

HYPOTHESIS FOR THE DIAGNOSIS OF A SITUATION
OF SOCIAL CHANGE:
THE CASE OF VENEZUELA 1/

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I.- INTRODUCTION

Only a minor effort of observation is required to conclude that there is something wrong with the present state of the Venezuelan Society. Whatever aspect is placed under the light of the analysis, it immediately registers the presence of acute conflicts that gives daily life a tone of unusual violence and insecurity. This work represents an effort to understand what really lies behind this situation,

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which can be considered abnormal. Any gain in this connection will also contribute to understand better the typical problems of other transitorial societies.

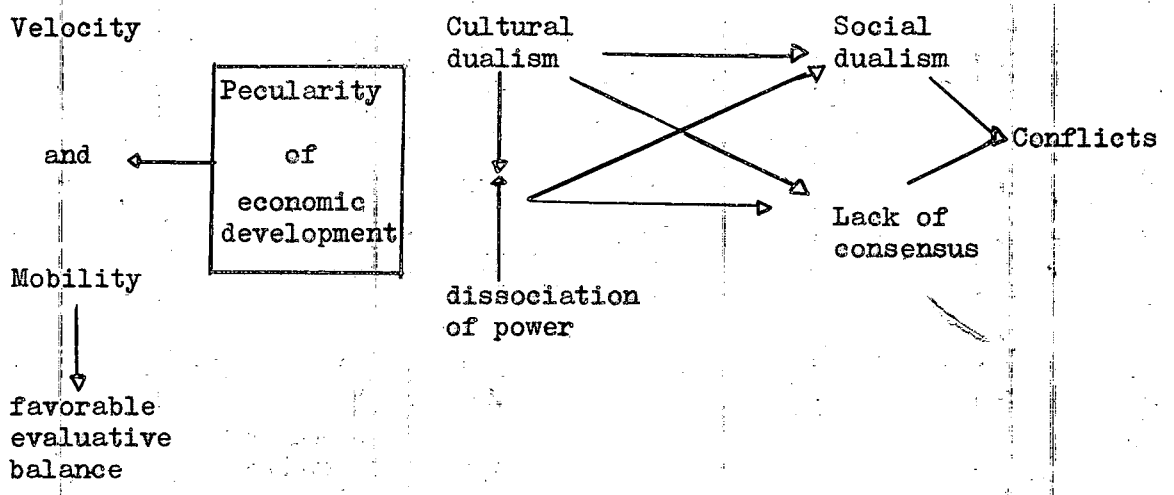
According to our analytical model the peculiarities of the process of economic development experienced by the country during the last thirty years gave birth to a process of desintegration of a traditional society, creating a situation of cultural dualism and dissociation of political power. Both contributed to accentuate a phenomenon of social dualism which was also a consequence of the peculiarities of economic growth.

It is almost unnecessary to add that in a society with those characteristics the degree of consensus has to be relatively low and the intensity of conflicts high. How then the necessary social integration has been maintained?

As it is well known social integration rests upon a combination of force and consensus. Force has played a very important role all along the history of Venezuela, but, it is also well known that no force is capable of maintaining integration in the absence of a minimum degree of consensus. In our view during the last thirty years this mini mum degree was also result of the peculiarities of economic growth.

The "model" and its graphical scheme are, of course, heroic simplifications of reality. We are very well aware of the fact that the relations among the variables operating in a process of social change are highly complex. Yet the simplification is justified by the limited purposes of the analysis.

Scheme of the Venezuelan model of social change



The "model" as it is presented has little use as a tool of prognosis, but we have added an additional consideration of some importance. It appears that the country cannot continue growing at a high rate through the same development path followed in the past. It has to make a turn. We can assume that whenever a society has to make a turn it requires a high degree of integration.

Under conditions of dissociation of power, there are only two alternatives ways to increase integration. One is to reconcentrate power through the establishment of a dictatorship of the right or the left. The other is a creation of a coalition around an efficient programme, that is to say, of a programme which will create within society forces of integration, less conjunctural than a rapid rate of economic growth and high degree of social mobility. The feasibility of a coalition around such programme depends upon the nature and intensity of the existing conflicts. This last point is not discussed in this document.

II.- The symptoms of desintegration and consensus

Let us now examine the symptoms of those phenomena.

Cultural dualism, that in this context interests us only ^{with} reference to the structure of personality, can take two different forms:

a) as two adjacent cultures coexisting under the same system of political power within which one dominates from any point of view, and b) as the coexistence within one culture of individuals with values and attitudes which are typical of two or more cultures. The Venezuelan Society is dual in both senses. The attitudes, values and aspirations of the rural population - who constitute the lowest layer of the society and who has lived from colonial times under the hacienda system - considerably differ from those characterizing the members of the higher groups. Furthermore within each layer of the social hierarchy there are individuals with modern personality and others with traditional personality. Dissociation even permeates individual personality to an extent that an exaggerated observer believes that it is pathological.

The external symptoms of cultural dualism are many. There is, for example, a notorious lack of correspondence between levels of aspiration and attitudes towards work; the evaluation of the social phenomena and even of the individual ones is done resorting to ideological criteria and, generally, based on very limited information, and status of women is notably inferior.

In connection with the meaning of the concept of dissociation of power as is used here it is necessary first to clear some theoretical assumptions.

We start from the notion that in every society the structure of power is pyramidal in the sense that the frequency of individuals decreases as the index that measures power rises. It is supposed, moreover, that this is a valid proposition for any kind of organization. It is furthermore assumed, that society is an organization of organizations and that the greater its complexity, is, the greater is the functional specialization of her component organizations. If this is correct, in all complex society the pyramid of power has more than one apex. There are, let us say, an economic power apex, a political and a cultural one and, perhaps it should also be mentioned, a military one. We understand that power dissociation exists if the pyramid has more than one apex.

The dissociation of power requires the existence of consensus among power holders with regard to the fundamental issues with any society confronts, such as the criteria or norms to select the individuals who must fill the power roles; the restrictions that must be imposed to the exercise of power; the priorities that must be assigned to the fulfilment of different tasks, etc.

At ~~this~~ present it is generally accepted as true that modern societies are characterized by the diffusion of power with consensus. In transitorial societies, however, the typical situation seems to be dissociation without consensus and Venezuela appears to be a clear example

absence of political parties representing the great economic interests and the presence of others which search domination by nonelectoral ways. In the cultural field, the lack of consensus is shown in the attitudes of the students regarding the rules that govern their conduct as such and their promotion through the cultural pyramid and also in the norms established to practice teaching. [We understand as social dualism the coexistence of traditional institutional structures with modern structures and/or the functioning of the modern ones according to traditional norms.]

The Venezuelan Society is a complex one. It possesses practically all the formal institutions of a modern society, but also some traditional ones. The ^{extended} family is still very common both in rural and in urban areas; the governmental administrative machinery is very inefficient. There is no administrative career and the budget deficiently operates as a mechanism of legal control of expenditures. The judicial system is governed by laws that were elaborated while Venezuela was still traditional and rural and functions very slowly and at high costs.

The educational system - although quite extended - still possesses many features of those typical to systems of traditional societies. The family enterprises are the prevailing ones, although some are

organized as corporations. Its efficiency is not very high and adscriptives criteria for role fulfillment still prevail.

Within that picture of desintegration, forces of cohesion were also operating. We mentioned earlier that they were also the consequence of ^{the peculiarities of} economic growth.

One of those peculiarities was its very rapid rate of growth, which permitted an ample and extremely generous satisfaction of the raising levels of aspirations, for some directly and for others creating the conditions for high social mobility. High social mobility does not necessarily follow from a rapid rate of economic growth, as it is testified by the petroleum producing countries of the Middle East. Yet, in the absence of a social revolution, it may constitute a necessary, although not sufficient, condition. The other ingredient was the role played by the Government in the process of growth, a second character in the list of peculiarities. The Government greatly facilitated social mobility because it became the mechanism through which the petroleum income remaining in the country was distributed.

In some transitoral societies nationalism has played an important integrative role. In the case of Venezuela this has not happened, partly because of the peculiar form of her colonization. ^{Rather} More than ^{one} a country, there were several small colonies linked to the metropolis by

economic and administrative relations, but with very weak interregional links. Loyalty was more regional than national which explains, to a certain degree, why in Venezuela the war of independence had the nature of a civil war as well as of a fight for independence. The regional feuds lasted practically during all the past century and were finished only when the central region acquired an overwhelming economic power that could not be challenged by any other region in particular, nor by all of them together.

Once the national political integration was consolidated - at the beginning of the present century - the needs of economic development did not stimulate the strengthening of nationalism. Development started with petroleum exploitation, an activity unknown to the natives of the country, and the expansion of which damaged the interest of nobody. On the contrary, it favored everybody. Besides, the activity demanded an amount of capital, technical knowledge and control of the product's international distribution, ^{which} was well beyond the strength of the small agricultural and commercial entrepreneurs of the country.

In some traditional societies the Army has served as a mechanism of diffusion of nationalism. In Venezuela it did not play this role in the past, in part, due to the fact that the country never had international conflicts. The Army has operated mainly as an internal police

and as a mean for climbing up the social ladder. Besides, the organization was institutionalized only well advanced the present century. Earlier there were armies loyal to "caudillos" who fought for political power.

III.- THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

The Venezuelan process of economic development has been peculiar in five senses: (i) its velocity; (ii) the exogenous nature of its dynamism; (iii) the changes in structure of production and employment; (iv) the changes in the structure of sectorial productivities and (v) the part played by the Government.

The velocity of economic growth has been notorious. In the early 1920's when the process begun, Venezuelan society was almost completely traditional and agricultural. Today 64% of the population is urban. The gross domestic product showed an increase of 8% per annum from 1936 to 1958. Some available information suggests that the acceleration took place some years before. In all the history of the Western World there has been no similar experience.

Economic development was an important element in the acceleration of demographic growth. The rate increased to 2.0% in the decade of the 1920's, to 2.5% in the decade of the 1930's and reached to 3.6% in the 1950's. Yet, the country's per capita income, which was one of the lowest in Latin America, during the 20's stands at present at about 750 dollars,

the highest of the region and possibly the highest in the tropical world.

If we accept that the satisfactory functioning of a society requires certain structural equilibrium, ^{including} ~~even the~~ personality structures, and if we accept as unlikely that an spontaneous process of rapid economic change will modify values and attitudes at the proper speed and direction, it follows that the rapid rate of growth is a sufficient explanation of the cultural dualism which characterizes Venezuela. On the other hand, the growing complexity of the Venezuelan society, brought about by rapid development and population growth, by itself, had to produce a tendency to dissociation of power.

The exogenous origin of economic change also had a notable influence both over cultural dualism and dissociation of power. The fact that it was initiated by foreigners, with imported techniques, capital and organization, made unnecessary the creation of socio-political and cultural pre-requisites. It was not necessary to break down a power structure, create entrepreneurs, increase knowledge, create a favourable attitude towards saving, work and, in general, economic rationality, nor to create new formal institutions. It was neither necessary to develop agriculture to the point that it would leave a sur-

plus for the development of other activities. Even today a large percentage of the agricultural labor forces does not know the use of the plow and of animal traction. PFinally the development of the petroleum industry, was one of the most important contributing factor for a notable distortion in the structure of production and employment.

In fact, the quick growth of petroleum exports brought as a consequence a fast growth of domestic demand of all types of goods and services. On the other hand, domestic production of these goods and services was elastic in the case of the services and inelastic in the majority of goods. As a consequence, the large part of that demand shifted abroad and, as a ^{further} consequence, while the economy as a whole grew at 8% per annum the agricultural sector grew at 4%. At the present time its contribution to the national product is only 7%, comparable to the one in the most developed countries of the world. Regarding construction, because of being a non-importable good, the product generated by the sector (including water and electric power), grew in the decade of the 1950's at a rate of 20% per annum. Briefly, the production structure of Venezuela corresponds neither with those of the developed countries nor with those typical of the underdeveloped ones.

Contrasting with manufacturing, petroleum production does not offer much employment opportunities. Its present contribution to gross domestic product is approximately 25%, but employs only 2% of the population. This explains why the country, in spite of its high per capita income level, still has 33% of its labor force occupied in agriculture; 14% unemployed and a proportion occupied in services and constructions comparable to the one of the most developed countries of the world.

The changes in the structure of production had a very important influence on cultural dualism, because almost none of the activities that developed most were really incompatible with a traditional personality. They were, on the contrary, together with agriculture, typical activities of traditional societies. Besides, the slow rate of agricultural growth, together with the demographic growth, acted as an expellent force from rural areas to the city. For this and some other reasons Venezuela, in the short period of forty years, changed its urban-rural relation from 1:3 to 2:1. Caracas, a city of 92 thousand inhabitants in the 1920's, now has 1.3 millions. Therefore, it is proper to say that cities are populated by rural people. Apart from the implications of this

fact, in regard to the cultural dualism, it means that an undetermined proportion of the imigrant population lost its needed institutional rural frame and has not been able to become a part of the institutions of urban life. They are uprooted.

The fourth peculiarity of the economic development process has been the inequality of sectorial productivities. In the developed countries the differences in the relation of value added per employed person among the different productive sectors are usually relatively small. In the underdeveloped countries the relation between the non-agricultural and agricultural sector is 3:1. In Venezuela the relation is of 8:1 and if the mining and petroleum sector is used as a base the ratio is 75:1. These differences involve two things: first that the differences in remunerations between the country and the city are enormous and second, that the personal income distribution is very unequal. In fact, it is estimated that 12% of the richest population receives 49% of the income and that 45% of the poorest receives 9%. Naturally, the inequality in sectorial productivities is only one of the reasons which explain the inequality in income distribution. The Government and the way in which the productive structure was

modified also played a very important part.

The Government is one of the country's principal investors. During the first stages of the expansion process its main preoccupation was to build the infra structure of capital, providing a great impetus to construction activities. This activity requires a lot of unskilled man power whose remuneration are regulated by the agricultural wages, as this sector is the principal supplier of this kind of man power. On the other hand, mainly during Perez Jimenez, the Government did not pay much attention to the control of remuneration of constructors. As a matter of fact, taking advantage of the inefficiency of the administrative machinery, they obtained disproportionated earnings. This behaviour, in turn, stimulated an increasing burocratic inefficiency. Remunerations of the middle class, whose principal employer was the Government, were also established at very high levels. Here the demonstration effect of the petroleum industry and the backwardness of the educational system, which accentuated the scarcity of the middle class typical skills, also played a significant role.

The fact that the agricultural sector did not transform its production techniques kept the rural remunerations low and this, as it was mentioned before, contributed to dis-

tort the salary structure in the cities. While the agricultural lag was checking the increase in the rates of remuneration of the lower echalons, the educational policy, Government policy and the demonstration effect of the petroleum industry were inflating the ones corresponding to the middle and higher steps.

Naturally, the great differences in the urban-rural income distribution contributed effectively to stimulate migration from the country to the city, thereby stimulating the rise of cultural dualism. Population migrated but neither at the origin nor at the destination there were mechanisms to accelerate the change of attitudes which could reduce the differences between traditionalism and modernism. Perhaps if the agrarian economy would have developed faster, the intensity of the phenomenon would have been reduced.

Finally it remains to examine the role of the Government. Taxation was the only way by which the nation could take for herself a proper share of the benefits generated by the petroleum industry. As a consequence of this, the Government obtained great economic power to an extent that public investment exceeds private non-petroleum investment. In using this power, the Government facilitated cultural dualism by stimu-

lating social mobility, through the administrative machinery as well as through the economic ladder. This influence was exercised by means of neglecting completely the application of universalistic rules for the selection of people for the performance of different roles and by means of a notable relaxation of the saction and remuneration system. Any person could aspire to any position without risking to descend by the social scale as a consequence of its incapacity to perform its functions. It also had an influence over cultural dualism by delaying the expansion of the educational system and by neglecting its qualitative modification. When democracy was reestablished in 1958 the educational system expanded very rapidly, to the degree that at the present, 90% of the primary school population is incorporated to the system, but again very few qualitative changes occurred.

Let us now examine the influence of economic development upon dissociation of power.

Like in every traditional society, power was highly concentrated in Venezuela when the economic development process begun. Since the beginning of the century the country was governed by Gomez's dictatorship, which lasted until his death in 1935. Gomez was a man of a very humble

origin who conquered political power by force and who, in order to consolidate his regime, destructed the economic power of his opponents and create his own loyal economic elite. He himself accumulated an extraordinary fortune. He also eliminated all the regional military leaders and united the country under the dominion of the central region.

Gomez prohibited all activities of political parties and, although a Congress existed, it was integrated by men of his selection. When, as a result of the economic development process and urbanization, the middle class began to acquire significance ~~it~~ ^{appeared} also oppressed the typical aspirations of the members of this class, such as the establishment of clear rules to regulate the exercise of power and norms which would give them a larger participation.

At the end of the decade of the 1920's university students and intellectuals began to show their disgust for public immorality and lack of political liberty.

Gomez's death opened the gates to the possibility of action of the political parties. That was the birthday of the ones possessing today the greatest influence. But Gomez's death did not destroy his political system. Gomez's Congress chose the Minister of War as the successor to serve until

1940 and then chose Medina, another "Gomecista" General for a period of five years. Medina seemed to be highly influenced by the reformist winds that blew during the second world war and consequently undertook some economic reforms and permitted free political activities, Yet Medina^{he} did not open up the avenues for political electoral participation. "Acción Democrática", one of the parties now on power profited from the opportunity and organized a large political machine integrated by members of the middle class, workers and "campesinos".

Several other parties are also organized, but what is significant was that none represented the interests of the holders of economic power. All other parties were leaded by men of the middle class who did not join "Acción Democrática" because of ideological reasons (catholics and communists) or by reasons of personal conflicts between the leaders.

There is a plausible explication for the political indifference of the economically powerful groups. Possibly they thought that it was unnecessary to enter into the political arena as the established system granted them complete domination as long as the alliance with the Army continued. However, something very important had happened in the Army after Gomez. It had been institutionalized, a hierarchy had been

created and it was no longer possible to reach a given rank in an arbitrary fashion and, even more impossible was to become General or Coronel by self appointment. The institutionalization of the Army required the existence of an upward functional mobility, yet this was not feasible because Gomez's successors did not eliminate the high ranking officers who had been appointed by Gomez.

The frustration of young officers coincide with the frustration of the emerging political leaders, and lead up to an alliance of "Acción Democrática" with the armed forces which overthrew Medina at the end of 1945 on the eve of a new election.

The new Government proceeded immediately to take the necessary measures for the consolidation of its power by electoral means. To do this, on one hand, it modified the legislation, giving vote to women and illiterates, reduced to 18 years the minimum age needed for voting and simplified the electoral inscription mechanism. On the other hand, it modified labor legislation, establishing in the Constitution ~~the~~ collective bargaining and the right to strike; it raised taxation of the petroleum companies and the rate of income

tax and established the obligation of renting land to farmer workers in the big farms. At the end of 1947 the country was called to elections and a member of "Acción Democrática" won by an overwhelming majority.

The first President ever elected with vast participation and direct vote, only lasted seven months. He was overthrown by a new alliance of the Army with the holders of economic power. Given the circumstances this was not surprising. "Acción Democrática" had taken all necessary steps to consolidate its electoral power, but had not modified the conditions to consolidate the electoral system as a way to power promotion. The Army continued being the arbiter of the situation between the economic power and the new political power. The economic power did not accept the economic and social reforms imposed by "Acción Democrática" and some Army officers found irresistible the reward offered by the dominion of a Government through whose hands circulated more than 20% of the national income.

The coupe d'etat lead to the enthronization of Perez Jimenez's dictatorship which lasted from 1948 to 1958. His period coincided with a great economic prosperity, due to the expansion of the world's petroleum market, to the improvement

of the terms of trade and to the selling of new petroleum concessions. Prosperity helped Perez Jimenez to govern with very little opposition notwithstanding that all the political leaders had gone to exile, to jail or to clandestineness and that every intent of protest was dominated with "iron-hand", and notwithstanding that public moral reached even lower levels than the ones recorded during Gomez time. But Perez Jimenez committed two big mistakes which destroyed his regime when prosperity ended. In the first place he managed public finances as if prosperity could last forever and, in the second place, his was a clique dictatorship, not one of the Army. This obliged him to build up his own security force, independent from the Army and, of course, its rival. When the crisis became worse the dissatisfaction of the economic groups and of the militarys was added to all the conflicts which prosperity and ^{coercion} ~~cohesion~~ had maintained latent, and the regime broke down.

Perez Jimenez's fall opened the gates to the action of political parties and "Acción Democrática", whose electoral machinery had not been destroyed, notwithstanding the exile of its principal leaders for more or less ten years, won again the elections. This time their former experience provided the

pattern for the orientation of their policy. Its fundamental preoccupation was precisely what before constituted its main fault: the creation of the conditions for the stability of the electoral system. For this purpose it established an alliance with other, more conservative, political party, its greater enemy in the previous period; showed great cautioness not to hurt the economic interests of the powerful groups, and step by step, diminished the power of the Army, first dividing the command and slowly eliminating the officers suspicious of not being devoted to the democratic regime. The ground to do this job was much more favourable at this time. The institutionalization of the Army had been consolidated and this created new attitudes among the officers. At the same time a process of technification occurred which contributed to fasten professional rather than political attitudes.

The conciliatory attitude of the Government toward the economically powerful groups also found echo, greatly due to the appearance of new industrial groups, who became aware that a return to political power through alliances with the Army could bring them more risks than advantages. Due to the influence of those same groups the country is for the first

time seeing efforts for the organization of a political rightist movement. These attitudes, however, are not shared by everyone, not even by a majority of the holders of economic power.

Meanwhile, many events had been happening in the cultural field since Gomez's fall, which lead to a growing alienation of the intellectuals. Medina, as much as Perez Jimenez, tried to neutralize "Acción Democrática's" influence over labor unions and students by stimulating or overlooking the action of other parties and it was the Communist Party the one that took the best advantage of the situation. For several years it became the exhibitor of the many disadjustment of the Venezuelan society and the richest supplier of categorical explanations.

In relation with the first point there was no need to invent. "Ranchos" and unemployment were rampant even in the most prosperous years of the 50's; farm workers continued living in extreme poverty, immorality in government affairs and the influence of foreign interests were evident and have strenghten the nationalistic spirit. As to second, there was not much to compete with. In none of its levels the educational system was helping the student to understand the world where they lived nor to think by their own means. These con-

ditions are ideal for ideological radicalization; a process from which those-civilians or militaries sensitive to social problems can hardly escape. In fact, even the youngest leaders of "Acción Democrática" did not escape and constituted a new revolutionary marxist party in 1961.

Other elements also influenced ideological radicalization. The most important one were perhaps the freezing, in 1959, of the revolution initiated in 1945 by "Acción Democrática", the economic depression that lasted until 1961 bringing the unemployment rate to 14% and, of course, the cold war and the success of the cuban revolution.

III.- THE PROSPECT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

In spite of the ¹⁹⁶² recovery, ⁱⁿ ~~of the 1962's~~ ^{the} economic crisis, which affected the country since 1958, ~~it~~ does not seem to be of a simple conjunctural character. It is not a problem of the petroleum exports experiencing a transitory reduction in its rate of growth as a consequence of a recession in the great industrial centers. Undoubtedly the slow growth of the North American economy had some influence, but the principal cause lied in the fact that the expansion of the use of the automobile, the dieselize of the railway and the substitution of coal in household heating have practically come to an end in the

United States. This is why most of the studies on the long run outlook of the demand for petroleum in the United States show rates of growth not higher to 3-4% per annum. In Europe, on the other hand, those innovations have still a long way to go, but Venezuela's increasing participation in those markets is unlikely due to her competitive position with respect to the Middle-East suppliers.

If the preceding propositions are correct and Venezuelan economic growth continues relying on petroleum as in the past, the future rate would be just half of what it was between 1930 and 1958, but as population now grows at a rate above 3%, the growth of product per capita will drop to one fifth of its traditional value.

The experience of Venezuela can be generalized in the following term. If it is accepted that the basic difference between underdeveloped and developed countries lies in the absence of an autochthonous innovation mechanism, it follows that the classical theory of economic development is applicable to these economies. They surely can experiment a process of growth, but it is condemned to reach a stagnation point. In other words, the economic development of those countries is exhaustible. But the fact that anyone avenue is

exhaustible does not mean that a country cannot have at its disposal at that moment some other avenue to continue to grow to a new higher point of stagnation. This is the case of Venezuela. It can no longer grow at a satisfactory rate by exporting petroleum, but it can use the avenue of import substitution, which is also exhaustible.

In fact, the transit from an avenue to another demands the satisfaction of a few non-economic requisites. The requirements are conditioned by the adaptive needs of society, for if each avenue of development is exhaustible, ^{transits} ~~transits~~ or shifts will be rather frequent within the life horizon of the society. Thus, the development by means of petroleum export was possible from 1920 to 1960 and the development by means of import substitution may probably have dynamism during a shorter period. Examining the problem within this context it appears that it is not enough to shift from one avenue to another. The transit must be done in such a way that, when the right time comes, it does not stand in the way to a new transit. The process of import substitution begun in the early thirties but the way it is being done does not seem to be the most appropriate for a shift to exports sometime in the future.

Past developments of Venezuela had some effects which

facilitated the transit to a new way of growth and some other which made it harder. Among the first appears the expansion and integration of the national market, which provided a solid base for the development of many industries; the creation of social basic capital facilities; the appearance of an entrepreneurial class which, although incipient, is dynamic and aggressive, and the creation of a saving capacity which enables the country to devote quite a high portion of national income to investment.

^{Among the}
The ~~second~~ obstacles are cultural dualism, social dualism and dissociation of power without consensus. Let us see why.

In the first place, it can be stated that in every process of change directed to economic development, which has to be completed in a relatively short period of time, collective action guided by the Government is needed. In order to act as a guide Governmental institutions need a minimum degree of administrative efficiency and of rationality in the process of decision making. The backwardness of those institutions in Venezuela was already mentioned. In fact, if the transit from one to another avenue of economic development ^{were} ~~was~~ not subject to certain restrictions, the requirements for administrative

rationality would be fewer.

On the other hand, rationalization of the administrative system becomes much more difficult if dissociation of power without consensus and cultural dualism are significant features of society. In a way those deficiencies function as escape valves for the tensions created by dissociation of power. Cultural dualism on the other hand, operates drawing away evaluative attention towards non-relevant issues, such as if the State must or must not participate in the development process, and makes unlikely that pressure groups exert their influences in the proper direction.

Cultural dualism also influences directly the difficulties of transit. Perhaps it can be assumed that transit requires the stiffening of the sanction and remuneration system, in addition, of course, to the change in its type. The hierarchical position of some roles needs to be changed and many of those high roles will have to be substituted. These necessities can hardly be understood nor supported by the power holders if their schemes of cultural reference differ too much.

However, in the concrete Venezuelan case it does not appear prima facie, impossible to achieve the transit satis-

factorily. Everything depends essentially on two things. In the first place, upon the possibility of organizing a coalition around a program of efficient action and, in the second place, upon the possibility of a much greater effort for professionalization of the Army.

IV.- SOME THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS USED IN THE
ANALYSIS OF VENEZUELA

A.- Assumptions

The analysis of any concrete situation requires the utilization of some implicit or explicit theoretical assumptions. In our view it is better to make them explicit, at the risk that its nakedness will evidence its weaknesses. In the following paragraphs an effort is made to present them summarily, repeating some already mentioned in preceding pages and adding some complementary ones. The assumptions by no mean constitute a theory of social change. They are only points of reference which can be used as analytical tools.

It will recall that one of them asserts that social ^{cohesion} coercion is always based on a combination of ^{coercion} ~~cohesion~~ and consent. The presence of both elements involves, in the first place, that in every society a continuous process of evaluation regarding

the outcome of its operations, is taking place. If this ~~was~~^{were} wrong it would be impossible to conceive consent. In the second place, if there is a constant evaluation and if, as it is evident, it is not necessary, not even probable, that the judgements of all evaluators coincide, the problem of meaning and degree of consent arises.

In relation to the degree, it can be said that, for our purposes, it is diminishing or increasing according to the degree in which the necessity for the use of force is being modified in the opposite ~~way~~^{direction}.

Regarding the meaning, it perhaps could be said that it is equivalent to the existence of a net evaluative balance favourable to the way in which society is operating. The concept can be applied to an individual or to a group and in both cases a system of weights is needed to come to the final conclusion.

In the case of an individual his judgement on the operation of each function will have to be weighed by the importance he gives to each of the functions he evaluates. Within each function he can evaluate different aspects, which will have to be weighed by the importance he attaches to

each in order to determine the net balance of his judgement about the function.

An individual can evaluate all or only some of the functions in society. Some may be off his field of observation for his unawareness that they are functions which needs to be fulfilled in society and that the way their are fulfilled affects his personal situation or that of his group of kinship.

Within each function, the evaluative attention of the individual can concentrate upon the norms governing the function, upon the formal institutional structures responsible for the execution of the function and/or upon the performance of the people occupying hierarchical roles. Once again in this case it may be possible that the individual evaluates only some of these aspects for not being conscient of the rest or for not being in condition to understand their meaning. Perhaps there is a relation between the capacity of abstraction and the possibility to evaluate beyond the performance of the individuals who exercise the roles of power.

With regard to the number of functions covered by the evaluator there are, in fact, some which for several reasons are easier to evaluate than others. In the first place, in

the case of some functions the formal institutionalization is more developed. Formal institutionalization gives a concrete ^{form to the} abstract notion of a function and makes possible to judge it through the formal institution.

In the second place, the external sanction and remuneration system is more efficient in the case of some functions than in others. In those functions where the external system is less efficient, sanctions and remunerations must be internalized: it is necessary to turn instruments into values. For example, private property is, undoubtedly, an instrument used by society to facilitate the allocation of resources, but to function as such individuals must consider it as a value; otherwise, there would be no police mechanism (external sanction) capable of protecting it. This transformation makes the evaluation of the norm very difficult or unlikely.

In the third place the norms for certain functions are much more vague than for others. It is much easier to judge the efficiency of a business firm than that of a family. In those cases where sanctions are very severe or remunerations very high a tendency may develop to specify the norms more concretely.

Finally, in the case of some functions highly rational

criteria have been developed to judge, not the compliance with the norm, but the propriety of the norm itself.^{1/}

The number of functions covered by an individual in his evaluation process, as well as the importance he grants to each and to each one of the elements of each function are related to the individual's position in the hierarchy of power, to the quantity and quality of the information he possesses and to the frame of reference he uses to interpret it.

The higher the evaluator is located in the hierarchy of power within a function the more difficult will be for him to recognize deficiencies in the fulfilment of the function, unless the action that can be brought about by evaluation does not affect his position, and there will be a greater tendency to rationalize very evident deficiencies.

On the other hand, the lower the power status of evaluation is, the less will be the quantity and quality of the available information and the greater the ideological content of his frame of reference for interpretation of the data.

^{1/} The product maximization principle in economics permits to judge the propriety of the profit maximization norm.

The position in the scale of power also influences attitudes with respect to evaluation. Who he lacks all power, will possibly be a more apathetic evaluator. Consequently, the "propensity to evaluate" will increase downward to a certain step of the hierarchy of power and then will start to decrease. The individuals placed near the apex should then show a greater propensity to evaluate and better information than at the bottom and because they have less need for rationalization and ideology they should turn to be, from the functional point of view of society, the most efficient evaluators.

The preceding propositions are not necessarily correct within a society which shows a phenomenon of cultural dualism of the vertical type. Many of the individuals placed near the apex will have rapidly climbed up there ^{bringing} in their tendency for ideologies and their unconventionality for the analysis of the information. Rapid ascentment will not affect, however, their "propensity to evaluate". On the contrary it can intensify it, as rapid ascentment might give them a telescopic vision of his own power, a feeling that no place is too high for him. In opposition, those individuals that reach the top may have less "propensity to evaluate" and a

higher tendency to rationalize than the older members of his club.

So much for the evaluator of his own function. Whenever he evaluates other functions--the business manager looking over the school system-- his behaviour will be different, depending on whether there is concentration of power, dissociation with consensus or dissociation without consensus.

In the first case the external evaluator of a function in comparison with the internal evaluator will show less propensity to evaluate, will have less information and will show a greater tendency to rationalization. Yet both will use interpretive criteria inspired in a common ideology.

If there is dissociation of power with consensus the external evaluator will show a greater propensity to evaluate, will have less information available, but will have less tendency to rationalization and to use ideological criteria, and his ideology will not differ qualitatively from the one used by the internal evaluator.

If dissociation is accompanied by lack of consensus, the external will have more inclination to evaluate than the internal, will dispose of less information and will be less inclined to rationalization. However, ideology will play a

more important role and there will be differences in ideologies.

The preceding propositions can be summarized as follows:

(i) evaluation is more intensive in situations of dissociation of power ~~and~~ ^{but conflict} not necessarily more acute; (ii) the possibility of dissociation depends upon the shape of the pyramid of power; (iii) evaluation is more ideological and conflicts more acute if dissociation is accompanied by lack of consensus and this depends, highly, on the existence or non-existence of ^{vertical} cultural dualism.

The fact that evaluation is more intensive in situations of dissociation of power does not mean that within each case variations do not occur along time, as there are environmental factors which can deteriorate the efficiency of a function and stimulate the evaluative process. Besides, even in the absence of environmental impacts, the evaluation process may become accumulative.

The environmental factors can be very important in under-developed transitorial societies, because if it is true that their economic development takes place through exhaustible paths; that, consequently, the continuity of the process depends upon the existence of other paths which can be used once the exhaustion point of a given path is reached and if

it is true that in the contemporary era the dependance of demographic growth upon income growth has been broken, it follows that those countries are periodically confronted with stagnation, a period during which the evaluative process intensifies and all the maladjustments that could have been created by the preceding process of growth appear. This operates as the ignition for society to start a process of adaptation to the new situation.

But even in the absence of environmental impacts, the process of evaluation may lead by itself to social change. In order to appreciate the way in which it operates it is necessary to mention an additional theoretical assumption: that the functional structure of society must satisfy certain requisites of internal compatibility in order to function satisfactorily. From what it was said in preceding paragraphs it can be deduced that satisfactorily means that it produces a degree of consensus that avoids an increasing use of coercion. If the proposition were incorrect it could be conceivable, for example, the coexistence of representative democracy with a feudal agricultural organization, or in more general terms, it would not make a sense to refer to cultural dualism as an undesirable characteristic of society.

Naturally, internal compatibility must be interpreted as a matter of ranges, not of perfect coincidence. The way in which the economic function is fulfilled can change, for example, without making indispensable to modify simultaneously the norms guiding the performance of the political, social and cultural functions, but only to a certain point. Beyond that point, those norms begin to lose efficiency, or the formal institutional structures are no longer appropriate.

Now, the very fact that some functions are easier subjects of evaluation than others is conducive to different rates of transformation of the various functions.

Differences in the ways individuals evaluate and in their attitudes toward evaluation are also of great importance. For if the "propensity to evaluate" increases from the apex to a certain point and then starts to descend as it gets closer to the base of the pyramid and if in the evaluative balance as a whole the weight of each judgement depends on the number, position of power and capacity of communication of its sustainers, it follows that the leaders of the evaluative process emerge from the groups which are near to the apex. Therefore, in societies where the shape of the pyramid is such that there is a vacuum between the apex and the base it is

very unlikely that a phenomenon of social change may originate in the evaluation process itself.

When an internal structural unbalance is produced the process of evaluation becomes more intense and ample, meaning that it covers a greater number of functions and that a greater number of individuals participate. Possibly in a first stage, criticism will be directed towards the individuals who perform the roles of hierarchy. If this does not solve the situation and effort to replace them will be made and if this does not work out the struggle for power will be extended to the formal institutional structures and norms. Therefore, it is the struggle for power the mechanism by which the new orientations derived from the evaluative process are put in practice, as in economics competition for profits is what makes possible the adoption of technological innovations.

B.- The use of the assumptions in the analysis of Venezuela

The analysis of the Venezuelan problem was initiated with a very definite purpose: to elaborate some guides to define an efficient policy of economic and social development. Those guides had to fulfil one condition: to minimize the social cost of the process.

For that purpose it was necessary to identify the principal problems of social change, their origins and dynamics.

The theoretical assumptions pointed toward the convenience of concentrating upon the characteristics of social integration and of the structure of power.

The most relevant policy aspects on both questions can be placed in evidence only by means of a very careful, large and expensive investigation the results of which could be of secondary importance if the basic assumptions did not correspond with reality. Fortunately, the most elemental doubts about this can be largely dissipated, through the observation of external symptoms of easy perception, as it was pointed out in the second section of this paper.

Furthermore, it is relatively easy to identify the transformations of importance which a society has to carry out if she has exhausted the possibility of growing offered by her traditional path. But it is difficult to determine how they should be put into practice, what kinds of instruments should be used, because there are many alternative sets of instruments but not all equally feasible from a political, social or cultural point of view.

Besides being feasible the program must be efficient. What does an efficient program means? It consists of a set of instruments which lead to the reduction of the existing conflicts of the explicit as much as the latent and which will be conducive to the creation of integrative forces of a less conjunctural nature than velocity of growth and high social mobility. More concretely, on the case of Venezuela, the program necessarily has to include maintainance of a high rate of economic development, the solution of the employment problem, the reduction of inequalitites in income distribution and agricultural modernization. In other fields it has to consider administrative reform, reform of the educational system in its broad sense, the integration of the eradicated people and many other things which besides their intrinsic value could be translated into symbols around which the society integrates.

It is evident that it is not enough to enumerate the objectives of a program to check its factibility. It is necessary to examine, for example, the alternative techniques which may be used to obtain a rapid rate of growth or to dis-

tribute income. It is necessary to go beyond strategy because existing conflicts may be compatible with a power strategy but not with all the possible tactics appropriate to that strategy. This naturally requires a detailed knowledge of the nature and intensity of the conflicts as well as the attitudes, values and aspirations of the leaders and the masses.

The study of those questions may indicate that the possibility of building coalitions around an efficient program does not exist. In that case the desintegrating tendencies of the Venezuelan society will be growing worse and the country may be faced with frequent attempts to reconcentrate power by means of force.^{1/}

^{1/} In collaboration with the Center for International Studies of the MIT, the New School for Social Research of New York, and of the Simulmatic Corporation of New York, the Center for Studies on Development of the Universidad Central de Venezuela will initiate an investigation concerning these problems, including alternative sets of the development strategies. The studies will be financed by the Ford Foundation, Creole Foundation and the Administration of International Development of the United States Government.