

THE MOBILIZATION OF LOCAL COMMITMENT TO  
URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA

by

JOHN GISIGER

B. ARCH., Cornell University  
(1959)

Submitted to the Department of  
Urban Studies and Planning  
in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements of the Degree of

MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

at the

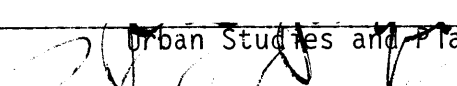
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

February 1985

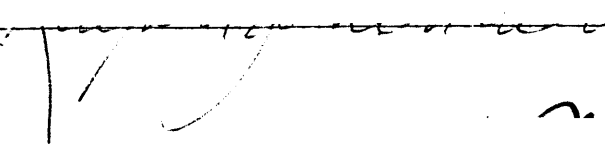
© John Gisiger 1985

The author hereby grants to M.I.T. permission to reproduce and to distribute copies of this thesis document in whole or in part.


Signature of Author

  
Urban Studies and Planning, 16 January 1985

Certified by:

  
Ralph Gakenheimer  
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by:

  
Chairman, Departmental Graduate Committee

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE  
OF TECHNOLOGY

**Rotch**

FEB 08 1985

**Rotch**

LIBRARIES

THE MOBILIZATION OF LOCAL COMMITMENT TO URBAN  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN LATIN AMERICA

by

JOHN GISIGER

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
on January 15, 1985 in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Degree of Master of City Planning

ABSTRACT

Development planning policy motivated by experience, has come to stress the advantages of flexibility, beneficiary participation and the decentralization of decision-making in the implementation of complex urban programs. These trends place ever greater reliance on local power structures which are noted for their consistent resistance to social progress. The composition, operative interests and interrelationships of dominant local groups indicates both significant constraints and opportunities for their engagement. Experience demonstrates that they have had positive, as well as negative, impact on programs which promote social change. Analysis of their past behavior indicates means by which various dominant factions and individuals may be mobilized by advocates of reform and opposition neutralized in pursuing the successive requirements of program implementation. The thesis concludes that, while dramatic societal change is not to be expected, greater progress toward social and economic equity is feasible within existing power structures.

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Ralph Gakenheimer

Title: Professor of Urban Planning and Civil Engineering

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
CHAPTER I - THE CONTEXT: DEVELOPMENT PLANNING TRENDS.....	7
EMERGING PRAGMATISM.....	11
FLEXIBILITY.....	12
PARTICIPATION.....	14
DECENTRALIZATION.....	16
DECISION-MAKING SHIFTS.....	18
CHAPTER II - THE ACTORS: URBAN POWER STRUCTURES.....	20
SUPERPOLITICAL ELITES.....	24
BUREAUCRATIC HIERARCHIES.....	28
NON-POLITICAL ALLIANCES.....	33
CHAPTER III - EXPERIENCE: THREE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS.....	40
THE CAUCA VALLEY DEVELOPMENT.....	41
THE CONASUPO FOOD PROGRAM IN MEXICO.....	45
THE PRAIA GRANDE PROGRAM IN NORTHEAST BRAZIL.....	51
CHAPTER IV - MOBILIZATION: EXPLOITING OPPORTUNITY.....	59
PRESENTATION.....	60
BUILDING COALITIONS.....	62
OVERCOMING OPPOSITION.....	66
BY-PASSING CONFRONTATION.....	73
SUSTAINING COMMITMENT.....	77
CONCLUSIONS.....	84
NOTES.....	87
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	91

## INTRODUCTION

Latin America has remained frustratingly unresponsive to the attempts of reform-minded agents to bring about significant social change. Developmental efforts, promoted from both within and without the continent, have produced such disappointing results as to give growing credence to the proposition that only violent revolution can achieve real progress there.

Yet, of all the less developed regions of the world, Latin America would appear to possess conditions most propitious to rational, peaceful and sustained development. Culturally, it is dominated by educated, Christian elites whose European roots give them much in common with the most progressive western democracies. Its political institutions are based on ideals similar to those of much of the developed world, it commands the natural and human resources which make prosperity possible, and it has had, nominally at least, political independence under sovereign, democratic regimes for over a century. Why then has it remained so tenaciously resistant to economic development and social progress?

A central dilemma is the apparent conflict between the narrow special interests of entrenched oligarchies and programs which envision greater economic and political equity. Latin elites are claimed to be exceptionally reluctant to accept social reform and consistently effective in impeding it. Intuitively, it is difficult to accept that an entire continent is dominated by aspirations so diverse from those espoused by nations founded on similar values, or that minute interest groups should be able to maintain a stranglehold over large, free, heterogeneous societies. Furthermore, if experience in Latin America has

proved generally discouraging, there has been a sufficient number of successful developmental endeavors to warrant investigation of the factors which made them possible. Why would the all-powerful elites permit, even support, progress in some instances? Or has it been accomplished against their will?

One is also prompted to question the effect of global planning trends on these groups. Progress in developmental planning has been likened to the peeling away of layer upon layer of misunderstanding. Two layers which seem to be almost discarded are the one which perceives development strictly in terms of national economic growth and that which envisions the process to be imposed by a small, select group of planning experts. The understanding which experience has brought has generated both greater humility and broader ambitions. While we are becoming aware of the complexity of issues - that they defy simplistic, imperious approaches - we are also becoming determined to address them at more fundamental levels: the building of cohesive communities rather than of hydroelectric plants or structural changes in land tenure rather than model housing projects. This sort of enterprise is not achieved by merely throwing money at it, or expertise; it requires the conviction, competence and active involvement of those actors responsible for getting the job done.

This thesis proposes that existing Latin social structures provide opportunities for their engagement in programs of positive change. It analyses the composition of urban power structures in an attempt to identify their operative interests and spheres of influence, observes the application of their power in developmental programs and articulates means by which this power can be mobilized within developmental

endeavors. it does not propose new means of achieving momentous structural change in Latin society, but rather, methods of discovering "chinks in the armor," opportunities for building the support, and for neutralizing the opposition, of those in power. Its basic question is: How can these groups be induced to further current developmental goals?

Urban development is of particular concern in that Latin America is rapidly becoming one of the most urbanized regions in the world. By the end of the century three out of four Latin Americans will inhabit some of the world's largest cities. As the inequities of wealth and opportunity become more concentrated, and more visible, in urban settings, their brutality becomes more intolerable and the propensity to violent solutions more inevitable. Reliable, far-reaching urban development policies have become essential to maintaining political order as well as to reducing social injustice and to promoting economic growth.

Specific programs, while they may not be the sole, or even the most reliable, means of promoting change, serve as important catalysts to those who seek development. They are also useful in providing a comprehensible context in which to evaluate performance, in the light of articulated objectives, during the implementation phase, when the complex political interrelationships of the various local interests come into their own.

The substance of this thesis is largely derived from the author's experience in coordinating, over a five year period, an urban development program in São Luís, Brazil and his subsequent one year fellowship in M.I.T.'s Special Program for Urban and Regional Studies in Developing Areas (SPURS). It was written under the supervision of Ralph Gakenheimer, Professor of Urban Planning and Civil Engineering and Peter Smith, Professor of History and Political Science.

## CHAPTER I

### THE CONTEXT: DEVELOPMENT PLANNING TRENDS

The destinies of most third world societies, and certainly of Latin American ones, have long been dependent on national and international events far beyond their own control. Not only are they subject to the decisions of distant political leaders and financiers, but their cultural aspirations and intellectual convictions have also come to rely heavily on foreign influence. No where is this dependency more apparent than in developmental planning, where a small group of first world thinkers largely determines what development is and how it is to be achieved. Communication technology, ease of travel and the proliferation of international scholarships in concert with the traditional expectation of guidance from the North assure the immediate dissemination of each new paradigm, and more often than not, it's enthusiastic adoption. While these changes in approach may not alter ingrained attitudes to any great degree, they do effect the formal behavior of even local decision-makers, by changing their interaction with powers beyond their spheres of influence as well as expanding or contracting those spheres. There exists a fairly continuous linkage from first world academia to the barrio.

A generation's effort, by some of the planet's most astute minds and rationally conceived organizations, to bring about a more equitable distribution of the worlds wealth, has proved the task to be elusive. The initial confidence in our ability to induce sustained economic growth, acquired largely through the effective regeneration of post war Europe and Japan, has been considerably undermined by subsequent experience in many of the less developed nations. While definitions of

"success" and "failure" leave considerable room for debate, the field of developmental planning has become dominated by dissatisfaction and the recognition that solutions are not as obvious as they once seemed. Albert Hirschman, one of the most respected scholars of development economics, summarises the situation thus:

"Our subdiscipline has achieved its considerable lustre and excitement through the implicit idea that it could slay the dragon of backwardness virtually by itself, or at least, that its contribution to the task was central. We know now that this is not so."<sup>1</sup>

There is a growing awareness that the issues involve more social, political and cultural variables than were formerly appreciated; that the simple beefing-up of insufficient domestic savings with foreign investment is not a universal recipe for prosperity, nor that any other economic paradigm, by itself, guarantees progress. Perhaps most significant is the growing conviction that industrial expansion is not the same thing as development. While no one denies that wealth must be produced before it can be distributed, writers such as Paul Streeten, John Grant, and M.D. Morris<sup>2</sup> argue convincingly that G.N.P. bears little relation to the welfare of the bulk of the population in many developing countries. The extremely skewed allocation patterns have focused much attention on achieving more equitable personal and regional income distribution. Some writers go farther to claim that it is not so much income as "entitlement" that needs to be distributed. Amartya sen, for instance, states that the commodity bundle a person can command provides the most helpful format for characterizing economic development and that this depends on the political arrangements which determine his ownership and his exchange possibilities.<sup>3</sup>



Even economists, not to mention sociologists and political scientists, extend the meaning of development beyond physiological well being. Michael Todaro stresses that in addition to life sustenance, development must seek to achieve individual freedom from servitude and the promotion of self esteem. Approaching the pole opposite that of the dogmatic neo-classic economists one encounters Gandhi's extortation to promote the "realization of human potential" and Octavio Paz's assertion that "development and underdevelopment are exclusively socioeconomic concepts with which we pretend to measure societies as if they were quantitative realities. That way, all those aspects that defy statistics and give shape to society are not accounted for: its culture, its history, its sensibility, its art, its goals, its cuisine, everything that used to be called the soul or spirit of the people, its own way of being."<sup>4</sup>

If there is still considerable debate on how to achieve development, and even on what it is, there are fairly universal policy trends among the multilateral agencies which dominate the field - the international, regional and national development banks. Following two decades of concentration on capital investments designed to create the conditions for Walt Rostow's "take-off", two influential analyses, the Pearson Report and the Jackson Report raised serious doubts as to the efficacy of this approach alone.<sup>5</sup> They were joined by voices and institutions (notably ECLA, in Latin America) which questioned everything from the international economic order to investment priorities and social justice. One significant result was a shift in World Bank policy under Robert McNamara's leadership in the early 1970's, to address urban problems, and specifically the urban poor. The "basic needs" approach came into

being. Low-income housing, slum upgrading, sites and services, urban employment and micro infrastructure joined rural development and macro infrastructure projects in the Bank's, and other donor agency's, lending programs. Acknowledging the complex societal relationships and structural nature of these undertakings "integrated" and "multisectoral" programs were designed to simultaneously address a broad range of issues.

At about the same time "water's edge" financing started becoming prevalent. Both developmental and commercial banks had come under criticism for interference in the internal affairs of their client nations. From now on the national governments would guarantee loan repayment, but accept no conditions or influence from the lender on its application. Countries, not projects, were to be financed. Since entire countries were not expected to go bankrupt, and the banks were happy to be relieved of the responsibility, and risk, of specific projects this arrangement was agreeable to all. (In any case, the banks have the U.S. taxpayer as ultimate insurance).

These two factors - the complexity of projects in which human resources overshadow financial ones and lack of perceived risk on the part of the lender - have created a situation where success depends almost entirely on the commitment and competence of the borrower. Evaluation of a decade of this policy has again raised doubts. Except for a few exceptions, notably in Eastern Asia, results have generally fallen short of expectations. Urban equity and entitlement have not made great strides in most of the developing world.

There are of course extenuating circumstances. Integrated projects directed towards the poor are admittedly ambitious; they attempt to change deep-rooted and persistent problems. Furthermore, global economic

upheaval during the 1970's has hit many developing countries particularly hard; climate has been exceptionally uncooperative in some major regions; urban migration has proceeded at unprecedented rates; and, to a degree, even the successes of developmental efforts (reduced infant mortality and increased life expectancy) have exacerbated problems of urban misery.

### **EMERGING PRAGMATISM**

At the current stage of developmental planning much attention is being given to the political nature of the process and to the transactional requirements of program implementation. This pragmatism transcends the evaluation of narrow program objectives in an attempt to discern its contribution to more general policy goals. Donor agencies have come to place great emphasis on replicability - the ability of an endeavor to perpetuate itself and to alter an environment such that it is more receptive to future efforts.

The World Bank, in evaluating its first decade of urban development experience has attempted to identify the most pervasive obstacles to this approach.<sup>6</sup> High on the list is a concern with institutional framework - the weakness, or unresponsiveness, of existing institutions. It cites the strengthening of urban institutions as one of the most difficult tasks of its operations. Cost recovery has also become a fundamental component in achieving replicability in poor nations. Instilling a credit mentality among people who live from hand to mouth, who have had little exposure to the protestant ethic and who are frequently subject to the immediate creditor's failure to live up to his part of the bargain is a daunting task, and a politically unappealing

one. Other factors such as overly ambitious construction standards, highly inequitable conditions of land tenure and inadequate management skills are also stressed. Beneficiary participation is recognized as a critical element of replicability and, in this regard, the importance of the so-called "special components" of health, training and community development, the implementation of which has been particularly frustrating. In the Bank's words: "Neighborhood politics have been beyond the effective reach of the Bank and its intermediaries." Assuming "intermediaries" to mean national bureaucracies, it is probable that municipal and state politics are also largely beyond their reach, and perhaps that of the "intermediaries" as well.

Recognition of the limitations of foreign donor agencies and federal governments in controlling "neighborhood politics", while at the same time proposing programs of broader, long-term social impact, implies a greater reliance on local implementers, and some means of motivating them to perform more effectively than they have in the past. Several recurring planning themes have resurfaced, with renewed vigor, as essential components to programs which envision more active local involvement. Prominent among them are flexibility, participation and decentralization.

## **FLEXIBILITY**

The World Bank had found that "where both borrowers and Bank staff have approached implementation with a flexible, problem-solving attitude, projects have progressed reasonably well."<sup>7</sup> In a similar context, Caiden and Wildovsky argue forcefully for flexibility in developing country budgeting as the only realistic means of accomodating abrupt and

unforseeable change<sup>8</sup> and Albert Hirschman's "hiding hand" principal makes an eloquent case for the value of ad hoc approaches to unexpected events and the importance of local creativity in institutionally weak environments.<sup>9</sup>

Flexibility, it would appear, is a generally acknowledged strategy for dealing with the uncertainty of complex programs in an unpredictable environment. At the very least it is a prudent tactic in avoiding irrevocable commitment to a disasterous course of action. But it runs counter to basic planning mentality, which relies heavily on the ability to predict events, and to the smooth operation of rationally structured organizations, which depend on behavioral consistency. In a study of Bank behavior, Mattingly, Peattie and Schoen recently determined that:

"Flexibility is crucial to good project work because it opens the way for ferreting out unexpected opportunities in the field, and because it makes a virtue of the practical necessity to back away from Bank policies that can't be made to stick...But consistency is understood as a prerequisite to establishing credibility both in the field and in the Bank. The need to be consistent drives the team to follow Bank policies quite closely."<sup>10</sup>

If Bank policies allow for little flexibility, procedures are even more rigidly defined. As projects have become more complex, so have the attempts to direct borrower behavior. Project management system techniques and control procedures have reached levels of sophistication difficult to apply even in developed countries. Rondinelli in describing the impact of "imperious rationality", imposed by donor agencies on the Third World, claims such procedures to be totally unrelated to the

political, administrative and cultural conditions of developing countries; not only unrealistic, but perverse.<sup>11</sup> Whats more, local administrators have been quick to learn the formalities of these techniques, to "play the game", creating an illusion of conformance without substantially changing their behavior.

Flexibility, or its lack, can also effect project implementation in more fundamental ways. Many First World donors feel the obligation to transfer some responsible citizenship along with their funds and have difficulty in concealing their presumed moral superiority. If their own views on property rights, the obligations of debtors, corruption and truth are quite narrow they may encounter frequent misunderstanding. If they require open confrontation to resolve disputes, they may be misled into interpreting silence, or bullied affirmation, as assurance that they've reached agreement.

Excessive, or unnecessary, flexibility may be equally counter-productive. It may raise doubts about one's convictions or sincerity and subject one to exploitation. To be effective, flexibility must be based on a clear perception of program priorities as well as an understanding of the local environment. In this regard, the burden falls more heavily on the outside donor, especially once funds have been committed.

## **PARTICIPATION**

Participation, more specifically community participation, has become accepted as a necessary component of integrated projects. Like flexibility, it allows for a wide range of interpretation, is subtle in its implications and may conflict with other project objectives.

The World Bank's ambivalent attitude towards community involvement has been expressed in statements such as: "In some cases community support has been an effective, though time-consuming, input," and "While community involvement can delay and complicate decisions the drawbacks have been outweighed by the valuable inputs."<sup>12</sup> The involvement of targeted beneficiaries appears to be accepted as a necessary nuisance - a disturbing conclusion, considering their pivotal role in building the homes, seeking the training, making the monthly payments and voting for regime which is promoting the program. Precisely what inputs are expected is also unclear. In two frequently cited examples of "successful" community involvement, beneficiaries are primarily credited for ensuring cost recovery in El Salvador while in a similar project in Zambia they are praised for contributing to the design of the tertiary road network, although cost recovery was one of the worst in Bank experience.<sup>13</sup>

While there does seem to be a growing awareness that the direct beneficiaries of a program should be given some decisionary power over its design, little attention is paid to those responsible for effecting implementation - the local politicians, technocrats and power groups. Developmental literature also generalizes about the national and regional factors which affect policy and programs, but shows less concern for local determinants. Yet in nations of considerable ethnic variety, primitive communications, relatively weak intranational institutions and often specific local interests, the cooperation of these groups may be a most crucial factor.

Planners are prone to view the preindustrial bureaucracies of

provincial developing areas with contempt, though it is not entirely fair to criticize international donor agencies for shunning them when they are often treated with obvious disdain by their own national elites. One may feel justified in holding the entrenched oligarchies responsible for the gross material and social inequities which characterize these regions, but it seems only reasonable to recognize the necessity of mobilizing their support, or at least attenuating their opposition, to programs which affect their interests, to attempt to understand, rather than merely condemn the motivations of these groups, and to assign them a stake in the outcome.

### **DECENTRALIZATION**

The concerns with community participation and flexibility have become focused on the more objective issue of administrative decentralization. While essentially a broader distribution of authority and responsibility, "decentralization" can take a variety of forms. It may mean "privatization," the divestiture of public enterprise, such as is currently taking place in Argentina; or it may imply "deconcentration" by which the agencies of central authority are geographically dispersed, without necessarily decentralizing authority itself, such as has occurred in some more dynamic developing countries (as well as in socialist ones). "Devolution" entails the shift, or return, of some degree of authority to local government, as has been happening in parts of Asia; and "delegation", the most genuine form of decentralization, the actual transfer of major decision-making roles to local entities.<sup>14</sup>

Cynics argue that decentralization moves are little more than desperate efforts, on the part of shaky central governments to



extricate themselves from discredited policies. Many however, see a wider distribution of authority as a realistic approach to generating local initiative and responsibility. Highly centralized planning, regardless of its ability to mobilize national resources to GNP growth, has had little success in distributing resources either regionally, or individually.

Appealing as decentralization is to democratic ideology, the application of willful, objective oriented endeavors confronts a host of obstacles in many societies unaccustomed to such autonomy. In evaluating recent decentralization programs in southern Asia, Cheema and Rondinelli cite some of the major difficulties: the lack of managerial talent, overly ambitious goals, reluctance to assume responsibility, lack of central government support, communications with central government and donor agencies.<sup>15</sup> Nor does local control guarantee beneficiary participation or flexibility. Ethnic or social groups may be unjustly excluded and local administrators can be just as rigid as federal bureaucrats.

On the other hand there are indications that given responsibility, along with resources, technical support and decisionary powers, even small, unsophisticated communities can manage their affairs effectively.

De facto decentralization has probably always existed to a greater extent than officially recognized. While central governments can control purse strings and issue directives, locals have been quite inventive in diverting the funds and distorting the orders to their own interests. Building the necessary institutional capability and accountability into the lower levels of bureaucracy is obviously a challenge, but one that must be confronted if responsible performance is demanded there. The

task may well require the structuring of institutions on local cultural characteristics rather than the dogmatic imposition of Weberian standards.

### **DECISION-MAKING SHIFTS**

Perhaps the most important implication of these trends in urban programs is the downward shift of the decision-making locus. This occurs, on the one hand, due to the progressive increase of case-specific decisions which arise as implementation proceeds and, on the other, due to the social and political complexity of integrated programs which makes objective evaluation of feasible alternatives by outside experts difficult. In some respects this is true of any project - theory originates in academia, major donor agencies determine policy, which recipient national governments adapt to, central technocrats design programs for local administrators to implement, and final beneficiaries accept or reject, whatever is thrust upon them. Those who are responsible for a program's success, its replicability, have little say in its conception but virtually total control over its implementation. To use the "actor" analogy, popular in planning circles, the "author", "producer" and "director" can only hope that those on stage will perform as they have been instructed to. By the time their decisionary power becomes evident, the producer's commitment is usually irreversible. (Unlike a theatrical production, however, dress rehearsals are seldom staged.)

A major difference between infrastructure construction and low-income housing or employment programs is that, in the former, the social background and aspirations of project designers and implementers is likely to be similar; tasks are relatively technological and objective

and the support of final beneficiaries is not critical to "success." In the latter, cultural differences come into play. Not only do beneficiaries have little in common with foreign bankers, but the motivation of local politicians and technocrats may be at considerable variance with that of their national counterparts. Opportunities for crossed signals, accidental or intentional, abound. Those farther down the chain of command are in a position to either make decisions themselves, or to filter the information on which decisions are made.

Dependency at this stage has become much more of a two-way affair, with the outsiders supplying resources and technical assistance and the local actors a committed effort. While this interdependence may appear self-evident, it has been frequently ignored. Donor agencies and their intermediaries have too often relied on their intellectual arrogance or missionary zeal to motivate acceptable behavior and local powers have often reacted by subverting or sabotaging programs. Their ability to do so has certainly been sufficiently demonstrated to establish their commitment as a crucial element of program implementation. The challenge then becomes one of engaging the local power structure without sacrificing basic program objectives.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ACTORS: URBAN POWER STRUCTURES

The groups and individuals who have dominated events in Latin America have not had a good press. The ruling elites are consistently described as greedy, short-sighted luxury-loving exploiters of submissive masses, and the backwardness of the continent attributed to their ignoble behavior or even to the Latin character in general. Fagen and Cornelius are typical in concluding their study of political confrontation in seven Latin countries with the observation that there is no empirical basis for anticipating a more equitable distribution of material or political goods in the foreseeable future.<sup>1</sup> Many Latin political scientists themselves are equally pessimistic. Those who hold some hope for progress are apt to place their faith in pressures from below, in the coercion rather than the cooperation of the dominant power groups. A more pragmatic approach, it would appear, would be based on an objective understanding of what motivates the behavior of these groups, to recognize their limitations and to exploit those attributes which contribute to positive change. Our concern then is not so much with changing the power structure as with engaging it as it is.

Power structures in Latin America have remained consistently elitist and corporatist - dominated by small hegemonious groups - throughout its modern history. Pluralism, though officially sanctioned by national constitutions has surfaced in only sporadic and short-lived instances, while Marxism, increasingly proposed as the only viable remedy for entrenched inequities, has been unable to mobilize effective support for the dramatic change envisioned by its proponents. The role of the

elites has been interpreted in a variety of ways by different disciplines, and within them by different ideologies, but two general schools of thought have come to prominence in developmental planning. One, based on the structural functional theories pioneered by Weber and Durkheim represents the liberal, evolutionary view of societal change, by which universal qualities of entrepreneurship and institution building move nations forward.<sup>2</sup> One could expect even elites, acting in their broader self interests, to contribute to general progress. Neo-Marxist dependency theory, however, questions their freedom to act. This view, promoted by Baran, Frank, and others<sup>3</sup> has gained a large number of adherents in recent years. It claims that underdevelopment is a structural imposition of the developed nations, their necessity to maintain a backward "periphery", supplier to cheap raw materials and consumer of their manufactured products, and that local elites have little control over local events.

These are the big issues. Their ramifications undoubtedly penetrate deeply into society, but the farther one moves from global and national centers of power, the more other factors appear to become critical: the conflict between traditional landed elites and more progressive manufacturing - based ones, the relationships within and between various hierarchies and the coalitions which form and dissolve. If one assumes as "the elite", those individuals, families, groups and organizations who retain the bulk of the wealth and decision-making power, one has to consider a quite heterogeneous body and one in which individuals are not easily pigeon-holed. T.L. Smith, in describing the Brazilian elite notes and intellectual broadness of its members, as compared to U.S. elites.<sup>4</sup> A prominent politician may at the same time

be a practicing engineer, rancher, university lecturer and poet; a physician, a prominent historian, astronomer and owner of the McDonald's franchise. Smith cites this amplitude of interests as possibly contributing to the region's backwardness; American elites, by contrast, are more specialized, focusing on a particular activity and excelling at it. Nor do political parties provide much of a focus for analysis, affiliations shifting with the winds of personal loyalty and commercial, or regional, interests more than with ideology. International influence may bear on power coalitions, but such ties can be cultural, as well as economic, and xenophobic as well as expansive.

Within this ambiguous structure there are patterns which appear to be pervasive. They may be institutionalized or not, tied to national events, or local and relatively rigid or subject to evolution. John Walton, one author who has done considerable research on local elites, has found that power is more concentrated in provincial centers of agriculture than in industrially-based cities, which tend to generate a higher degree of competition among power groups.<sup>5</sup> Francine Rabinovitz tends to support this generalization and goes on to argue that local power evolves together with economic development, that the process produces new coalitions of power while destroying others, that industrialization splits elites into traditional and progressive factions and that development tends to separate political from economic interests.<sup>6</sup> Ogliastri and Davila, on the other hand, in analyzing 11 Colombian intermediate cities find the opposite to be the case.<sup>7</sup> In their study they found power to be more concentrated in the more industrialized cities. Furthermore, they found ideological distinctions between "liberal" and "conservative" to become blurred with

development, reducing further the issues around which elites might differ.

One significant area of agreement, which is also supported by first world studies, such as that of Robert Dahl in New Haven,<sup>8</sup> is that economic development tends to shift elitest power from a personalized, political base to one of more narrow economic interests. Less clear in Latin America than in the U.S., are the limits of influence and internal fractionalization of the "economic notables", and who rises to occupy the political positions they vacate. These questions are particularly important if one suspects that even economic decisions are often confronted with a variety of options in which social, political and cultural concerns play a part.

The categorization of Latin power groups also presents some specific considerations. It is generally accepted that interest groups are structured in fairly self-contained hierarchical pyramids with the simplest classification specifying the public sector, private sector and labor. Accepting the pyramid image (though an up-side-down "T" might be more appropriate) the three sector grouping seems deceptive, particularly for provincial societies. In institutionally fragile environments the public/private transsectoral movement is so pervasive that one is prompted to seek other bases for cohesion. Economic or social class ties may be more useful, but, although reasonably permanent, they are characterized by greater degrees of heterogeneity than can comfortably be dealt with in a unit. It would seem that the source of legitimacy of a group might be a more adequate determinant, one that implies a relative authority and viability without requiring either an institutional or ideological basis. What comes to mind are those groups whose legitimacy transcends local and national events

as opposed to those who owe their existence to the local political structure and those who merely exist, with no apparent political or institutional foundation.

### **SUPERPOLITICAL ELITES**

Certain, identifiable groups appear to be relatively immune to immediate political and social pressures, their authority derived from tradition or status located beyond shifting national interests. The elites considered here are those that have had continuous continent-wide influence, that direct, more than they react to, events and who respond to popular demands, if at all, on their own terms.

Probably the most stable institution, throughout Latin America, is the Catholic church. Priests often preceded conquistadores into new regions and have remained a dominant force, politically as well as spiritually ever since. The Church has been widely condemned as an instrument of the ruling powers, be they colonial commercial companies or native plantation owners, in keeping the exploited masses docile. By and large, this had been its major effect until the mid 20th century. Today, however, liberation theology, which approaches marxist teaching in regard to the rights of the poor, is a major force for social change. It has been applied with more vigor in isolated rural areas than in the cities (and more by lower than higher echelons of the clergy) but, in alliance with progressive political factions, is beginning to be felt in urban areas as well. Church activism has been least apparent in the provincial cities, where the alliance of conservative clergy and reactionary bourgeoisies still generally prevails. Even so, it has become engaged, if only in providing its unassailable stature as a



shield to those promoting reform. Other factors which are encouraging the Church to become more active include the growing inroads of protestantism and spiritualism among the middle and lower classes and increasing activist pressure from European and American Jesuit priests.

The most obviously powerful and resistant elite is the military, which has been more visible in internal than in external affairs throughout Latin American history, as the ultimate defense of the oligarchy. The army is seen as a stabilizing force in many countries, almost as a bastion of democracy and it has indeed used its unique powers to bring nations back on course when they have veered too far left, or even right. But most often it has represented, or created, oppressive dictatorships. Nevertheless there are hints of change. The time has passed in much of the continent when every prominent family felt obligated to produce at least one priest, one doctor and one soldier. The uniform, like the cassock, has lost some of its lustre and the military has become increasing middle class in makeup. Progressive regimes in Venezuela and Colombia owe much of their coming to power to the support of younger dissident officers and other countries, such as Brazil, are beginning to feel the pressures of reform minded soldiers. At the provincial level, federal troops are likely to be viewed with ambiguity: a ostentatious symbol of repression, to radicals; a protective if somewhat uncomfortable presence, to politicians, a sometimes frightening but competent authority, to the populace at large, noted for greater discipline and less corruption than the local police. The mixed feelings were illustrated to a group of social researchers interviewing squatters shortly after the military police had physically obliterated a near-by settlement. The respondents, who lived in houses without water or

sewerage, and were very aware of the police action, cited police protection, and specifically that of the military police, high on their list of demands.<sup>9</sup>

Professional alliances constitute another elite which considers itself above politics, although it is often quite selective. Civil engineering for instance, not a particularly high status occupation in developed countries, has a very prominent role in Latin America. Hirschman describes the powerful influence engineers had over politicians in defining policies for Brazil's drought-prone Northeast<sup>10</sup> and Gakenheimer has shown the ability of these professionals to dominate planning through the most varied regimes in Chile.<sup>11</sup> In Rio de Janeiro, an invitation to speak to the Clube de Engenharia is close to the epitome of prestige. Nor is their close association with the construction industry grounds for suspicion as it might be in other parts. Civil Engineers have been able to assume a mantle of apoliticality and authority which places them in an almost unassailable position. Architects, on the other hand, journalists, lawyers, and to a lesser degree, physicians and scientists are likely to be associated with more radical social causes. All of the professions maintain strong national, and international, "ties of class" which place them above the nitty-gritty of local politics. These ties also expose them to increasingly critical first world opinion and it is becoming common for professional entities to issue statements on current political issues. Constantly wider access of the middle classes and women to professional training no doubt contributes further to the professions' increased participation in politics.

Latin America has always had a thriving intellectual community.

Unlike North America, cultural refinement and academic endeavors have been highly respected, even by those with little opportunity to pursue them. The provinces abound with literary scientific, historic and geographic academies. Relying heavily on Europe for inspiration and guidance the intellectual elite has consistently maintained an aloof attitude towards local affairs. With rare exceptions, the political events of France and Germany have occupied their attention more than those of Latin America, and those intellectuals who have addressed Latin issues are more likely to find receptive audiences abroad than at home, such as has been the case of those responsible for the incisive thinking of the Economic Commission on Latin America, in the 1960's. This seemingly impervious intellectual elite, or at least significant portions of it, is losing some of its alienation. The "dual dualism" of which Jorge Ahumada speaks - the dualism of traditional and progressive values superimposed on that of both dominant and submissive classes<sup>12</sup> - is bringing about some fractionalization of this group. The access to higher education, of those outside the traditional elites, together with international interest in global development is creating a body of socially active intellectuals. With little familial or economic loyalty to the dominant classes this faction is acquiring an increasingly dominant voice in academia, and while rhetoric and action are still subject to considerable independency in Latin America, the association of social scientists and peasant or labor groups is becoming more prevalent. Exile or harrassment by a repressive regime has even come to confer a special status in some academic quarters, and popular music and black culture are becoming legitimate areas of study.

International donor agencies have become another major influence. While ostensibly respecting national sovereignties, they promote

the attitudes of first world planners and often, the economic and political interests of the nations which fund them. At their most basic level these agencies are merely banks lending money and concerned primarily with the security of their loans. The situation becomes more complex however as ideology, political influence, and paternalism comes into play. Borrowers are anxious to satisfy the real, or perceived, conditions of the lenders, and lenders feel impelled to use their bargaining power to induce behavioral change. There is considerable illusion in this relationship in that the intentions of the borrower are both difficult to discern and to control, while the lender may have strong incentives to "push money" and little stake in its effective application. Nevertheless, foreign agencies do have a substantial say in the types of policies and projects acceptable for funding and thus influence national and local bureaucratic behavior. They have further effect, during implementation, through their technical experts, whose authority and apolitical status provides them with special opportunities for influencing local groups. they may, for instance, through establishing rapport with the politicians and technocrats directly responsible for a project, substantially aid and enhance the status of these individuals, perhaps at the expense of national level actors. They may use their special position to build communication between antagonistic groups, or, by remaining aloof, reenforce the distrust and defensiveness that often characterizes the attitude of local bureaucrats.

### **BUREAUCRATIC HIERARCHIES**

Although it is impossible to distinguish absolutely between super-political, political and non-political groups, certain ones are much

more susceptible to the fluctuations of the immediate political temper than others. They determine less than they react to conditions and they tend to be highly visible. Such groups include government bureaucracies, political parties and institutionalized interest groups. In the non-pluralistic societies of Latin America these groups usually depend on the superpolitical elites, for whom they may be little more than mouth pieces, for their existence. However, their viability also depends on satisfying a variety of changing demands from elite and non-elite groups and in balancing these various interests they often find opportunity to act with considerable autonomy.

Political parties cover the spectrum from extreme right to extreme left, though ideological distinctions often shift or become blurred. Most parties represent limited constituencies, requiring the formation of coalitions to achieve any major political objective, and these coalitions are often built on very tenuous and temporary common interests. According to Ahumada, the fragility of these "marriages of convenience" is the disassociation of power, without consensus on goals - dividing the cake without basic agreement on policies or priorities to be pursued.<sup>13</sup> As a result these countries are subject to periods of apparent pluralism where middle class parties with widespread popular support manage political affairs while economic power is retained by entrenched elites. If the politicians become unmanageable, the military steps in to protect economic interests. The effect of these cycles is more strongly felt at the national level and in the larger, industrialized cities than in the provinces, where, as Ogliastri and Davila have pointed out, a more personal, non-economic loyalty prevails, one which is less subject to the vagaries of party politics. Parties in such circumstances

serve primarily in providing legitimacy to established power groups, and a rallying point for coalitions during elections. In the rare cases in which parties have achieved long term political dominance, such as in Mexico and Cuba, this position has only been retained through appeasement or absorption of the military and economic powers in what amounts to dictatorial national regimes rather than a spontaneous coalition of interests. More common are short-lived alliances, united under a banner of "social democracy", which prove incapable of satisfying their own conflicting internal demands, much less those of the nation, and eventually deteriorate to the point where the more reactionary forces feel compelled to step in and restore order.

Unreliable, fluid and confused as party politics is, it does manage to create a degree of consolidation among the upper echelons of the administrative bureaucracy which links national to state and local government. Those local administrations too inflexible, or too independent, to move with party shifts at the national level will undoubtedly be short-changed in the allocation of national transfers and denied valuable channels of communication to federal programs. Weak institutional linkages and constantly fluctuating national policies make personal, party-associated ties crucial to a local administrators ability to perform. When properly cultivated, they also keep him informed of, and prepared to adjust to, forthcoming shifts in policy and personalities.

An increasingly visible faction within the administrative bureaucracy is that composed of technocrats. As centralized national planning has gained acceptance in Latin America, it has given rise to this new elite whose authority, loyalties and spheres of competence are not defined by tradition. Technocrats have been effective in

establishing themselves as the embodiment of rational, progressive values and as disinterested bystanders in social class conflicts. Their central role in the definition and administration of public policy constitutes a threat to traditional political elites and a hope to those who champion structural change. Benveniste analyses the growing dependence of society as a whole, and political leaders in particular, on privileged experts knowledge and the intricate maneuvering which takes place between "prince and pundit."<sup>14</sup> On a national scale, Brazil is a case in point in which the planning technocracy has out maneuvered the political process as well as a reactionary military regime in acquiring control of the economy. Nor do technocrats there feel obliged to play a low-profile advisory role. Planning minister "Czar" Delfim Neto, and his policies are discussed by the man in the street, who might be hard pressed to name the various presidents under whom Delfim has "served".

Technocrats appear to acquire a special mystique in societies where public scrutiny of self-proclaimed authority is successfully suppressed. Theirs is an authority derived from the possession of exclusive and superior knowledge - knowledge imported from nations who already have much of what developing areas aspire to. Their knowledge is also perceived to be objective - free of the value laden judgement which affects politicians, soldiers and intellectuals. Technocrats themselves seem to share this view. They display (more or less overtly) disdain for the traditional, politicized oligarchies and establish their own local and national networks, They command information, procedures and jargon which is shared at their will and they are relatively immune to popular opinion. Benveniste concludes that "mounting a ladder of proof

based on its own untested convictions, an elite of experts and planners can acquire far more influence on the course of events than those who hired them ever intended them to have, and that [planning failures] include those of experts who acquire too much power, happen to make mistakes, and are surprised to discover that the narrow and technical definition of their role was inadequate and led them to disregard widely shared values."<sup>15</sup>

The lack of appreciation of operative values occurs on national, as well as on international, levels in centrally directed development programs. Highly-trained (often foreign educated) national planners may have a better grasp of economic and management theory than of particular local aspirations and feel more comfortable with first world colleagues than with their provincial counterparts. The technocracy has produced its own dualism, in which cosmopolitan federal officials cannot always communicate effectively with those at state or city level. These latter are likely to hail from the middle class and, lacking the family connections to enter business at the top, frequently accept positions in public service. With the authority of a degree but without established ties to the traditional elites they may harbor strong, and radical, convictions concerning their role in furthering the interests of the oppressed. These new technocrats provide a unique conduit between federal and foreign program promoters and targeted beneficiaries. This position allows them considerable opportunity to inject their own ideologies into the flow of information, protected from undue interference from their political superiors by the mantle of technical objectivity. We had the opportunity to observe how such a group of technocrats, the local administrative unit of a World Bank



sponsored urban development program in Brazil, consistently by-passed the political-ministerial chain of command to deal directly with the parastatal corporations who controlled disbursement of the funds.<sup>16</sup> Of all the actors with a stake in development programs, the local technocrats appear to be assuming an ever more pivotal, and often insufficiently appreciated role.

### **NON-POLITICAL ALLIANCES**

The groups mentioned so far are not, of course, entirely homogeneous entities. What makes them identifiable is their possessing some form of vertical integration, whether it be through an institutionalized hierarchy or not. In some cases, such as in the Church or the military this structure is well articulated, in others - the professional or academic elites, for instance, it is more subtle. Still, members have a fairly definite notion of where they stand - who they can influence and who they must respect. Transcending these groups are other ties which function on a more horizontal plane, their effectiveness determined by their consensus on broad issues and which provide the basis for cementing alliances between the hierarchies in their pursuit of specific objectives. Accepting Larissa Lomnitz's thesis that "politics is the art of manipulating horizontal solidarities against vertical ones"<sup>17</sup> and that the vertical solidarities are structured within relatively self-contained pyramids, then the horizontal ones constitute a complex web of linkages which attach the pyramids to one another.

Common economic interest would naturally be one of the stronger attachments. But it is also a potent generator of competition and factionalization, and while economic powers may sometimes unite in power-

ful alliances they are as often engaged in devisive conflict. Latin America has been characterized, and caricaturized, by the hegemony of its omnipotent oligarchies - traditionally the autocratic plantation owner and more recently the urban industrialists or financiers. While these groups obviously occupy the pinnacle of wealth in societies of widespread poverty, their role in promoting or in thwarting progress is less clear; nor should their homogeneity be taken for granted. Large rural landowners do, as a group, hinder equity and progress. They can be held responsible for the demonstrably inefficient use of agricultural land and for practices which keep most of the rural population in a state of serfdom. It can be hoped, perhaps expected, that the pressure of rapidly expanding populations, concerns with urban immigration and calls for peaceful, or violent, land reform will eventually dislodge this elite. Government sponsored colonization programs and land taxation designed by evermore urban oriented national governments should also contribute to increased efficiency and distribution. Progress may be slow, but the generally positive thrust seems irreversible.

The urban based oligarchy is criticized for its lack of entrepreneurship, subordination to foreign interests and inefficient management. As it becomes more sophisticated, it should begin to appreciate the advantages of progress to its own self interest. Commerce and manufacturing evidently benefit from development, at the very least, the former from increased purchasing power and the latter from more efficient infrastructure and trained labor. The possible costs of more expensive labor or more effective public administration are more than offset by the gains. Specific interests in particular interventions may well generate conflict, but in such cases resolution

may depend more on the political ability of promoters than on any need to reconcile basic differences in objective. A major accusation against local economic interests has been their propensity to divert, distort or usurp the benefits of development for their own purposes. This may be largely true, but to the extent that these elites share at least some local aspirations with the community as a whole and possess the ability to attract, generate and apply resources, they constitute a vital element of the process. It becomes the task of others - government, church or reformer to guide their capabilities toward broader goals.

More has been said than revealed about the emergent middle class of Latin America. Industrialization and urbanization have undoubtedly produced a growing population which is neither very rich nor very poor, but to what degree this group heralds the dawn of pluralism is still cloudy. It has come to pervade public administration, constitute the bulk of the military, church, academic and professional pyramids and to provide the backbone of nascent consumer societies, yet it seems unable or unwilling to find a voice of its own. Much depends on how one defines "middle class" - an enormous range of incomes if one takes, say, the 35% of the population below the wealthiest 5%, or an absurdly small group if one takes those who command the middle 50% of wealth. In the latter class identification is likely to be less strong than the ambition of making it into the privileged class. Even in the lower strata of the "large middle class," consolidating one's distance from the poor may be a stronger motivation than seeking solidarity with ones peers. Fagen and Cornelius emphasize the essential conservatism of the middle class in its participation in electoral politics in South America and warn that expectations of finding the seeds of liberalism

and democracy in this group are unfounded.<sup>18</sup> Others do perceive elements of pluralism in new and broader based coalitions, in which portions of the middle class together with labor and some elitist factions unite behind a common interest. Programs which favor general regional interests, such as ones involving massive transfers of funds from the national government, for example, can catalyze such alliances.

Then there are the masses who are the primary focus of integrated urban development planning. Peering through all the theory, rhetoric, ideology, good intentions, and misinformation it is virtually impossible to form a coherent view. At the one extreme is a seemingly endless body of undernourished, unemployed, unhoused, hopeless humanity; at the other, individuals coping as best they can in a not very hospitable environment. Their identification as a group is based on their poverty, which supposedly gives them a commonality of interest, while their power is derived from their large numbers. Attempts to mobilize this power to effective political purpose have been repeatedly frustrated; the radical rallying cries they might be expected to heed have gone largely ignored. This reluctance to further their own apparent well-being has been attributed to both apathy and a deeply ingrained conservatism.<sup>19</sup> The latter is more convincing in that radical change implies a certain risk which those living close to the limits of subsistence may not feel they can afford. To the degree that they are manipulable by politicians, the incumbent elites, as the dispensors of what patronage is available, have a distinct advantage over radical reformers.

Though it may be wishful thinking to expect active support from the masses, on the part of those who envision abrupt and decisive social change, it would be equally unwise to discount their potential. In the

first place their sheer numbers and their visibility due to the intensity of urban concentration in Latin America, must give pause to any regime which relies on repression. It is rapidly becoming unnecessary to incite the poor as a group; any one of a number of factions is capable of posing serious threats to stability. Furthermore, what industrialization is taking place is giving rise to a laboring class sufficiently above the starvation level to be able to risk a bit of uncertainty and sufficiently informed to be capable of being organized. The essential conservatism, and awe of the system, of this class may be more vulnerable to the appeals of radical reformers. While history should make one wary of predicting social revolution in Latin America, regardless of the apparent ripeness of the situation, one cannot ignore the unprecedented composition of urban populations and the speed with which the composition is changing, in provincial, as well as in metropolitan areas.

Familial and ethnic ties are frequently cited as sources of horizontal linkage, along with substantial documentation of their abuse. The factors which reinforce such bonds - large patriarchal families, living in relative isolation, in sometimes hostile, and often lawless, environments have instilled deep-rooted reliance on personal loyalty. While such relationships are condemned in modern western society as incompatible with merit-based organizational structure, they must be recognized as pervasive elements of Latin American institutional life; not only bonds established by blood and national origin, but also spontaneous friendship. In the words of a popular bureaucratic dictum: "to my friends: everything; to the public at large: the law; to my enemies: nothing."

The position of women has received little attention. The macho mystique has largely obscured the traditional roles of women, significant as they have been, and there has been little overt feminism to promote or to publicize more recent influence. Yet today, women constitute a greater proportion of the professions - doctors, lawyers, engineers, etc. in Latin American than in the United States. The strong family ties that characterize Latin societies have always given the mother a dominant, even revered, position in forming the moral and intellectual values of the offspring, as well as considerable authority over social and religious issues which males traditionally shunned. The maintenance of a low profile has belied the extent to which females individually, and through widespread solidarity have made their presence felt. The concern for social equity which has been introduced into developmental planning, together with the prominence of females in academia and in the technocracy, makes them an ever more apparent force in urban politics. The Praia Grande project (described in the following chapter) came to rely heavily on two dynamic ladies at one point and it is unlikely that the present Argentinian government would have acted forcefully in prosecuting former military torturers without the pressure applied by the wives and mothers of their victims.

In summary, it appears that Latin power structures are neither as homogeneous nor as class antagonistic as they are frequently depicted. There are also indications that the traditional coalitions on which oligarchic power has depended may be becoming destabilized, through external pressures, through nascent industrialization and, at least in urban areas, through the sheer numbers of the non-elite population. There is no assurance that the power shifts in progress

will produce positive change, but there is sufficient evidence of positive motivation and capability to provide a basis for guarded optimism.

CHAPTER III  
EXPERIENCE: THREE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS

The identification of concentrations of power is a straightforward task compared to understanding their relative impacts on the environments within which they act. The labyrinth of motivations, of expressed and hidden agendas, of shifting alliances and of intended and accidental results necessarily injects a substantial dose of subjectivity into any evaluation. At best, one can hope to supplement observation with cautious amounts of conjecture and logic in an attempt to discern recurring patterns.

What follows here is a review of three programs, one each in Colombia, Mexico and Brazil, with the intent of determining the effect of the principal actors on outcome and the means by which they achieved their influence. The cases are similar in that they involve innovative efforts to address longstanding problems, they have well-defined objectives, visible promoters and effective opposition. They differ in the source of their legitimacy as well as in the specifics and scope of their objectives. While it would be foolhardy to characterize this, or any, set of cases as "typical" these three programs are at least relevant in that they feature some of the more prominent actors in Latin developmental endeavors: rural and urban economic elites, a strong central government, technocrats and mid-level reform mongers.

The success or failure of the programs is of interest only to the extent that the effectiveness of competing interests can be judged against progress toward broad policy goals. Specifically, an attempt will be made to answer the following questions: Who were the dominant



power groups? What motivated them? and, How did they achieve their objectives?

### **THE CAUCA VALLEY DEVELOPMENT**

The essence of the issues which have characterized the development of Cali, Colombia and its environs during the past 25 years is the classic conflict of emergent, progressive urban-based elites and the traditional landed gentry. One side, the progressives, has quite clear-cut, rational objectives which promise benefit for all, even for the agriculturists, and broad based support, managerial talent and the tide of history to boot, the other, little more than fear, tradition and wealth. National politics, foreign business interests and intellectuals enter the fray at various stages, and with varying effect to alter the course of events.

Cali is the major city of the upper Cauca Valley in Western Colombia, a region which has been rich in cattle and sugar cane since early colonial days, and, more recently in coffee as well. The opening of the Panama Canal and rail connections to the nearby port of Buenaventura and to other valley cities, in the early 20th century, stimulated Cali's growth as the commercial center of the region. Small scale industrialization, initially of food products, followed by textiles and paper, also became concentrated there. Something of an industrial boom took place after World War II with the number of manufacturing establishments increasing seven-fold between 1945 and 1953 and continuing at about the same pace into the mid 1960's.<sup>1</sup> After a period of stagnation industrialization picked up again in the later 1960's. The process induced very rapid urbanization, with Cali itself growing from 280,000 in 1950 to

over 1.5 million in 1980 and the valley to over 4 million.

Much of the initial industrialization was controlled by the large land owners of the region, but in the post-war boom outsiders became influential as well as did foreign, mainly North American, business. By 1965 the valley contained 20% of Columbia's industry, 40% of it foreign owned.<sup>2</sup>

North American influence also intruded in more subtle ways. Developmental planning and the mystique of rapid industrial growth had captured the imagination of Cali's more progressive elite. One man in particular, Jose Castro Borrero, new industrialist, son of wealthy land owners and part-time politician, began to form plans for a Latin version of the Tennessee Valley Authority. He promoted the scheme relentlessly, inviting in David Lilienthal, father of the T.V.A., as consultant and, in the mid 1950's, established an autonomous regional development corporation, the C.V.C. His goal was to stimulate industrial as well as agricultural development through the provision of large-scale infrastructure projects - electrification, flood control, irrigation and highways. C.V.C. backers were intent that their program be free from interference from the central government and proposed that its operational financing be through taxation of rural land. In addition to producing revenue, this taxation would encourage wider distribution, and greater productivity of what were notoriously inefficient and undercultivated large agricultural properties.<sup>3</sup>

The "latifundarios" reacted with passion. Although they would benefit directly from many of the program's components, not to mention increased property values, they were neither willing to foot the bill, nor to give up their presumed birthright (modest land reform a decade later did force them to give up some of the holdings). The ensuing

battle was fought between two very small elites: 43% of the land was owned by 2% of the land owners and Walton has identified a mere 21 "influentials" as dominating urban decision-making. Nor were there "influentials" entirely of a mind. Dispute over the scope and urgency of program components ensued between aggressive boosters, demanding progress at any cost and moderates, many of whom had family and social ties with the landed gentry.

The national government maintained a neutral position in this battle of local titans and the local bureaucracies, which were dominated by lesser, notoriously ineffectual, elites were left to watch from the sidelines. Other potential participants, including the church, labor, the populace at large, and small farmers generally applauded the progressives but offered no substantial support.<sup>4</sup>

The C.V.C. was hampered by its aloof treatment of local government, in being unable to coordinate its investments with that of the public sector. The politicians, aware of their inferior status, and anxious to display what little autonomy they had, were often uncooperative. Ironically, the rural elite was prone to support the progressives in their battles with the officials over where to build roads or sewer lines. When outsiders challenged their decision-making monopoly the oligarchy managed to bury the hatchet.

The corporation did produce results, but at a rate unsatisfactory to a new generation of progressive elite. These "young Turks", well educated sons of the earlier industrialists, decided that neither the narrow interests represented by organizations like the Industrialists' Association nor the ineffectual public sector were adequate to the task, and sought alliance, and their own legitimacy, with the University. The

Universidad del Valle, founded in 1945 with Rockefeller Foundation funding did not suffer from the tradition-bound scholasticism of older Latin institutions and embarked enthusiastically on a program of practical business management training. As described by one of its promoters, "The program must be aimed at 'movers' and 'shapers'. In any society or region there are a few men at the top of the 'strategic human capital' pyramid who set the environmental stage. They are the individuals who, if they put their minds to it, can transform society from within and from the top down without tearing it apart through conflict. It is these men, and only these who, through their involvement and leadership, can root a development program in the local soil, create the climate in which it will flourish and give it the kind of nourishment that will bring it long-range growth and vigor."<sup>5</sup> Well, this was 1964; the Universidad del Valle had then, and has had since, programs of a broader social view, but the statement is indicative of how deeply entrenched the progressive's perspective had become, and how even prestigious, autonomous institutions are subject to mobilization within quite narrow, clientist interests.

Too narrow, in the view of yet another group of more progressive progressives, who by the early 1970's had splintered off to form a competing promotional agency centered around a different set of organizations. The tactics and the alliances shifted once again, but the same interests, the same elite, continued on essentially the same course.

Two decades of determined effort on the part of the progressive elite went far in transforming the upper Cauca Valley from feudalism to capitalism. One can debate the value of their accomplishment, but one can't deny that Cali had become a major industrial center. Power was very visibly concentrated in a small, private, status elite, motivated by

a clear view of its own interests, which it effectively communicated as the interests of the region. Despite internal conflicts, its confrontation by an equally powerful elite, its shunning of the public sector and frequent frustration of its immediate objectives it was able to maintain a momentum of enthusiasm and conviction. Beyond its own capacity, it relied on only a few, select coalitions. American business interests were a potent silent partner at the outset, the University when broader legitimacy was required, and the national government sporadically to provide legislation and funds. This elite also had brute power, history and the planning mystique on its side, but even these were only tools, effectively manipulated to forward what was essentially a result of the unshakeable faith of a handful of true believers.

#### **THE CONASUPO FOOD PROGRAM IN MEXICO**

This story is centered on a vast national program, sponsored by a strong authoritarian government and administered by an extensive, well-trained corps of professional bureaucrats. The conflicts which arise during its implementation and the coalitions necessary to confront them are more widespread and less clearly drawn than in the Cauca Valley and require a high degree of political ability on the part of its advocates. We are particularly concerned with the behavior of the mid-echelon administrators whose job it is to coordinate the complex array of political, economic and social interests which determine the programs application at the local level. These implementers are of the new breed, the technocrats, whose authority derives from their organizational legitimacy and their personal expertise. These qualities, however, prove insufficient to get the job done and force them into a position,

not altogether defined, but apparently crucial to functioning effectively in an environment of institutional ambiguity.

CONASUPO is the acronym for Compañia Nacional de Subsistencias Populares, a federal agency established in the 1960's to regulate the pricing of "basic necessities". Its sphere of influence has expanded from basic foods and clothing to include household and school supplies, building materials, toys, farm implements and other items. In addition to its regulatory role, it employs over 8,000 people and consumes over 5% of the national budget in the purchasing, storage, processing and retailing of food staples, through a nation-wide chain of 2,500 fair price stores.<sup>6</sup>

The agency was established to correct what were perceived as serious malfunctions of the market in the distribution and price stability of food staples - an ambitious public intervention made possible only by Mexico's all powerful central regime. Nevertheless, it is not surprising that the agency has encountered constant and determined opposition from a wide range of economic interests with which it competes. Resistance on a broader scale is founded in the disapprobation, if not open contempt, in which public enterprise is held in Mexico, where socially-oriented programs are generally considered the most susceptible to inefficiency, corruption, partisanship and vulnerability to vested interests.<sup>7</sup> The size, and scope of its mandate make CONASUPO an especially attractive target for suspicion and accusation.

The officials most responsible for building the agencies credibility and for assuring its effective operation are its local managers. These mid-level bureaucrats are responsible for overcoming the opposition of local businessmen, accomodating the politicians, garnering the cooperation

of various elites and satisfying the demand of their low-status clientele. They are, of course, constrained by general policy set in the capital and the bureaucratic exigencies of the agency, but have a high degree of autonomy over the allocation of resources, implementation approaches, staffing and dealing with the local power structure.

These individuals hail from the relatively new elite of "tecnicos", a type which is becoming increasingly visible in public administration in Mexico, as elsewhere. CONASUPO has made an effort to build a technically competent staff of administrators with backgrounds in economics, business administration agronomy, accounting, etc. to a substantial depth within the organization, and to function on an approximation of Weberian norms. This is not to imply that friendship, kinship and political ties no longer play a role, but that in themselves, they are insufficient in gaining a position of authority within the agency. Grindle has found that with the exception of the top-most levels of the hierarchy party affiliation seems to have relatively little bearing on staffing.\* Other linkages are more difficult to evaluate in that the tecnicos belong to the same elites that dominate most of public and private life in the country. Still, they possess a new qualification - that of a professional degree - and one which is not common in the environment in which many of them act. Another qualification, and one not normally attributed to their class, is widespread commitment to a socially significant program. If for no other reason than professional advancement they must tend to the demands of the low income population and many display more altruistic motivations.

It is within this context, of influential opposition in a highly politicized environment, that the tecnico, with special knowledge as his

authority, must attempt to operate. One of his first tasks is to establish close working relationships with the local government. The politicians are, of course, interested in using the national program for their own purposes - taking credit for its successes at election time, ingratiating themselves with the party leader's in the capital, and dissociating themselves when its activities conflict with local business interests. They can be helpful too, in advising when and where new stores can be opened with little risk of opposition, who has to be placated, or from which distributor it would be wise to make at least a token purchase.

The CONASUPO manager cannot afford to be arrogant with the provincials despite his representing the federal government. His autonomy carries with it a major responsibility in fomenting political harmony. In the single party regime which governs Mexico the exposure of internal conflict can be very damaging to the careers of politicians and technocrats alike. The system places a heavy burden on the federal agent to resolve local differences, or to at least assure that they are not noticed in the capital.<sup>9</sup>

Another crucial faction he has to cope with is the local business community, especially that which distributes and retails food staples. To them he may well appear to represent subsidized competition and a real threat. It is incumbent upon him to establish dialogue through chambers of commerce and other business associations, to convince them of their mutual interests. He can, for instance, sell them produce from the agency's regulatory reserves at reduced prices, and do it selectively; he can award transportation contracts and he can locate new stores in areas that will have little impact on existing merchants. Primarily he must convince them that CONASUPO is a fact of life and that cooperation



is their wisest policy.

He also has to give at least some satisfaction to his clients. While they have little opportunity, between elections, to articulate their demands, his performance is eventually evaluated on the amount of product he moves. The popular nature of the program has caused information on its objectives to be widely diffused and there is probably no other government program which has created such high expectations, nor one in which the poor have as many allies - the middle class, the national government and organized labor - demanding results.<sup>10</sup>

In attempting to reconcile these often conflicting demands, the CONASUPO administrator is likely to behave more as a political survivor than a technical expert. Much depends on his own career ambitions, ideological stance and to whom he owes his loyalties. Those who are appointed through their connections to the national bureaucracy tend to be most intent on pushing through the agency's current policy, less sensitive to local interests and hindered in their ability to mobilize these interests. Those who gain their position through local political ties may see their future linked more to these than to national priorities. They may have greater facility in dealing with the prevailing power structure, and may in fact represent it, while having more difficulty in maintaining their institutional backing. Both have to recognize the implications of the six-year administrative cycle which revamps the staffing of all bureaucracies, and their "appointee" status, which makes them subject to "release" at any time. Grindle quotes the CONASUPO manager's own evaluation of their position as a highly politicized one in which they are required to curry favor from within and without the organization in promoting their personal ambitions as well as those of the program.<sup>11</sup>

Some appear to achieve a workable balance between career and public interests while others submit to political expediency or corruption, which seriously compromise their effectiveness.

CONASUPO's own ambitious policies contribute to the dilemmas confronting provincial managers. A major, long standing issue within the agency is its determination to provide low-cost food to urban labor while concurrently improving the lot of the rural, food producing, peasant. The program had been consistently dominated by a strong urban bias, when, in the early 1970's it was decided to address the rural problem more aggressively. Local managers were placed in the awkward position of catering to the politically weak, and administratively inefficient source, the small farmer, while maintaining constant low-cost supplies to the cities. In an attempt to circumvent this conflict, a separate agency, the Field Coordination Program was established to mobilize peasants at the village level, that they themselves would articulate demands on CONASUPO from below.<sup>12</sup> The peasants, however, unaccustomed to being invited into the decision-making process and skeptical of any real change in the system they had long been subjected to, saw the new officials as merely one more link in the bureaucratic chain, albeit one to which they had more access, and attempted to employ them as intermediaries in reaching the power structure on any issue. Rather than encouraging grass-roots mobilization, the field managers came to be employed as brokers by the low-income groups. While they were in a position to do some good, assuming their heart was in the right place, they were seriously compromised by their obligations to both client and patron. This seems to be the fate of technocrats in Mexico - an obligation to carry out nationally mandated reform within a political structure which permits little room

for maneuver. The more creative implementers do discover breaches in the system and do make limited progress, but even they are required to expend an inordinate amount of effort in balancing conflicting interests.

Equity, and the mobilization of the forces to achieve it, assumes a somewhat surrealistic quality in the highly centralized, authoritarian and paternalistic political structure of Mexico. While the traditional, concentrated power structures persist, they are increasingly subject to the influence of the politicized technocrats whose behavior appears to be dictated by a different mix of aspirations. They embody a more ambitious, open-minded and professionally oriented spirit than that which has guided the older oligarchies. They may be no more willing to share political power and status, but they do display a determination to achieve greater economic and social equity. Their continuous ascendancy within the governmental hierarchy provides a basis for cautious optimism.

#### **THE PRAIA GRANDE PROGRAM IN NORTHEAST BRAZIL**

This case is intended to illustrate the complexity of interests that come into play in even relatively modest developmental efforts and ones in which the stakes are not clearly perceived. The program's promoters had neither political nor economic power, their loyalties were ambiguous and their support subject to frequent shifts. Opposition too was disorganized, tending to coalesce around suspected, more than actual, threats. The fluidity of the situation provided unique possibilities as well as uniform constraints, requiring a high degree of flexibility on the part of a small group of technocrats determined to sell an untried idea. Their behavior alternated between manipulation and arrogance in what became largely a game of seizing targets of opportunity.

São Luís is the capital city of the state of Maranhão, on Brazil's northeast coast approximately where the semi arid Northeast meets the Amazon rain forest. It passed through French and Dutch hands before becoming the administrative, and commercial, seat of a Portuguese province the size of Western Europe. During the 17th and 18th centuries it became the thriving center of export for the sugar and cotton of the region and one of the continent's richest and most beautiful cities - "La Ville des Petits Palais de Porcelain" in the words of a prominent 19th century French visitor and in reference to the abundance of porcelain tile faced buildings.<sup>13</sup>

With the abolition of slavery in the 1880's, heavy competition from the Caribbean and other factors, Maranhão's economy entered a continuous downward spiral. Plantation owners took to poetry and politics, living off investments outside the province, as cash crops gave way to subsistence farming of rice and mandioc. The last textile mill closed in the 1950's. While Maranhão was reduced to the poorest of Brazil's poor northeastern states, São Luís acquired the distinction of the country's only major city to retain a downtown of unadulterated colonial architecture - a combination of misery and decaying beauty. UNESCO had recognized the fact and twice presented recommendations for restoring the historic central core; the federal government declared a 50 hectare tract to be national patrimony and thus protected from physical alteration. To no avail; the physical as well as the economic deterioration continued. In 1978 an itinerant American architect, under the auspices of the State Secretary of Planning prepared a proposal which emphasized the economic and social, as well as the cultural, potential of the most thoroughly deteriorated area.<sup>14</sup> Prompted by the publicity this proposal received in

Southern Brazil, the Governor convened a panel of national experts to recommend approaches; a commission was composed of the representatives of seven federal, state and municipal agencies to define policy and a task force of technocrats established to coordinate design and implementation. The state, as sponsor, was interested in attracting federal funds for any reason and this program seemed to have some possibilities: cultural preservation, infrastructure, port improvements and tourism, as well as placating a persistent clamor from the intellectual community that something be done to preserve Praia Grande, as the old central city, adjacent to the waterfront, was called.

The experts went home, the Governor turned to more pressing matters and the commission members, who didn't share great common interests, or much mutual respect wither, felt that the Planning Secretary, who had initiated the whole thing, should assume the major responsibility. He, in turn, had been more or less badgered into assuming the initiative by the original promoters, now the task force, and felt he had fulfilled his obligations for the time being. This left the task force with a green light to proceed, but without any real authority, funding or support from above.

In the mean time resistance had been building. The intellectual-cultural elite which had come to view Praia Grande its own particular province objected to the program's being housed in the Secretary of Planning rather than their own Secretary of Culture, and suspected that economic objectives would dominate preservationist ones. Further criticism centered in the university, where self-proclaimed marxists, after 15 years of harsh suppression, were beginning to feel sufficiently secure to condemn any initiative of the government and especially one which

involved low-income groups such as the tenement dwellers of Praia Grande. The business community, whose aspiration was to see the area razed and rebuilt, was skeptical of the government's ability to do much good, or harm, but curious to see what the outside technocrats might propose and property owners, absentee landlords for the most part, perceived a possibility of unloading their unprofitable holdings on the state. The local population of poor tenants, artisans, prostitutes and small businessmen had heard the story too often in the past to pay much attention. On the whole, though there was little overt conflict, cynicism and suspicion ran high.

The task force, left to its own devices and aware that the initial enthusiasm, publicity and flowery speeches lacked much substance, attempted to design a strategy. Its principal members were out-of-town professionals, committed to the program for its social challenge and profoundly disdainful of the institutional environment of which they were now a part. They were intent to avoid becoming one more ineffectual bureaucracy or the tool of any faction; something of a "fifth column" mentality prevailed.

The group began to operate on three distinct levels. First, its survival depended on satisfying the requirements of the bureaucracy to which it nominally belonged, which meant going through the motions of preparing schedules, budgets, progress reports, etc. and not causing embarrassment to the Secretary. Second, it had to discover and cultivate potential sources of funding. State and municipal agencies could hardly meet their own operating budgets and the federal ministries were perceived to be so thoroughly politicized and ineffectual as to be of dubious use. The parastatal corporations, dominated by competent technocrats and with considerable discretion in allocating resources, proved more

receptive. The task force prepared a portfolio of projects addressed to the parastatals with jurisdiction over transportation, tourism, ports and housing. Third, it was necessary to build a reliable constituency, both within and without the institutional framework, to sustain what promised to be a long-term undertaking. Attempts were made to divert and to co-opt the opposition which had surfaced, to draw out any which hadn't and to articulated potential gains to various interest groups. In this task, being outsiders provided some particular attributes to the task force. On the one hand, they were considered dedicated and technically competent and afforded exceptionally free access to all local factions; on the other, they were assumed to be politically naïve and their motivation difficult to discern - it just didn't figure that they were as disinterested as they claimed. It is more reassuring to know where the man stands, even if (or especially if) he's a scoundrel.

Credibility began to build with implementation of the first physical projects - a public square, street paving and sanitation, improvements to the passenger port, all financed by the transportation parastatal. These projects were very visible, obviously of public interest and sufficiently respectful of the architectural patrimony to allay fears of special interest and cultural insensitivity. They also served to stimulate a degree of boosterism among some of the initial non-believers and of confidence within the task force, which set it on an aggressive course of expanding its sphere of influence.

It gave up any pretense of sub-ordination to an inoperative Policy Commission and abandoned its coordinating role to initiate, design and direct the implementation of specific projects - construction, training, community mobilization, by whatever means presented themselves. The

results were gratifying. Resources began to materialize from a variety of sources, critics joined the effort, or focussed on other issues, and some of the skeptics came aboard to claim a piece of the action.

The task force thought itself to be acting with great audacity and was surprised to encounter virtually no resistance from those whose spheres of competence it was invading. Granted, it was doing their work, made efforts to keep them informed of the progress of "their" projects and careful to see that they shared in the credits. Apparently the outsiders were not perceived as a political threat. Still, they were taken off guard when the Secretary of National Historic and Artistic Patrimony, whose agency's financial contribution was nil and with whom relations had been particularly strained, graciously accepted congratulations on the program and publicly cited it as "the most important program in terms of an architectural complex, underway in Brazil."<sup>15</sup> Hyperbole notwithstanding, the backers of Praia Grande felt redeemed.

It is difficult to identify a single dominant power group in this case. The cultural elite made the strongest claims of proprietorship and it definitely enjoyed a position of very high status within São Luís society. But it proved ineffectual in moving from rhetoric to action, except through its lower, younger and more highly politicized faction, which eventually came to identify more with the program's social concerns than with orthodox architectural restoration. The older, more erudite elite appears to be on the wave, along with some other traditional powers, such as the "river bank colonel" political chieftains and the urban merchant bourgeoisie, which are becoming anachronisms in contemporary Maranhão. Still, while they are relatively impotent to act, they retain considerable ability to impede action.



Undoubtedly the most decisive individual in the state was the Governor. With the rural oligarchy in decline and no industrial elite to speak of, economic and political matters were very dependent on the national government party which he represented. He, however, faced challenges from within the party and adopted a very tight, personalized administrative style which required getting his ear on even minor issues. The program came to rely heavily on his wife as its most effective conduit. Beyond his final authorization, neither the Governor nor his bureaucracy were of much help in formulating decisions. This depended largely on the ability of the task force to mobilize pressures, from within and without the community and to articulate an issue to the point where as simple "yes" or "no" was required. That they had no political clout, but they had the mobility of their cause, the mystique of their expertise and their apparent political disinterest to give them credibility among a variety of potential allies, including the press, the parastatals and the businessmen. Acceptance by these elites, who had no overriding stake in the program, provided the status necessary for the task force to act as a legitimate catalyst for coalition building among those groups with more direct interests in Praia Grande. These, the cultural elite, the marxist sociologists, the low income residents were capable of commitment to specific components, which were sometimes antagonistic, but not to the overall program.

The experience of this case confirms that urban development programs are, above all, complex political processes and ones in which authority, legitimacy and commitment may be derived from various, even conflicting, sources. It also demonstrates that the social forces operative in present day Latin America are sufficiently

heterogeneous to provide opportunities for positive intervention in longstanding problems.

## CHAPTER IV

### MOBILIZATION: EXPLOITING OPPORTUNITY

It bears stressing that our intent is not to devise formulas for inducing dramatic societal change - to propose a new developmental paradigm - nor to suggest that unrepresentative power structures are doomed by the tide of history. (Even the word "commitment" may be over-ambitious in describing the process we envision.) Rather than seeking radical modifications of behavior, our intent, to resort once more to Hirschman's wisdom, is "to show how a society can begin to move forward, as it is, in spite of what it is and because of what it is,"<sup>1</sup> to discover where among the conditions and attitudes which seem impervious to progress, there exist positive dimensions which can be stimulated and put to productive use. Warwick, in building on the work of Hirschman and Waterston, has developed his "transactional approach" along similar lines. In dispelling what he calls the "myths of planning," he emphasizes the political role of planners, their necessity to interact with the society in which they function and the value of their ability to mobilize "whether through a hiding hand or a gun to the head, unanticipated allies, resources and energies along the way."<sup>2</sup>

This approach has its risks. As in the case of the CONASUPO local managers, there is the temptation to become too politicized, too immediatist, to allow means to dictate ends. It may also give rise to arrogance, the satisfaction which comes from manipulating unwilling actors, from usurping undefended spheres of influence and from colluding with disdained interests, as happened to some degree in Praia Grande. Above all, it's a messy process, one inimical to the planning psyche.

It requires the constant judgement of ambiguous situations and individuals, decisions based often more on intuition than on fact or theory, the self assurance to establish limits to compromise, and the agility to exploit breaches in the system.

If one accepts development as essentially a political process, however, and one in which values are not universal, this approach assumes its own rationality. Although the values vary, there does appear to be a range of methods which have general applicability and it is in their employment that we see grounds for optimism.

## **PRESENTATION**

"Presentation" may strike us as uncomfortably close to "propaganda" and "advertising" and thus beneath the dignity of serious consideration, but it would be foolish to underestimate the long-term effects on a program of how it is initially perceived by the community to which its directed. First impressions, negative and erroneous ones, can become so firmly entrenched as to resist subsequent rational evidence mounted to dispel them. The CONASUPO program was launched with the fanfare required to display strong federal government commitment and to build supportive pressure from below; the limited opposition which was generated was less significant, and in any case well founded and inevitable. In the Cauca Valley, on the other hand the progressives unveiled their scheme with unnecessary arrogance. Their interests might have been better served by diligent behind-the-scenes negotiation than by the blatant boosterism which virtually challenged the large owners to defend their traditional, honor-bound stance on property rights.

In Praia Grande, the programs promoters, confident in their backing

by the state government, felt little compulsion to court the approval of the cultural and academic elites, whose support they took for granted and who subsequently caused them so much inconvenience. Initial efforts were directed toward finding a sponsor and in their concentration on committing the Secretary of Planning the program's promoters relied heavily on outside pressures (perhaps due to being outsiders themselves) at the expense of cultivating local elites. They published an elaborate proposal, rich in photographs, maps and sketches and distributed it to the national press. When a full page article in Rio's major newspaper, lauding the proposal, appeared in São Luís, local interest galvanized and the Governor convened a "Convention on Praia Grande", to which he invited nationally recognized intellectuals, who provided a legitimacy much superior to that of the state government and one the local elites were obliged to respect. The respect was grudging, however, fraught with resentment and jealousy, and caused of a great deal of confusion and delay in the initial phases of the program. The promoters would have been shrewd to have been more generous in sharing the limelight with those who considered themselves the traditional patrons of Praia Grande.

While the initial "selling" of a program may well require some showmanship it is wise to be informed of the audience. Too often, developmental endeavors are limited to a dialogue between believers and believers - technocrats to technocrats or bankers to finance ministers. Some of those ignored may unnecessarily become effective adversaries. Planners are well advised to heed the ability of politicians to adjust their presentation to the concerns of those being addressed, to distinguish between those who supply resources, grant authority, provide the "elbow grease." This is not to suggest duplicity, but sensitivity to

the wide range of valid aspirations which urban interventions engage.

### **BUILDING COALITIONS**

In identifying "who counts" at the local level during a program's implementation, Warwick cites two major categories. The "gatekeepers" are those whose approval is required before any action can be taken.<sup>3</sup> They may be recognized formally or not and their approval may be explicit or not. The group includes government organizations, numerous elites and individuals who may not be readily recognized as power-brokers. Identifying gatekeepers in a provincial setting can be a daunting but crucial task to an outside technocrat. The other category is that of the "implementors", those who actually carry out the job. They have little formal decisionary power and often no authority, but neither are they mere delegates of the gatekeepers. They have their own interests and motivations and ample opportunity, in institutionally precarious situations, to distort the intentions of the givers of authority. Coalitions between them and between individual implementors and gatekeepers, as well as between gatekeepers, becomes the cement that bonds the program. The implementors, through their more direct involvement and through their ability to manipulate information, are frequently in a strong position to determine which bonds shall be formed and which shall operate. Peattie has shown how even low-status beneficiaries, squatters in Caracas, manage to collude with low level officials to thwart the policy of higher level authorities and Hirschman's "wily reformer", in Colombia, was able to maneuver the highest authority behind his own purpose in an alliance of very odd bedfellows. There, radical proponents of land reform aligned themselves with the Finance Minister's desire to improve the

country's balance of payments through more efficient agricultural production. In the process they acquired support for organizing peasant leagues whose influence went far beyond the central government's intentions.<sup>5</sup>

Praia Grande provides an instance where those most interested in its success began with no coalitions or constituency of any kind. The nominal sponsor, the Secretary of Planning, performed only the most perfunctory gatekeeping duties while the rest of the community appeared to be waiting to see what would happen. Coalition building began on two fronts: with the parastatals from whom resources were sought and with the cultural elite whose approval, which was being withheld, was essential. The former were visited in their headquarters and supplied with a continuous stream of specific proposals directed to their area of competence. Personal relationships formed on common technical concerns and mutual condemnation of political expediency and bureaucratic incompetence. This was a "rational" technocrat to technocrat relationship.

The cultural aristocracy was approached indirectly through the younger staff of the Secretary of Culture, a "New Bohemian" element, patrons of the city's rich Afro-European-Amerindian popular culture and with access to the old guard and to the university. Their attitude towards the program was ambiguous, curious about what it might mean for the musicians, artisans and spiritual cultists of the area, but disinterested in restoring old facades and frankly suspicious of the potential for gentrification. Gaining their confidence, and eventual collaboration was largely a process of establishing personal rapport over innumerable beers in modest bars, displaying an interest in local folklore and providing

assurances that neither IBM nor the CIA had any involvement in the program. The coalition which eventually materialized was a horizontal one of technical and cultural functionaries, but one which got the task force in the door of two important pyramids - that of the real cultural elite and that of the vociferous radical intellectual one.

While horizontal alliances may be sustainable over long periods, vertical ones, especially ones which transcend hierarchies, appear much more subject to temporal factors. Anthony Downs proposes a five stage "attention cycle" to describe how societies confront issues over time: a pre-problem stage in which the issue is ignored, or considered unsolvable; then a euphoric phase in which a solution is discovered and enthusiastically promoted; followed by the realization that it goes against influential interests which are in a position to thwart it; then public interest fades, leaving the issue to languish in the hands of a few die-hards; and finally a post-problem stage where the effort is largely ignored, but accepted, and quiet progress can be made.<sup>6</sup> These stages and their effect on the composition of coalitions are evident in the three cases reviewed. The early enthusiasm of the Cauca Valley boosters and their foreign champions ran into heavy opposition from the landed gentry, subsided into a lower keyed phase of consolidating their position with national government support and eventually proceeded under a variety of temporary coalitions with the university, private associations and federal agencies. Even CONASUPO, despite its ostentatious national party sponsorship, became subject to shifting alliances at the national level as implementation progressed and dependent on whatever support mid-level administrators could muster within individual communities. In São Luís the excitement of press coverage and national convention which



launches the program also coalesced the latent opposition. It became necessary to form new associations, to broaden the base beyond the technical-administrative middle ground in which it was conceived.

Early efforts to reach down proved frustrating. Meetings with public market vendors to plan the rehabilitation of their facility produced only skepticism; the time was not ripe, elections were too far off. A slide presentation of the program's objectives to 40 aging prostitutes put most of them to sleep, they felt they were being lectured by missionaries. A "June Festival" fair intended to mobilize the low-income tenants was received as just that: beer, dancing and carnival rides, with no lasting impact. These groups were all eventually engaged, but only after they had witnessed concrete results and had been presented convincing proposals addressed to their own specific perceived needs.<sup>7</sup>

Help from above came through unexpected channels. The head of state Corporation of Tourism was probably the most effective official involved in the program (she was later dubbed "the Godmother of Praia Grande"). Dona Zelinda is a very forceful woman, well connected socially and determined to impose her will on the macho environment of Maranhense public administration. She obviously enjoyed advising the out-of-town technocrats and aggressively championed their cause. Through her mediation the Governor's wife was brought into the act, and between the two of them, the Governor was maneuvered into commitments beyond what could have been expected otherwise, and browbeaten by the women into living up to them.

The sources of fruitful coalitions may not always be apparent, nor their reliability once established. It seems prudent to assume however that those determined by the organization charts of developmental programs -

those chains of technocrats and politicians that lead from donor agencies through ministries to ever lower administrative bureaucracies - provide at most a skeleton to be fleshed out with the local powers which make things happen. It is also apparent that some alliances provide the broad legitimacy required to sustain an endeavor through its various stages, while quite different, often temporary, ones are essential to implementing particular tasks. In either case expert knowledge and moral conviction are no doubt useful prerequisites for those who seek to consolidate commitment, but much depends on the rapport brought about through mutual respect, a sensitivity to unshared aspiration, the willingness to listen. In this regard, perhaps the most effective role of the reformer is to serve as a catalyst for the creative forces already present in the community, a focus for assembling and articulating latent capabilities.

### **OVERCOMING OPPOSITION**

Important as the building of support through coalitions is, overcoming resistance, whether it is founded or not, may be a more taxing and often critical activity. Those businessmen who opposed CONASUPO had rational grounds for doing so, at least in the short run. Their market was effected and any benefits they may have realized from improved food production and distribution were doubtful. The landowners in the Cauca Valley seemed less reasonable. They could sell off non-productive land for more than the cost of taxation if industrialization were to intensify; they could have seen themselves as potential beneficiaries of urbanization. Yet their resistance to the development corporation was relentless, because deep-rooted class prerogatives were at stake. In

Praia Grande, opposition was more subtle. No one could openly attack the preservation of the national heritage (except perhaps for descendents of slaves, but what reservations they expressed were to make a point of principle, not to impede progress) and in fact this aspect of the program provided a sort of halo which kept more pragmatic objectors, such as property owners and Rotary Club boosters for modernization, at bay. Opposition was based more on questions of prestige, acknowledged authority and traditional spheres of competence. The cultural elites were not pleased to see the Secretary of Planning, an entity entrusted with promoting industrial investment and agricultural productivity, bring in outsiders to interfere in their baliwick. They expressed their reservations in highly critical articles in several of the six dailies of the town (one of each major political faction). The attack was centered in the Departments for History and Sociology of the Federal University. Here, the Planning Secretary's political astuteness proved invaluable. Although the state had its own welfare and research entities, he publicly invited the two university departments to join the project, with responsibility for social policy and historical research. Refusal would have been awkward for the university, which has been expressing interest in trying its hand at the real world, and so the two departments became members of the program's Commission in a neat instance of neutralizing the opposition through incorporation.

Opportunities to distract trouble-makers may also be exploited. On several occasions federal preservation authorities expressed concern, and the threat of veto, of projects which failed to incorporate sufficient reverence for orthodox restoration. These threats, which usually would have required substantial increases in budget to pacify, could sometimes

be diverted by calling attention to much more serious depredations of the patrimony occurring elsewhere. A providencial distraction from which the project benefited in several regards was the arrival of ALCOA in Sao Luis. The first of the large industries attracted by the discovery of major mineral deposits in the western Amazon region and São Luís' potential as the only deepwater port in northern Brazil, provided a new focus for those distrustful of the federal and local regimes. The multinational was widely perceived, as an imposition of foreign and southern (Brazil) economic interests, one which would produce extensive environmental damage and stimulate further rural immigration without benefiting the local community.<sup>8</sup> Xenophobia was running high. By comparison, threats to Praia Grande seemed quite innocuous.

Embarrassment, or its threat is another effective, if sometimes risky, means of neutralizing opposition. Many prominent citizens have engaged in activity they would rather not have publicized and there are usually enemies willing to expose them. The major risk is one's own vulnerability to counter exposure and in this regard, the outsider, lacking much local history, may have an advantage. Accusations of undue financial gain may not be very damaging in themselves, but when coupled with a cause to which the accused professes great commitment they can become awkward. In several instances, properties targeted for acquisition by the program changed hands before they could be purchased and were then offered at exorbitant prices. (Disappropriation was a legal alternative to negotiation, but an administratively torturous one). When inside information was suspected and familial ties established, between the recent purchaser and someone involved in the program, the threat to make the linkage public could sometimes reduce the asking price to a reasonable

level. There is evidence of the threat of exposure being employed by Cauca Valley promoters to ensure the solidarity of those colleagues with ties to land interests behind property taxation, and in Mexico to keep politicians in line with government policy.

Money is not the only subject of this tactic. Prestige and vanity can also be operative. The regional director of the federal authority entrusted with historic preservation in São Luís was a political appointee with extreme pretensions to erudition and open contempt for the program and its promoters. He held a veto power over physical interventions in much of the area, and the manner in which his approval was sought was usually more decisive than the subject of approval. The "Carmo Church Steps" is an illustrative example.

The square on which the church fronted was being redesigned to improve traffic and pedestrian circulation and to enlarge leisure areas. The Director had no objections to the design per se, but threatened withholding his approval unless the church access, an elaborate flight of steps, was restored to its "original design", as depicted in a prized early 20th century photograph he owned. The task force tried to dissuade him by pointing out that the older design had no functional advantages (that it had no aesthetic ones, either, they kept to themselves) and would be very costly to replicate. A respected local historian, aware of the debate and sympathetic to the task force brought the group's attention to a 19th century painting which showed an even earlier design, quite similar to the present one. Confronting the Director openly with this evidence of older "originality" would have been undiplomatic, probably forcing him to save face by either questioning the authenticity of the painting or devising some other objection. The solution

was to have him become aware of the painting in an indirect manner, and one in which he couldn't be certain whether his adversaries would ever know of its existence not. He evidently decided it wisest to drop the issue, for it never came up again.

Such manipulative tactics, of course, have little to do with consolidating commitment and may indeed solidify resistance when they backfire. However, officious behavior is still quite prevalent in pre-industrial bureaucracies and one which is often impervious to persuasion or overt coercion. Grindle has described the ingratiating, if not downright obsequious, approach of some CONASUPO managers toward local politicians.<sup>9</sup> Insincere respect may be accepted, or even expected, but it is usually recognized for what it is and more easily exploited by the receiver than the giver. Cooperation granted on the basis of flattery will usually incur a debt repayable in more substantial form. Bullying, on the other hand, while perhaps capable of producing short term results, is likely to cause resentment, repayable in a variety of insidious ways. While personal relationships may be exceptionally important in Latin America, the vain politician and the officious bureaucrat are probably best approached with the detached formality which obviates intimate association.

Recognized expertise can be especially useful in countering opposition in societies where class distinction and authoritarianism prevails, the more distant its source the more deserving of respect. Developmental literature abounds with accounts of imported know-how which didn't work but does little to discredit the mystique. One can hardly speak of economic planning in Latin America without referring to Milton Friedman or the Cauca Valley Development without acknowledging its debt to David

Lilienthal. The initial interest in the Praia Grande proposal was no doubt due in part to the fact it was proposed by a foreign professional. But with time, while he and his colleagues gained the trust of the community, they lost some of it's admiration. It became fruitful to invite respected national and foreign experts to come and to give assurance and, consciously or not, to mediate disputes. Experts from UNESCO told the cultural elite that the preservation of a large architectural complex did not require the absolutely rigorous restoration of every building feature. Sociologists from Sao Paulo convinced the radical that the low-income residents stood a better chance within the program than if left to fend for themselves. Economic planners were persuaded by their more sophisticated colleagues from the capital that the tourism and real estate potential was real. national transportation planners supported plan to restrict vehicular traffic. Out-of-town experts need not be inhibited by local prejudice or politics, so they must be carefully selected.

There may come a time when the only way to silence opposition is to raise one's voice and bang one's shoe on the table. Justification of this method is probably better founded in psychology than in theories of rational organizational behavior and it should certainly not be applied indiscriminately by mid-level technocrats. But there are occasions, in emotionally expressive societies, when prolonged patience may be interpreted as lack of conviction, or a willingness to compromise as cowardice, or when the boundaries of one's authority require affirmation. Such occasions arose in Praia Grande, when the Secretary of Planning's efforts to accommodate dissenters were taken for wavering leadership,

for example. When he became aware of behind-the-scenes maneuvering to transfer the program to another agency, he reacted with a violence that precluded any doubt about his determination to maintain complete and sole control. The task force coordinator too, was challenged, when his propensity to delegate more responsibility than was the custom, was interpreted as disinterest in administrative authority. By the time he became aware of a colleague's preparations to oust him, bureaucratic procedures for the transfer of the position were already in place. A violent and unequivocal reaction on his part reversed the operation immediately, whereas a more tempered attitude would have likely entailed an unsatisfactory compromise. In another instance, the public market vendors, who the task force was treating rather paternalistically in their effort to revitalize the market, were becoming unmanageable. They proved quite adept at manipulating the well-intentioned technocrats through a combination of flattery and insistence on their past mistreatment by officialdom. After reluctantly agreeing to demands which were becoming progressively difficult to justify as public expenditures and unable to convince the vendors of their unreasonableness, the task force stormed out of a joint meeting, implying that the whole market project would be cancelled. The following day, the leaders of the vendor's union appeared to apologize and withdraw their most recent demands.

The violent approach is probably only justified for achieving specific, short term objectives. It also requires that its victims have at least an intuitive awareness that their own position is either unreasonable or untenable, and that their retreat does not preclude more long term goals.



## BY-PASSING CONFRONTATION

Preferable, and usually less taxing than attempting to overcome opposition once it has been articulated, is avoiding it in the first place. There is a natural tendency, and often the need, to seek broad coalitions, but this propensity should not preclude the ability to be selective, to maintain a cautious distance from powerful groups who may prove unresponsive to persuasion and immune to coercion. Unnecessary confrontation with them can be disastrous and positive engagement may afford them the opportunity to distort a program to their own limited interests. It may be wiser to let sleeping dogs lie. Who, and when, to mobilize often requires careful orchestration as a program moves through succeeding stages, effecting different groups and requiring differing forms of support.

Maintaining a low profile toward those one would rather not arouse while attempting to consolidate support for popular, visible social programs is a tricky business. Much depends on convincing the potential opposition that their interests are not affected, that the undertaking is of such a nature, or so insignificant a scale as to pose no threat. The Cauca Valley promoters felt little need to act with restraint and were forced to take the landed gentry head on and at considerable cost. It is doubtful whether they could have avoided this confrontation indefinitely, but is it probable that resistance could have been attenuated by "breaking the news" of land taxation more gradually. CONASUPO, despite its incontestable authority, avoided more serious conflict with business interests by opening its first stores in areas where it would not be aggressively competitive with private stores. When it came to addressing peasant concerns it acted with discretion, establishing a separate entity and attempting to stimulate grass roots demand, rather than con-

front traditional rural elites directly. The Praia Grande group felt compelled to keep even potential allies, such as the business community, at arm's length out of fear of their ability to usurp the program. Assistance from the well-endowed State Secretary of Public Works was also declined until the group felt confident in its ability to control the interventions of the agency, which had long alienated the cultural elite through its gross insensitivity to the architectural heritage of the area. This elite, in both its local and national components, had made it clear that it would not be circumvented. It required careful nurturing, through the initial implementation of modest urbanization projects which didn't threaten its area of concern to progressively more ambitious ones.

To the extent that one cannot escape the attention of unwanted powers, it may be feasible to convince them that one represents their interests. Thus, for instance, foreign fundamentalist missionaries are tolerated among Brazil's Amazon Indians. Though they are the subject of widespread suspicions, and open contempt on the part of National Indian Agency anthropologists, their willingness to teach Portuguese to the natives and to instruct them on the evils of communism guarantees their welcome by the agency's conservative military leadership. The Cauca Valley progressives assured themselves an unusual degree of autonomy by assuming the national government's role in promoting economic development on a large scale. While it didn't generate consistent federal support, it achieved the industrialists' interest of keeping the bumbling bureaucracy from interfering. It does not seem overly cynical to propose that even as worthwhile an undertaking as CONASUPO was motivated, to some extent, by the governments' need to confirm its representation of urban labor and to neutralize a potential focus for unrest. On a more modest scale, the

Praia Grande task force did eventually manage to convince radicals, intellectuals and businessmen that it had their interests at heart; by keeping the interests separated, as well as the groups themselves, major conflict was minimized. In this case, the interests themselves were not so much circumvented, as their interaction. The antagonism which had characterized meetings of the Coordinating Commission, in which all groups had participated, diminished with the quite dissolution of the Commission and subsequent filtering of communications through the task force. This shouldn't, of course, be taken as a condemnation of efforts to promote dialogue between different interests, but that, lacking strong, commonly - perceived objectives such interaction may be counterproductive.

When it becomes impossible to either disengage or convincingly represent an inopportune faction it may still be possible to reduce their negative impact by inducing a third party to confront them, to do one's "dirty work". The Praia Grande group frequently felt itself trapped in a no-mans-land between intellectuals, politicians and business where open conflict with any of them could be very harmful. One such instance revolved about a proposed new fishing port. This facility promised a substantial World Bank loan, which the state government was very interested in securing. The port was to be sited some distance from the city and designed to accommodate a (largely future) modern commercial fishing fleet, but its justification required that the traditional coastal fleet also be relocated there. The latter, composed of several hundred small sailing vessels currently docked, sold its catch and was serviced in Praia Grande, a much more convenient anchorage. The task force was made to feel downright disloyal to the State when it objected to the eviction of the fishing fleet and that it was jeopardizing an important investment. Alerting the national cultural agency of the proposal relieved them of

the awkward position. Its director raised sufficient ruckus in the capital to kill the plan with no implications on the task force. This was not a typical client patron relationship, in which services are exchanged through a pyramidal hierarchy. The two agencies, federal authority and local task force, were in fact quite antagonistic. Nevertheless they had a common interest in which the more powerful entity could be induced to take up the battle of the weaker, sparing it an inconvenient engagement. Even when mutual concerns are not that apparent, more influential groups, or individuals, can often be enticed into entering a fray, if only to demonstrate their own authority or to weaken an adversary.

Why powerful groups chose to align themselves with specific endeavors is often difficult to access. It is noteworthy, for instance, that neither the Church nor the military feature prominently in the cases reviewed. One might have expected the Church to actively support the CONASUPO program, or conservative generals to come to the aid of the beleaguered land owners of the Cauca Valley. Part of the explanation is probably the ability of these groups to control, or at least strongly influence, the conditions which allow development programs to flourish, rather than to enter the action directly. Yet, to view them as all-powerful, behind-the-scenes puppet masters is too simplistic. It seems more likely that their agendas contain sufficient scope to accommodate a broad range of activity, but that, as a body, they are moved to intervene only when major threats to the social order materialize. If they become involved in lesser matters it is generally as individuals, or small factions. While their power certainly shouldn't be underestimated they appear to allow for considerable latitude for substantial, partial or no engagement and largely at the discretion of more direct decision-makers.

## SUSTAINING COMMITMENT

Mobilizing the enthusiasm to undertake a program and maintaining it mobilized long enough to get the job done are two very different tasks. As Downs' "attention cycle" analysis points out, many come forth to offer their praise for the launching of a new enterprise only to disappear when the drudgery of putting it together, piece by piece, begins. "Revolutions are not made by dramatic speeches before cheering crowds, but through long nights of grinding the mimeograph", it has been said. Politicians are, of course, particularly adept at rationing their effort to its immediately realizable benefits and of inspiring others to take on the work but technocrats and academics are no slouches at avoiding hard work, either and to the businessman its the essence of effective management.

Thus the structuring of the Cauca Valley Development Corporation was largely due to the efforts of one man. He had an enthusiastic cheering section, sometimes too enthusiastic, but when it came to the tedious process of badgering the government into enabling legislation and initial funding they were content to cheer from the sidelines. Later in the program, when initiative lagged, it became the task of small groups of young progressives to inject new momentum. Even the Mexican program with strong backing from the national regime became periodically dependent on a few dedicated individuals to prod it forward.

Praia Grande went through its stage of euphoria, with ample press coverage, convention of intellectuals and attention from the Governor, then sank into quasi-oblivion. part of the reason is the way in which state administrations are structured in Maranhão. As planning has come into vogue, each governor-elect undertakes to devise his four-year

plan - in our case, the "Joao Castelo Government." In the months between election and inauguration he assembles panels of politicians and professionals anxious for a position in his administration, to produce sectoral plans: transportation, housing, sanitation, agriculture, etc. Capital projects are then divided into three groups. "Impact projects" are those calculated to have the greatest potential for popular appeal, those counted on to produce votes in the next election, to project the Governor to a seat in the senate. They have his constant personal support and will receive funding priority, no matter what. Castelo's prime impact project was a new stadium and sports complex (popularly dubbed the "Castelão", Big Castle, in a play on his name). It took a large chunk of the State's budget, was of questionable utility and its construction scandal-ridden, but it was inaugurated during his senatorial campaign and he won the election. The next category, in order of priority, are "Basic Infrastructure Projects": major roads, sanitation networks, irrigation and the like. These are usually subject to substantial federal financing and entrusted to state sectoral agencies, headed by politicized technocrats. At the bottom of the list are "Obligations" to localized or special interest groups - a municipal hospital, water supply to a new subdivision, or a wharf for the fishing fleet - and Praia Grande, - an obligation to the cultural elite. These projects are postponed as long as possible or partially satisfied when demands became sufficiently intense. The task force argued that theirs was an "Impact" project, that the whole city harbored deep affection for Praia Grande, that the entire nation was concerned for its fate. The Governor agreed, slapped them on the back, and told them go to it - with whatever funds they could get from the federal government. They sought help from their direct boss, the Secretary of Planning. He made vague promises; after all, he

had a large portfolio of "basic infrastructure" to attend to.

It was apparent that stage two, "euphoria", had run its course. The initial boosters, the politicians, had achieved their major objective of displaying to the intellectual elite their concern for the cultural patrimony, cheaply. If the issue died there, it might be just as well, since the client was voicing objections to the proposed approach and further action might only excite his ire. He could probably be satisfied, for the time being, with a forum for expressing his own views.

The task force, anxious to maintain what momentum had been generated, sought support elsewhere. It attempted to reach the Secretary of Culture through its budding rapport with some of his staff. His response was sympathetic, almost too much so. Unbeknownst to them, or any one else, he negotiated with the Governor to take over the program. When the Secretary of Planning was belatedly consulted, he reacted violently (the deal was complicated by the involvement of a European commercial development group representing by the Governor's chief of staff), his autonomy impinged. The task force managed to use the incident to secure more staff, work space and a minimal operating budget. The small gambit was employed two more times, by now with the sly collusion of the task force, when getting the Secretary's attention proved difficult. As neglected wives have long known, the coveting of ones possessions by others can provide a most persuasive incentive to affirm one's own commitment.

The timing of activity is an obvious, but frequently underappreciated, factor in any program. The constraints imposed by the "sexenio" administrative cycles in Mexico have been mentioned, as well as the futility of approaching special interests in Praia Grande before cir-

cumstances were ripe. Political campaigns undoubtedly provide one of the most fruitful opportunities for solidifying support, if one in which it is essential to distinguish between the usefulness of immediate gain and promises of dubious reliability. Praia Grande reached "impact project" status in such a situation. A year before national elections, the Governor, who would be running for the Senate, and the Secretary of Planning for Congress on the government party ticket, were becoming sensitive to the substantial opposition which was beginning to coalesce in the capital. Radicals, who has resisted the program, had become assured that it was not the scheme of outside commercial interests nor of any particular local businesses and directed their criticism towards other activities associated with the government party and against Alcoa. The task force, following tactics devised by the First Lady, convinced the Governor that a strong display of commitment to the program would enhance his image to the socially and culturally concerned intelligencia, provide opportunities for demogoguery, and attract some national press, without offending anyone; and at lost cost; but that time was running out. His condition was that six projects - renovation of the market, a cultural center, a hotel, a park, a hostel for indigents and a primary school - all be concentrated in one small area and be simultaneously ready for inauguration in 11 months. The task force recklessly assured him of the feasibility of his plan and began a period of intense activity.

(Though far from complete at the end of his campaign, there was sufficient visible progress to provide a suitable setting for speech-making and popular festivity.) While this commitment evaporated on election day, it had provided sufficient impact to sustain the program through the inevitable reshuffling of priorities of the new administration.



This instance also relied, to a degree on the potential of inter-regional pressure. The Governor, in entering national politics, was conscious of the necessity to overcome his image as a provincial bumpkin. Though Praia Grande was far from being a national issue, it was photogenic and capable of arousing a response in the progressive south where the architectural heritage has largely been obliterated. It could attract media coverage and promote the Governor as a man of culture. In a country as large as Brazil, and where communications technology has far outpaced regional economic equity, television especially has become a potent integrating force and one which politicians at all levels use to effect. Images of deteriorating colonial mansions impressed viewers in São Paulo more than ones of the soccer stadium or road paving, even if their facades were partially obliterated with campaign posters; and some of the coverage materialized into national media interest.

Hirschman has emphasized the role played by remote elites in prodding provincial development, how, when they represent more advanced regions and when their own immediate interests are not at stake, they often assume positions of authority and paternalism toward their more backward cousins. Thus southern elites have generally been the promoters of irrigation schemes and rational land use in Brazil's drought-prone Northeast, while the local landed oligarchy has been reluctant to support any endeavor which might upset the status quo. In Columbia, too what land reform has taken place in the provinces has been largely due to the pressures of urban groups intent on achieving greater agricultural efficiency and a national balance of trade. More ideological reformers were able to employ this distant interest in furthering their local

purposes.<sup>8</sup> The immediate value of external support may not always be apparent, but its relative immunity to the ebb and flow of local interests gives it the ability to sustain a program over difficult or dormant periods, and advances in communication technology provide new opportunities for stimulating it.

At the opposite end of the support structure is the often small core of true believers whose commitment may be taken for granted, but even their motivations may be quite varied - faith in the enterprise may be dependent on its potential for acquiring influence, promoting one's career or more noble ends, but which nevertheless require periodic payment. Successes are undoubtedly stimulating and opposition can be useful forging internal bonds, but stagnation can generate the frustration which gives rise to dissension, the questioning of approach, of leadership or of objectives. The complex and lengthy nature of urban development programs provides ample opportunity for frustration, and those committed for idealistic, rather than for financial reasons are likely to be the more easily discouraged or induced into rash actions. On such occasions it is probably wise to devise internal tasks, preparatory to future endeavors and geared to the interests of particular participants, or to make oneself useful to other related activities which at least assure a justification for one's continued mobilization. Praia Grande was subject to several prolonged lapses in activity and dependent on the continuous motivation of a small, heterogeneous core of impatient activists. During interruptions in the program, the marxists went off to interview slum dwellers, the historian to advise an out-of-town research team, the engineer to assist the municipality on a traffic problem. While these activities weren't directly related to the current

work, they contributed to maintaining morale as well as to cementing outside relations and building a portfolio of projects which could be called forth as opportunities for their development appeared. One advantage of the institutional fragility of provincial administrative bureaucracies is the flexibility afforded to circumvent rigidly proscribed responsibilities in adapting to the necessities of the circumstance.

This catalogue of methods for building commitment is far from complete, the range of motivations from financial gain to power, status, loyalty, honor, trust and altruism too vast to allow for a comprehensive treatment here. The intent has been to display, through reason and example, that even those societies which have been characterized as rigidly controlled and unresponsive to any but the most obviously self-serving stimuli offer a variety of opportunities for positive manipulation, if not drastic reform, by the perceptive advocate.

## CONCLUSION

If one accepts that the course of events is not entirely dependent on the whim of impish gods, or on the nefarious machinations of a few dour old men, it requires no great leap in faith to conclude that international donor agencies and remote national governments, too, have only limited control over populations they seek to influence. While their own behavior often appears to ignore this state of affairs, development planning experience tends to confirm it. This thesis has been structured on the positivist convictions that people do have a substantial say in their own destinies, that they respond to a wide array of stimuli and that while these include advocates of development, they are most effectively motivated within the context of their own environment and on their own terms. It has attempted to develop a pragmatic approach for employing some of the more recent trends in developmental policy, namely flexibility, participation and decentralized decision-making, in inducing local forces to promote change in traditional Latin American societies.

A basic precondition, it would seem evident, is that programs be founded on widely-shared and unassailable aspirations. They need not have universal support, but should possess a moral authority which shields them from substantial, overt criticism. The more efficient distribution of subsistence food in Mexico, for instance, though it affected powerful business interests, could not be openly attacked. Industrial growth in the Cauca Valley was, at the time, accepted as the most valid of developmental objectives. In São Luis there may have been reservations about the economic wisdom of the undertaking and about the intentions of its pro-

motors, but the professed goal of protecting the revered cultural patrimony provided a "halo" over the program which brought differing interest groups together and kept effective opposition at bay. The ability of a program to capture, and to link, a broad spectrum of interests to a common concern appears to be a basic qualification for viability.

Beneath this protective umbrella one can identify several operative forms of commitment. There is the official authority, granted usually by some level of government. It may, or may not, assure credibility depending on how the entity is perceived by the community. Then there is the legitimacy which can only be bestowed by widely acknowledged arbiters of value, those above suspicion. They may be loved or feared but most important is that their blessing commands respect. There are also the more limited, direct interests whose commitment is required, if only temporarily, to carry out specific tasks. These may be subject to differing even conflicting, incentives or openly antagonistic, in which case means must be devised to neutralize their ill-effect. Finally there is a core of dedicated advocates whose determination, perhaps more than any substantive power, propels the endeavor through opposition and apathy. Their persistence may count for more than numbers, something close to obsession which allows them to subvert every circumstance to their noble cause. It would seem to be the positive interaction of these different forms of commitment which drives a complex program forward.

In pre-industrial societies, with ineffectual institutions, critical support is likely to be situated more without than within the established bureaucracies. Persuasion and coercion may become more operative than "rational" argument and these societies may also present more

heterogeneous and less organized concentrations of power, providing opportunities to cultivate a range of interests which transcend elitist structures. Furthermore, where personal reputation counts more than institutional representation, the adherence of a few individuals may be sufficient to achieve limited objectives.

It is not our intention to imply that progress in Latin America depends entirely on the application of ad hoc solutions to modest objectives by scheming advocates. We do find, however, that the ambitious policies and highly trained professionals which determine the thrust of developmental planning are of limited relevance outside the contextual reality of the communities to which they are directed and that despite glaring inequities and high concentrations of power there is effective capability at the local level, and ample opportunity to motivate it behind efforts to induce positive change.

NOTES

I. THE CONTEXT: DEVELOPMENT PLANNING TRENDS

1. Albert O. Hirschman, Essays In Trespassing, p. 23.
2. Paul Streeten, Development Perspectives; John Grant, Disparity Reduction Rates in Social Indicators; M.D. Morris, Measuring the Conditions of the World's Poor.
3. Amartya Sen, "Development Which Way Now?" Sen emphasizes his point in a comparison of income distribution versus entitlement in contemporary India and China.
4. Octavio Paz, Mexican poet and social commentator, quoted by John W. Thomas in Some Definitions of Development, unpublished paper, Harvard University, 1982.
5. Lester B. Pearson, Partners in Development, and Sir Robert Jackson, A Study of the United Nations Development System are two of the most authoritative accounts of development planning experience from World War II through the 1960's.
6. The World Bank, Learning By Doing, a review of the Bank's urban development experience between 1972 and 1982.
7. Ibid., p. 24.
8. Naomi Caiden and Aaron Wildavsky, Planning and Budgeting in Poor Countries.
9. Albert O. Hirschman, Development Projects Observed.
10. Cheryl Mattingly, Lisa Peattie and Don Schoen, Urban Practice in the Bank, unpublished report of an eight month study of the behavior of the World Bank's Urban Projects staff.
11. Dennis Rondinelli, "International Assistance Policy and Development Administration."
12. World Bank, opus cit., p. 25.
13. Ibid.
14. S.G. Cheema and D. Rondinelli, Implementing Decentralization Programmes in Asia.
15. Ibid.

## II. THE ACTORS: URBAN POWER STRUCTURES

1. Richard Fagan and Wayne Cornelius, Political Power in Latin America.
2. For an authoritative review of structural - functional theory see: Almond, Gabriel A., and Coleman, James S., eds., The Politics of Developing Areas. (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1960).
3. Baron, Paul, The Political Economy of Growth. (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1957) and Frank, Andre G., Capitalism and underdevelopment in Latin America, Rev. Ed. (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1969).
4. T.L. Smith, Brazilian Society.
5. John Walton, Elites and Economic Development.
6. Francine Rabinovitz, "Sound and Fury Signifying Nothing".
7. Ogliastris and Davila, "Estructura de Poder E Desarrollo En Once Ciudades Intermedias de Colombia."
8. Robert Dahl, Who Governs?
9. Interviews conducted by the author in São Luís, Brazil in March 1983, as part of the Special Program for Medium Sized Cities.
10. Albert Hirschman, Journeys Toward Progress, p. 26.
11. Ralph Gakenheimer, cited in lecture on planning institutions at M.I.T., Fall 1984.
12. Jorge Ahumada, Hypothesis for Diagnosing Change.
13. Ibid.
14. Guy Benveniste, The Politic of Expertise.
15. Ibid., p. 38.
16. Gisiger, John, "The Recognition of Local Determinants in Multi-lateral Assistance Programs," unpublished paper, M.I.T., 1984.
17. Larissa Lomnitz, "Horizontal and Vertical Relations and Social Structure in Urban Mexico".
18. Fagan and Cornelius, Opus Cit.
19. Ibid., p. 398.



### III. EXPERIENCE: THREE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS

1. John Walton, Elites and Economic Development, p. 62.
2. Ibid., p. 65.
3. For an account of land reform in the Cauca Valley see Albert Hirschman, Journeys Toward Progress,
4. Alejandro Portes and John Walton, Urban Latin America, p. 171-173.
5. Roderick F. O'Conner, "This Revolution Starts At The Top", Columbia Journal of World Business (Fall 1966): 41.
6. Merilee Grindle, Politics and Policy Implementation in the Third World, p. 208-210.
7. Merilee Grindle, "Power, Expertise and the Tecnio: Suggestions From a Mexican Case Study", p. 399-400.
8. Ibid., p. 411-413.
9. The Federal Bureaucrat's role as political conciliator is described in Richard Fagen and William Tuohy, Politics and Priveledge In A Mexican City.
10. Wayne Cornelius describes the opportunities for demand making among the urban poor in "Urbanization and Political Demand Making".
11. Merilee Grindle, Ibid.
12. Merilee Grindle, Bureaucrats, Politicians and Peasants in Mexico, p. 155-165.
13. For a detailed account of the economic and political history of Maranhão, see Cesar Augusto Marques, Dicionario Historico - Geographico Da Provincia Do Maranhao (Sao Luis, SUDEMA, 1970).
14. John Gisiger, A-Renovação Urbana Da Praia Grande.
15. Irapoan Calvacanti Lira, as quoted in O Imparcial on August 23, 1983.

#### IV. MOBILIZATION: EXPLOITING OPPORTUNITY

1. Albert Hirschman, Journeys Toward Progress, p. 6.
2. Donald Warwick, "Integrating Planning and implementation: A Transactional Approach", in Russel Davis (ed.) Planning Education For Development, p. 410.
3. Ibid., p. 390-397.
4. Lisa Peattie, "Social Issues in Housing", in Shaping an Urban Future, B.J. Frieden and W.W. Nash, Jr. (ed.).
5. Albert Hirschman, Journeys Toward Progress. Bruce Bagley and Matthew Edle also stress the efficacy of this coalition in Politics of Compromise, Coalition Government in Colombia, Berry, Hellman and Solaun (ed.).
6. Anthony Downs, "Up and Down with Ecology: The Issue-Attention Cycle", in The Public Interest, No. 28. (Summer 1972), p. 38-50.
7. Wayne Cornelius confirms the specificity of the demands of low-status clients in "Urbanization and Political Demand Making".
8. The vehemence of the opposition to ALCOA was surprising considering the extent of unemployment in São Luís and the almost total absence of industry there. Yet it was continually condemned by the local press and featured prominently in the 1982 political campaign.
9. Merilee Grindle, "Power, Expertise and the Tecnico".
10. Albert Hirschman, Journeys Toward Progress.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ahumada, Jorge, "Hypothesis for Diagnosing Social Change: The Venezuelan Case," in A Strategy for Research on Social Policy, F. Bonilla and J. Michelena (ed.) (Cambridge, MA, The M.I.T. Press, 1967).
- Benveniste, Guy, Bureaucracy and National Planning: A Sociological Case Study in Mexico, (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1970).
- Benveniste, Guy, The Politics of Expertise, (Berkeley, The Glen Dessary Press, 1972).
- Berry, Brian, The Human Consequences of Urbanization: Divergent Paths in the Urban Experience of the 20th Century, (London, McMillan, 1973).
- Caiden, N. and Wildavsky, A., Planning and Budgeting In Poor Countries (New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1974).
- Cheema, S.G. and Rondinelli, D.A., Implementing Decentralization Programmes in Asia: Local Capacity for Rural Development (Nagoya, Japan, U.N. Center for Regional Development, 1983).
- Cintra, Antonio O., "The Politics of Comprehensive Metropolitan Planning: A Case Study of Belo Horizonte," Ph.D. Thesis, M.I.T., 1983.
- Cornelius, Wayne A., "Urbanization and Political Demand-Making Political Participation among the Migrant Poor in Latin American Cities," American Political Science Review 68: 3 (September 1974).
- Dahl, Robert, Who Governs? New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961.
- Daland, Robert T., Exploring Brazilian Bureaucracy: Performance and Pathology, (Washington, D.C., University Press, 1981).
- Denton, Charles F., and Lawrence, Peter L., Latin American Politics: A Functional Approach, (San Francisco, Chandler Publishing Co., 1972).
- Downs, Anthony, "Up and Down with Ecology: The Issue-Attention Cycle", in The Public Interest, No. 28, (Summer 1972).
- Fagen, Richard R., and Cornelius, Wayne A., Jr., eds., Political Power In Latin America: Seven Confrontations, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice Hall Inc., 1970).
- Furtado, Celso, Economic Development in Latin America: A Survey From Colonial Times to the Cuban Revolution, (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1970).

- Gisiger, John, A Renovacão Da Praia Grande, (São Luís, Sioge, 1979).
- Grindle, Merilee S., "Power, Expertise and the Tecnico: Suggestions From a Mexican Case Study", in Journal of Politics, 39, February 1977.
- Grindle, Merilee S., (ed), Politics and Policy Implementation in the Third World, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1980).
- Hirschman, Albert O., Development Projects Observed, (Washington, The Brookings Institution, 1967).
- Hirschman, Albert O., A Bias For Hope: Essays On Development and Latin America, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1971).
- Hirschman, Albert O., Essays in Trespassing: Economics to Politics and Beyond (Cambridge, Cambridge University, 1981).
- Landau, Martin, "Linkage, Coding and Intermediacy," in John W. Eaton (ed) Institution Building and Development: From Concepts to Application, (Beverly Hills, Sage Publications, 1972).
- Lomnitz, Larissa, "Horizontal and Vertical Relations and Social Structure in Urban Mexico", in Latin American Research Review, Vol. XVII, No. 2.
- Malloy, James (ed), Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977.
- Mattingly, Cheryl, et al., Urban Practice in the Bank: Notes Toward A Learning-Agenda, (unpublished paper, M.I.T., 1984).
- Nelson, Joan, Access to Power: Politics and the Urban Poor in Developing Nations, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1979).
- Oliveira, Fransisco de, Elegia para Uma Re (li) gião; Sudene, Nordeste, Planejamento e Conflito de Classes (Rio de Janeiro, Paz E. Terra, 1977).
- Ogliastri, Enrique and Davila, Carlos, "Estructura de Poder e Desarrollo En Once Ciudades Intermedias De Colombia", in Desarrollo E Sociedad, No. 12, September 1983.
- Portes, Alejandro, and Walton, John, Urban-Latin America: The Political Condition from Above and Below, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1976.
- Rabinovitz, Francine F., and Felicity M. Trueblood (eds), Latin American Urban Research, Vol. 1, (Beverly Hills, Sage Publications, 1971).
- Roberts, Bryan, Organizing Stragers, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973).

- Renaud, Bertrand, National Urbanization Policy in Developing Countries, (Washington, D.C., The World Bank, 1981).
- Rondinelli, Dennis, "International Assistance Policy and Development Project Administration: The Impact of Imperious Rationality," in International Organization, 30 (Autumn 1976).
- Samuel, Paul, Managing Development Programs: The Lessons of Success, (Boulder, CO., Westview Press, 1982).
- Sen, Amartya, "Development: Which Way Now?" in The Economic Journal, December 1983.
- Smith, Thomas L., Brazilian Society, (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1975).
- Tendler, Judith, Inside Foreign Aid, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).
- Walton, John, Elites and Economic Development: Comparative Studies on the Political Economy of Latin American Cities, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977).
- Warwick, Donald, "Integrating Planning and Implementation: A Transactional Approach," in Russell Davis (ed.) Planning Education For Development, Vol. I, (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, 1980).
- The World Bank, Learning By Doing, World Bank Lending For Urban Development, 1972-82, (Washington, The World Bank, N.D.).