



**LABOR IN CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICA:
AN AGENDA FOR RESEARCH
- A RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT -**

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Working Paper #61 - February 1986

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Abstract

This rapporteur's report summarizes the major themes and issues raised at a workshop on "Labor in Contemporary Latin America: An Agenda for Research," held at the Kellogg Institute between February 28 and March 2, 1985. Most of the discussion focused on the labor movements of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile since 1970, but additional comparative and historical perspectives were provided by the opening presentation and by frequent references to other countries and earlier time periods. The central empirical themes of the conference were (1) the challenges that these labor movements currently face as social actors, and (2) the ways in which they may be able to contribute to the construction or consolidation of political democracy. The major debate was whether the investigation of these themes is best undertaken from the standpoint of the experiences of workers at the shop-floor level, or from the relationship between workers' organizations and other social and political actors.

Resumen

Este informe resume los temas y asuntos principales del taller sobre "El Movimiento Obrero en América Latina Contemporánea: Una agenda para la investigación," realizado en el Kellogg Institute entre el 28 de febrero y el 2 de marzo de 1985. La discusión se centró en los movimientos obreros de Argentina, Brasil y Chile desde 1970, aunque también se discutió otros periodos y otros países. Los temas empíricos centrales de la conferencia fueron (1) los desafíos que esos movimientos enfrentan como actores sociales, y (2) las maneras en las cuales ellos podrían contribuir a la construcción y consolidación de la democracia política. El debate principal fue si la investigación de esos temas se realiza mejor desde el punto de vista de las experiencias de los trabajadores en las fábricas, o desde la relación entre los sindicatos y otros actores sociales y políticos.

Participants

- Carlos Acuña**, Department of Political Science, University of Chicago
- Father Ernest Bartell, c.s.c.**, Executive Director, Helen Kellogg
Institute, University of Notre Dame
- Charles Bergquist**, Department of History, Duke University
- Marcelo Cavarozzi**, Kellogg Institute; CEDES, Argentina
- David Collier**, Department of Political Science, University of California at
Berkeley
- Ruth Berins Collier**, Institute of International Studies, University of
California at Berkeley
- René Cortázar**, CIEPLAN, Chile
- Charles Craypo**, Department of Economics, University of Notre Dame
- James Dunkerley**, Kellogg Institute; Latin American Bureau, England
- Gonzalo Falabella**, Department of Sociology, University of Maryland-
College Park
- Teresa Ghilarducci**, Department of Economics, University of Notre Dame
- Margaret Keck**, Institute of Latin American and Iberian Studies, Columbia
University; Kellogg Institute
- James McGuire**, Department of Political Science, University of California at
Berkeley
- Kenneth Mericle**, Institute of Industrial Relations, University of Wisconsin-
Madison
- Ian Roxborough**, Kellogg Institute; London School of Economics and
Political Science
- Amaury de Souza**, The Wilson Center; IUPERJ, Brazil
- Samuel Valenzuela**, Department of Sociology, Harvard University; Kellogg
Institute
- Alexander Wilde**, Associate Academic Director, Kellogg Institute
- Peter Winn**, Department of History, Tufts University

INTRODUCTION

A workshop entitled "Labor in Contemporary Latin America: An Agenda for Research" was held at the Kellogg Institute of the University of Notre Dame from February 28 to March 2, 1985. Participants analyzed the historical experiences and current challenges of the urban labor movements of Latin America, focusing on Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. What resulted was not only an agenda for research, but also a variety of concepts and methods for working through it.

The conference opened with David and Ruth Collier's paper, "Unions and Parties: A Historical Perspective." The Colliers analyzed several dimensions of the political importance of organized labor in Latin America, and argued that the conditions under which the urban working class was "incorporated" into the political system of a given Latin American country had important consequences for that country's subsequent political evolution. The next three presentations--Amaury de Souza's on Brazil, Marcelo Cavarozzi's on Argentina, and René Cortázar's on Chile--analyzed the past and present structures and orientations of the labor movements of those countries. In the final presentation, "New Trends at the Plant Level: Some Research Questions," Ian Roxborough tackled the analytical issue of whether analysis of Latin American labor movements is best undertaken with primary emphasis on "shop floor" issues, or from the standpoint of the relationship between unions and the political system. He also addressed an important empirical question: whether the labor movements of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile may be moving toward a

situation of greater autonomy from the state apparatus and a more confrontational posture toward employers and governments.

The goal of this report is neither to transcribe what was said at the workshop nor to deal exhaustively with the issues it raised. It is rather to highlight the analytical and empirical foci around which discussion revolved. If successful in this endeavor, the report will reflect the workshop's important contributions toward establishing an agenda for research on the labor movements of contemporary Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, and toward stimulating reflection on conceptual frameworks that may prove useful in addressing that agenda.

UNIONS AND PARTIES: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Colliers began their presentation by attempting to make more explicit the scope and significance of the workshop's subject-matter. While recognizing the importance of rural labor and of workers in the "informal sector," the Colliers pointed out that the empirical content of the papers to be presented implied a narrower object of analysis: organized labor in the urban modern sector. By adopting this more restricted conception at the outset, the participants in the conference were able to minimize the methodological problems that arise when comparisons are attempted among very heterogeneous objects of analysis.

Unionism in the urban modern sector is itself far from homogeneous. Nevertheless, the Colliers argued, urban unions are

subject to an "inherently homogenizing impulse" that derives from the fact that a cohesive union movement is useful not only to workers who press demands, but also to political elites interested in channelling or controlling them. The heterogeneity of organized labor in the urban modern sector is thus a political issue as well as a methodological problem.

1. The Importance of Urban Unionism

The Colliers gave several reasons why unionism in the urban modern sector is particularly worthy of study. In the first place, the economic clout of urban unions is both large and highly salient. Urban unionists tend more than rural or informal sector workers to be concentrated in activities that are crucial to the overall functioning of the economy. Moreover, urban unions are located in areas where the effects of strikes and demonstrations are often experienced first-hand by political elites and by a large part of the general population. A second reason why the urban trade union movement is "more than just another political and social actor" is that it is a potential source of legitimation for the state. As Guillermo O'Donnell has argued, the denationalization of Latin American economies and societies, the banning of elections under military rule, and increasing disparities between rich and poor reduce the capacity of the state to legitimate itself by claiming to be the representative of the nation, the citizenry, or the underprivileged. The trade union movement, as a powerful and conspicuous bearer of these legitimating referents, represents an

attractive ally for governments attempting to rebuild shattered institutional and symbolic linkages between state and society.

The Colliers noted a third reason why the urban labor movement is particularly important: historically, it has frequently played a central role in shaping the political system. The incorporation of organized urban labor into national political life, at a time when the state was expanding its economic role and important changes were occurring in industrial relations and in the political party system, marked a key "founding moment" in the political evolution of many Latin American countries. The characteristics of this founding moment had important implications for subsequent patterns of interaction between unions, political parties, and governments. In particular, different types of labor incorporation seem to have increased or decreased the capacity of the state and the political party system to institutionalize a "class compromise" between various fractions of labor and capital. The next section summarizes the Colliers' analysis of how different styles of labor incorporation have affected the subsequent political evolution of specific Latin American countries.

II. The Political Legacy of Labor Incorporation

The Colliers identified two "polar" types of labor incorporation. In the first, exemplified most clearly by Chile (1924-31) and Brazil (1937-45), a more or less unified national political elite decides that a previously excluded (and still relatively weak) urban labor movement represents a potential challenge that needs to be "pre-empted." When this perception takes hold, the urban labor movement is granted a

quite limited set of rights and benefits ("inducements") in conjunction with a much broader range of legal and institutional restrictions ("constraints") on union organization and activity. The second "polar" type of labor incorporation is best exemplified by Mexico (during the 1920s and the Cárdenas period) and Venezuela (1945-48). In this type of incorporation, one fraction of a divided national political elite attempts to defend its political project against those of rival elite fractions by mobilizing behind it a previously excluded labor movement which, by contrast to its counterpart in such countries as Brazil and Chile, has considerable autonomy and power. In this type of incorporation, in contrast to the first, inducements usually "outweigh" constraints because the mobilizing elite is rendered partially dependent on the autonomous cooperation of the labor movement.

In both Mexico and Venezuela, the highly mobilizational style of labor incorporation resulted in considerable social polarization, and eventually produced a conservative reaction. In Mexico during the 1940s, the PRI underwent a rightward drift that culminated in a 1948 purge of left-wing unionists; Venezuela during the 1950s experienced the notorious dictatorship of Pérez Jiménez. These more conservative periods ended in both countries with a negotiated reconstruction of the political system. Following this reconstruction, the Venezuelan Acción Democrática and the labor wing of the PRI, purged of their most radical elements and having undergone a programmatic shift to the right, helped to institutionalize a party-mediated class compromise and to provide the state and political party system with the legitimating referents of nationalism and populism.

Brazil and Chile exemplify the less mobilizational, more "constraint"-oriented pattern of incorporation. In contrast to Mexico and Venezuela, incorporation in Brazil and Chile was followed not by a move to the right but by a democratic opening. This opening produced not a party-mediated class compromise (as in Mexico and Venezuela), but an active and, in Chile ideologically charged, pattern of party competition. In Argentina, as in Mexico and Venezuela, a mobilizational style of incorporation under Perón gave rise to social polarization and a conservative reaction. But in contrast to these northern countries, this period of reaction ended in Argentina not in a party-mediated class compromise and the readmission of the labor movement as a national political actor, but with an electoral ban on the Peronist movement.

III. The Idea of a "Founding Moment"

The question that the Colliers posed for the contemporary period was whether the political parties and labor movements of Argentina and Brazil (and of Chile if and when civilian government is reestablished) can seize the opportunity presented by recent political openings to create a "new founding moment" in which unions and parties institutionalize a class compromise. Marcelo Cavarozzi was uncomfortable with this question. He asked whether the original "incorporating periods" can really be said to have constituted or, (if the crucial period is seen as the conservative reaction to the incorporating period) paved the way for a "founding moment" during which future patterns of interaction among governments, unions and political parties were partially "frozen" into place. The Colliers

affirmed that certain events and short-term processes often leave important institutional and ideological legacies (usually not those intended by the actors), though over time these legacies tend to diminish in strength.

IV. Other Factors To Be Considered

Several participants in the workshop identified social actors and analytical considerations not emphasized in the Colliers' presentation which they felt deserved a more central place in explaining how union-party-state relations have evolved since the "populist" era. Carlos Acuña argued that if the working class is a crucial actor in shaping the political trajectories of Latin American societies, so too is the other half of the capital/labor antagonism, the bourgeoisie. More consideration, he argued, should be given to cleavages within this class and to the ways in which different fractions of the bourgeoisie interact with labor, political parties, and the state. While one way of including the bourgeoisie in the analysis is to analyze the role of the state and political parties, this seems insufficient. In addition, continued Acuña, the organization of workers in the formal sector may well depend precisely on the *disorganization* of workers in the informal sector. Peter Winn endorsed this observation, arguing that the analysis of working class political behavior in contemporary Chile, where unemployment is about 30% of the work force, must take into account the great mass of pobladores who are linked neither to unions nor to political parties, and the constant flow of workers between the formal and informal sectors.

Gonzalo Falabella suggested that in analyzing the political behavior of the working class in Latin American societies, it is important to consider the spatial and strategic location of the "core" of the working class, and especially whether that location coincides with the region in which the country's strategic goods are produced. In Chile, for example, copper miners live in the area where the country's principal export product is found; in Argentina, the grain and meat producing Pampas are far from the major working class concentrations in and around Buenos Aires. Important sectors of the Chilean working class thus confront directly the local and foreign capitalists who own and manage the copper mines, while more complex mechanisms, often involving the state, seem to be at work in Argentina.

When asserting that a certain process (like the incorporation of the working class) is comparable across countries, it is important, Charles Bergquist argued, to take into account the effect of "world time." Comparable processes may differ greatly in their significance and consequences according to the time in world history when they are initiated.

V. Continuity in the Form of Labor Organization

One way of addressing the question of whether the recent transition from military rule in Argentina and Brazil will constitute a "new founding moment" for unionism is to ask what factors are likely to promote continuity in the form of labor organization. Samuel Valenzuela proposed that the prospects for such continuity depend, in large measure, on the degree of prior consolidation of unions and

working class parties. He suggested that such consolidation can be measured along four dimensions.

1. The degree of rank and file allegiance to pre-existing union organizations. The greater this allegiance, the more continuity is to be expected. Since the degree of union "basism" is much higher in Chile than in Brazil, more continuity is to be expected in Chile.

2. The degree to which turning points in the process of consolidation (the Colliers would term such a "turning point" an "incorporating period") are associated with a political movement with a new and compelling vision of the world, especially one that identifies "enemies." To the extent that labor organizations are associated with such a movement, the likelihood of continuity is increased. Thus, to the extent that continuity depends on this aspect of consolidation, more is to be expected in Argentina, where Peronism supplied such a vision, than, for example, in Brazil.

3. The strength of political parties and of links between unions and parties. Continuity in the form of labor organization is more likely where labor-based political parties and their links with trade unions are strong, which tends to be the case in countries where such parties emerged prior to the major turning point in the consolidation of the labor movement. Labor-based parties tend also to be stronger in countries where electoral processes and the party system have operated effectively over long periods of time. In countries like Chile, where the electoral process was well established prior to 1973 and in which pre-existing working class parties played an important role in

the process of union consolidation, strong links between unions and parties may well be reconstituted if and when the party system becomes effective again. In Brazil, where Vargas created the PTB as an "afterthought" and where electoral process prior to the 1964 coup had rather shallow roots, the union movement seems to have emerged from two decades of military rule characterized, as would be hypothesized on the basis of this factor, by novel structures and orientations.

4. Continuity in the form of labor organization also depends on the willingness of the state and employers to accept any new structures or orientations that the labor movement may have produced. In the last analysis, however, such willingness probably depends primarily on the three factors already discussed.

Valenzuela concluded that the form of labor organization would appear on the basis of these four criteria to be most fully consolidated in Chile, less so in Argentina, and least of all in Brazil. Hence, novel forms of unionism are more likely to appear in Brazil than in Argentina, but are more likely to develop in Argentina than in Chile (if and when the latter country emerges from military rule).

UNION, PARTY, AND GOVERNMENT IN WORKING CLASS POLITICS IN BRAZIL

The Brazilian trade union movement changed significantly under military rule. Not long after the abertura (political opening) was formally launched in 1974, powerful sectors of the labor movement began to demand the lifting of long-standing legal and institutional

restrictions on union organization, leadership, financing, and activities. Amaury de Souza's presentation focused on some of the implications of the emergence of this more independent and combative "new unionism." How and to what extent, he asked, will the new unionism, with its demands for union autonomy from the state and its newly formed links to the Partido dos Trabalhadores, bring change to the Brazilian political landscape and to the system of corporatist controls on labor?

I. Corporatism and Brazilian Unions

Corporatism, according to de Souza, involves state regulation of the labor market through the delegation of public authority to private business and labor organizations. In exchange for a share in this authority, unions and business associations agree to abstain from certain types of demands and to accept controls on their structure and activities. De Souza in his presentation analyzed the development of corporatist controls on Brazilian labor in terms of the evolution of laws and institutions first set up in the Consolidated Labor Code of 1939.

1.1 Labor Laws and Institutions in Brazil

1.1.1 Organization: Business and labor associations in Brazil are organized by occupational sector and region into parallel hierarchies that culminate in the state. Roughly 8000 local labor associations (about half of which are in the rural sector) belong to about 200 state-wide federations and 8 national confederations representing manufacturing, banking, education, health, air

transport, land transport, sea transport, and agricultural workers. Public employees are proscribed from unionizing, but other occupational groups that wish to bargain collectively or use the labor courts may appeal to the Ministry of Labor for status as a sindicato. This status gives the association a representational monopoly for a certain occupation in a given locality.

1.1.2 Leadership: Union leaders in Brazil have been, at least until recently, less successful than those in Argentina and Chile in articulating the interests and demands of the rank and file. A weak union leadership is institutionalized in a set of repressive and cooptive controls written into the system of labor law. Regardless of its size (the São Paulo Metalworkers Federation has about 400,000 members), no union can have more than seven paid officers. The Ministry of Labor has wide powers to seize union properties and funds and to replace union leaderships with government appointees. Labor leaders can be fined heavily for a variety of offenses, and may be tempted by government offers of lucrative posts as judges on the labor courts.

1.1.3 Financing: All workers in jurisdictions and occupations with sindicatos are legally members of those organizations. All workers pay for the support of the sindicato through involuntary taxes, and all are covered by its contracts. If union members wish to enjoy certain social welfare benefits that the union provides, they must pay dues in addition to the involuntary tax. Approximately 20% do so; the proportion ranges from about 80% for bank clerks to 30% for metalworkers to 5% in the textile sector, where most workers simply cannot afford to pay dues no matter how great the benefits may be.

1.1.4 Collective Bargaining: The government sets a minimum wage for all wage and salary workers. Above this, sindicatos are permitted to come to voluntary agreements with employers, or to submit wage disputes to arbitration by the labor courts, where they are settled by discussion among representatives from the workers, employers, and the state. Before the 1964 coup, strikes sometimes played an important part in wage-setting (hours, working conditions, and benefits are regulated by law in Brazil), either by convincing employers to come to a voluntary agreement or by putting pressure on court representatives. Between 1964 and the advent of the "new unionism," the right to strike was severely curtailed.

Note: The above description of corporatist controls on labor is based on Ken Mericle's chapter on Brazil in James Malloy, ed., Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977), as well as on Amaury de Souza's presentation.

1.2 The Evolution of Union-State Relations Since 1945

Brazilian union leaders achieved limited participation in government policy-making during the fifteen or so years following the democratic opening in 1945, but such participation by no means implied that the state had relinquished its controls on union structure and action. In the early 1960s, however, a new wave of labor militancy, and the perception that top government officials were planning to mobilize the labor movement in support of a left-leaning political project, made the corporatist relationship between unions and the state appear to conservative elite groups less as a means of

controlling the workers than as a potential institutional support for a challenge to the existing social and political order. This perception helped precipitate the 1964 military coup. Once the military took power, unions were shorn of virtually all of their capacity to influence state decision-making. Union leaders were removed and incarcerated; the right to strike, job security, and other labor rights were cut back severely; and the unions were deprived of control over most of the social services they had provided in the past. In 1968, a wave of strikes among the metalworkers was ruthlessly repressed, marking the end of major strike activity for a decade.

The image of Brazilian unionism as paralyzed under the military regime by wage controls, the abolition of the right to strike, and the elimination of provisions for job security is in many ways misleading. Labor leaders responded to such restrictions by adopting new patterns of action. Since they could no longer negotiate wage issues in the courts, they began to negotiate ways to strengthen the union structure both organizationally and financially. The repression of 1964-65 and during and after 1968 reinforced among many labor leaders the conviction that unions would have to begin to operate more on the margins of the state apparatus, or even in opposition to it. The expansion and diversification of the work force, especially during the "economic miracle" of 1968-74, and the emergence of a new generation of labor leaders also contributed to the breakdown of traditional patterns of interaction between the unions and the state.

The birth of the "new unionism" can be traced to these developments during the first decade of military rule. In 1973, union

leaders began to demonstrate more militance and independence by demanding compensation when the government admitted that it had underestimated the rate of inflation in calculating cost-of-living increases. This demand was followed by pressure for greater union autonomy from the state, for collective bargaining without state intervention, for the right to strike, and finally for shop-floor representation. The wave of strikes that occurred in 1978-79 grew out of such demands. This period of union "voluntarism" (during which unions moved away from state control while union-party linkages remained minimal) has since been tempered by new, more politically-oriented programs of action, but one of its most important legacies has been that since 1978 there has been more collective bargaining, and less compulsory arbitration, than in earlier periods.

II. Unions and Political Parties in Brazil

There have been two systems of interest representation in Brazil since the democratic opening in 1945. One is the corporatist system just outlined with reference to labor; the other is the system of political parties and elections. The former has been more representative than is often thought; illiterates have had the right to vote in union elections but not in elections for national political office. On the other hand, the electoral system has held a more central place in Brazilian history than is frequently alleged. It has existed in one form or another for 150 years, and it is through this system that Brazil is now emerging from 21 years of military rule--during which, in stark contrast to other military regimes of the era, the electoral

calendar was respected and real opposition parties were allowed to develop. In 1979, a law was passed eliminating the two-party system imposed in 1966 and permitting the emergence of a new party system that included the Partido dos Trabalhadores, which openly invoked the interests of the working class. Highly competitive elections were held in 1982 for state governorships and the Federal Chamber of Deputies, and in 1985 an electoral college elected Tancredo Neves, the candidate of an opposition party, President of Brazil. That party, the PMDB, developed out of an opposition party created by the military; it is the only party of the several that emerged in the wake of the 1979 political party reform law that is likely to survive the next few years, and it has the potential to become the dominant party in Brazil for the rest of the decade.

II.1 Union-Party Relations: Institutional Aspects

Between the 1930 military coup that brought Getúlio Vargas to power and the emergence of the Partido dos Trabalhadores in 1980, links between trade unions and political parties were "virtually non-existent" in Brazil. (Ruth Collier later suggested that this assertion be made in a weaker form, pointing to the Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro created by Vargas and the Partido Comunista Brasileiro). De Souza stressed three institutional factors in explaining the weakness of these union-party linkages. First, Brazil has no tradition of craft unionism. Second, the principle of representational monopoly embodied in the 1939 labor code resulted in extremely large and heterogeneous unions. For example, the 400,000 members of the São Paulo Metalworkers Federation include workers in an enormous variety of occupations,

ranging from porters to middle managers. Given this internal diversity, union leaders, in order to be re-elected and to maintain the support of the rank and file, must appeal to *general* interests, i. e., to those interests which their heterogeneous memberships have in common. By appealing to such general interests Brazilian unions become, in a sense, "proto-political parties," making it less likely that they will establish linkages with formally constituted parties. A third factor explaining the weakness of union-party linkages in pre-1964 Brazil is that the system of labor law implemented under Vargas contains an explicit prohibition on union involvement in electoral or political party activity. It is unlikely, however, that a mere legal injunction would prevent political parties, especially officialist ones, from involving themselves in union activity, and indeed such involvement has taken place over the years. To fully understand the reasons that Brazilian unions have unusually weak ties to political parties it is necessary to supplement the institutional level of analysis with data on individual attitudes toward the role of unions in politics.

11.2 Union-Party Relations: The Attitudinal Dimension

Thanks in large part to the efforts of survey researchers at the Instituto de Estudos Econômicos, Sociais e Políticos (IDEEESP) in São Paulo, Brazil has extraordinarily rich documentation of the attitudinal changes experienced by the mass of the population under military rule. For the past two decades, IDEESP researchers have conducted attitude surveys among the Brazilian population, using advanced sampling techniques and identical or comparable question sets to facilitate time-series analysis. Between January and March 1984, at the height of the

mobilization for direct presidential elections, IDÉESP researchers administered a survey to 1200 respondents in the 7 municipalities that make up the heavily industrialized "ABC" region south of the city of São Paulo. (The "ABC" municipalities are the heart of Brazil's "new unionism.") The results of the survey provide insight into the way unionists and non-unionists view unions, political parties, and structures or potential structures linking unions with parties and with the state.

One major finding of the survey was that the population of the ABC region tends to see both unions and political parties in a positive light. What is more, these institutions are judged to be the only important channels of political participation and demand-making available to ordinary members of the population. Less than one per cent of respondents reported membership in neighborhood organizations or ecclesiastical base communities, and very few of those surveyed regarded such associations as viable channels of political influence.

A second major finding was that the general population was quite supportive of the idea that unions should advocate support for specific candidates and political parties and for positions on major issues. However, and in accordance with the view that unions are themselves regarded as "proto-political parties," attitudes toward union involvement with existing parties and other political interlocutors were much less favorable. In short, resistance at the attitudinal level to union-party linkages reinforce the constraints imposed on such linkages by existing laws and institutions.

II.3 Union-Party Relations: Possibilities for the Future

Ian Roxborough outlined three possible scenarios for the evolution of union-party relations in Brazil during the next decade. (1) The PMDB could become a majoritarian party and preside over the formation and administration of a social pact, which would reduce the social tensions associated with an inevitable austerity plan. This scenario presupposes base-level support for the proposals advanced by top union leaders. (2) Unions affiliated with the PT could confront the new government with a wave of strikes and protest. If the government wins, the first scenario once again becomes a possibility; if the more combative unions succeed in maintaining worker mobilization, a very fluid and perhaps tumultuous situation could emerge. (3) The PMDB could disintegrate, leaving the government to formulate policy on an ad-hoc basis, in which case the response of the unions would be hard to predict.

III. Corporatism and Brazil's "New Unionism"

III.1 Corporatism and the "New Unionism": Findings From Survey Data

Despite new demands for union autonomy, considerable support still exists for the old structures linking the unions to the state. This support was made evident in a 1972 survey of national elites, the general population, and members of the twelve largest unions in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. At the level of union leadership, there were demands for union autonomy from the state, collective bargaining, and the right to strike. At the level of the general population and the union

rank and file, on the other hand, there was a rather favorable attitude toward government involvement in union affairs. In an attempt to correct for simple ignorance of what was at stake, controls were added for "politicization" (measured by the respondent's ability to use left-right ideological labels accurately). Nevertheless, "disturbing" support remained among the rank and file and the population at large for a close relationship between unions and the state. The response of these sectors to an open-ended question suggests, however, that lack of familiarity with the workings of the political system may indeed help explain such attitudes. Many rank and file unionists and members of the general population stated that they favored *more* government control of the unions, and indicated that they thought this greater control would result in higher wages—even though the government was at the time *decreasing* real wages through official readjustment policies. Whatever the causes of this "disturbing" level of rank and file support for government involvement in union affairs, the fact that their opinions on this issue differ from those of their leaderships points to constraints upon the capacity of the leaders of the new unionism to promote and organize worker militancy.

The 1984 survey also provides insight into the character of some of the political parties that emerged with the 1979 reform. "Unpoliticized" PT and PMDB identifiers were far more likely than their "politicized" counterparts to support the view that unions should be at least partly controlled by the government, whereas the *opposite* relationship prevailed among members of the PDS, the party most inclined toward support for the military regime: "politicized" PDS

identifiers stood much more heavily in favor of exclusive government control of unions than did "unpoliticized" PDS supporters. A particularly intriguing finding emerged *within* the category of "politicized" PT identifiers: one-third reported that their "ideal model of union structure" would be one in which unions would be independent from party and government but active in electoral politics, while another third reported that they favored party but not government influence within the unions. These contrasting attitudes of PT identifiers toward the involvement of the PT in union affairs may portend future programmatic disputes within the party.

This discussion of attitudinal differences between the union leadership and the rank and file is not meant to leave the impression that union leaders thoroughly oppose every aspect of the Vargas system. On the contrary, 80% of the union leadership in the São Paulo region opposed the abolition of the representational monopoly, and most gave at least cautious support to the mandatory sindical tax. Union autonomy from the state was a widely shared goal, but this push for autonomy stopped short of a challenge to the "essence" of corporatism--the delegation of public authority to private organizations. (All of the above is distilled from Amaury de Souza's presentation).

The controls embodied in the Vargas system thus seem to have become crystallized in the attitudes of the union rank and file. Samuel Valenzuela suggested two possible ways in which this crystallization may have occurred. On the one hand, institutional factors, like the heterogeneity of Brazilian unions and the legal requirement that

disputes with employers be resolved through the labor courts, may have given ordinary union members a low sense of efficacy. On the other hand, a sort of "hegemony" may be at work: union members may support the old system simply because it is "second nature" to them. If the relative importance of these two alternative attitudinal "transmission belts" could be determined, it would be easier to foresee what would happen if the representational monopoly and sindical tax were retained, but restrictions on collective bargaining at the enterprise level were lifted, presumably increasing the workers' sense of efficacy by permitting more rank and file participation in such activities as union assemblies to discuss negotiation strategies and outcomes.

III.2 Corporatism and the "New Unionism": Conflict or Synthesis?

Union autonomy, according to de Souza, is unlikely to go much farther than it already has. Union leaders may demand shop floor representation and a central labor confederation, but even if they are successful, such institutions would not in themselves represent a fundamental break with the old system. The new challenges that emerged under the military regime, de Souza concluded, did not destroy corporatism; they reinvigorated it. Margaret Keck questioned this interpretation. Corporatism, in her view, involves not only the delegation of public authority to private bodies, but also the capacity to *withdraw* this delegation. Insofar as the new unionism challenges *this* state prerogative, a synthesis between it and the corporatist system is more difficult to contemplate.

In de Souza's view, one reason that the corporatist relationship between unions and the state has proved so durable in Brazil is that it offers the above-mentioned benefits to union leaders. Union leaders, however, must balance their desire to enjoy these benefits against, among other things, the need to retain the support of the rank and file. In 1979, a year after a series of wildcat strikes took place in the São Paulo region, union leaders themselves launched a wave of strikes with the primary intention of keeping their memberships from "running amok." Rank and file support for this corporatist relationship may stem in part from a lack of "political sophistication," but it also probably has much to do with the fact that Brazilian workers, even in the ABC region, are not wealthy, and the state with its social welfare programs provides a highly visible cushion against additional economic hardship.

In seeking to engineer a "social pact" in which representatives from business, labor, and government forge an agreement involving voluntary wage and price controls, the Brazilian government faces formidable challenges. Not least among them are the debt crisis and an extremely high rate of inflation. Real wages for some occupational groups have fallen as much as 50% since 1980, and thus far in 1985 there has been more strike activity than last year. The cities and towns are the sites of new social unrest, and new forms of insurgency have emerged among migrant harvesters. In evaluating the chances that the social pact will succeed, it is important to recognize that the responsiveness of top union leaders to pressure from plant-level militants may be more conducive to an effective "social pact" than it

would seem at first sight, since no union can expect to be included in such a pact unless its leadership can provide a credible guarantee that its members will adhere to the terms of the agreement that is reached. In the last analysis, de Souza concluded, the success of a social pact may well depend on the survival of the corporatist structures that the new unionism is at once eroding and reinvigorating.

INTEREST CONCERTATION IN ARGENTINA: UNIONS, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNMENT

The Peronist trade union movement, Marcelo Cavarozzi argued, is indeed more than "just another" social and political actor in Argentina: it has been since its inception the leading protagonist around which virtually all other social actors--including competing fractions of the armed forces-- have positioned themselves on the political stage. Nowhere is such self-positioning with reference to the trade union movement more visible than in the case of the powerful and well-organized Pampean landowners, whose antagonism toward the Peronist unions turns on profoundly differing political and ideological projects as well as on a conflict of interest over the domestic prices of beef and grain.

I. Key Moments in Argentine Labor History Since 1943

It is not surprising that the Peronist union movement, given its political centrality, has received much attention from political scientists. Nonetheless, Cavarozzi noted, research on the Peronist

unions has tended to focus on two major episodes. The first is the emergence of mass unionism in the late 1940s, marked by the growth of union membership from half a million in 1944 to two and a half million in 1950. Scholars studying this period have tended to stress the government's promotion of unionization and, more generally, the relations between unions and the state, often characterized as "corporatist." The second period to have been studied in detail is the late 1960s and early 1970s, during which important sectors of the working class began to question the private ownership of capital and employer control of the workplace and work process. Those who have tried to explain the emergence of this "new working class" have placed less emphasis on the analysis of state-labor relations, and devoted more attention to the evolution of the capitalist economy and to related changes at the factory-floor level.

Without denying the importance of these chronological and analytical foci, Cavarozzi suggested that two other periods, though perhaps less spectacular than the late 1940s and early 1970s, deserve more attention than they have hitherto received. The first such period, comprising the years between 1955 and 1966, and the second, between 1983 and the present, have in common that Argentine trade unions, while remaining for the most part nominally Peronist, underwent considerable democratization and began to search for new relationships with other sectors of society. The 1958-66 period especially, far from being a time when relations between the Peronist unions and other political actors were more or less "frozen," saw the emergence of key Peronist leaders, most notably Augusto Vandor, who

were considerably less enthusiastic about Perón's return from exile than their immediate predecessors had been. Another common feature of the pre-1966 and post-1983 periods is that both came in the immediate aftermath of a decisive defeat of the working class (the 1955 coup that ousted Perón and the 1976-81 Videla government).

Some theoretical apparatus is needed to explain the timing of these moments of internal democratization, and to shed light on the reasons why the democratization of the late 1950s was followed by a turn toward authoritarianism within the labor movement itself and in terms of its support for authoritarian political actors. Such a framework, Cavarozzi suggested, would treat the Peronist trade union movement as much more multifaceted than has usually been the case with approaches associated with the concept of corporatism or the emergence of the new working class. It would also take account of the fact that democratic and authoritarian tendencies in post-1930 Argentine politics have developed, not in sequence (as implied by perspectives ranging from "modernization" to the "emergence of bureaucratic-authoritarianism"), but in tandem, as part of a unified process whose key is to be found in the mode of capitalist development that the country has experienced since the late 1800s.

II. Peronism, Anti-Peronism, and the Failure of Democracy in Argentina

Though the ideology and practices of Peronism have helped to undermine democratic and semi-democratic regimes, those who have actually overthrown them, and who have provided the bulk of support

for their authoritarian successors, have largely belonged to those forces which call themselves "anti-Peronist." The "anti-Peronism" of such forces, Cavarozzi noted, is directed not at Peronism's authoritarian aspects, but at its democratic and egalitarian content. Peronism is attacked for being subversive of the basic social hierarchy and for contributing to the cohesiveness of a capable and astute collective bargaining antagonist.

The conflict between Peronism and the armed forces is, Cavarozzi argued, less a fundamental tension in Argentine politics than a manifestation of the absence of an effective party system and of the prevalence of "political myth-making" among Peronists and anti-Peronists alike. In stressing the development of a "party non-system," Cavarozzi stated his opposition to the view that Argentine parties are "weak," noting that both the Radical and Peronist parties served as vehicles for the incorporation of a new social sector into national political life, and that both have succeeded in maintaining a viable organizational structure during long periods out of power and in spite of considerable repression. Argentina, he proposed, has strong parties, but ones that have proved unable to constitute a viable party *system* whose constituents would recognize each other as valid interlocutors. The failure to produce a viable party system antedates the emergence of Peronism. Not only the Peronists, but also the conservative parties at the turn of the century and the Radicals during the Yrigoyen period, conceived of themselves as the nucleus of a majoritarian movement, hardly a view conducive to recognizing other parties as legitimate participants in national politics.

The second process that has made a fundamental contribution to exacerbating conflict between Peronists and anti-Peronists (and more generally to the destruction of Argentine democracy) has been the development of "political imaginaries" by both the capitalist class and the labor movement. The "political imaginary" of each actor involves the goal of restoring a mythical "golden age" when the other was not an effective power contender. In the context of Argentine society since the 1940s, such a project of course entails a radical challenge to a position that another powerful actor already holds in the social and political order.

The challenge posed by urban and rural capitalists to the position of the Peronist trade union movement is articulated more explicitly than the latter's challenge to the position of the dominant classes, and has often been invoked in support of military regimes. It involves not only opposition to the expansion of the labor movement and to the position unionism has held since the 1940s as an important political actor, but also to the expansion of workers' power at the shop-floor level, especially as this is manifested in a "loss of respect" for the gente bien (an attitude for which the capitalist classes blame Peronism in particular). In seeking a return to an imaginary belle époque characterized, among other things, by the absence of all of these manifestations of working class power, the capitalist classes were not content after 1955 to stop after defeating the unions in the struggle for the distribution of wealth and income. They sought further to eradicate "union power," i. e., to close the most important channels of working class political participation. For the urban

capitalists in particular, the desire to return to an imaginary belle époque when union power was non-existent involved a curious contradiction, since the era when the working class was weak was also a time when urban capitalists were themselves in a very dependent position with respect to the Pampean landowners.

The working class challenge to the bourgeoisie was articulated more indirectly than that of its adversary, but also involved an aspiration to return to a mythical "golden age." The belle époque for the Argentine working class was the 1944-50 period. Three features of this period deserve special mention. First, it was the time when the national state, under the leadership of Perón, first assumed the capacity to arbitrate on a regular basis between capital and labor. Second, it saw the culmination of a trend toward state tutelage of national capital in the face of foreign competition. Third, it was the only period in Argentine history during which wages grew much faster than productivity. By some estimates, wages between 1944 and 1950 grew 26% while productivity rose only 2 or 3%. But the working class too had mythified its golden age. Despite the stress that the Peronist ideology placed on an alliance between the "national" bourgeoisie and the working class, the former had been at best a reluctant partner during the Peronist period. By the late 1950s, moreover, the growth and transnationalization of the Argentine economy had brought significant change to the composition of the urban industrial class, making even more unrealistic any hope of "re"-constituting such an alliance.

The conflict between the labor movement and the capitalist class thus proceeded at two different levels. Disputes over wages and working conditions were complemented and exacerbated by repeated attempts to eliminate the adversary as an important social and political actor. In relentlessly pursuing the latter (or "maximalist") goal, each actor resorted repeatedly to implied or explicit threats to back a military coup. This resulted in a paradoxical situation where the attempt to crush the adversary by capturing and *increasing* state power (as finally occurred under Videla) produced precisely the *erosion* of that power. The resulting weakness of the state institutions played a major part in perpetuating the cycle of stalemate, polarization and crisis that characterized Argentine politics between 1955 and 1976.

One set of questions raised by Cavarozzi's analysis of the role of these "political imaginaries" in undermining Argentine democracy is why political actors in Argentina have been so susceptible to this type of myth-making, and why the myths emerged at the time they did (Bergquist). It was pointed out that the myths are perhaps less fundamental than the intransigent "maximum program" that each actor has adopted toward its adversary, and that what cries out for an explanation is the view that the antagonist must be crushed completely (Ruth Collier). Cavarozzi suggested that the maximum programs can be understood partly as manifestations of conflict between workers and the owners of large estates over domestic prices of beef and grain, but that they also have a specifically political dimension that such an explanation fails to capture. David Collier argued that the absence of a

large Pampean laboring class has deprived the landowning classes of that region of a potential electoral base, limiting the electoral viability of right-wing political parties and creating an incentive for the Pampean bourgeoisie to reject elections and the political party system as soon as the urban working class showed that it could use these arenas to its own advantage. Charles Bergquist again stressed the importance of incorporating "world time" into the analysis. Picking up on this theme, David Collier pointed out that the social unrest caused by the post-World War I price spiral and the perceived threat posed by the Russian--and one could add Mexican--Revolutions made an important contribution to the failure of Yrigoyen's overtures to the unions during his first term in office, and that the failure to incorporate the unions at this point in history contributed to the highly mobilizational character of the incorporation that later occurred under Perón.

III. The Labor Movement in Contemporary Argentina and Possibilities for a "Social Pact."

Since 1955, Cavarozzi argued, the power of the Peronist union movement has been based on its capacity to derail policy. This capacity has in turn presupposed a relatively unified leadership capable of mobilizing the rank and file. Both Peronist and anti-Peronist governments have contributed to the cohesion of the union movement: the former by suppressing dissidents and wildcat strikes, and the latter by repressive policies that forced the Peronists to close ranks. As a consequence, and despite the periods of internal ferment

discussed above, the leadership of the Peronist unions has displayed a notable degree of continuity since 1955.

The government of Raúl Alfonsín, by contrast to most of its predecessors, is neither Peronist nor overtly anti-Peronist. This suggests that some of the factors which in the past contributed to the cohesion of the Peronist union movement may no longer be operative. In addition, the working class has undergone a radical restructuring since 1976. As a result of economic policies which had the effect of undermining Argentina's industrial base, there are far fewer industrial workers now than there were a decade ago, and unemployment, historically very low in Argentina, has greatly increased. Figures from union elections which took place in late 1984 suggest that union membership has also declined. Those elections also represented a defeat for the "62 Organizations," the political and ideological nucleus of Peronism within the trade unions. At the same time, however, and partly as a defensive reaction to this defeat, the "62 Organizations" have solidified their position within the Peronist party organization, in which, nonetheless, internal divisions have reached the point where two separate party congresses were held in February 1985. These developments within Peronism represent an ongoing, and as yet unsuccessful, attempt to respond to the death of Juan Perón (Cavarozzi).

President Alfonsín has called for "concertation," in which representatives of his government would negotiate incomes policy with labor and employer representatives. Given the economic situation, the problem revolves around distributing the costs of an austerity plan. A

"social pact" concluded by representatives of government, labor, and business in 1973 failed after a few months under far more auspicious economic conditions, so the success of the present one is far from guaranteed. Rank and file workers may not be willing, after the deep cuts they took under the military regime, to accept another drop in real wages and salaries whatever the quid pro quo. Such reticence is rooted in economic hardship, but is reinforced by the apparent breakdown of "Verticalism" as evidenced by the decline of the "62 Organizations" within the Peronist trade union movement (Winn).

What is needed in order to evaluate the situation is data on the present orientations of Argentine union members and shop-floor leaders, along the lines of those that Amaury de Souza presented for Brazil (Winn). At present, all that is available is survey data on electoral preferences and the actual results of the recent national and union elections. These data, as far as they go, suggest that rank and file workers may be more willing to reduce labor's "maximum program" than are top-level union officials, and more willing to moderate their economic demands than are local and shop-floor leaders (Cavarozzi).

Recent statements by representatives of business and labor suggest that each may be more willing than in the past to moderate its "maximum program," i. e., to recognize the other as a valid and more or less permanent interlocutor for the social sector it claims to represent (Cavarozzi). The major contribution of the proposed concertation agreement, if and when it is concluded, may be less in enforcing a given distribution of the economic costs of an austerity

program than in realizing its "non-explicit objective" of creating a "sense of social peace" (Valenzuela) and a willingness to co-exist that will promote, but not guarantee, the consolidation of democracy in Argentina.

CONCERTATION VERSUS CONFRONTATION: LOGICS OF UNION ACTION IN CHILE

Unlike Argentina and Brazil, Chile is still ruled by a military government. The "national protests" of 1983 and 1984 held out hope for a transition to democracy, but the social mobilization they engendered was soon buried under a state of siege. Nevertheless, union leaders and party officials are currently attempting to forge a united opposition to the military regime. The Chilean labor movement has an important role to play both in this process and in shaping the political climate that will determine, if and when there is a return to civilian rule, whether or not democracy will be consolidated. René Cortázar's presentation dealt primarily with the latter theme.

I. The Current State of Chilean Unionism

There are less than two-thirds as many unionized workers in Chile today as there were in 1973, and the unions that continue to function have lost much of their capacity to protect their members and almost all of their former political clout. The decline of Chilean unionism is partly the result of a neo-liberal economic model which, as in Argentina, undercut the industrial sectors in which unionization

was farthest advanced. By 1983, there were only half as many miners and two-thirds as many industrial workers in Chile as there had been a decade earlier. Furthermore, only about a quarter of Chile's industrial workers are currently union members, as against about 50% in 1973. In the transportation and public utilities sectors, both the absolute number of workers and the percentage affiliated with unions have declined considerably. In addition to the decline in the industrial work force and in the overall rate of union membership, restrictive labor legislation and repressive policies against labor leaders and unions as organizations have also been crucial in weakening the unions, as has government propaganda in favor of "individualism" in worker-employee relations.

Primarily as a result of these government policies, there has been a severe decline in the living standards of Chilean workers. Between 1965 and 1973, real wages increased at a rate of 6.5% per annum and unemployment averaged 5.7%. Between 1974 and 1984, real wages averaged 20% lower than in 1970 and the mean unemployment rate was 19.5% (at the time of this writing--March 1985--it hovers at about 30%). In 1973, there were ten times as many union members as unemployed; today there are three times as many unemployed as unionists.

II. The Logics of Union Action in Chile

Chilean trade unionism is not homogeneous. Union members in Chile find themselves in different situations according to the type of investment, the technical characteristics, the required skill levels,

and the labor markets that characterize the particular industries in which they work. Moreover, the orientations of Chilean unions are shaped and constrained by their diverse relations with the state and political parties. Analysis cannot proceed at a level of disaggregation that would do justice to such heterogeneity, but it is important, Cortázar argued, to distinguish at least between two sectors of Chilean unionism: unions in the "modern monopolistic" sector and unions in the sector of "small and medium-sized enterprises." Unions in each sector share a "logic of action" that differs from the one shared by the unions in the other sector. Each logic of action consists of a distinctive hub of collective bargaining, distinctive patterns of relations between unions and employers and unions and the state, and distinctive sets of goals for both union members and for society as a whole.

11.1 The Logics of Union Action Before 1973

11.1.1 The Modern Monopolistic Sector: This sector is characterized by large, capital intensive firms with few competitors, modern production processes, high productivity, and "technocratic" styles of management. It is epitomized by state-owned steel plants, oil refineries, electric power generating plants, telecommunications services, copper mines, airlines, and shipping companies, but also includes the largest firms owned by domestic and foreign private capital. These firms can "afford" to pay workers relatively well due to their high productivity and because their monopolistic position allows them to recoup their wage costs by charging consumers higher prices.

Prior to 1973, collective bargaining in the modern monopolistic sector took place almost exclusively at the enterprise level. One reason for this prevalence of enterprise unionism is simply that many industries in this sector are dominated by one or a few firms. Another is that a comparatively "modern" management outlook makes employers in this sector more receptive to unionization and collective bargaining (and even to a modicum of worker control over hiring and social welfare and technical training programs). These factors help explain why the Central Unica de Trabajadores (CUT), the principal national-level union federation in Chile prior to 1973, had only weak links to the firm-level unions in the modern monopolistic sector. Unions in this sector were not without ties to political parties, and would sometimes attempt to influence government policy. Nonetheless, wages and working conditions in this sector were more insulated from state policies than they were in the sector of medium-sized and small firms, so that unions in the modern monopolistic sector had less incentive to participate actively in political system. Their long-range goals included increased social mobility for their members in particular and for society more generally, and the modernization of the economic system.

11.1.2 The Sector of Medium-Sized and Small Enterprises: This sector includes construction, printing, and consumer goods producing firms. Relatively low productivity in this sector drives down wages, but since high inter-firm competition makes it harder than in the modern monopolistic sector for employers to translate wage hikes into price increases, employers in the sector of smaller firms tend to feel

more threatened by unionization and union demands. The resulting employer resistance to firm-level unionization gives local unions an incentive to form industry-wide *federations* to try to take advantage of the industry's strategic importance to other industries and the state and its fragmentation into competing firms. Though contracts in most industries dominated by smaller firms are signed at the enterprise level (Valenzuela), union federations may coordinate local union strategy and objectives, and often mediate between the local unions, other federations, national confederations, political parties, and the state. The same logic also encourages individual union members, local unions, and industry-wide federations to organize national *confederations* to pressure the state for wage and price guidelines and for social benefits (social welfare, job security) that employers cannot, or will not, concede. The CUT, abolished in 1973, was always more representative of unions in this sector than in the modern monopolistic one. Finally, the high impact of state policy on the living standards of workers in this sector encourages union organizations at all three levels, and individual union members, to affiliate with political parties. The goals of this sector of unionism are typically oriented toward higher wages, better working conditions, and substantive democratization, often in association with demands for the abolition of capitalism. Despite the latter tendency, unions in the sector of small and medium-sized firms have rarely broken with the established political system, although a potential rupture occurred in 1972 and 1973, when cordones industriales were formed in sectors of Chilean industry not designated "social property" by the Popular Unity

government. (All of the above is distilled from Cortázar's presentation).

Cortázar also included employees of the public administration (like teachers or health workers) in this category, arguing that their vulnerability to state policies and their tendency to form federations due to the weakness of local organizations represent important commonalities with the logic of union action described for workers in the smaller enterprises. Valenzuela, however, contended that public administration employees should be excluded from this category because their organizations are technically not legal and therefore depend on government toleration, and because the collective contracts of public employees, in contrast to those of all of the other sectors that Cortázar places in this category (except the leather and shoe industry), are actually signed by the federation rather than at the enterprise level. Falabella also agreed on this need for greater disaggregation; elsewhere, he has created a seven-fold categorization of Chilean unionism prior to 1973.

11.2 Changes in the Logics of Union Action Since 1973

Since the advent of the military regime, thousands of unionists have been murdered, imprisoned, exiled, or "disappeared." The political party system has been shut down and the old network of union organizations has been virtually abolished. Legislation has reduced the coverage of minimum wage laws, severely limited the right to strike, weakened or removed provisions for job security, and concentrated negotiation at the enterprise level -- or even at the level

of the individual worker. The 20% drop in real wages since 1973 is largely the result of officialy decreed readjustments, and the government's economic model bears much of the responsibility for the precipitous decline in the industrial and mining workforces and for the vast pool of unemployed and underemployed.

These government policies have resulted in a simultaneous fragmentation and homogenization of the Chilean labor movement. Unions in both the monopolistic sector and the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises have adopted a "survivalist" strategy whereby each tries to avoid losing rights and benefits acquired in the past. Employers have taken advantage of new laws and regulations to reduce or exclude the participation of workers and their organizations in running the day-to-day affairs of the firm. Relations between high-level union leaders and the union rank and file are much weaker than in the past, in part because it is now harder to hold national or sectoral economic or political events to orient local union action. Since political parties have been severely repressed for the past decade, their links with the unions have weakened. What contact there has been between local unions and the state has taken place through the Catholic Church, ad-hoc or government-sponsored "groups" of union leaders, or recently formed "confederations" with weak links to local unions and the rank and file. The latter deserve special attention, for while local unions are engaged in a daily struggle for survival, it is the new national confederations (in particular, the Comando Nacional de Trabajadores [CNT] and the Central Democrática de Trabajadores [CDT]) which have led the struggle against the military regime.

Prior to 1973, the CUT had only seven paid officials, and national union confederations in Chile were little more than sounding boards for different political and ideological tendencies (Valenzuela). All confederations were abolished after the 1973 coup, but in recent years newly formed ones like the CNT and CDT have become, perhaps by default, the main organizational supports of the struggle for democratization. It was the new confederations, not the political parties, that formed the initial nuclei of the "national protests" that swept Chilean society in 1983 and 1984. When these protests were crushed by the state of siege imposed in November 1984, the confederations embarked on a new strategy. For the first time since the 1973 coup, national-level union leaders began to meet with representatives of business and professional organizations to discuss the formation of a united front to press for liberalization and, if and when this occurs, to foster a climate of cooperation among social forces to better cope with the economic crisis. This tentative process of "concertation" is shot through with tensions that derive from the current economic crisis, the changes that have taken place since 1973 in the social and economic structure of the country, and continuing differences in the logics of union action associated with the monopolistic sector and the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises.

II. Concertation versus Confrontation in Contemporary Chile

The question of whether it will be possible for social forces in Chile to form a united front to press for a transition toward a

minimally stable democratic regime depends in part on the global orientation adopted by the trade union sector. Cortázar distinguishes between two such orientations. "Autonomous confrontation" is based on the view that class interests are basically irreconcilable, and that workers through their organizations should neither work to restore, nor participate in, a "negotiated" political system, which presupposes that some accommodation between class interests is possible and desirable. "Political concertation," on the other hand, adopts the principle that class interests are not totally incompatible, and that some accommodation should be reached among them in order to improve the chances of restoring and consolidating an open political system (which is seen as desirable in itself) and, if and when such a restoration takes place, to facilitate economic recovery and stability, substantive democratization, and income redistribution.

III.1 The Concept of Concertation.

Cortázar was careful to distinguish his notion of "political concertation" from the concept of "corporatist interest intermediation" associated with the writings of Philippe Schmitter. Whereas the latter involves a fairly specific set of institutional structures and negotiating processes, Cortázar referred more informally to "the end of war and the beginning of politics"--that is, a new sense of compromise or consensus among social forces formerly bent on destroying their adversaries.

Acuña argued that this definition was too broad, permitting concertation to be identified in any country, including the United

States, where social forces do not attempt to destroy one another. He contended that to the extent that "corporatism" carries with it authoritarian connotations, "concertation" might be a better term to describe what is being sought by some Chilean political actors, but that either term, to be meaningful, must imply some observable structures, including union confederations which encompass large sectors of the working class. De Souza argued that the term "corporatism" should be restricted to situations where the state allocates a monopoly of representation to specific groups, and suggested that the term "social pact" might express better than "concertation" the idea of an "end of war and beginning of peace" among social organizations in Chile. Cortázar responded that in Chile the term "social pact" is associated with specific proposals by the Christian Democratic Party to which the left refused to adhere, whereupon Marcelo Cavarozzi pointed out that the term "concertation" has negative connotations in Argentina due to its association with proposals by the military regime. It is necessary, Cavarozzi added, to recognize that the debate over terminology is not merely academic; there is a continuing political struggle to appropriate certain words which makes a high rate of terminological attrition almost inevitable. He further suggested that the term "concertation" should be reserved for situations in which a tradition of confrontation gives way to one of "political bargaining" *and* in which tripartite mechanisms are established under state auspices to deal with conflicts between capital and labor. Ken Mericle argued that the specific nature of concertation

and its likelihood of success cannot be assessed except with reference to specific plans for economic recovery.

III.2 Current Tensions and Possibilities for the Future

"Autonomous confrontation" and "political concertation" have long coexisted within Chilean unionism. How they will coexist in the future, and in which sectors each will predominate, will depend primarily on the economic model that is followed and on the types of proposals advanced by different political groups.

The debt crisis in Chile makes it unlikely that foreign capital will serve in the near future as a motor of economic reactivation and job creation. Foreign lenders are unlikely to risk sums beyond the bare minimum needed to ensure their own survival, and foreign direct investment will probably remain low as transnational corporations turn increasingly toward other markets and sources of supply, and toward service contracts rather than investment in new plants and equipment. For growth to occur, capital will have to be mobilized domestically, with negative consequences for consumption levels (Father Bartell).

The main union confederations, business organizations, and professional associations have been meeting since late 1984 to discuss how to handle the situation of austerity and to work toward some sort of political opening. If any agreement reached is to have a chance of securing the cooperation of the working class, the union leadership will have to present a minimally united front and demonstrate receptivity to the demands of the rank and file. However, any given

set of economic policies is likely to have different effects on sectors of unionism with divergent logics of action, making unlikely the development of a highly cohesive union movement (Cortázar). In addition, the precariousness of employment and the weakness of federative structures in the sector of small and medium-sized firms suggests that a confrontational posture may begin to prevail among the union bases of this sector, who may begin to seek alliances with segments of the unemployed. This confrontational pull may gain strength if local leaders with different party affiliations engage in a competition to appear combative (Valenzuela).

Cortázar stressed that the possibilities for a social pact may be undermined by the tradeoff between employing those who do not now have jobs and restoring the real wage levels of currently employed workers. Given the need to pay the debt, a growth rate in excess of 4% per annum (barely sufficient to absorb the natural increase in the labor force) is unlikely to be achieved during the next few years. Cortázar estimated that in order to reduce unemployment 1%, growth would have to be 5% rather than 4%, and in order to generate the foreign exchange necessary to achieve this 5% growth rate, a devaluation would have to take place of a magnitude that would reduce real incomes 2% and spur inflation by a like amount. In contrast to the Keynesian situation that prevailed between 1965 and 1981, when economic growth based heavily on foreign borrowing allowed real wages and employment to rise concurrently, the more austere conditions of the past four years have produced a very salient tradeoff between job creation and the recuperation of wage levels. Nowhere is

this more evident than in the public administration, where wage increases and unemployment programs compete for scarce government resources.

Because of their historical traditions and their strategic location within the economy, unions in the modern monopolistic sector tend to be predisposed toward the political concertation strategy. This predisposition could be reinforced by a package restoring worker participation in the fields of hiring and promotion, technical advancement, and social welfare. Within the sector of small and medium enterprises, as well as in the national confederations, there is likely to be open competition between the confrontation and cooperation orientations. The structural weakness of local unions in this sector suggests that in either case they will attempt to reconstitute sectoral federations and to exert a strong influence over the actions of the national confederations. At present, the national confederations seem to be developing a concertation orientation, but a strong confrontational pull is likely to emerge in the union sectors which historically they have best represented. Should an alliance emerge between confrontation-oriented unions, Socialist and Communist party militants, elements outside the formal sector, and segments of the unemployed, confrontation might overshadow the concertation approach (Cortázar). This could also be the case if conservative sectors opt for the institutionalization of a "protected democracy" (Valenzuela), or if an accord between the political parties excludes the Communists or militant branches of the Socialist party (Cortázar, Falabella).

NEW TENSIONS AT THE PLANT LEVEL: SOME RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The final presentation, by Ian Roxborough, focused on two tensions, one empirical and the other analytical. The first tension involves the likely evolution of the overall orientation of the labor movements of Argentina, Brazil and Chile. Will there be a shift away from the highly politicized and/or state controlled unionism which each country has experienced in the past, toward a more "open," decentralized system of relations between the unions, employers, and the political system? If so, Roxborough suggests, trade union movements may follow the more confrontational path best exemplified by Brazil's "new unionism"; if not, the "social pact" may emerge as a dominant model. The second tension concerns the analysts as well as the actors: should explanations of the historical trajectories and prognoses about the likely future evolution of the union movements discussed at the conference be made principally "from the bottom up," i. e., from the standpoint of the detailed analysis of the experience of unionists at the shop-floor level, or "from the top down," i. e., in light of the relations that the union movement as a whole, or large sectors of it, have established with political parties and the state? In this concluding section of the report, these two issues will be discussed with reference both to Roxborough's presentation and to themes introduced by other workshop participants. A summary will then be given of the research agenda that seems to have emerged from the conference and of some factors that might have been more heavily emphasized.

I. "New Unionism" or Social Pact?

One problem in projecting ahead is that the union movements of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile have not yet really worked out a coherent response to the neo-conservative market offensive that has characterized government economic policy since the 1970s, especially in Argentina and Chile (Cavarozzi), nor to the deep recessions which have affected the industrial sectors of Chile, Argentina, and Brazil since 1973, 1974, and 1979 respectively (Roxborough). Another problem in making such a forecast is that the three countries differ in terms of the type of political system that currently exists (new democratic civilian regimes in Argentina and Brazil, an authoritarian military one in Chile), the changes that occurred under military rule in the overall situation of the industrial labor force (smaller and weaker in Argentina and Chile, larger and potentially more powerful in Brazil), and the global orientations of unionism prior to the period of military rule (strong links with the Peronist movement in Argentina, with a set of competing political parties in Chile, and with the state in Brazil) (Roxborough). It may be that the stronger the prior links between the unions and political parties, the more continuity that can be expected in the ways in which unions behave as political actors, in which case the situation of unionism can be expected to be much more fluid in Brazil than in Argentina or Chile (Valenzuela, Roxborough).

Turning to possible global orientations which these union movements may adopt in the future, it is worth noting differences in how workshop participants conceived of the relationship between the

"new unionism" (which in Cortázar's idiom involves the stance of "autonomous confrontation") and the "social pact" or "political concertation" approach. Roxborough preferred to see each global orientation as an alternative for the union movement as a whole, whereas Cortázar stressed that there are structural economic reasons to believe that each orientation may come to dominate in a different sector of unionism. The main thrust of de Souza's presentation is that aspects of the more independent and combative approach adopted by the new unionism in Brazil may actually serve to *reinforce* corporatist traditions which may now find a new sort of expression in the "social pact" being sought by the new government. The Colliers pointed out that during the 1890-1920 period in the three countries being analyzed the union movement displayed tendencies that we might now associate with the "new unionism," implying that there is a tendency for more independent, confrontational unionism to predominate in certain historical epochs and for a more alliance-seeking orientation to predominate in others. Falabella, finally, suggested that an autonomous, confrontational unionism might well agree to enter a "social pact" in the hope of using it as a vehicle to become a hegemonic force within society as a whole.

II. Shop Floor or Political Alliances?

Roxborough formulated his presentation partly as a response to that of David and Ruth Collier, who analyzed the evolution of labor movements primarily in terms of their links to the state and of the alliances they establish with political parties. He stressed the need to

analyze labor at what he terms the "shop floor" level, looking closely at how the forms of organization and action of trade unions are related to the labor market, technical characteristics, and strategic economic position of different industries.

The presentations of de Souza and Cavarozzi, although in quite different ways, shared with that of the Colliers a primary concern with the role of labor in the overall political system, whereas Cortázar's focus was more in accord with Roxborough's proposals. Though Roxborough emphasized the contrast between the two analytical perspectives, there was general agreement that in some senses at least they are "two sides of the same coin," with one concerned primarily with what determines the actions and orientations of a labor movement and the other with how those actions and orientations affect the functioning of the political system. Roxborough himself suggested three ways in which analysis at the "shop floor" level could illuminate aspects of labor's role in the political process: (1) industrial conflict in key plants, industries, or unions may have a direct effect on government policy, as when a union breaks through government wage guidelines; (2) shop floor issues in individual plants or industries may affect union structure or orientation, altering the union's behavior in the political sphere; (3) changes in labor processes or in the industrial structure might alter the type of issue that is debated politically.

III. An Agenda for Research

It is worthwhile to summarize at this point some themes that workshop participants thought would be particularly deserving of attention in monitoring future developments within the labor movements of the countries discussed, and in analyzing how they developed their existing structures and orientations in the first place. As was observed initially by the Colliers, the workshop focused not on the whole world of urban work, but on unions in the urban formal sector. Roxborough suggested that it might even be worth restricting the bulk of analysis to unions in "key economic sectors," which for him would be those industries with the strongest "accelerator impact," but could also be considered those producing the country's main exports (Bergquist), those in the country's spatial or strategic "core" (Falabella), or those in the monopolistic sector (Cortázar). Narrowing the focus in this way would permit a more detailed analysis of specific union structures and patterns of collective bargaining, and of the ways in which differing structures and bargaining patterns interact with employment and wage levels and produce different orientations in different unions. De Souza, however, cautioned that such a directive might result in a series of isolated studies.

Other participants, while recognizing that labor unions in the urban formal sector are far from homogeneous, were more concerned with the role that unionism as a whole would play in the democratization process (de Souza, Cavarozzi, Cortázar). It was also pointed out that entire labor movements may now be on the verge of a "new founding moment" comparable in significance to earlier

"incorporating periods" which, like those initial "founding moments," may well produce a quite heterogeneous set of dynamics for the future (Colliers). Charles Craypo raised the possibility that a move in the direction of the "new unionism," if the experience of the United States is any guide, might in coming decades result in a gradual decline in the overall political weight of the labor movement.

There was widespread consensus on the need to analyze the structure and orientations of unionized labor with close reference to the behavior of employers and the state, as well as the "informal sector" and the unemployed, and on the need to look to the levels both of worker organization (the programs, resources, and structure of unions, the alliances they forge with parties, and their relationship to the state) and of worker consciousness (the opinions, perceptions, and intentions of individual workers).

Not all aspects of the situation of labor in contemporary Argentina, Brazil, and Chile could be covered at the workshop. Among the most important omissions (or underemphases) were the changing role of women in the labor force; the impacts of the debt crisis, of foreign governments, and of international labor organizations on the union movements of the three countries; and the relationship between the formal and informal sectors of the economy (Wilde).

It was proposed that the participants reconvene at the Kellogg Institute sometime within the next few years to reflect on the analyses and prognoses made at the workshop and to address new issues that may arise as the situation evolves.