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PEASANTRY, AGRARIAN REFORM AND CLASS ALLIANCES:

THE CASE OF BOLIVIA

BY

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Chapter I

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE THESIS

In the colonial countries only the peasants are revolutionary because they have nothing to lose and everything to win. The peasant who starves to die, outside the system of classes, is the first among the exploited to discover that the only thing which pays is violence. For him there is neither compromise nor possible accommodation. . . 
(Franz Fanon - The Wretched of the Earth)

Many times in history peasants have rebelled against their oppressors. But also history shows us many cases of peasants who have suffered in silence. At the same time, occasional eruptions of peasant revolt lead us to ask the question of the revolutionary potential of the peasantry or under which conditions it may become a revolutionary force.

To speak of the peasantry as an homogenic and undifferentiated group it seems impossible. Different forms of organization of production lead to the creation of different types of peasantry. Plantation, hacienda, independent family plot, create different interests and goals for each sector.

More important, the sectors of the peasantry which participate in a revolutionary movement and its levels of participation, depend on the character of the movement, and the roles of the peasantry in this movement depend to a great extent on its goals.

- 1 -
The traditional Marxist position stated the dominant role of the industrial proletariat in the socialist revolution. The diagnostic of the conservative and reactionary character of the peasantry seemed to be confirmed everywhere in Western Europe and especially in France, where the peasants remained passive spectators or assisted the authorities to crush the revolt of the proletariat in 1848. But in Eastern Europe this was not the situation. The bourgeoisie and the proletariat were weak; they could not succeed unless it was also an agrarian revolution. Support for peasant parties was offered in those countries where the bourgeois revolution was not completed, even if that will create individual peasant ownership, "an agrarian form seemingly opposed to any kind of communism" (Carr, 1966, p. 382).

The suggestion of two different strategies towards the peasantry was an embarrassing position, so Engels developed the idea of the alliance between proletariat and peasantry. The peasantry, deserted by the bourgeoisie, would advance towards alliance with the proletariat; it also contained the germ of the idea, later to bear fruit, of a split between those peasants who will cling to the bourgeois alliance and those who will join the proletariat.

Marx and Engels never abandoned their belief in the large-scale organization of production, in agriculture as in industry, as an essential condition for socialism; and it followed that the peasants could become the allies of the proletariat in the socialist revolution only when they have been weaned from their faith in peasant ownership (Carr, 1966, p. 382).
The results of the events of 1905 in Russia was to give the peasant a wholly new importance and prominence in marxist calculations. Lenin in "Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution," devoted a lengthy analysis to the theme of the alliance between proletariat and peasantry. He proclaimed as the immediate goal of the revolution "a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" (Carr, 1966, vol. 2, p. 24). He distinguished between the first, or bourgeois stage of the revolution, in which the proletariat would be in alliance with the peasantry as a whole, and the second or socialist stage, in which the proletariat would rally the poor peasants against the reactionary elements in the peasantry. Partition of the land, accepted as a tactical goal in the first stage of the revolution was to be reversed in the second stage, towards the creation of larger and efficient units. In 1917 the situation proved to be different, and the necessity to carry the second stage was evident. In "the April theses" he calls to give power to the proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry, the confiscation of all lands which will be placed at the disposition of Soviets of Poor Peasants and Peasants and large estates turned into large model farms (Carr, 1966, Vol. 2, p. 32).

Lenin adopted the program of the SR party (the peasants party) which proclaimed the equal distribution of land and exempted from confiscation the small holdings of working peasants and cosacks. De facto, the decision to partition or to keep the estates as a whole was left in the hands of the Soviets of peasants, during the revolution.

Mao Tse Tung wrote two articles which clearly express his view on the subject we are dealing with ("Analysis of the Classes in the
Chinese Society" and "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan" written in 1926 and 1927). The first paper argues that the reason for the lack of success of previous revolutionary struggles in China was the failure to identify one's real friends and one's real enemies. The neglect of the peasantry as the chief ally of the revolution can be seen as the main cause of this lack of success. The second paper points to the achievements of the peasant rising of 1926. According to Mao, the main force in this rising are the poor peasants. This is a broad category comprising about 70 percent of the peasantry. Leadership by the poor peasants is absolutely necessary, and to deny their role is to deny the revolution.

His peasant categories present some problem, since the poor peasant category includes two strata: the utterly destitute, comprising about 20 percent, are in his words, completely dispossessed, people with no money or land, who become mercenaries or hired laborers. This is in other words, a rural proletariat. The second strata, what he names the less destitute, comprising about 50 percent of the peasantry, are the partially dispossessed; they have some land and some money (such as the handicraftsmen, tenant-peasants, and semi-owners peasants). The definition used by Mao is so broad as to allow him to define as revolutionaries sectors of the peasantry which might be defined as being close to the middle peasants.

Scholars from different disciplines interested in the peasantry have been debating the issue of under what conditions do the peasants become revolutionary, and what sectors are more likely to engage in
different types of political activity. Analyses tend to center in the influence of an agricultural commodity market developed on a world-wide scale, in which the underdeveloped countries supply the agricultural raw materials needed in the industrial countries in Europe and North America.

Deep alterations in the social and political life of these countries is produced as a consequence of the pervasive influence of international capitalism. New forms of organization of production and new classes arise as a response to new economic demands.

Stinchcombe studied the political behavior of plantation workers, which he characterizes as being politically apathetic, poorly unionized and prone to sporadic rebellions. The same group has been described by Steward as highly motivated and having high levels of class consciousness (Paige, 1975). For Stinchcombe, the family-sized tenancy is more likely to engage in intense class conflict.

Eric Wolf in his analysis of peasant involvement in six cases of rebellion and revolution (Wolf, 1969) takes explicitly in account the relation of the agricultural commodity market and revolution. He suggests that it is precisely when the peasant cannot longer rely on traditional institutional arrangements in order to minimize his risks, and new alternatives are too chaotic or too restrictive, that psychological, economic, social and political tensions all mount toward rebellion and revolution. For Wolf it is the middle peasant who is the most likely to suffer the impact of land expropriations, fluctuations of the market, high interest rates and other changes introduced by the world market economy. His independent economic base and the
impact of the market economy provides both the resources and reasons for revolutionary activity.

Barrington Moore tries to explain the varied political roles played by the landed upper classes and the peasantry in the transformation of agrarian societies to modern industrial societies. He discerns between three main historical routes from the pre-industrial to the modern world.

The first is called the bourgeois revolutions. Those are violent changes in English, French and American societies on the way to becoming modern industrial states and are connected with the Puritan Revolution, the French revolution and the American civil war. The most important feature in this type is the development of a group in society, the bourgeoisie, with an independent economic base, which attacks obstacles to a democratic version of capitalism. The upper landed class either joined in the political efforts or was destroyed, and with the advance of capitalism, the peasant society disappeared.

The second route also is a combination of capitalism and western democracy but with the difference that the capitalist class is weak. In these revolutions, called from above, elements from the ruling landed classes are recruited to put through the political and economic changes required. Capitalism was rapidly developed, but after a brief and unstable democratic period, fascism was instaured (Germany and Japan).

The third path is communism. Industrial development was inhibited by the agrarian bureaucracies. The result is that the capitalism class was even weaker than in Japan and Germany, closing before them this path
of capitalist development. A huge mass of peasants remained, who by being subject to the strains and stresses of the modern world encroached upon it, provided the destructive revolutionary force that overthrew the old order (Moore, 1970).

In postulating how different types of landed classes led to different modes of political development, Moore did not give adequate attention to state structures, which may be an important explanatory factor in political change. Another weakness is the exclusive focus on domestic forces, which do not take in account the impingement of international factors.

Paige proposes a theory in which the main causal variable is the relationship of both cultivators and noncultivators to the factors of agricultural production as indicated by their principal source of income (Paige, 1975). The relative dependence on land versus capital or wages is the most important determinant of the economic and political behavior of cultivators and noncultivators, and the interaction of the behaviors of the two broad classes should reflect this dependence.

Two cases in the continuum proposed by Paige illustrate his theory. One of them, the sharecropping system, create a powerful cultivator organization, based in strong group solidarity, on the basis of homogeneous economic status, and correspondingly, revolutionary movements tend to be based on socialist or communist ideologies. The sharecropper resembles the plantation wage worker in the three economic characteristics critical for his political behavior—weak ties to the land, working class occupational homogeneity, and work group interdependence. Decentralized sharecropping systems in general and irrigated rice production
in particular, however, are likely to create a homogeneous landless peasantry with strong incentives for collective action and intense pressure for group solidarity. These economic characteristics would produce in turn political radicalism, powerful organizations, and intense class solidarity. Thus, an organized class-conscious proletariat is the likely consequence of sharecropping systems.

The nature of the conflict, from the other side in commercial hacienda systems, stems from the fact that both upper and lower classes extract their income exclusively from land. Thus, a zero-sum political conflict over landed property and the stage is likely to develop. In such systems, however, there is little or no peasant political activity. When revolts do occur, they are focused on just the control and distribution of land. Peasant rebellions in commercial hacienda systems depend in the weakening of the repressive power of the landed aristocracy, the introduction of organizational strength from outside the peasant community or both. Paige also suggests that political organization must depend on other forms of economic organization or on interest groups outside the peasant economy. The deflation of power of the landed aristocracy is one of the main reasons for the upheavals of the peasantry. Many peasant revolts which occur when the upper class has been weakened end in the seizing of lands. The conditions of small commercial producers begin to exert a centrifugal influence on the movement, and it may once again relapse into political apathy. Once the peasants in the hacienda system have attained land, they rapidly lose interest in politics.
Several weaknesses are evident in Paige's analysis. Among them we will point to: what are the linkages of the agricultural export sector and other sectors, this we do not know from Paige's theory.

The historical aspects of the development of capitalism in a certain country are not taken in consideration. How is that agrarian capitalism develops? The relations between cultivators and noncultivators are not the only relations which have important consequences for social movements. The relations with other classes, fundamentally the urban or mining proletariat may be crucial for the development of a certain social movement. The same we can say on the importance of the role of the State and the relation of the nation-state with other nation-states.

Taking in account these points, we will try to organize our thesis around the social history of Bolivia, centering our concern in the development of peasant movements, agrarian reform and the relationship of peasants to other classes of Bolivia. In this sense we will try to show how agrarian reform is the resultant of a series of factors interacting among themselves and manifesting these interactions in the constitution of political alliances and finally in the outcome of the agrarian reform, the focus or problem of an analysis (see Chart 1).

The factors which impinge in the development and outcomes of political alliances and on the agrarian reform are:

a) race and class

b) the agrarian structure and the process of accumulation

c) parties and social classes

d) the immediate and long-range interests of the social classes
Notes: We assume in this model of determination that interrelations exist not only from the determinant to the determined factors but also between the basic relations themselves. So the position of racial groups in the economy and their social status may have a strong impact on the ideological stances of leftist parties toward the different classes. Agrarian structure and the role of different sectors in the accumulation process may have an influence in the level of class interests developed by each class. The activity of the State, its strength and the use of its power has a clear influence on the process of accumulation, in the assignment of roles to different sectors in this process and in the levels of class interests of different classes. We may add that the State is conceived here as the embodiment of internal and external forces as well.
e) the structure of the State, the distribution of power, its actual power and how it is used.
We will develop these points succinctly.

a) Race and Social Class

The racial composition seems to have a deep impact in the social history of the country. Being historically a colonized country where a minority of white settlers dominated a majority of Indians, the racial polarization encompasses all the aspects of social life. There is geographical segregation, polarization in the types of occupations, different languages, differential access to legal institutions, and a complete correspondence between race and social class. A deep isolation is characteristic of the Indian-peasant. This refers to the contact with the world outside the hacienda or the Indian community; lack of contact or interaction with other social classes; ignorance of the legal system; exclusion from the political process (Petras, 1972; Cotler, 1968). The levels of consciousness of the different strata in the peasantry are determined by the extent of closeness to the racial determinant. So, different processes of acculturation are important to understand the behavior of sectors or classes.

Hypothesis: The changes in the perception of the place and importance of the peasantry were important in the breaking of the estamental society, and in the creation of class consciousness (Pearse, 1972).

b) Agrarian Structure and Accumulation

The agrarian structure of Bolivia adopts particular forms, determined by the secondary role in the economic process. Extraction of
minerals geared to the world market made agriculture a support sector only with a negligible contribution to the accumulation process. Consequently, the process of accumulation in the agricultural sector itself was also insignificant, despite the efforts of the liberal elite at the end of the 19th Century to incorporate the community lands to the market and their attempts to create a class of small agricultural holdings.

The dispossession of the peasantry from their lands continued with increased velocity but there was not corresponding growth of capital in the agricultural sector. The haciendas are characterized by low levels of capital investments. Their functioning is made possible by the tight control of labor, through monopolization of lands, and by the fact that shifts all costs of production to the colono. The Junker type of capitalist development is rejected by the landed class, and in this way opens the door to agrarian revolution (Bartra, 1975).

We must add, even if this is not a major theoretical concern of this paper, that the process of accumulation in general was characterized by the weakness of the concentration of the national money capital. The conditions of enclave and the heavy domination of foreign interests in most of the stages of the production-elaboration marketing process, prevented the accumulation of capital in the hands of the national capitalists.

Hypothesis: Low capitalization and negligible contribution of the agrarian sector to primitive accumulation, and weakness of concentration of capital in the nation will have an influence in the way chosen by
the revolution after 1952.

c) Parties and Social Class

We may look at the relation between political parties and social classes as a two-way relationship. While the level of consciousness of the different classes may influence the political strategies and practices of different political parties, the ideological programs of some parties, and certain ideological feuds may have a strong impact in their approaches to the different classes. This is particularly true and important in the Latin American context and especially in Bolivia. The racial factor already mentioned, was a determinant in the composition of most of the parties. White dominance and paternalism are characteristics of politics.

The feud in the international left, between stalinists and trotskysts had an impact in the national arena. Followers of the Moscow-line in the 40's and 50's adopted a socio-economic model of development in stages, arguing that Latin America was dominated by feudal characteristics, and must move towards the development of capitalism. The peasantry, being a remnant of the feudal mode of production must be converted in either small capitalist producers or be proletarianized. No revolutionary potential was assigned to the peasantry at this stage. Political activity was directed towards the urban working class.

Followers of trotskysm supported a proletarian revolution and stressed the political work to be done among the most militant elements of the working class: the miners.
d) The Immediate and Long-range Interests of the Social Classes

Three classes stand for analysis in the Bolivian case: 1) the middle class; 2) the working class; 3) the peasantry.

1) The middle class, being a dependent urban class, in the absence of a national bourgeoisie, manifests a tendency to occupy the latter's role, e.g., to be the carrier of the bourgeois democratic revolution. Being politically and economically weak, its interest is the mobilization of the lower classes to break the power of the tin aristocracy and the allied landed classes, and adopts a populist-capitalist program of development.

2) The working class, highly concentrated but numerically weak, being a young class from close rural origin, will be more interested in securing its position as a class. It will stress immediate interests over long-range interests.

3) The peasantry, divided itself in classes and sectors with sometimes contradictory interests, they also will stress the satisfaction of its own immediate interests.

Hypothesis: The creation of political alliances is conditioned by the basic orientations in regard to their interests, as advocated by these classes.

e) The Structure of the State, the Distribution of Power, and the Actual Power and How it is Used

Two points are important for our analysis: 1) The constraints imposed by inherited state structures are assumed to be important in the implementation of certain projects of economic development. 2) Both
internal and external forces are felt in the structuration of the State, the internal distribution of power, and the actual use of it. The weakness or strength of the State will depend on the degree of autonomy it can achieve from both these forces. The attainment of a certain degree of autonomy is crucial for the fulfilling of the two central functions performed by the State: accumulation and legitimacy.

**Hypothesis 1:** In the case of underdeveloped countries the possibility exists that these two functions may contradict each other, because of the particular interplay between domestic and foreign forces.

**Hypothesis 2:** The degree of cohesion or unity of the political alliance which backs a certain power block, may have a substantial influence in the performance of the State, especially in relation to projects of independent national development.

In Chapter II, The Breakdown of an Era, we intend to show a) the changes in the perception of the peasantry, due mainly to events exterior to the agrarian system; and b) the landed class opposes both the Junker path to capitalist development, and the attempts of the colonos to create independent economic basis, according to their new perceptions.

In Chapter III, we analyze the agrarian structure and the process of accumulation. The hybrid hacienda system, based on commercial nexus to the market and in subsistence economy, prevents the primitive accumulation of capital, and shifts all costs of production to the colono.

Chapter IV deals with the Agrarian Reform and its limits. After the destruction of the economic and political power of the landed elite,
the peasantry is able to win real political power, to the extent that is linked to the working class in a political alliance. But since the objectives of both classes are the satisfaction of immediate interests, after fulfilling their narrow demands, a process of division and cooperation develops. The organizational and ideological limits of the peasantry are determined internally, by the instrument sought to express its demands: the sindicato.

Chapter V, Peasantry and Political Alliances, intends to show that the achievements and limitations of the peasantry are explained by the type of political alliances in which it participated. Since the Left renounces to create an independent revolutionary party, and relies in an organizational framework dominated ideologically by middle class orientations, it will be caught by the limits imposed by this class.

Finally, we analyze the impingement of international capital in the power block, and what is the effect for the structuration of power, the strength of the State and the use of its power. It is our contention that this type of power block leads to the weakening of the State, the distortion of the process of independent capitalist development and to the demobilization and cooperation of the peasantry.
Chapter II

THE BREAKDOWN OF AN ERA

The Chaco War of 1932-1935, between Bolivia and Paraguay must be taken as a starting point in the study of modern Bolivia. The Great Recession of the 30's affected deeply the economic and social life and plagued the country with increased social conflicts. Bolivia was a major exporter of tin, and with the collapse of the world market, the country was deprived of its most important source of income.

In this context, war was supposed to be the solution to the troubled internal situation; all the traditional parties in Bolivia favored this solution.

After three years of war, Bolivia became a defeated nation, with large parts of its territory in foreign hands (Díaz Machicao, 1957). Twenty-five percent of its army were killed, about 65,000 soldiers. The causes of the defeat were attributed to the composition of the army, compounded mainly by Indians, most of them colonos, which were taken by force into the army. Only white or mestizos fulfilled command posts and the system of segregation prevalent in the country was maintained with exactness. Therefore, the status of the Indian in the Army did not change.

On the other hand, the drama of the Chaco opened new ways for a new consciousness among the peasants. Those who came back spoke a
new idiom. Words like "nation," "equality," were often used by them (Klein, 1969; Patch, 1961). The Grand Chaco war was a solvent of the social order and it withdrew peasants from the isolation of their landgroups. The experience widened horizons and damaged stereotypes (Fearse, 1972). The war also brought to other classes the awareness of the peasants, whom they had known as estate serfs in the haciendas and towns.

The war opened a deep breach in the oligarchic state and party system and created new social and political dynamics, such as class unions and revolutionary parties. For the first time there was a break in the political legitimation, after many years of liberal parliamentary system. The crisis continued for 16 years, until 1952.

The economic crisis of the 30's, which affected the economy of the mines, was transferred by the dominant class to the middle and the working class, while allowed themselves to maintain their level of income and luxurious style of life (Whitehead, 1972). As a consequence of the economic crisis and the subsequent war, the linkage between the dominant class and the middle class was broken, and the possibility to solve the contradictions created in the framework of the old regime, disappeared. After the war, the new social dynamics not only introduced a new party system, but also cracked the unity of the Army. The colonels Busch and Toro tried to implement some reforms, introducing new ideas of charismatic leadership, where the Italian influence particularly was evident.

The function of the new political system was to express the rebellious spirit of the Army after the defeat, and also to placate the
revolutionary consciousness of the masses, but without bringing about radical changes. This political solution was rejected by the dominant class, who preferring the use of violence, showed lack of flexibility and increased greatly the fear and confusion. This class made repeated intents to regain the control of the State, undermining more the basis of legitimacy and authority, and finally conducing to the destruction of the entire traditional system.

At the beginning of the 40's we see the born of the so-called National Left, as a direct outcome of the economic crisis, the Chaco war and the paulantine destruction of the traditional political system. The most outstanding new political formations were the PIR (Partido de Izquierda Revolucionario), the POR (Partido Obrero Revolucionario), and the MNR (Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario) (Rolon Anaya, 1966).

In the Army, many groups were trying to organize. The RADEPA, an underground organization influenced by Fascism, united with the MNR, at this time a small political movement, and in 1944 took the control of the State in a bloodless coup d'Etat. Their intention was to continue the interrupted way of the Colonels of the "military socialism" (Busch and Toro), but without having a very elaborated and concrete ideology.

The dominant element in the coalition, the MNR, confronted with strong opposition from the dominant class, turned looking for support toward the peripheral classes, first with the miners and after that with the peasants.

The new contacts, especially with the miners under the influence of the Trotskyist POR, brought to the adoption by the MNR of a "leftist"
language. Much more of an impact was the opening toward the peasants. The instigation of the peasantry was considered a "tabu" by the white and dominant classes, who always preferred to resolve their conflicts inside the "family."

The Villarroel government, and especially the MNR members in it, organized the first Indian Congress in 1945 in La Paz, with the participation of more than one thousand representatives. Bolivia's Indian languages were spoken for the first time in an official event, and the need for integration of the Indians into the national life underlined. An attempt was made to form a permanent organization controlled by the government, but this failed. Some laws were presented at the Congress, the most important of them, the abolition of pongueaje (personal unpaid services). The abolition of the pongueaje—if implemented—would have been conducive to far reaching changes in the agrarian structure, but after the overthrow of the Villarroel government in a bloody coup d'etat, the laws were concealed.

Why the MNR turned so avidly for support toward the peasantry? The activism of the latter was not new in Bolivia's life. The creation of the haciendas was a resultant of the encroachment upon the lands of the freeholding Indian communities, particularly after Bolivia achieved its independence from Spain. The pace accelerated after 1860 and continued well into the 20th century. This process was never peaceful and was generally accompanied by numerous uprisings. Sometimes they were initiated by freeholding Indian communities trying to stop the encroachment, sometimes by colonos recently incorporated to the haciendas.
The peasants' revolt of 1899 was the most outstanding event which showed the protest of the peasantry to this process and seriously eroded the system of control and exploitation. Two factors seemed to foster the peasant uprising: 1) the need to defend the community land rights from the encroachment of the townsfolk and the estate-owners; 2) the appearance of a liberal party which fomented the uprising and manipulated it to its interest, using the political support of the peasantry against their conservative political rivals (Pearse, 1972).

The powerful force of the peasantry, as exemplified in this uprising, remained as a warning to the upper classes but also as a lesson to be exploited by segments of these classes in their internal struggles.

The activism of the new parties of the Left among the peasantry added a new dimension to their social consciousness. Agrarian unions or sindicatos began to spring in the Upper Cochabamba Valley and in other regions of the country. The "military socialism" of the colonels Toro and Busch after 1935 allowed them to rent the lands of two haciendas belonging to a catholic religious order and the municipality of Cochabamba and to run them to the benefit of the ex-colonos in those haciendas. The increased consciousness of the peasants was also fostered by some rural school teachers. Strikes and two major uprisings in the late 1930's and early 1940's prompted the calling of the First National Indian Congress in 1945, cited before (Dandler, 1976).

Peasant education, the abolition of unpaid services in the haciendas and the acquisition of lands become the central issues in the peasant struggles of the 40's and 50's. Peasant education encountered fierce
opposition from the estate owners, which complained that schooling will deplete the agricultural labor force by encouraging peasants to move to towns. The spectacle of tens of thousands of peasants assembled at a grand rally of nuclear schools filled the landowners with panic. Those events clearly pointed to a new phase of structural changes. The isolation of the peasantry in the boundaries of the haciendas started to break in these larger-than-local concentrations, implying a threat that it may become organized and active in the political arena.

Peasants unions became very active not only in the struggle for the abolition of unpaid personal services and the acquisition of land rights, but in the educational issue as well. Schooling was seen by the peasant as an important way to break the chains of isolation, to get a new status and the knowledge needed to defend his rights. In many cases where the peasant union was subject to persecution, the associations of parents created around the school gave organizational continuity to the peasants in their struggles.
Chapter III

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AGRARIAN SECTOR

a) Characteristics of the Agrarian Sector

According to the Agricultural Census of 1950 the total amount of land used for farming was approximately 33 million hectares, divided into 86,377 farms. Six percent of the largest agricultural units constituted 92 percent of the land, while 80 percent of the smallest units held only one percent of the land. This made Bolivia the country with the greatest concentration of land in Latin America.

Three-fourths of the country agricultural population had no property rights. Although 30 percent of the total land area was classified as arable, only two percent was cultivated.

Smallest units showed greater utilization of the lands, cultivating 44 percent of their plots, while the haciendas, who comprised 92 percent of the land, cultivated only one percent of their lands (Burke, 1974).

According to the Census more than two-thirds of the labor force of the country was engaged in agriculture: 67.7 percent of the males and 74.5 percent of the females.

b) The Agricultural Structure

The hacienda system. It was the predominant form in Bolivia until 1952. The haciendas varied widely in size and in the type of production they engaged. However, the common point to all of them was the organi-
zation of the labor force into the "colonato system" (De Shazo, ).

The colono engaged in a service-tenure arrangement and a serf-like relation to the landlord. The full tenant was known as the "first person," owing four days labour per week and contributing his own draft animals, farm tools and additional services at peak times. Various other personal services to the landowner (patrono or patron) were performed by the colono or other members of his family at the patron house in the hacienda or at his home or store at the city or town.

The "second person," also the head of a family, owed 2-3 days a week, and also had to bring his working tools and animals.

In exchange to that, the colono received a plot or several small plots in the fringes of the hacienda, generally the worst lands. The second person received less land than a full person.

In addition to the obligations to perform general agricultural labor, there were a number of specific tasks to be performed in rotation by all the tenants, both first and second persons.

The "unpaid personal services," a survival from the Colonial times, generally domestic services performed by both men and women, were for periods of two weeks. They were not connected at all with the production process, but were the servile obligation performed at the house of the patron.

Another duty was the transportation of agricultural produce from the estate to the city, where the landowner frequently held a store, called aljiria. Many other servile obligations are reported, most of them existed on a local basis. The common to all of them as of the work
performed on the agricultural fields was to avoid especialization and division of labor, the use of the lowest level of technology and efficiency with the resultant that the operating cost in money was almost nonexistent (Pearse, 1972).

An important way of shifting costs of production to the colono was to allow him to take sharecroppers, who in exchange for sharing part of the crop, performed some of the duties of the colono in the lands of the patron. Wages did not constitute a significant part of the income of the colonos before 1952. In most parts of the country, colonos received few if any money from the hacienda. Only the administrator received a salary. In some haciendas of the Upper Cochabamba Valley, also in the Yungas, here the labor force was scarce and generally brought from the densely populated Altiplano (Highlands), tenants were voluntary contracted, being paid small amounts of cash and given generous tenancies. But even there the servile obligations existed. In certain regions, haciendas used to hire temporary workers, paying them in kind rather than in cash (Dorsey, 1975).

The size of the plots assigned to the colonos varied notably, depending mainly on the quality of the land, the availability of labor and the type of crop or livestock. The use plot, called sayana in Aymara language and penguji in Quechua, was that part of the land surrounding the colono’s house; other land available to him generally several small plots called aínokas, were scattered in different parts of the hacienda. Some of the plots were in flat lands, and some of them in the hills.
In the Lower Cochabamba Valley, with high quality of land and irrigation systems, and abundant labour, plots were in the one-third to one-half hectare range. In the Upper Cochabamba Valley, where most of the land was not irrigated, use plots were larger generally, between 2 and 5 hectares. In the Altiplano, near La Paz, where climatic conditions were hard and the land of poor quality than in the Valleys, the average use plots held by colonos was 4 to 5 hectares.

In the Central and Northern Altiplano where rainfall is very scarce plots were reported to be greater, with an average of 20 to 30 hectares. In the Southern regions of Bolivia (Chuquisaca, Potosi and Tarija) the use plots held by colonos originally were large, since the population was scarce. In this region in the percentage of the land under direct control by the patron was only a third of the total land held by the hacienda. That means that most of the cultivable land was assigned to tenants, called in this region arrenderos.

Obligations for arrenderos in Southern Bolivia included payments in cash and in kind as well as labor (Erasmus, 1967). Sometimes payments in cash were cancelled for labor in the hacienda. Payments in kind were generally in fixed amounts. Percentage payments were a separated and sometimes added obligation, known as catastro. In the southern regions some landowners cultivated grapes or sugar, using numerous hired laborers. But also was common for them to hold haciendas, where they maintained a work force of arrenderos, in reserve, to secure their labor in the peak season in vineyards and sugar plantations.

Thus, while the arrenderos provided the work necessary to the haciendas, the arrimantes, who were colonos to the arrenderos, provided
the work necessary to their use plots. Some exceptionally large plots were recorded in the hands of arrenderos, and they were broken down in several small plots among the arrimantes (Heyduk, 1974).

c) Commercial Nexus

The estate owner kept the commercialization of the hacienda products in his own hands, with the exception of the comparatively free marketing allowed to the colonos of the Yungas. Clark reports that from 51 hacienda in the Northern Altiplano before 1952, all of the landowners held homes in La Paz, and all but five had stores, in which they sold the produce of the estate (Clark, 1968).

The duty of aljiri, performed by the colono, included packing and transporting the demesne products, advertising of the goods, and also the delivery of certain of his products, as eggs or cheese, to the patron.

Certain prohibitions against colonos were made explicit, in order to prevent their contact with the market, but in most cases, a certain level of access to the market was allowed to the colonos, but mainly to local fairs and neighboring towns. At these opportunities the colono exchanged or sold staples as potatoes, barley or eggs and chicken and acquired clothes, cocoa, salt, sugar, alcohol, matches, etc.

An imbalance between manufactured goods from the cities and agricultural production was thus created by the almost total monopoly of commercialization by the estate owner, compelling the tenant to meet his consumption needs with his own production (Pearse, 1972).
d) Freeholding Indian Communities

The people of these communities were never attached to the hacienda system as tenants. Most of the communities were located in the Altiplano, where they were able to maintain considerable tracts of lands (in La Paz department 40%, in Oruro 85%, in Potosí 46.7%). In other regions the communities held negligible amounts of lands, less than 3 percent.

The communities struggled constantly against the process of encroachment of the haciendas upon their lands. Early in the post-Conquest time, many communities were given in encomienda, royal land grant for a certain period of time, but because the profitless nature of certain lands, they never became object of colonial encroachment. Other communities were protected by legal rights from the Spanish Crown, who in exchange exacted tribute from them.

A constant process of fragmentation of the lands was one of the main characteristics in the land tenure system at the communities. This was related to population growth and to the fact that no extra land was available to them.

Agriculture was in the communities mainly family labor. Even women, accompanied by small children, performed work in the plots. Hired labor was almost in-existent although there was some exchange of work among comunarios (members of communities) at plowing or harvesting time. In these instances wages were not paid, but work was returned in equal amount by those aided (McEwen, 1975).
Land was given to sons when they married, and in this way plots became smaller and smaller. All the children received an equal share through inheritance. Some heirs preferred to sell their share to a sibling and become colono on a nearby hacienda. Some of them became arrendero of colonos, on a sharecropping basis, helping the latter with the burden of rent and labor obligations. Some comunarios who had more land than they can work let a chacra (plot) for one-half of the crop, or rent it on a cash basis.

Cash rent, sharecropping or receiving one's own plots, or sharing in the harvest of the father's land, were the different ways to get access to the land in the communities. But many younger men finding it impossible to subsist with small plots were forced to seek seasonal work at haciendas, mines or in the cities. They were not bounded to the land as the colono in the hacienda, something which made a big difference. Others emigrated forever, thus allowing their siblings to enlarge their plots (Klein, 1969).

Some Indian communities owned big estates, worked by colonos. Other communities still maintained a system of communal land distribution. Most of the communities developed a system of stratification based on a few powerful families (these differences based on old laws of the aymara marca or the quechua ayllu). Those privileged groups enjoyed also from the differences created during a long time between "original" and "attached" (Originarios and agregados): the original members of the community and those that joined it during the time. Different rights were assigned to each group. But also existed another group, practically
without rights in the community, the *hutahuahuas*, who had no rights to the land, and were sharecroppers of the comunero, with a status similar to a serf. So, the hutahuahu was the lowest category in the stratification system in the rural sector (Garcia, 1970).

e) **Small Holders Communities**

They were called sometimes *pquierias*, and the individual member was called a *piquero*; they were founded almost exclusively in the Cochabamba Valley. Those independent farmers bought or inherited the land. The process of selling small parcels of land from haciendas to colonos or farm workers continued for a long period of time. The types of crops and technology were similar to those of the haciendas, but the peasants were free to organize their production. The profits generated from sales in the market were generally invested in new purchases of land. (The possibility of buying additional land existed almost exclusively in the Cochabamba Valley, where many small haciendas found non-profitable to use colonos.) The fragmentation of land was constant among the piqueros. The Cochabamba Valley is characterized by a high concentration of population, one of the greatest in the world, which conduced to the continued subdivision of land.

It is among these peasants that the contact with the market and with the Spanish culture was most widespread. Also, the level of literacy was the highest among the peasantry.

The desire to escape the ties of the haciendas was very strong in the Valleys. After the Chaco War, many peasants organized *sindicatos* (unions) in order to buy land from landlords and religious convents. At
the beginning, they were successful, but after a while, the big landlords tried to reverse the trend and push them back to the haciendas.

f) Commercial Farms

In the lowlands of the Oriente we found another type of organization: medium and large scale commercial farms, or maxifundios (Heath, Erasmus & Buechler, 1969). Most of the land in this region was unclaimed before the agrarian reform; access to it was free and pressure on the land almost inexistent. Absentee landlords were unknown. The finquero (landlord) used the work of jornaleros, year-around paid resident laborer on a finca (hacienda). Because labor was scarcer than land, wages were paid and other arrangements made in order to attract workers to the land. There were also small farmers, renters and squatters, most of them without having titles of property. In the Santa Cruz region, machinery was introduced early in the 1940's, increasing the amount of land under cultivation (Heath et al., 1969).

g) The Social Structure of the Hacienda

The main social characteristic of the peasants in the hacienda is the segmentation of their life. The management of their relations with the world was in the hands of the landlord and his aids, who maintained them in subjection and isolation.

The work regime was one of harsh subordination, where physical punishment was administered in cases of non-fulfillment of obligations. In most of the cases the owner was absentee, holding another occupation in the city (lawyers, merchants, bureaucratic position in the government,
etc.). He generally delegated his authority in an administrator, who represented him in managing the production, allocating labor duties, and in reward-punishment decisions.

In large haciendas there were under the administrator, several mayordomos (overseers), who had direct control of specific activities. Under the mayordomo there was the curacas or jilicatas, people selected among the most reliable colonos, who enjoyed of high social and economic status in the community (Peinado Sotomayor, 1971).

At the bottom of the social hierarchy were the colonos. The social system was well accommodated, in part because most of the conflicts between owner and peasant were not open, because the landlord was absentee, generally, and the delegation of authority; so, conflict was generally between the administrator or forseers and the colonos.

Only when the abuses stepped sharply beyond the limits of expected roles (as in cases of extreme personal cruelty) there were explosions of anger and rebellion among the colonos. The colono accommodated also to the situation because he did not see other possibilities of changing to other occupations. Not only was there an absence of non-agricultural jobs, but also the social and cultural stereotype as occupying an inferior ladder in society, was an impediment in his way to escape the hacienda system (Klein, 1969).

The colonos were also isolated from the exterior society in relation to the legal and religious systems. Disputes between colonos were handled by the patron or the administrator; the colonos were also deprived access in his grievances against the owner to the outside
judicial organs. The owners' friends, or representatives were sitting in any case in the key influential positions, as the police, and the regional judge. The religious life was also carried inside the hacienda, who had generally its own chapel. Each group of colonos in a hacienda had its own way to observe festivities.
Chapter IV

NATIONAL REVOLUTION AND AGRARIAN REFORM

a) Mobilization of the Peasantry

The forerunner of the Revolution was an intense social struggle which tried to break the defenses of the State. It began as a political military coup, like many others, but which shattered the decision-making centers of the government and unfolded as a gradual insurrection of the middle class and the workers, the mining proletariat and the peasants (Garcia, 1970).

The insurrection was oriented by the MNR, principally led by elements of the middle class, and during the struggle, they were joined by workers and miners, while the peasants although they did not fight, became a crucial element in the months after the military success of the coup. The MNR represented a new type of radical populist movement. After years of revolutionary activity it underwent gradual change toward a more radical ideology, and finally incorporated some parts of the marxist-trotskist POR (Partido Obrero Revolucionario) program which allowed the canvassing of many supporters and leaders to the MNR (Klein, 1969).

The MNR started the destruction of the old system and started the construction of a new society. The first presidency of Paz Estensoro, which goes from 1952 to 1956, was a period of deep changes. One of the
first government acts was the nationalization of the big tin mines, and a joint labor-government management was established for them. At the same time, a new set of advanced labor decrees was passed, which gave job security to the workers.

Alongside with these measures, there were also major political changes. The Army was temporarily abolished and civilians, workers and peasants were all given arms and organized into militia units. The old literacy qualification was abolished and the voting population rose from 200,000 in 1951 to more than 958,000 in the first election after the revolution.

But the most striking and unexpected consequence of the revolution of 1952 was the rapid emergence of the Indian peasants as a decisive force on the national scene.

In the period following the success of the revolution there was little talk and less action about Agrarian Reform. The leaders of the revolution were mostly liberals or supporters of moderate socialism. The agrarian reform or formation of peasants unions were not included among the objectives of the Ministry of Peasants Affairs, recently created. Only after considerable peasant pressure in favor of a radical reform these fields came to be recognized (Huizer, 1973).

This pressure started in the overpopulated Valley of Cocharamba where a general uprising was called for immediately after the success of the revolution, and then expanded throughout all the country. After a few months, 1,200 syndicates were active in the Department of Cochabamba with 200,000 members. This movement was in reaction to the intent of the landed elite to organize a counter-revolution.
The activity of the peasant syndicates was directed to the occupation of the lands of the haciendas and demonstrating in the towns. As a consequence, most of the landlords fled to the cities.

An agreement was reached between the government and the C.O.B. (Bolivian Workers Confederation) to organize syndicates all over the country among the peasantry, and in this form take control of the movement. It is in this context, that we have to understand the decision to promulgate the law of the Agrarian Reform. Before the promulgation of the law, latifundia had been taken over by the peasants in most of the areas of the country. The law came merely to officialize a de facto situation. But more important than that, these acts (the unionization of the peasantry and the promulgation of the agrarian reform law) came because the peasant movement went out of control of the MNH and developed an autonomous and radical leadership.

The most radical and immediate change produced as a consequence of the revolution was the occupation of the lands of the haciendas and its destruction as a social economic and political structure. This included the abolition of compulsory unpaid services and other types of servitude and the disruption of the whole system and social hegemony.

The policy of the government was to promote a more equitable distribution of land, to raise the productivity and to integrate the rural population into the national economy and society. The principle that guided the distribution of lands was the restoration to the Indian communities all lands usurped since 1900. Other principles were to change the predominant system of work relations, to stimulate the production
and commercialization of agricultural products, to encourage the emigration of population from the areas densely populated (The Altiplano and the Valleys) to the underpopulated tropical areas. These principles were formulated by laws in a vague formation and no specific regulations or qualifications were made about.

The law of Agrarian Reform represented a compromise between the forces which made up the coalition in power. Two contradictory tendencies came up about the desired agrarian reform: those who wanted to preserve productivity and efficiency of the agricultural units, whatever their size, which underlined the suggestion to allow big landlords to retain some of their lands, and those who advocated the distribution of the maximum amount of land to the largest number of peasants, regardless of the effects on production. Both tendencies were included in the agrarian reform law; the decisive principle which allowed or not the distribution of the lands of the hacienda was the degree of mechanization and modernization of the operation of the hacienda. The desire of the peasants for individual plots was recognized and little concern was given to communal production and cooperatives.

The most radical elements of the coalition in power, the POR and the COB demanded to keep the confiscated haciendas as one productive unit, rather than divide it in individual plots, but the commission which drafted the agrarian law was weighted in favor of those who opposed collective operation. Most of the land was to be titled individually and compensations to be paid to owners of expropriated latifundia.
Owners of big latifundia managed to create a system by which only one of their possessions was confiscated, protecting the others legally with legal titles which exempted them from further expropriations. Even in such areas of growing demographic pressures as the Cochabamba Valley, the latifundia subsists under the guise of natural pastures or as a so-called "agricultural enterprise" (García, 1970).

In the Oriente lands there has developed great and mechanized haciendas, some of them of several thousands of hectares (Reye, 1970). The maximum sizes of holdings allowed vary to whether the holdings are on the Highlands or in the Puna (areas used mainly for grazing); in the interior valleys or in the eastern subtropical regions (the Oriente); in fixing them, only the cultivable area is taken into account (Patch, 1961).

The pace of implementation of the law was too slow and the rate of distribution too low (Thome, 1966). The slow pace of the agrarian reform process not only produces negative economic and social effects but also creates many complex legal and social problems; on many properties a condition of land tenure insecurity has been created which results in social instability in the rural areas and prevents a more efficient and productive use of the land (Thome, 1966).

Different processes took place in the light of these developments and because of them, conflicts arose between peasants themselves and landlords. A process of social disintegration has also been noted in many rural areas and communities. Investments and improvements on the land are not being carried out to the extent they could, given the resources and potential of the people involved.
The supply of credit is almost always contingent on the possession of a valid title, a requirement of the Agricultural Credit Bank.

It seems that today the use of land is more intense than before the Agrarian Reform. In the Highlands, some farms checked showed that 5 percent of the land is now under cultivation; before the reform it was only 0.5 percent. Production dropped out after the Reform but recovered some years later.

b) The Process of Distribution and Titling

It is recognized that the legal process is very complicated and the official agency is largely underfunded. By the end of 1972, 12 million hectares had been distributed to over 200,000 heads of households. The official agency for the land reform, SNRA, estimated that these titles had benefited over 30 percent of the country's estimated rural population of about 3.5 million in 1970 (Dorsey, 1972).

The land distributed represents 37 percent of the land included in the 1950 Census, although this comparison is misleading since great amounts of public lands in the eastern Lowlands of the Oriente have been granted by the SNRA. Nearly 40 percent of the land distributed by the SNRA is located in the Santa Cruz and Beni departments (in the eastern Lowlands) most of these lands has been always owned by the State and unexploited. Only a small part of the land granted in these regions is the result of expropriation of private latifundia included in the 1950 Census (Dorsey, 1972).

Bolivia's Lowlands are the center for the development of a new type of agricultural organization, cattle raising. This vast area
comprises nearly 60 percent of the total area of Bolivia, and of this total it is estimated that between 8 and 10 percent is titled and held as private cattle raising and other agricultural enterprises. The first real opportunity for the exploitation of meat came during the period 1952-1955. This led to the creation of the first large, commercially-oriented ranches. The Beni department in the northern Lowlands, is the area most clearly associated with the markets of meat in La Paz and the mines, as well as the export markets for live animals in Chile and Peru.

The quantity of land involved in new concessions to cattle ranches during the last 20 years is not known, and one is forced to estimate that the majority of properties in both number and total hectares are not held under titles from the SNRA (National Agrarian Reform Service), but are possessed as a result of use, purchase, inheritance, etc.

**TABLE 1**

Summary of Landholding Structure in Lowland Cattle Raising Regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Property</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>% of Properties</th>
<th>Total Area Hectares</th>
<th>% of Total Hs.</th>
<th>Average Size in Hectares</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Cattle Ranches</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>314,830</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-sized Ranches</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1,720,173</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle Enterprises</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2,274,387</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>7,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,292</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4,309,390</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperatives</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without Classification</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>28,576</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,302</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,345,178</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The landholding structure in Table 1 shows that 13 percent of the cattle ranches, i.e., the ranches that are enterprises possess 53 percent of the total land held in ranching, whereas the 50 percent of the holdings which are small ranches possess 7 percent of the land.

Since 1968 the process of formation of the new landholding structure received a great push. This transition has been caused by the new commercial opportunities for meat, which have come about during the recent past. So, it is our contention that the process of formation of a neo-latifundia structure is fostered by the agrarian reform process itself, in direct contradiction to the main purposes of the Revolution.

Not only can we see a new landholding structure in the process of formation but simultaneously social and political changes associated with it. The finqueros, big landowners of the Oriente lands, in order to avoid the threat of expropriations in the future, started to reveal a new concern with the legalization of rights. Secondly, many of them no longer allow their old tenants to cultivate small plots for their own use, for fear that they might claim right to title of the land. Instead they recur more and more to hired workers.

After losing their tenants, the finqueros had to look for labor supply. A new pool of unemployed sugar cane cutters was forming at the same time elsewhere in the country. Many kolla peasants from south Bolivia who used to work for years in north Argentina in the cane harvest, suffered new restrictions in the mid 1950's and their seasonal migration was interrupted.

This people, from a different racial and cultural context to that of the Oriente, turned to work for the finqueros. They are generally
brought by contractors to work in the sugar cane harvest or other seasonal harvests and generally stay only six months, returning after that to their homes in the southern highlands.

The original camba peasant, before a tenant for the finqueros, became an independent farmer, working only occasionally for his old patron. So, the classic relations of paternalism that existed before the agrarian reform are disappearing. Instead, the relations are becoming more impersonal and businesslike. Workers in the Oriente are neither resident throughout the year nor dependent on the finqueros (Heath et al., 1969).

A new type of dependency for the migratory worker arouses, becoming dependent on the contractor, who represents a new type of patron or mediator between the labor and the landed capital.

Loans by the United States to stimulate agricultural development were particularly significant in this area, especially after 1956. Finqueros used agricultural machinery rented at lower rates and started to develop rice cultivation in the north and sugar cane near Santa Cruz. These products succeeded and their productivity and commercialization increased very much. Small and medium size properties remained very close to the subsistence level and very little of their production reached the market. Very few cooperatives were established in the Oriente, and most of them were Italian and Japanese immigrants.

Several projects for massive reallocation of landless peasants from the densely populated Highlands and Valleys to the underpopulated Oriente were carried out, as a means to bring to a major demographic realignment
within the nation, but the success did not accompany these projects, with the result that most of the peasants returned to their native areas. Among the factors which influenced the failure of the colonization are:

a. Traditional resentment against kollas.

b. Disappointment of the peasants who did not found the houses and agricultural equipment which they had been promised.

c. Crops and methods different from those of the Highlands.

Instead of the officially organized colonization, a spontaneous migration started to take form. Peasants came independently, using the improved roads to the region. But this did not alleviate the population pressure in the Highlands.

At the Cochabamba Valleys the changes in the agricultural structure were very different from those in the Oriente. This is the most densely populated area of Bolivia; the predominant ethnic group is the Quechua, which has been greatly influenced by the Spanish culture. In this area the minifundia was very extended before the Agrarian Reform, and took the name of Piquerias, farm villages formed by small independent farmers who bought the land or inherited it. Finally, it was in this zone that the initial push for the seizing started early in 1952-53 under the direction of the peasant unions.

The Cochabamba Valleys is the area where the reallocation of land was the most profound. Between 1953 and 1970, the area affected by agrarian reform was 4,136,916 hectares, which is 34.39 percent of the total land affected by the Agrarian Reform in the country. In the Valleys a great part of the haciendas were declared latifundia during
legal proceedings of the reform and its lands divided between the colonos. The size of the plots alloted varied considerably, and the tradition played here an important role in these decisions. The size of the plot the colonno had before the Reform, the land available and the size of the family and also the number of families—all these influenced in the distribution of land.

The size of the plots granted oscillated between one and 13-1/4 hectares. Most of the communities utilize the same agricultural techniques than before the Agrarian Reform. Mechanization is almost nonexistent. The only investment is in livestock. The fragmentation of the land is enormous and this is due to many causes, among them inheritance, and the buying of different plots. The Agrarian Reform merely provided legal rights to these plots and reinforced this fragmentation.

Potatoes and barley are the main crops, and livestock is regarded almost as complementary to agriculture.

The structure of power is mainly determined by the only institution existing at the community level, namely, the sindicato (the peasant union). This is the only institution capable of mobilizing people to action, individual or communal. The sindicato is one of the major products of the revolution and the agrarian reform. The power vacuum left by the elimination of the hacienda has been occupied in most of the cases by the sindicato.

Social stratification in areas where the family farm is prevalent can be described as follows:
1) Rich farmers or piqueros, with functional or informal leadership.

2) Farm owners, piqueros, labor class.

3) Those who "do not count." Extremely poor farmers, generally out of communal activity or any type of leadership.

The people in the middle strata above are the most numerous today and form the majority of the community. Political and sindicato activities are usually conducted by these farmers. Considerable interaction between people of all strata does exist, indicating the flexibility of the new social structure (Peinado Sotomayor, 1971).

The number of families who can and use land is now considerably higher than before. Part of this increase is due to the reform of families that were evicted by the former owners, and part to the policy of the government to transfer miners to the agricultural sector, especially to the Cochabamba Valley, as a policy of rationalization of the mining sector. In most of the cases peasants received the same amount of land they worked before. There are many indications that marketing as a percentage of production is lower; this is due to the fact that peasants increased their consumption of food, and this decreased the amount of production that before reached the market. But also more peasants are reaching the markets, and the part the women who go to the markets is remarkable.

In the southeast of Bolivia the land under cultivation which changed hands probably reaches 17 percent. This represents no more than
one-third of the land of the latifundia (Erasmus, 1967). The peasants reported improvements in their levels of consumption, especially in the consumption of food.

In the Highlands or Altiplano, near 21 percent of the properties which have terminated the expropriation process were declared latifundia. In La Paz before the reform, 17 percent of the farms were 200 hectares or more, representing 81 percent of the land under cultivation and 96 percent of the total land (Clark, 1968). In the pre-reform period marketing was characterized on the one hand by commercially-oriented transactions of the patron and on the other hand by a economy of subsistence of the peasants.

In the Highlands it was the MNR who stimulated the formation of sindicatos and the subsequent seizing of lands. In this task was aided by members of mining unions and other leftist intellectuals. Most of the landlords fled to the cities, and as a consequence some land was left idle for some years.

In general, land distribution followed the pre-reform structure in most of the haciendas, and the quantity of land a peasant received had depended on his place in the stratification system of colonos prior to the reform (a full person received more; and half a person less, and so on). Sometimes part of the hacienda land was added to the individual plots. Thus redistribution has often accentuated differences among peasants rather than equalizing their landholdings.

The landowners who kept some parcels of land are making new arrangements in order to get labor. The task of supervising work had often been
entrusted to the sindicato leaders. External sources of labor do not exist in the Highlands. Wage labor has proved to be unsatisfactory on the Highlands, and most haciendas soon reverted to sharecropping arrangements, even if it is now considered illegal (Clark, 1968). The most common system adopted now is an adaptation of the old hacienda pattern of work; but now is the union leader who directs the work, much as the jilicata (foreman) had before the reform, and the produce is divided between landlord and peasant, almost 50 to 50 percent.

Between the peasants themselves the most common working arrangement is the AINI or reciprocal labor. Paid labor or MINGA can also be arranged between members of the extended family.

Many peasants that received lands are entering in sharecropping systems with other wealthy peasants or landlords.

In the Yungas, unlike the Highlands, migrant wage laborers are indispensable. This pattern was, and still is, characteristic of the patrons and also of the colonos. Most of the migrant workers came from the Highlands, mainly from the free Indian communities, where the land is more scarce than in the haciendas. This is the case of the huta-huahua, or "adopted children," who have little or no land, who go and work for a salary in the Yungas area. Their status has improved a little but still is the lowest among the peasantry.

As a result of the Agrarian Reform the peasants are participating more intensively than before in the markets in the Highlands and Yungas. The bottleneck in marketing and transportation which has been created by the Agrarian Reform were given a solution, especially by the peasant
unions and the peasants themselves, and in second place by middlemen. New fairs and markets were created, and sometimes new towns formed around these markets. Many trucks come from the cities, creating new adjustment to the new situation. But the truckers and new middlemen started to control the new markets, creating a new situation of dependency for the peasant liberated recently from the old patron.

The purchasing of manufactured goods increased, but still many peasants rely in exchange and bartering (Clark, 1968).

c) A Summary of Changes in Agricultural Sector

The economic and political power of the landed elite was destroyed by the Revolution of 1952, from which the Agrarian Reform became an inseparable offspring. The main benefits of the Agrarian Reform were for the ex-colonos of the haciendas, who were able to assure legally a title for the plots they cultivated before the Agrarian Reform. This process occurred primarily in the Cochabamba Valley and to some extent in the Highlands. But because of the ideological orientation of the dominant forces in the revolutionary process, from the beginning the minifundia was reinforced.

The problems that existed in the free Indian communities were untouched. So is the situation for the landless peasants, which include many of those living in the free Indian communities.

In the Lowlands of the Oriente a new agrarian structure is emerging; those are agricultural enterprises oriented to the market, mechanized and relying increasingly in hired labor. Added to those, are the great lati-
fundia who survived the process of confiscation and distribution in the Highlands, in the Cochabamba Valleys and in Chuquisaca, under the disguise of middle-sized properties or agricultural enterprises, recognized by the law.

The means dedicated to the implementation of the Agrarian Reform were scarce from the beginning. A great flow of United States aid fostered the creation of a new rural petit-bourgeoisie and rural capitalist class, especially in the Lowlands of the Oriente. The minifundia peasant and landless worker were not benefited at all from this aid.

The localism and regionalism existent before the Agrarian Reform is stressed by the differential allocation of resources by the government and by the stimulus it gave to some friendly factions of the syndical movement.

Where the latifundia was divided among the peasants, including the land managed directly by the landlord, those advantaged ex-colonos maintained their position or even increased the difference with disadvantaged peasants. The irrational subdivision in small plots scattered in different places in the hacienda was not corrected at all.

In the Highlands most of the peasants continued to be agricultural, sedentary and subsistence oriented; ties with the world outside the community are almost inexistent. The persistence of low levels of technology and the hard conditions of nature prevent the peasantry from leaving ritual celebrations (La Fiesta), which continue to absorb some of the surpluses obtained. However, there are indications that its importance is diminishing as a way of acquiring prestige and power at the community level: more and more young peasants are stressing the
role of education as an instrument for social mobility.

Some of the characteristics of closure of the peasantry are lessened. Society started to recognize the existence of the peasant. He is no longer treated in the way he was before. Even the deprecative word "Indian" was replaced by the word "campesino" (peasant), implying a redefinition of their status in society. The nexus to the market is open to some sectors of the peasantry, especially in new markets, fairs and towns. In these new places it is possible to see also that many peasants were able to secure some administrative and even judicial positions.

More important, the occlusion of the legal system which existed before the Revolution has been replaced by other channels, at the national level, or through the peasant union hierarchy.

The revolution and the Agrarian Reform delegitimized the social condition of the peasant, especially by the own action of the peasantry, who by arming itself was able to seize lands and replace discriminatory institutions. But it was unable to transform completely the perception of the society nor to product immediate bilingualism. While there is an increase in the level of expectations, the peasant subculture has not been re-evaluated. The peasantry remains the lowest class in society.

Individual peasants have rising expectations and more open channels for social mobility. Learning Spanish, changing his clothes and acquiring an urban occupation, allow a peasant to be considered a "cholo" (Mestizo).
The peasantry held political power for a certain number of years after the Revolution, especially by its ability to organize the peasant unions. But these were incorporated later into the political apparatus and therefore controlled, delivering the voting capacity of the peasantry to politicians and their nominees. The peasants were able to maintain real political power to the extent the Army did not exist and they possessed the only organized military power. So the government had no choice but to rely on their power for direct action.

The peasantry was also able to maintain real political power because all the sectors of it were interested in keeping the unity for the attainment of the common goal: the seizing of land. After this first phase, disunity started to crack their power. Economic differentiation and the interest in local affairs diverted their attention from national subjects and common goals.

The upper and middle echelons of the peasant unions became an important part of the national political machinery. Thousands of petty offices were created for trade union leaders after the revolution (1952-1956), becoming one of the main avenues for cooperating and rewarding them. Other lucrative economic activities were given in monopoly to union leaders, peasant and miners.

Particular factions led by caciques resulted in the disintegration of the peasant movement, and internal conflicts within the new ruling class found expression in real struggles between peasant union caciques.

This degeneration of the Revolution conducd to the stagnation of the Agrarian Reform and to a partial retreat of the gains obtained.
This process started with the rebuilding of the Army after 1956, and the increasing reliance in foreign aid to get economic development. The governing MNR elite broke the alliance with the most militant elements of the coalition in power (the miners and workers), and after the coup of Barrientos in 1964, a new coalition came to power, formed mainly by the Army, the government bureaucracy and coopted leaders of the unions representing a new power block formed by the new rural bourgeoisie, merchant capitalists and representatives of international corporations.
Chapter V

THE PEASANTRY AND POLITICAL ALLIANCES

The revolution of April, 1952 started as an outbreak of sectors linked to the MNR and with the active participation of the proletariat. After the Army was defeated and the MNR took power, the peasantry was won to the side of the revolution, actively joining the political alliance.

The instrument of mobilization for the peasantry was not the political party but rather the sindicato, which quickly evolved into armed militias. Through the sindicato the peasants gained wide participation in the political process and took control of the land.

The achievements and limitations of the peasantry must be seen in the changing context of the political alliances in which it participated. The main gains of the peasantry may be defined as breaking the political, economic and social power of the latifundia; distributing of land; education; and reaffirming its consciousness. The agrarian reform is the general framework which includes the achievements of the peasantry and can be considered as an instrument of social stabilization. In fact, we can say that the gains of the peasantry were only gains in the short range. The peasantry did not benefit either from the expansion of new agricultural lands or from the bulk of the aid (national and foreign) to the agrarian sector.

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The agrarian policy of the State was aimed toward the creation and further strengthening of a private capitalist sector, through the allocation of new lands, construction of highways and a substantial financial and technical aid (Dandler, 1977).

After the first phase of taking over of latifundia lands and their distribution was completed, the negative sides of the agrarian reform became more evident. A deep process of fragmentation continued with renovated strength, and the migration of thousands of peasants without access to land to the urban centers became more acute. Many peasants migrated to the new colonization lands of the Orientec where some became salaried seasonal workers and some received lands; many more continued to emigrate to Argentina (Albo, 1975).

Another negative aspect of the Agrarian Reform was the lack of resources (credit, technical aid, etc.) which seriously impaired the development of the productive forces. Only in Cochabamba did the reformed sector attain a greater diversification and peasants become more integrated in the market as consumers. In general, the colono who received lands through the agrarian reform benefited from no material aid.

The development of the events after 1952 from the point of view of the peasantry gives reason to the arguments made by Lukacs (1976). External upheavals were necessary to bring the peasant masses to coalesce in a unified movement, but even then they were incapable of organizing and providing the slogans and the positive direction corresponding to their own interests. The position of other classes,
especially the middle and working classes, which were involved in the conflict, and the level of consciousness of the political parties which led them, determined whether the peasant movement took a progressive or reactionary character.

The ideological form taken by the class consciousness of the peasants changes its content more frequently than that of other classes; this is because it is always borrowed from elsewhere (Lukács, 1976).

So, the analysis of the MNR as the political party which led the 1952 revolution becomes crucial. This was a populist movement oriented toward the mobilization of the workers and peasants but historically supported and led by elements of the dependent urban middle class. The intellectual elite of this class planned the takeover of the State apparatus as a means to regulate the society, with the end of achieving economic development. Far from having revolutionary goals, its intentions were to implement substantial reforms, trying to save from self-destruction an unlimited and unregulated capitalist system.

This fundamental ideological orientation of the middle class we may synthesize as reformist, elitist and statist (Burke, 1973).

The MNR thus maintained the necessity of capitalist development on the basis of populist guidelines in order to build a national State based on the conciliation of the interests of the different classes: proletariat, middle class and peasantry. Its flag was anti-imperialism. It believed in the possibility of an autonomous, capitalist development, which ultimately would break the chains of dependency. This was to be
done through State intervention in the economy but directed to foster the creation of a national strata of capitalist entrepreneurs.

At the same time, the MNR believed that this strategy must be accompanied and not contradicted by the redistribution of income, conditional to the control of the workers and peasants by the State (Mayorga, 1976).

The MNR did not incorporate the labor movement; rather, it became the labor movement's chosen political instrument. Labor leaders, grouped around the figure of Lechin and coming fundamentally from the miners union, the FSTMB, constituted a labor left sector of the MNR, but were autonomous to a great extent from the party apparatus.

On the eve of the rising in 1952 many in the labor left wing who had a definite revolutionary socialist vision of society entered the MNR under a conscious strategy known as ENTRISMO, i.e., to enter the MNR and radicalize it from within. The strategy of ENTRISMO was pushed mainly by Lechin, the top leader of the miners, and some of his closest friends, members of the trotskite POR, maintaining that the Bolivian proletariat was neither large enough nor developed enough in its consciousness to seize and use the State power alone.

Their view was that they could and should work through the more pragmatic sector of the MNR (Paz Estensoro, Siles, etc.) to reach their ends (Malloy, 1970; 1971).

The Bolivian proletariat seemed to support this strategy in its composition and character. It is a class without clear physiognomy, whose numeric weight and spirit has changed many times and suddenly
under the impact of massive migrations from the rural sector. Besides the miners and other working class sectors, there is a vast segment of infra-proletarians attached to the mining and urban centers whose immediate origin is rural. The consciousness of this proletariat is greatly influenced by its rural origin and strongly dominated by pre-capitalist socio-cultural patterns (Bedregal, 1970).

Confirming this characterization, Zavaleta says:

> What we generally call proletariat is in fact a vast sum of groups and sub-social groups which participate in the characteristics of this modern social class but at the same time are subject to different degrees of deformation and class displacement (Zavaleta, 1967).

He adds that the lack of definition of the social classes, especially in the cities, shows fundamentally the distortion and confusion of the economic activity of the country as a whole. Unpredictable mobilizations and chaotic reactions are often observed in the proletariat. What we see is a wide and deep development of working class unions, but the class fails in the organization of a party of the working class. This maladjustment between the militancy of the working class and the absence of a classist hegemonic party is a constant of the last three decades and may be considered as cause and effect of the working class spontaneism and the hypertrophy of its unions (Mayorga, 1977).

Despite the reformist initial intentions of the MNR, this party found itself, unwillingly, leading an authentic social revolution. The pressure of the working class and the peasants was instrumental in bringing about the adoption of certain measures. Nationalization of the mines, agrarian reform, extension of the franchise to vote, and the
creation of the co-government with workers' participation were some of these measures. In the first phase of the process (1932-1956) the working class was able to impose its hegemony at different levels of the State policies. But many of the decisions adopted were diluted and in fact were compromises formulated under the limits imposed by the MNR (Mayorga, 1976).

The national-popular State taking the form of the co-government institutionalizes the coalition between the MNR and the COB. But this political formula allows the MNR to establish its ideological and political hegemony.

Thus the nationalization of the mines does not exclude private operation in the form of "Pequena Minería," and the agrarian reform excludes de facto most forms of cooperative action and establishes the bases for extensive capitalist agriculture.

The economic policy adopted by the MNR in the first phase was based in a developmentalist approach and aimed at the diversification of the economy and the correction of the distortions generated by the mining economy of enclave. The total decapitalization of nationalized mining, the fall in the international markets of the tin price and a rampant inflation led to a deep economic crisis followed by a political crisis.

A first break appeared in the populist alliance which further created a confrontation between the leadership of the MNR and the COB. The MNR decided to rely after 1956 on the aid and advice of the United States and other international agencies. The conditions demanded to
grant this aid were a redefinition of the State intervention in the economy and opening the doors to foreign capital and private enterprises (Dandler, 1977; Burke, 1973).

In the political sphere the economic shift meant, first, undermining the political positions gained by the Left, mainly the COB. Secondly, a new role was devised for the peasantry; thirdly, the Army was rebuilt. The government of Silcs, inaugurated in 1956, maneuvered to divide the Left wing and break Lechin's personal power over Labor. The COB split over old differences between members of the PIR and POR parties, which represented two different sectors of the working class (miners supporting the Lechin-POR group, and railways and factory workers supporting the pro-Siles-ex PIR group). Additionally, Siles started to replace COB members in high governmental positions by his followers from the right wing of the MNR. Parallel organizations were created at the same time in the union movement.

The second aspect in the realignment of forces was manifested in the new role of the peasantry. One of the most important leaders of the peasant unions, Jose Rojas, from the Upper Cochabamba Valley, was named Minister of Peasant Affairs in 1959. Among the first acts in office was the mobilization of peasant militias against the miners in strike in Oruro. Consequently, the policy followed by the leadership of the MNR to consolidate its power against the Left sector and achieve the goals of "economic stabilization" was to break the alliance between workers and peasants, through the manipulation of leaders of peasant unions and their cooptation (Dandler, 1977).
The process of manipulation and cooptation was done through the peasant union. The peasantry gave a peculiar character to this organization. The organization dealt with local government, formed armed militias, seized and distributed lands, and replaced the power of the landowner and other local and regional authorities.

But since the overall situation was one of mobilization and the MNR felt acutely the need to originate support against the Left, numerous opportunities were created for peasant leaders for economic and social individual mobility. Local federations, centrals, confederations, the Ministry of Peasant Affairs, all these provided the positions for individual gains. The distribution of prebends was done through certain personal channels, contributing in this way to the strengthening of those leaders loyal to the party.

The process of competition for positions controlling the peasant organizations is particularly evident from 1956, when the peasantry participated for the first time in national elections. It is through the delivery of the peasant votes that certain political clienteles, based in personal loyalties were articulated in the political scenario. The legitimation of the leadership among the peasants reverted and became increasingly from "above," creating verticality in authority. Coalitions were created on the basis of personal contacts and verticalism, breaking in this way the class character of the situations.

We pointed to the increasing division in the working class, which opposed urban sectors and mining sectors. A similar process developed in the rural sector. Evidence for this comes especially from the
Cochabamba region, probably the most strategic area of rural mobilization (Dandler, 1977).

The division in the rural sector went along several lines. First, there was the regionalization of local authorities. Second, a confrontation occurred between peasants and town dwellers, viewed by the peasants as representing the power of the old landowners. Third, there was the conflict between piqueros (proprietors of small plots) and ex-colonos. Only the latter benefited from the distribution of lands, even if the piqueros were also organized in sindicatos and supported the MNR.

Groups of town dwellers fomented the resentment of the piqueros against the ex-colonos and provoked an armed conflict between different sectors of the peasantry.

The struggle inside the MNR further pushed the division inside the peasantry. One sector, the ex-colonos and landless peasants who benefited from the distribution of lands, supported the central sector of the MNR under the leadership of Paz Estensoso, while their opponents supported the rightist sector, led by Guevara Arze. During the end of 1959 and most of 1960 the armed conflict of the two sectors of the peasantry spread to the Cochabamba Valley and to other parts of the country, and mounted as the struggle for the selection of the presidential candidate went on.

The central sector of the MNR at this point turned for help from the same left sector that previously tried to undermine its influence and power. Finally, Paz Estensoso and Lechin from the COB were elected
for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency, respectively, recreating a new opportunity for the revival of the Left.

In the countryside, many leaders switched again, and even some of them who previously supported the candidacy of the rightist leader, Guevara Arze, started to support Lechin. Toward the end of 1961 a new pact was signed by workers and peasants. This new alliance of workers and peasants tried to push the candidacy of Lechin as president in the coming elections of 1964. The central sector determined to impede at all costs the candidacy of Lechin brought for the third time the candidacy of Paz, a deep break crystallized in the MNR. Finally, Lechin formed a new party, splitting the MNR.

A new division and renovated struggle developed in the countryside, which brought the intervention of the rebuilt Army. Two competing peasant confederations, one of the MNR and the second from the Left, were organized in March, 1963. A violent repression of the peasant unions of the Left followed this competition.

The intervention of Barrientos in the name of the Army, his posturcs of conciliation among rival peasant factions, and the creation of a vast clientele supporting his candidacy for the Vice-Presidency were the results of these struggles. The peasants-Army pact was signed with Barrientos, and as a consequence the leftist sector of the peasantry was suppressed.

It was by counting on the support of the peasantry of the Cochabamba Valley that the armed forces were able to impose their conditions to the MNR, and later, in 1964, to overthrow its government. This was
the end of the populist regime of the MNR.

The establishment of a military dictatorship in 1964 was a consequence of the cracking hegemony of the MNR bureaucracy and the destruction of the equilibrium between this and the Army. The MNR abandoned in this way its role as administrator of the State power, a role which was done in the name of the power block.

The power block was formed at this time by representatives of international corporations and fractions of the new national bourgeoisie (the rural capitalist class, and sectors of private mining). From 1964 on the Army took over the role of administrator in the State apparatus. In the phase which went from 1956 to 1960 the State achieved a relative autonomy vis-a-vis the power block, formed by the monopolist international capital and the national commercial-bourgeoisie. This is because the State was able to maintain a certain equilibrium vis-a-vis the dominant classes, the proletariat and other classes.

But since the working class entered in a violent conflict against the regime, the party bureaucracy lost its capacity to appear as the general representative of the nation. The capacity of the MNR bureaucracy to maintain its supposed class neutrality depended on the ability of the COB bureaucracy to support the policies of the State.

The relative autonomy of the State is thus limited to 1956-1960. After that, the dominant classes assumed a more direct control of the State apparatus, and the working class directly opposed the State and the union's bureaucracy. Only the peasantry remained loyal to the established order, and with the installation of the military dictatorship,
reaffirmed its conservative role, expressed in the signing of the peasant-military pact (Mayorga, 1977).

A temporary break in this trend occurred during the governments of Ovando and Torres, which attempted to regain the road of State capitalism, and the conciliation of the interests of the different classes. The coup by Banzer in August, 1971 expressed the dominant class' capacity to resist the renewal of the populist experiences of 1952. From this time on the power block advanced steadily to a complete and direct control of the State apparatus.

The direct class control was covered by a corporatist socio-political project. Some of the populist ideological elements (and men) borrowed from the MNR served as a coating for this project. Politically, the regime tried to destroy the organizations of the working class and parties of the Left. The regime actively sought to interfere with the unions and to create unions loyal to the government while trying to de-politicize the working class.

The weakness of the regime manifested itself in its incapacity to attain these goals and in the abandonment of the corporatist project by 1974 (Mayorga, 1977).

From this, one conclusion seems to be important: the process of consolidation and institutionalization of the bourgeois State under regimes of military dictatorship confronted with a highly mobilized working class, develops in a context of a general political crisis.

The relative stability enjoyed by the military dictatorship in this last phase might be explained, partially, by the control and manipulation of the peasantry.
We have tried to explain, starting from 1952, the different roles played by the peasantry in the new schemes of political power, in a context of popular mobilization and alliances between different classes or class sectors.

In the first period, during the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, a fundamental transformation occurred not only at the level of the State but also at the level of the immediate interests of the popular classes, even if these transformations were conditioned by the limits imposed by the MNR. In the second period, the peasantry became increasingly the source of support of the MNR, as this party entered a process of gradual deterioration following its project of capitalist development, in conflict with the interests of the working class. A strong conflict arose between sectors of the regime, and in this context, we witness the division inside the peasantry and its gradual disengagement, atomization and de-politicization.

The political power of the peasantry is severely limited, and even if the Army tried to unify this sector again in function of a new political strategy, the peasantry is weak and lacks its previous militant character and mobilization.
Chapter VI

CONCLUSION

The breaking of the estamental society and the creation of a new perception, which is the basis for the beginning of class consciousness, are among the most salient consequences of the processes analyzed. However, the process of creation of a new class consciousness, with all the positive in it, is not unilinear. The peasantry is able to gain consciousness of its class situation and shows a great ability to create organizational tools to attain its interests. But the attainment of these interests may be fostered or hindered by many forces. The attitudes of political forces of the left is significant in shaping and orienting the realization of peasant interests. These attitudes are conditioned in turn by the ideological approaches towards the peasant question and by the level of the peasant interests itself.

A reversal in the process of gaining class consciousness is possible, especially the political demobilization of the peasantry. If we accept the proposition of two levels of interests, the short run interests expressed in this case by the satisfaction of the hunger for land, and long-run interests, which means socio-economic planning and political organization to achieve it (which obviously requires a highly developed level of politicization), the peasantry will be able to move
from one level to the other, from the lower to the higher one, only if certain requirements are met.

These requirements are:

1. The existence of a revolutionary party, which assigns a leading role to the peasantry in the revolutionary process of change.

2. The building of an alliance between peasants and the working class.

3. A re-evaluation of the place of the peasantry in the scale of social prestige.

4. The assignment of a leading role to the agrarian sector in the process of accumulation, a basic condition for the achievement of economic and social development.

5. The forging of a power block which follows an independent path of development geared to the strengthening of the State and one which excludes foreign forces from belonging to this power block.

Some of these requirements may be operating before the initiation of the revolutionary process and probably may be considered pre-conditions, as requirements (1) and (2); requirement number (1) may be considered also a key element for the attainment of the others. While conditions (3), (4) and (5) may also be looked at as a product of the revolutionary process, they are at the same time crucial elements in order for the peasantry to make the transition from one level to the other.
The absence of many of these requirements during the social processes analyzed in Bolivia is offered in this paper as the explanation for the distortion and reversal of the revolutionary potential of the peasantry.

Some of what we call requirements or conditions seemed to work for a short period of time, but the lack of what we consider the most crucial condition, a revolutionary party, seems to have had in the last instance a strong influence in the development of the other conditions.

From the above said stems our major theoretical point, which is that the revolutionary potential of the peasantry is not a given. Obviously, many forces play to counteract this potential: racial factors, superstructural elements, structural-economic conditions embedded in a certain mode of production and social forces trying to use or manipulate the peasantry in order to follow certain strategies for development.

The tremendous momentum the mobilized peasantry acquired in the first period of the revolution in Bolivia was missed by the Left, and led ultimately to the incorporation of the peasantry in a project of dependent capitalist development. The result is the political demobilization of the peasantry and the coming to a halt of the process of class conscientization.
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