recession which posed serious problems for the government, but this was basically a political question. The challenge of social revolution was not as great for Venezuela either, because the campesino was already more evolved and assimilated into national life than was the Indian in Bolivia.[2] Consequently, the role deveoped by the Venezuelan campesino has been channeled along more orderly and restricted lines than in Bolivia. The Venezuelan campesino has found his political preferences and needs best articulated through formally organized party or peasant structures.

While both the Mexican and the Bolivian Revolutions have developed along parallel lines, it is apparent that each is at a different stage of development. One basic difference is that the peasantry has been incorporated into the Mexican political system long enough so that it plays an important institutional role. The Bolivian Revolution, on the other hand, is at such an early stage of development in comparison that personalismo has continued to be more important than the institutional factor. It was for this reason that the Bolivian Revolution became side-tracked in November 1964, when the military intervened against the growing domination of Paz Estenssoro. The institutional thread had not yet become strong enough in Bolivia to subject the individual to the system, as both Cárdenas and Alemán were in Mexico. In Venezuela the system already seems to be stronger than the individual. Betancourt voluntarily gave up the presidency to Leoni, and no other individuals appear strong enough to challenge the system themselves.

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[2]Remarks by Gregorio Beltran, Inter-American Committee for Agricultural Development (CIDA), in the Land Tenure Center "Newsletter," University of Wisconsin, February 1964, p. 10.

II. Development of the Peasantry's Political Role

In all three countries, revolutionary change has been carried forward by political parties with a popular base, of which the peasantry has formed an important part. In each case, the party developed a labor base first; the peasantry was subsequently organized and brought into the party through the efforts of the labor movement. This has not necessarily meant that the peasantry has become an integral and important part of the labor movement however.

In both Mexico and Bolivia partly because of rival interests and leadership and partly because of decisions by those who shaped the course of events, the primary role of the peasantry as a pressure group has developed outside the labor movement, in opposition to it. This has met the need for competition and balance between the different elements in a one-party system. In the Venezuelan system the competition for power and for a share in the government's services takes place not between the peasantry and the labor movement but between the political parties. As a result, the campesino organization fits functionally within the labor movement. Even so, at this stage in Venezuela's political development the peasantry's primary political role is carried out through the political parties rather than through the labor organization.

Regardless of the nature of the political system or the degree of its development, the peasantry has emerged as a new element in the national political balance of all three countries. The peasantry has served first of all as a counterbalance against the right and has provided the new revolutionary governments with much needed support against the forces of reaction. Campesino and labor support helped Obregón overcome the revolt by General de la Huerta in Mexico in 1923. As an organized militia in Bolivia, the peasantry has proved effective against anti-government coups and also as a counterpoise against the military until 1964. Although not organized into a formal militia in Venezuela, the peasantry has been mobilized at times to resist rightist coups such as that of General Castro León in 1960. At the same time, the organized campesinos have probably been one factor inhibiting a military challenge to the AD governments since 1958, although the occasion for an actual showdown has not occurred so far.

The peasantry has also developed into an effective balance against the left. As has been shown, the communists recognized the importance of the peasantry at an early stage in Mexico when they succeeded in winning over the Liga Nacional Campesina in 1929. If Cárdenas had not organized the CNC, the communists might well have

won the opportunity of organizing the campesinos in Mexico by default. In recent years, efforts by the UGOCM and the CCI to incite the campesinos have been largely ineffective because of the existence of the CNC. In Bolivia, neither the PIR, the POR, nor the PCB was able to compete with the MNR, and the leftist drift of Juan Lechín and the FSTMB was checked with the support of the peasant militia, thus preserving the moderate center position of President Siles and, later, President Paz. Venezuela has been able to withstand major challenges mounted by the PCV and the MIR with respect to guerrilla insurgency and urban terrorism related to the 1963 elections and before in large part because of campesino support for the AD-COPEI coalition. The inference to be drawn from these three case studies is that to the extent the peasantry in other countries is not incorporated into the political system, the more restricted may be national support for those governments and the greater are the chances of Castro-communist subversion.

Actually the organized campesino has become a new element related to J.J. Johnson's analysis of the middle sectors. In keeping with Johnson's formula, middle sector groups have gained post-revolutionary political power in Mexico, Bolivia, and Venezuela with the support of labor, although the middle sector did not really lay claim to the Mexican Revolution until after 1940.[3] Once the middle sector-labor alliance succeeded in organizing the peasantry, the peasant has served initially to reinforce labor in the new balance against reactionary forces on the right. (In Mexico this was not necessary after 1923.) In Bolivia labor subsequently turned on its middle sector leadership and posed a threat itself--that of moving the Bolivian Revolution off center and to the left. Fortunately the new element in the political picture, the organized peasantry, has supported the Bolivian middle sector against labor.

In this regard, one wonders how the Mexican Revolution might have developed if Lombardo Toledano and the CTM had not been balanced by the CNC. Some interesting parallels suggest themselves here between the roles played by Lombardo Toledano in Mexico and Lechín in Bolivia. Both gained great political influence through their organization and command of the labor movement, Lombardo through the CTM and Lechín through the Miners' Federation. When each reached for the political power of the

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[3]Johnson, op. cit., p. 135.

presidency, each was rejected, Lombardo in 1940 and Lechín in 1964. In each case, the rejection was made possible in part because the influence of labor was offset by that of the organized peasantry.

In Venezuela the campesino has not yet been forced to choose sides between the middle sector and the labor-left. Rather, the Venezuelan political system has withstood a major challenge from the left because both labor and the peasantry have joined with the middle sector to form a strong political partnership. If the FCV had not supported the candidacy of Leoni, who was in effect the candidate of organized labor, it is quite possible that AD might have deferred to the FCV's preferences by settling on another candidate more acceptable to both labor and campesino leadership.

In all three countries under study, a political role for the peasantry has developed because political leaders needed its vote, its militia, or its general support in order to promote political stability and to keep political control away from potential opposition groups. Thus, political leaders have organized the peasantry and brought it into the political system to serve their own purposes, although in the process the peasantry has received benefits such as agrarian reform in the bargain. Thus, the peasantry's influence is limited largely to a role in meeting its own needs rather than having a broader impact. This is true in large part because of the domination of the peasantry by political leadership imposed from above from non-campesino sources. In none of these three countries is there an example of a campesino leader who, because of his own campesino base, is influential and independent of party machinery. The peasantry had not produced its own strong leaders as has the labor movement in all three countries. The leaders who have done most to build up the peasantry's role and its influence have been non-campesino political leaders like Cárdenas, Paz Estenssoro, and Betancourt.

In developing the political role of the peasantry in each country, the political leadership has found the use of agrarian reform an indispensable tool. Whereas agrarian reform was instituted in each country primarily as a basic social and (secondarily) economic reform in the overall revolutionary program, in each case the most significant effect of the agrarian reform was the contribution it made in establishing a campesino organization capable of exercising significant political influence.

The peasantry has played an important role as a political action group in each country, except for Venezuela, and continues to be important because of its potential in this regard. In

Mexico the peasantry played such a role both during the period of revolutionary combat as well as in the 1920's. The effect of the land invasions since 1958 has already been described. In Bolivia the main role of the peasantry is played as a militia involved in the MNR factional disputes or in moves against the miners. In Venezuela the potential of the peasantry as a political action force has undoubtedly deterred reactionary interference and spurred on the implementation of the agrarian reform program.

As a new element in the political balance, the campesino has contributed to political stability. This has been less true in Bolivia than in Mexico and Venezuela. The campesino organization has provided some sort of channel if not discipline which the campesinos could regard as an alternative to violence in making known their demands and which, in turn, the government could use to cajole the campesino when the agrarian reform or other government programs bogged down. As such, the campesino organization has provided one of the bases of support which a revolution needs while it attempts to build a new country.

Perhaps most significant of all the new political attributes of the peasantry is its role as an electoral force. The campesinos' votes have provided outward approval of the one-party systems in Mexico and Bolivia, reflecting a consensus reached from within. Although candidates are predetermined through sector or factional competition within the party, the electoral endorsement of these candidates by the peasantry indicates its acceptance of the system and provides the base of political stability without which the system could not endure. In the Venezuelan multi-party system, the peasantry exerts its greatest influence through its electoral role since its vote is decisive in determining what parties hold power. In either system, it is campesino support ultimately expressed through his vote which is the basis of the control of the system. But it must be remembered that in a one-party system the distance between one-party democracy and one-party totalitarianism is not great.

III. Conclusions

In evaluating the influence of the peasantry in the political process by the two criteria set forth in the introduction of this paper, it must be concluded that the peasantry's political influence has been limited so far primarily to a role in the determination of who controls political power.

This is most apparent in Venezuela because of the important part the campesino vote plays in the electoral process. In the 1963 elections the campesino vote was an important factor in AD's victory and COPEI's gain. The prospects that the peasantry's electoral role will increase in Venezuela are good, since all eligible campesinos are not yet included in the active electorate. In addition, as the Venezuelan political system becomes even more competitive, as it shows signs of doing, the campesino vote will become more sought after, and therefore the peasantry presumably will be able to exert even greater political influence.

In Bolivia the peasantry has been influential in determining who held power within the MNR through its support for particular factions or individual leaders. This was especially apparent during the presidential campaign preceding the 1964 elections.

Although the Mexican Revolution represents the oldest, most developed political system of any of those studied here, curiously enough the role played by the peasantry in determining who holds political power in Mexico is probably more limited than in either Bolivia or Venezuela. While the Campesino Sector's role in determining sector representation in public office is important at the regional and local level, its influence in determining state and national leadership is much more restricted.

Even though the peasantry does play a role in determining what party or faction will control political power in each of these three countries, the peasantry's influence and participation in organizing this political power and in deciding what individuals will wield it is much less than that of the other elements of party or group leadership. The peasantry's influence in this respect is limited largely to a voice in the selection of cabinet and other administrative posts related directly to the agricultural sector.

Once it is determined what group will hold political power, the influence of the peasantry in the determination of policy by this group is even more limited. The influence of the Campesino Sector in policy determination decreased in Mexico from 1940 to 1958 as the Popular Sector's influence increased. The allocation of greater resources to the agricultural sector by the government since 1958 can be attributed in part to increased influence of the CNC. One might ask, however, whether this shift in resource allocation was not motivated more by campesino unrest--and exploitation of this unrest by opposition groups--rather than by an increase in Campesino Sector influence. Even so, because of the institutionalization of the political system which has grown

up under the Mexican Revolution, the formal machinery exists through the sector organization of the PRI whereby the peasantry does have a channel for contributing to the decision-making process which is better defined and more tried than the systems existing in either Bolivia or Venezuela. Consequently, it may be that the Mexican peasant plays a greater role in policy determination than do the Venezuelan or Bolivian peasantries, particularly the latter.

In neither Bolivia nor Venezuela is the peasantry's participation in the role of policy determination great, except when it may involve a question of policy affecting domestic economic or social issues, such as agrarian reform. In this respect, the peasantry's influence may be greater in Venezuela, where government programs affecting the peasantry, such as housing, credit, transport, marketing, etc., are more varied and extensive. Since the Bolivian government's resources have been meager, programs benefitting the peasantry have been more limited, thus restricting the opportunities for campesino influence to play a role in decision-making. Because of the competitive nature of the Venezuelan political system and because the campesino is relatively advanced, the peasantry's role in the decision-making process is developing rapidly in Venezuela.

So far, the political system in these three countries has dominated the peasantry rather than the peasantry's dominating the system. Middle sector elements together with labor have controlled political power and have determined policies. Their agreements with campesino leadership have usually directed the campesinos' support and their votes. In each country the political system has been largely paternalistic in its relationship to the campesino. Until the campesino becomes more educated and more aware of his political choices and alternatives, his preference will continue to be influenced by his leaders rather than his leaders being influenced by campesino preferences. Although the peasantry constitutes the largest force numerically in each of these three countries and although the peasantry is now organized and politically conscious as it has never been before, the possibility of potential political domination by the peasantry in any of these countries appears remote. The military and middle sector groups would be unwilling to permit this and would intervene to prevent it, so long as they are strong enough to do so. The specter of civil war should be a restraining influence on all sides. This prospect restrained Paz Estenssoro from pitting the campesinos against the military in 1964 and would probably deter responsible leadership in other similar cases.

Underlying revolutionary change are basic politico-socio-economic factors which play a determining role in shaping the subsequent course of revolutionary development and consequently the nature of the political role of the peasantry. These factors account for some of the basic differences in post-revolutionary development in Mexico, Bolivia, and Venezuela. Since these factors vary from country to country, an analysis of the Mexican, Bolivian, and Venezuelan experiences provides no conclusions specifically valid for predicting the nature of revolutionary development or the effect of the emergence of the peasantry as a new political factor in other Latin American countries. Rather, such factors can suggest only broad guidelines influencing revolutionary change and subsequent political development. Such factors include: the proportion of the population which has peasant, Indian or mestizo predominance in its basic social composition; social and political development to the degree that there exists a middle sector, a labor movement, and a related political organization; the strength of the military and other conservative groups; a framework of revolutionary or evolutionary political change; the degree of change in ownership of land and other factors of production; and the existence of an agriculturally-based or diversified economy.

Judging from the case studies of Mexico, Bolivia, and Venezuela, the framework of political change is of over-riding importance because it is crucial in determining the properties of the political system to follow. These case studies indicate that an authoritarian system is more likely to follow violent revolution, whereas a more competitive system is likely to follow an evolutionary change. Under the first, the peasantry's political role is more likely to be that of internal support organized within a dominant political apparatus, while under the second, its most important role will probably be through electoral support. The latter system will give greater scope to the peasantry's role.

Taking the above factors into consideration as well as the characteristics of the other Latin American countries where the campesino has not yet been included in the political process, it would appear that the Venezuelan example might be useful in gauging the eventual development of the political role of the peasantry in Chile, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Uruguay, and Costa Rica, whereas the Mexican or Bolivian example might be more valid for Ecuador, Paraguay, and the other Central American and Caribbean countries.

In general, it may be concluded that in a developing country experiencing gradual political change where there is a competitive political system, the peasantry can be introduced into the political

process in a relatively orderly manner, along the lines of the Venezuelan example. In an authoritarian political system without political or social evolution, a violent revolutionary change is more likely with the peasantry being introduced to the political system along the lines of the Mexican, Bolivian, or Cuban examples.

In either case, this study shows that the peasantry can play an important role in the determination of the control of political power. It also shows that even though the peasantry may be incorporated into the political process, it will probably not be influential in policy determination. Accordingly, it would appear important for all groups--whether the middle sectors, the labor movement, the communists, or the traditional elite--to consider how they might organize and incorporate the peasantry into the political process on their own terms.

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Glossary of Abbreviations

AD	Acción Democrática
ARS	Splinter group from AD
AUFS	American Universities Field Staff (366 Madison Avenue, New York, New York)
CCI	Central Campesino Independiente
CDN	Comité Directorio Nacional (of AD)
CEN	Comité Ejecutivo Nacional (of AD or COB)
CGT	Confederación General de Trabajadores
CNOP	Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Populares
CNPPA	Confederación Nacional de la Pequeña Propriedad Agrícola
CNTCB	Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos Bolivianos
COB	Central Obrera Boliviana
COPEI	Social Christian Party
CROC	Confederación Revolucionaria de Obreros y Campesinos
CROM	Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana
CRT	Confederación Revolucionaria de Trabajadores
CTM	Confederación de Trabajadores Mexicana
CTV	Confederación de Trabajadores Venezolanos
CNC	Confederación Nacional Campesina
FEP	Frente Electoral del Pueblo
FCV	Federación de Campesinos Venezolanos

FDP	Frente Democrático Popular
FSTMB	Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia
FUN	Frente de Unidad Nacional
IAN	Instituto Agraria Nacional
IPFN	Independientes Pro-Frente Nacional
MIR	Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario
MLN	Movimiento de Liberación Nacional
MNR	Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario
MNRA	Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario Auténtico
PCB	Partido Comunista Boliviano
PCM	Partido Comunista Mexicano
PCV	Partido Comunista Venezolano
PDN	Partido Democrático Nacional
PIN	Partido de la Izquierda Nacional
PIR	Partido de la Izquierda Revolucionario
POR	Partido Obrero Revolucionario
PNR	Partido Nacional Revolucionario
PPS	Partido Popular Socialista
PRA	Partido Revolucionario Auténtico (formerly MNRA)
PRI	Partido Revolucionario Institucional
PRM	Partido de la Revolución Mexicana
UGOCM	Unión General de Obreros y Campesino Mexicanos
URD	Unión Republicana Democrática