



Redemocratization, the Church, and  
Democracy in Colombia

Alexander Wilde

Working Paper #22 - June 1984

Revised from a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Rocky Mountain Council on Latin American Studies, Tucson, Arizona, February 23-25, 1984. The author gratefully acknowledges the criticisms of Héctor Leis, Scott Mainwaring, and Eduardo Viola and welcomes further comments and suggestions.

Alexander Wilde is Senior Fellow and Associate Academic Director of the Kellogg Institute. He was formerly Acting Secretary of the Latin American Program of The Wilson Center, Washington, D.C. and has taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Haverford College. He has written about the politics of Colombia for nearly 20 years. This Working Paper is drawn from the author's forthcoming study, **POLITICS AND THE CHURCH IN COLOMBIA**.



## ABSTRACT

Colombia's transition back to political democracy in the 1950s raises interesting issues for current debates about "redemocratization." The regime has charted a remarkably consistent course compared to the interruptions and reverses elsewhere in Latin America. At the same time, however, oligarchical democracy has arguably become less democratic in its processes and consequences, and the country has experienced a continuing sense of moral crisis. These two phenomena are related to one another and to the political role of the Catholic Church. The Colombian Church turned away from "Catholic" one-party government and supported bipartisan oligarchical democracy. It also recognized that La Violencia called for a new social mission--more direct, active involvement in society--if it were to retain its accustomed magisterial authority. In the last two decades, however, it has repeatedly experienced a tension between exercising this direct social mission and supporting the political regime. Liberationist groups within it have offered a Christian critique of social problems, but in contrast to many other Latin American countries, the Hierarchy has consistently marginalized these Liberationist elements. The cost for the Church has been an obvious irrelevance in the midst of the felt moral crisis. The cost for the country has been to deny legitimation to popular social organization--and its potentialities for achieving a more just and democratic society.

## RESUMEN

El retorno de Colombia a la democracia a fines de la década del 50 plantea cuestiones interesantes para el debate actual sobre "redemocratización." El régimen colombiano ha seguido un curso consistente comparado con las interrupciones e involuciones comunes en América Latina. Sin embargo, simultáneamente, la democracia oligárquica ha devenido (posiblemente) menos democrática, tanto en sus procesos cuanto en sus consecuencias, y el país ha experimentado un continuo sentido de crisis moral. Estos dos fenómenos están relacionados mutuamente y, por su vez, con el rol político de la Iglesia católica. La Iglesia colombiana tomó la decisión de no legitimar un "gobierno católico" de un partido pasando a apoyar la democracia oligárquica bipartidaria. La Iglesia también reconoció que La Violencia planteaba la necesidad de una nueva visión social--compromiso más activo y directo con la sociedad--para retener su histórica autoridad magistral. En las últimas dos décadas, no obstante, la Iglesia ha experimentado repetidamente la tensión entre el ejercer de esta misión social directa y apoyar al régimen político. Los grupos liberacionistas dentro de la Iglesia han propuesto una crítica cristiana de los problemas sociales, pero en contraste con otros países latinoamericanos, la Jerarquía ha marginalizado consistentemente estos elementos liberacionistas. El costo para la Iglesia ha sido su irrelevancia en cuanto potencial institución comprometida con la superación de la crisis moral. El costo para el país ha sido la negación de legitimidad para la organización social popular y para las potencialidades de ésta para lograr una sociedad más justa y democrática.



## Redemocratization, the Church, and Democracy in Colombia

Colombia's transition back to political democracy in the 1950s is usually regarded as an "easy" case, seen in a comparative context.<sup>1</sup> It restored essentially the former regime, institutionalizing the historic party system, with its long traditions of acuerdos and convivencia. The challenges to be faced in constructing the National Front--populist politics, organized labor, military ambitions, economic conditions, the authoritarian interlude--were all relatively weak compared to their counterparts in other Latin American societies. The problems to be faced were "political" in the narrowest sense, concerned with engineering among manifestly partisan forces. That the crisis had this limited character, it is argued, is best demonstrated by the endurance of the narrowly political and traditional solutions then instituted.<sup>2</sup> In the broader context of the last quarter century of Latin American history, Colombia seems to offer a remarkable example of democratic consolidation.

Reflecting on this analysis in the light of current debates about "redemocratization,"<sup>3</sup> however, two doubts arise. One is concerned with the character of the crisis in which Colombia's democracy was reconstructed. The other is related to the nature of that democracy itself. The latter doubt concerns specifically the ways that democracy has been undermined by social, political, and state violence, or more pointedly why formal political democracy has not had more broadly democratic social consequences.<sup>4</sup> The answers to these questions are related to the

crisis in which democracy was created, which was much more profound than the "easy case" analysis suggests. The lack of "deepening" of Colombian democracy has a great deal to do precisely with the depth of the crisis which its creation failed to plumb.

The 1950s were a watershed in Colombia history. They were, on one hand, the decade in which the country chose the basic options, politically and economically, that have made it what it is today.<sup>5</sup> These choices resolved fundamental issues in both realms, sometimes of long standing, and charted a course which seems remarkably consistent compared to the interruptions and reverses observable elsewhere in Latin America. On the other hand, the 1950s witnessed the beginnings of a far-reaching moral crisis still very much alive in Colombia today. Traditional values and institutions began to disintegrate with a violence only exceeded in societies that have undergone social revolutions (and not even in all of them). Violence has changed its forms since la Violencia of two decades ago, but it continues with a pervasiveness (and occasional intensity) that makes the country feel, in Carlos Lleras Restrepo's telling phrase, that it is "coming unbound."

Huellas of this crisis have not been wholly absent from politics. Before the National Front, presidents Laureano Gómez (1950-53) and Gustavo Rojas Pinilla (1953-57) both assayed corporatist constitutional alternatives to Colombia's historic oligarchical democracy. Since "redemocratization" in 1958, the traditional parties have been challenged electorally (MRL, ANAPO)

and, more fundamentally, by armed guerrilla insurrection. But the scope of the moral crisis has been only imperfectly reflected in the manifestly political realm, the país político that now includes the guerrillas and army as well as the traditional political parties.<sup>6</sup> Why that is so--most pointedly, why the left has failed so dismally to present an alternative "project" capable of crystallizing the multiple discontents of Colombian society--is a matter of some debate.<sup>7</sup> Significant explanations seem to me to lie beyond conventional politics, in that broader moral realm which determines its scope. It is for this reason illuminating to examine that institution pre-eminently concerned with the moral--nowhere more so than Colombia--the Catholic Church.

The Church offers important insights into the nature of Colombian democracy because democracy is always a moral matter. As the current debates about redemocratization remind us, democracy is never simply a political method. It always involves a society's moral judgements about itself, about what is right and wrong for its public authority, about the values to be served by its political procedures and the ethical ends of its public policies. These moral considerations are particularly present in moments of transition from dictatorship to democracy, but they recur observably within a democratic framework as well, both to protect it from antidemocratic regression and to extend its benefits and scope.

The Church played a prominent part in the restoration of Colombia's oligarchical democracy in the 1950s. It did so with a sense that Colombia was experiencing a crisis both of political regime and of moral community. It responded to this in part in

traditional ways, within the frame of the country's historical  
8  
"Christendom." But it also responded innovatively, by  
unequivocally endorsing political democracy and by embracing a new  
social mission. The commitments it made at that time have caused  
unprecedented conflict within it, but they have been maintained in  
the period since then by the Hierarchy. This has had the  
consequence, I believe, that in its teaching role, the Church has  
had no discernible impact in elucidating the ongoing moral crisis.  
It has not contributed to closing the felt gap between politics  
and society--by, for example, broadening the "agenda" of  
9  
politics --nor has it helped deepen democracy beyond periodic  
electoral competition.

The principal body of this essay examines the Church in the  
1950s, during the period of dictatorship and the Violence. The  
first section deals with the crisis of regime after the breakdown  
of oligarchical democracy in 1949 and the powerful pulls within  
the Church to perpetuate one-party Conservative rule. The next  
explains why it chose ultimately not to do that but instead remove  
itself from the traditional partisanship and support redemocrati-  
zation with the National Front. The following section describes  
how the Violence led the Church to reform and expand its own  
structures and to involve itself more actively and directly in the  
processes of social change. The final section returns to the  
broader issues raised by the moral crisis in Colombia's  
oligarchical democracy. It argues that the Hierarchy, by  
excluding rather than incorporating Liberationist responses from  
within it, has undercut the Church's autonomous social mission.



Politically this has deprived popular organizations of the moral sanction that might have allowed them to broaden Colombia's democracy beyond its oligarchical limits.

#### THE CRISIS OF REGIME: CONSERVATIVE HEGEMONY?

The breakdown of Colombia's oligarchical democracy in 1949 and its restoration in 1958 are both part of the larger historical period of la Violencia, the Violence. Some 200,000 people lost their lives between its beginnings in the mid-1940s and its end in the early 1960s.<sup>10</sup> Although it was begun and punctuated at intervals by urban riots, some (such as the bogotazo of 1948) of extraordinary scale, it was primarily a rural phenomenon, its presence there marking the limits of state authority. For nearly two decades the grisly spectacle continued, week by week, month after month, recorded in the public press and the country's consciousness. The traditional political system broke under the strain, and other institutions--especially the army and the Church--were propelled into new political roles.

The collapse of oligarchical democracy in 1949 began what was clearly a crisis of regime. The presidential election of that year was held under state of siege, with sharp curtailment of all civil liberties.<sup>11</sup> The Gómez government of 1950-53 was not only of a single party (a situation that had existed under Alfonso López Pumarejo in the 1930s), but it also ruled essentially without Congress and convoked a constituent assembly with the aim of producing a new corporatist order. When Rojas Pinilla deposed Gómez in 1953, it was the first successful military coup in Colombia in a century. Although this "golpe de opinión" was

popular, Rojas retained the constituent assembly and sought in a variety of ways to establish a regime quite different from the country's historical party democracy. The military junta that replaced Rojas in 1957 was wholly unprecedented, and although it espoused an avowedly caretaker role, the restoration of oligarchical democracy through the National Front was by no means assured even very late in the transition.<sup>12</sup>

Such a crisis of regime was a fundamental problem for the Colombian Church because it had been historically, in effect, a state Church. It had been given a privileged public position by the 1886 Constitution and the 1887 Concordat (acclaimed by the Vatican as a model). That position, consolidated under nearly 50 years of Conservative party rule, had only been partially challenged by Liberal governments after 1930. The Church enjoyed both substantial autonomy in its own affairs as well as delegated authority and subsidies from the state for education, public assistance, and frontier areas ("mission territories"). To a striking degree public life continued to reflect traditional Catholic symbols and conceptions. It was a notable survival of traditional "Christendom" in the twentieth century. All of this had been secured, however, within the historic oligarchical democracy that was now in question.

In facing the regime crisis, the Church had two alternatives. One was to identify with the Conservative efforts, of Gómez and Rojas Pinilla, to create a new corporatist system. This option had obvious attractions. Both Gómez and Rojas were self-proclaimed (even ostentatious) Catholics, avowedly aiming to implement through their governments the Social Doctrine of the

Church. Both pursued policies specifically benefitting the Church--fresh aid for education, including the new schools of Radio Sutatenza; government harrassment of Protestant proselytizing; a new Treaty on Missions. Apart from these positive inducements, the Church had negative ones as well. The Violence had, after all, unleashed Liberal anticlericalism. Priests were being killed and churches sacked. In the urban rioting of April, 1948, frenzied mobs of Bogotá had burned the Palace of the Archbishop, the old colegio of La Salle, the Nunciatura, and in Medellín, the Pontifical Bolivarian

University.

There were many and visible forces within the Church favoring this option, which was essentially to resolve the regime crisis by rallying behind the traditional party of clerical defense. These forces saw the social disintegration of the Violence not as the product of indigenous Colombian development but of external forces perverting the nation's true Catholic and hispanic character. By the 1940s leading elements of the Church, the Jesuits prominent among them, had developed a whole Weltanschauung of reactionary nationalism. (The similarities to fascism elsewhere, as e.g. its antisemitism, were uncomfortably close).

The violent war of Colombians against their brothers was the fruit of the seeds sown by Masons, Protestants, and, above all, Communists--the "Colombian

lefts." The Violence was merely the latest manifestation of evils that were brought to the world by modernity, against which the Church had to continue to fight. In 1951, under Gómez, Jesuit Félix Restrepo gave a series of national radio addresses

commending "the Christian State and organic democracy" to a  
17  
"Colombia at the crossroads."

With the return of Conservative government in the late 1940s, much of the Church moved back to its old political alliance. As the Violence increased, these triumphalists saw it in increasingly apocalyptic terms, as an opportunity to conquer, on Colombia's modest soil, all error and all enemies of the Church. Many bishops forbade their flocks to vote for Liberal candidates in the 1949 congressional elections. Among them were Crisanto Luque, Bishop of Tunja (and, significantly, Archbishop of Bogotá after 1950), and Miguel Ángel Builes, Bishop of Santa Rosa de Osos in Antioquia. Builes captured so well the outlook of these elements in his Lenten message concerning "The Battle of the Church... in a special way in Colombia, against all the powers of Hell aligned to destroy it":

In the manner of generals of armies that give speeches to enlighten and fire their soldiers with passion, I that, by the will of God am before a portion of the soldiers of the Church militant, direct my cry to thee for the next electoral battle, that is the battle for the Church in our Fatherland.... The ideal of Catholics is to sustain on high the ensign of the Cross that fluttered at Calvary, on the top of our temples and over the tombs of our dead. Our ideal is to defend Christ and his sacrosanct rights...18

No Colombian, Builes said, could be a member both of the Catholic Church and the Liberal party, which was "the enemy of Christ and his Church." It was prelates such as these that condoned--or even encouraged--the direct involvement of their parish priests in the Violence on the side of the Conservatives, mobilizing their flocks against the Liberals, swearing out "safe conduct" passes for certified Conservatives. Builes was a frequent and vocal

supporter of Rojas Pinilla in his Conservative and Christian  
19  
projects.

The Church as a whole, however, did not support the efforts of Conservative governments to break with Colombia's bipartisan past. It ultimately chose the other alternative, to "redemocratize," to institutionalize the traditional oligarchical democracy. This was a decision of great historical significance. A quarter of a century later it is possible to say the Church did indeed break its association with the violent partisanship between the Liberals and Conservatives that had such destructive consequences through most of Colombian history. By removing this perennial source of instability, the Church clearly helped the arrangements instituted with the National Front to survive. The stability of the political regime was no small consideration for what had been historically a state Church. The experience of the 1950s with Gómez and Rojas Pinilla convinced the Church that the National Front offered the best possibilities to re-establish its place within a stable public structure. At the same time, however, the Church was rethinking its own relationship to society in fundamental ways. Before examining that, however, let us consider how the Church made the perhaps not-obvious choice of turning away from Conservative and "Catholic" governments and toward the bipartisan National Front.

#### CHURCH SUPPORT FOR REDEMOCRATIZATION

As a kind of state Church, the Church in Colombia wanted both state guarantees and autonomy in its own sphere. Gómez and Rojas Pinilla offered state guarantees, but the Church came to believe

that they had less security from these Conservative governments than from a regime which included Liberals in power sharing. The Conservative party was badly split by power (not an unusual experience for Colombia's factionalized parties). The followers of former president Mariano Ospina Pérez were a key support for the coup against Gómez in 1953, when Gómez seemed intent on preventing Ospina from succeeding him. Although Rojas Pinilla's government was essentially Conservative rather than military, party politicians were unsuccessful in maneuvering him out of office in a way that would allow them to reassert their own supremacy. The Conservative divisions among ospinistas and laureanistas were so deep that the two factions could not agree on a common candidate for the first National Front presidency, who the Liberals had accepted should be a Conservative. (Gómez eventually threw his support to Liberal Alberto Lleras Camargo.)

A Conservative party of such incoherence was hardly by itself a safe protector. At the same time, the Liberal party seemed less threatening. Moderate leaders, such as Alfonso López Pumarejo and Alberto Lleras Camargo, reasserted their control in the 1950s. Alarmed by where the Violence might lead, they repudiated populist mobilization and the Liberal guerrillas. They made clear early in negotiations of the Civic Front that they were prepared to offer the Church all the public guarantees it desired in the restored  
20  
bipartisan democracy.

The Church always wanted to retain autonomy over what it conceived as its own sphere, one that expanded further into society during the 1950s. Here as well the Church's experience with Gómez and Rojas Pinilla eventually disposed it to support

redemocratization. Laureano Gómez came into office with much talk about his "Christian concept of government" and, very shortly, had one of the most anti-Liberal of the prelates, Crisanto Luque, as his new Archbishop of Bogotá. The Church did accept benefits from his governments over the next years, but it showed increasing wariness about the old regalist. The Bishops distrusted his personalist style and his lack of deference to ecclesiastical authority, so often demonstrated in the past.<sup>21</sup> This was made particularly clear in the embittered polemics between the Church and Gómez after his overthrow by Rojas Pinilla in 1953. Although the first reaction of Archbishop Luque to the coup was hostile, the Church soon adopted a realist position and expressly<sup>22</sup> recognized the de facto government as a legitimate. Gómez excoriated the Bishops for this treason to a "constantly faithful son." How could they recognize Rojas, this "usurper," this "perjurer," this "torturer"? How could they give him "public salutation" and "be seated at the table" with him? How could they accept for Church charities subsidies from his government, which--like the thirty pieces of silver--mixed the pure with the impure?<sup>23</sup>

The Church response was to assert not only its independence from Gómez but with increasing clarity, its autonomy from all partisan politics. In 1954 the Episcopal Conference reaffirmed ecclesiastical authority over the laity: "The characteristic note and essential property of the only true Church of Jesus Christ is its hierarchical institution, that is, its social organization under the authority and government of the Sacred Hierarchy,"

declared the Colombian prelates. In a barely veiled reference to Gómez, they continued: "No human authority, however elevated it may be, has the right to judge the acts of the Bishops. . . ."

24

In 1956 the newspaper of the Bogotá Archdiocese, El Catolicismo, compared Gómez to Charles Maurras, whose Action Française had been condemned by Pope Pius XI. It particularly noted his "implacable blows against Liberalism" and the "immediate target, the Colombian Liberal party," which "went straight at the face of democracy itself." The Church, it said, would not be "utilized as an instrument of a political faction."

25

The Church's experience with Rojas Pinilla strengthened this determination. It received concrete and public advantages from his government. Despite this, there was a consistent undercurrent of anti-Rojas opposition within it, above all from the Jesuits. Although Rojas made an effort to support Church social activities, the one area in which he challenged a Church initiative was in labor, where the Jesuits had organized the U.T.C. In 1954-55 he supported the quasiperonist National Confederation of Workers (C.N.T.), against the older C.T.C. and U.T.C. In early 1955 Bishops first in Antioquia and then the whole country condemned the C.N.T. for being led by former C.T.C. socialists and communists and for expressly rejecting the clergy's right to intervene in social problems. Vicente Andrade, S.J., Moral Adviser of the U.T.C., kept the Church-inspired federation clear of the government. At the same time, students at the Jesuit Javeriana University played a leading role in street demonstrations against the regime, especially after the shooting of students by the government in 1954.

26



A clear turning point was reached with Rojas' announcement in 1956 of the formation of a "Third Force" populist movement to replace the traditional political parties. It was denounced by Cardinal Luque for its dangerous leadership and because it constituted "a threat for the labor movement that is inspired in the directives of the Sovereign Pontiffs." Making clear his central concern with the success of this most successful example of Catholic Social Action, Luque continued:

The Church does not assume responsibilities for labor organizing itself, but it inspires and favors the movement embodied in the U.T.C. . . . The Congress of the U.T.C. (in Cali) has exceptional importance for the Church, because it will be the occasion for proving whether labor organizations of Catholic orientation can continue carrying out their activities for the benefit of the working class and for the advantage of social peace, without force, hidden maneuvers, and partisan interests preventing it.<sup>27</sup>

Rojas attempted to assert his government's support for the Church's efforts in labor and to argue that the Third Force embodied essentially Christian concepts, but by mid-1956 dominant opinion in the Church was swinging against him.

The Church played a visible role in Rojas' downfall in 1957. In April Cardinal Luque published a letter to him which denied the legitimacy of his Constituent Assembly, decried the controls on civil freedoms, and urged a return to constitutional competition.<sup>28</sup> This put the Church increasingly openly on the side of the opposition headed by the leaders of the traditional parties, by business and financial elites, and by students. Prelates in Popayán and Cali were implicated in support for the declared opposition candidate to the presidency, Guillermo León Valencia. On the fifth of May a priest who had been outspoken in

opposition delivered a ringing attack on the regime which was applauded by a packed congregation in an elite Bogotá suburb. The government broke up the Mass with tear gas. Luque condemned the acts in El Catolicismo, in the strongest terms. On the sixth of May a general strike began. Newspapers, banks, shops, and factories were closed, and within a few days transportation gave out. On the tenth of May, Rojas Pinilla resigned in favor of a military junta (after Msgr. Builes had advised him to do so).<sup>29</sup>

The Church played a prominent part, no doubt, in bringing Rojas down. It had not for some time, despite all his efforts, given him any real support. It was dismayed by many aspects of his regime: its corruption, its violence, its populism. Ultimately, even with all Rojas' protestations of fealty and deference, it felt threatened by his personalist style, his rule without the accustomed institutions and traditions. The Church turned instead to a regime of the established ruling elites. It endorsed the shared leadership of both parties and threw in the lot of the institution with them, in their attempt to reassert their collective hegemony and to mend up, insofar as they could, the rent fabric of traditional society. Their consensus about the Church was expressed in the first article of the December 1957 plebiscite establishing the National Front:

In the name of God, supreme source of all authority, and with the end of guaranteeing national unity, one of the bases of which is the recognition made by the political parties that the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Religion is that of the Nation, and as such, the public powers will protect it and cause it to be respected as an essential element of the social order. . . .30

## LA VIOLENCIA AND THE CHURCH'S SOCIAL MISSION

The crisis of the 1950s was a crisis of both regime and of community. Responding to the first, the Church eventually threw its support behind the "redemocratization" of the National Front. La Violencia, however, suggested a social crisis beyond partisanship and political arrangements. The Church inescapably saw this as a moral crisis for the national community with which it identified itself throughout Colombian history. This moral crisis seemed to call for a direct response from the Church, beyond the mediation of the state. The Church did respond by expanding its social mission and developing an unprecedented range of its "own" structures in society. This did not occur in a single moment of insight and decision. Rather, it took place as the terrible unfolding of the Violencia over time reinforced the innovations urged by Rome, beginning with Catholic Action in the 1930s.

The Church responded to the earliest manifestations of la Violencia as an institutional threat, narrowly conceived. It protested the "atrocious crimes committed against the Church and against sacred persons and things," against the violence exercised against its own personnel and property.<sup>31</sup> But the Violence in reality posed a much deeper danger to the Church, as it only came gradually to realize. It raised the most basic kinds of questions about the Church's mission and presence. This atrocious anarchy was occurring in the land which they had "civilized," among a people "culto y cristiano," a people, as Pope Pius XII triumphally reminded them in 1945, "who count in their glorious history four

centuries of irreproachable Christianity." The Violence implied the most fundamental kind of failure. In theological terms the Church had to come to terms with the content of its Christianity, with the gap between public symbols and individual lives. Sociologically the Church had to recognize that it had not responded successfully to the new society that modernization and secularization were creating.

Archbishop Ismael Perdomo of Bogotá had understood the depth of the crisis even in the 1940s:

while we boast of our so-called "Christian civilization," we profess and at the same time practice hatred and are very far from practicing the fundamental Christian doctrine: love. Fratricidal battles are the most painful and devastating manifestation of evil that weighs down upon a sinful species.<sup>33</sup>

Although Perdomo died in 1950, the Bishops' Conference as a whole was gradually driven to essentially his view. Their collective pastorals of 1948 stressed the dangers of the Violence to the narrow institutional interests of the Church and gave a long exposition of the errors of Communism and of "Doctrinaire Liberalism." Already by 1949, on the eve of the breakdown of the oligarchical democracy, their joint message was far less partisan, far more a cry of anguish. They expressed the hope that 1950, which was to be an international Holy Year, would bring peace to their poor land,

torn apart by passions and hatreds which are not only antichristian but antihuman; drenched with the blood of fratricidal battles that we watch with our souls filled with sorrow, and that it is urgent and necessary to put to an end, because violence, like the violation that it is of divine and human laws, builds nothing and ruins all; it produces only misfortune and pain; it fills life with insecurity; it shackles fruitful initiatives in uneasiness; it cancels, weakens, or blocks the flow of energies that should be the source of individual and

collective wellbeing; it destroys the sentiment of human brotherhood; it lowers existence, annihilating the concepts that give it nobility and dignity; and it leaves as its ultimate result material and moral misery. 34

By 1953 the bishops devoted their entire pastoral to the moral causes for the most serious crisis in the history of the country, given that "the national conscience has awakened and is realizing the immensity of the disaster, understanding the necessity of doing everything to stop the course that carries us to the abyss." This was not a proud announcement of Colombia's orthodoxy, nor a political appeal to public authorities, but rather a pastoral call to the basic tenets of the faith.

We recognize as a beneficial sign of God the fact that Colombia is a unanimously Catholic country. But we think that everyone who thinks back over events will be persuaded that they give visible indications that the conduct of a considerable part of Colombians has not always been in accord with their being Catholics, nor with the principles that the profession of Catholicism presumes. In a word, it must be recognized that in many cases, unfortunately, Catholicism is on the lips but not in the depths of the heart and the spirit. 35

The Colombian Church responded to the challenge of the Violence on two different levels. The first was that of shortrun strategies, of appeals for peace and of symbolic gestures, often in cooperation with public officials. In 1949 the Virgin of Fatima was carried about Colombia as a rallying point for Christian civilization. 36 Collective pastoral letters were supplemented in 1951 and 1952 by Church participation in a National Crusade for Peace, which nominally included leaders of both political parties. In 1952 the Virgin was proclaimed "Queen of Peace," and the Republic reconsecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the most important of a "great national movement of pious

acts." In May of that year a large rally was held at which the Nuncio, the Primate Archbishop, and the Acting President, Roberto Urdaneta Arbeláez, spoke. A procession followed to the church of the National Vow. There was even a radio message from Pope Pius XII.<sup>37</sup> None of these methods proved of great efficacy. The Violence continued and gave the lie to the assumed influence of the Church.

These traditional kinds of responses from the Church suggested its belief that, despite appearances, the Violence had not destroyed Colombia's traditional society. Order--and the social order--could be restored. Such responses coexisted, however, with others within the institution which admitted that the disintegration of society called for new methods. In this second level of response, the Church modernized its basic ecclesiastical structures, institutionalizing the Bishops' Conference (with the first permanent secretariat in Latin America), stimulating clerical Vocations with new seminaries, creating new urban parishes and pastoral structures for the swelling cities. It established a national coordination for Catholic Social Action, patronized a new labor federation (the U.T.C.) and undertook new initiatives for the countryside (the FANAL peasant federation and Acción Cultural Popular radio schools). It created new institutes for sociological research (ICODES, CIAS) to interpret social problems and help relate Church action to them.

The Hierarchy sanctioning these changes conceived them in "papist" terms, as initiatives of the ecclesiastical institution, obedient to hierarchical authority, tracing ultimately to the Pope

himself. The Church wished to participate in new spheres which required the help of the faithful, but the laity was to work under the direction and leadership of the clergy. The different programs of Catholic Social Action also reflected the papal Social Encyclicals in their conceptions of society. They accepted the existing stratification of society and (against the Marxists) preached the basic harmony of interests of the different classes-- if each would only live up to its Christian social responsibilities toward the others.

38

The Church's own religious authority, resources, and structures were meant to complement those of the reconstituted oligarchical democracy. There was substantial fit between the Church's "papist" conceptions and the regime's "developmentalist" project. Both accepted the need for social change, and both believed it could be achieved by technocratic and reformist methods. Both implied that the adaptation of traditional institutions, political and ecclesiastical, would be adequate to the extraordinary challenge manifest in the Violence. They were not wholly wrong: La Violencia in its historic form came to an end,<sup>39</sup> and the oligarchical democracy has survived more than 25 years. But at the same time, the responses of Church and regime have not faced the deeper meaning of the Violence.

#### THE MORAL CRISIS SINCE REDEMOCRATIZATION

Oligarchical politics coexisted with considerable social violence throughout Colombia's history. From time to time this violence erupted in sharp political conflict, mobilized through the traditional Liberal and Conservative parties. The rural

Violencia of the 1940s originated in just such traditional partisan conflict but even before the installation of the National Front in 1958 had given rise to new forms of social violence. The political guerrilla bands created in the early 1960s clearly mark a new stage in the larger continuing phenomenon. These groups have since grown and multiplied and today represent easily the longest sustained challenge to oligarchical politics in the country's history.

Over the last 20 years, the regime of oligarchical democracy has failed to meet this challenge democratically. It has been unable to respond to underlying social problems with policies which would win broader popular allegiance and strengthen its institutions. Its agrarian reform, for example--that classic opportunity for conservative regimes to fortify their foundations<sup>40</sup> --redistributed insignificant amounts of land and actually exacerbated rural inequalities.<sup>41</sup> An overwhelming majority of Colombians--rates of nonvoting run to 50 to 70% and more-- do not participate in the institutions of formal<sup>42</sup> democracy. Without broader political support, the regime has responded to the guerrillas--and indeed, to other forms of popular mobilization--with ad hoc, arbitrary, and increasingly violent<sup>43</sup> means. The country has been governed under state of siege or emergency well over half the time during the last 26 years.<sup>44</sup> Historically small and civilianist, the military has taken on a growing and unprecedented range of responsibilities related to governance.<sup>45</sup> Oligarchical democracy has for the most part remained constitutional but has not been particularly democratic.



It is too early to tell whether the administration of Belisario Betancur, elected in 1982, represents a fundamental change in this broader pattern or merely a more personal sort of political triumph.<sup>46</sup> Betancur may be the most popular president in living memory, but it is unclear that his independent, idiosyncratic style will lead to important realignment within the larger system. In mid-1984 he apparently achieved a breakthrough ceasefire with most of the guerrillas, but that will not hold unless he is able to realize basic social reforms. The inequalities of wealth and power are marked in Colombia; indeed, they have arguably become more skewed under oligarchical democracy than they were under the previous dictatorship.<sup>47</sup> Violence remains an important aspect of ordinary life--a sense of pervasive crime, corruption, and inseguridad.

This social crisis unmistakably has its origins in la Violencia. Sociologically, the Violence broke old forms of social control, particularly in the countryside, and opened up new channels of social mobility. Morally, the Violence assaulted traditional forms of authority. The Church felt this particularly deeply. It had always claimed for itself a primary responsibility for articulating the nation's moral values. Indeed, relative to the Churches of other Catholic societies, it had been immensely successful in establishing its cultural domination. Its response in the 1950s, as explained above, was unequivocally to support restoration of oligarchical democracy, with a developmentalist project, while also involving itself more directly and actively in social change. This response has been the same kind of failure in moral terms that oligarchical democracy has been in political.

Like the regime, the Church has survived, but it has been unable, in any perceptible way, to form a national conscience. It has not succeeded in creating a moral critique which effectively relates its transcendental truths to the problems of Colombian society.

The reason for this seems rooted in the tension between the two elements of its institutional response in the 1950s. As suggested by the language of the 1957 plebiscite, it deeply desired to remain a state church, which "the public powers" would "protect" and "cause . . . to be respected." As such its mission would be associated with public authority and a political regime. At the same time, it asserted a new social mission. It took initiatives which suggested its autonomy and an independent vision which might be critical of the state, since its purposes were different.

For 20 years there have been forces in the Church that believed that the first of these goals contradicted the second. They have believed that to carry out its direct moral responsibility to society, the Church had to offer a moral analysis which included the consequences of government actions--and inaction. That required distance from the regime, not identification with it. Camilo Torres, the Golconda group, the Priests for Latin America (SAL) are only the best known names attached to a much broader (and continuing) phenomenon.<sup>48</sup> It is not surprising that this moral critique began with those in the Church who were meant to manage its "opening to the world." When the Church accepted during the 1950s that society's violent change demanded new responses from it, it opened a process which could not simply come

to rest with a "papist" state church. If the Violence had not been caused just by the Liberals and communists, or even by traditional Liberal-Conservative partisanship, then the National Front regime was not a sufficient solution. If the causes of the Violence were to be found in the structures of Colombian society itself, then the effectiveness of measures to change those structures was a central concern.

Camilo Torres, who had written on la Violencia as a sociologist, most vividly made the critique that others would continue in the Church.<sup>49</sup> The destructiveness of the Violence implied a moral crisis of the same magnitude. Its sociological and moral roots were the same--the poverty and powerlessness in which most of Colombia's people lived. The "counter-violence" they might use to secure better lives for themselves should not be confused with the violence inherent in their situation. In any case, they had a right to greater power than was offered them by oligarchical democracy, power which at the same time was the only effective way to change the structures of society. The Church--Christians--should be allied with their struggle. The means chosen by these Liberationists have varied. A few (including Torres himself) joined the guerrillas attempting to overthrow the whole political system. Most others have involved themselves in other forms of popular organizations--labor unions, peasant groups, political movements. All of them began from within the social mission the Church embraced in the 1950s; all of them attempted to reinterpret Catholic teachings to respond to the social crisis. And all of them expressed a fundamentally democratizing impulse.

Colombia's Hierarchy has totally resisted this impulse, at cost, I believe, both to the Church and to the country's democracy. Liberationist Catholics, who have had major impact on the Church in many countries of Latin America, have in Colombia been almost totally marginalized. With virtually unbroken consensus, the Hierarchy has considered them "rebels" against ecclesiastical authority, to be punished and if necessary expelled.<sup>50</sup> (The only two bishops publicly more sympathetic during this period died in the early 1970s and were not replaced with men of similar inclinations). In the name of avoiding "politics", the Hierarchy has shrunk from any form of popular organization. They have attempted to draw a clear, tight line around the social activities of "the Church", by which they mean those linked to ecclesiastical structures. The organizational modernization begun in the 1950s has been used increasingly to assert this centralized institutional control.<sup>51</sup> In moments of popular mobilization and stress for the regime--as with the labor unrest in the mid-1970s and the guerrilla resurgence around 1980--the Hierarchy has defined the issues, with the regime, as authority and security rather than social justice and democracy.

The cost for the Church has been an obvious irrelevance in the midst of the country's felt moral crisis. It was precisely intimations of such irrelevance in the Violence of the 1950s that stimulated the Church to embrace a new social mission. It was galling then to feel itself so powerless in the midst of the people it had "civilized" for over 400 years. It should be, in one way, even more so now, after more than a quarter century of

conscious effort. The decline of the authority of the regime has not led, in contrast to other countries in Latin America, to an increase in the moral authority of the Church. On the contrary, the Church, by identifying so closely with the regime, has shared in its decline.

This result helps explain both why Colombia's limited redemocratization has survived and why it has not become more fully democratic. During the time the National Front was created--a period of regime crisis--the Church with impressive consensus<sup>52</sup> helped to legitimate oligarchical democracy. Since that time, it has acted to curb dissident elements within itself who offered a moral critique of that regime and its fruits. Such a critique could have had significant impact in a society such as Colombia, with a culture in which the Church long had a particularly central position. A split within it--a substantial group associating itself with a broader democratizing movement--could have had a delegitimizing effect on the regime. The Hierarchy believed that. They saw in popular social organization the dangers of the Violence, of social revolution or merely purposeless suffering--rather than its potentialities for achieving a more just society and democratic politics.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. See Jonathan Hartlyn, "Military Governments and the Transition to Civilian Rule: The Colombian Experience of 1957-58," JOURNAL OF INTER-AMERICAN STUDIES AND WORLD AFFAIRS 26/2 (May 1984) 245-81; Karen L. Remmer, "Redemocratization in Latin America: The Impact of Authoritarian Rule," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Rocky Mountain Council on Latin American Studies, Tucson, Arizona, February 1984; and Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, "Political Life After Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Transitions," ms. 1984.
2. See Alexander Wilde, LA QUIEBRA DE LA DEMOCRACIA EN COLOMBIA: CONVERSACIONES DE CABALLEROS (Bogotá: Ediciones Tercer Mundo, 1982), esp. pp. 107-127.
3. See particularly O'Donnell and Schmitter, ibid., and their forthcoming edited volume (with Laurence Whitehead), TRANSITIONS FROM AUTHORITARIAN RULE: SOUTHERN EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA; John Herz, ed., FROM DICTATORSHIP TO DEMOCRACY (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1982); and Scott Mainwaring and Eduardo Viola, "Transitions to Democracy in Brazil and Argentina," ms. 1984.
4. Bruce Bagley gives a good overview of the larger literature in "The National Front and Beyond," paper presented at the meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Mexico City, October 1983. See also Edward C. Epstein, "The Restoration of Regime Legitimacy in Colombia: The Belisario Betancur Administration," paper presented at the meeting of

the Rocky Mountain Council on Latin America Studies, Tucson, Arizona, February 1984, and Enrique Valencia, "Colombia: Una Democracia Formal Autoritaria," in CIDE: ESTADOS UNIDOS, PERSPECTIVA LATINOAMERICANA, No. 6, 1979 (Mexico).

5. See R. Albert Berry, Ronald Hellman, and Mauricio Solaún, eds. POLITICS OF COMPROMISE: COALITION GOVERNMENT IN COLOMBIA (New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Books, 1980); Robert H. Dix, COLOMBIA: THE POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF CHANGE (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967); and John D. Martz, COLOMBIA: A CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL SURVEY (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1962). Fernando Cepeda provides a characteristically subtle analysis of a dimension often ignored in "La Influencia de la Agencias Internacionales en el Proceso de Desarrollo de Colombia, 1950-1974," ESTUDIOS INTERNACIONALES (Julio-Sept. 1978), 57-75. A provocative recent essay attempting to reinterpret the period is Carlos H. Urán, ROJAS Y LA MANIPULACIÓN DEL PODER (Bogotá: Carlos Valencia Editores, 1983).
6. See Gustavo Gallón Giraldo, QUINCE AÑOS DE ESTADO DE SITIO EN COLOMBIA, 1958-1978 (Bogotá: Ed. América, 1979) and LA REPÚBLICA DE LAS ARMAS, (Bogotá: CINEP Controversia No. 109-110, 1983). For relevant documents, see Luis Villar Borda, ed. OPOSICIÓN, INSURGENCIA Y AMNESTÍA (Bogotá: Editorial Dintel, 1982). A journalistic version of the argument is Alexander Wilde, "Is Colombia on the Brink of Anything?" WORLDVIEW 23/6 (June 1980).
7. The Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (CINEP),

associated with Liberationist Catholic perspectives, has many publications related to this theme, particularly in its "Controversia" series, now numbering more than 100 titles.

Mario Latorre Rueda, *POLÍTICA Y ELECCIONES* (Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, 1980), presents an incisive political science analysis.

8. "Christendom," a term applied originally simply to "the Church," or to that part of the earth converted to Christianity, came to imply a traditional conception of Catholicism. It emphasized the sacramental, hierarchical, and spiritual elements of Christianity and envisioned the institutional Church in an ideal, timeless tutelary role toward all of society, in union with the public authority of the state, creating a "Christian civilization." Particularly since the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), both Christendom and modern efforts to adapt it ("Neochristendom") have been criticized as antithetical to the Church's mission of liberation. See Pablo Richard, *MORT DES CHRETIENES ET NAISSANCE DE L'EGLISE* (Paris: Centre Lebreton, Série Amérique Latine No. 3, 1978). The Colombian Church has maintained more elements of a Christendom Catholicism than any other in Latin America. See the chapters on the national period by Fernan González and by Rodolfo de Roux in *HISTORIA GENERAL DE LA IGLESIA EN AMÉRICA LATINA*, Vol. VII: COLOMBIA Y VENEZUELA, Comisión de Estudios de Historia de la Iglesia en América Latina (Salamanca, Spain: Ediciones Sígueme, 1981) and also Luis Alberto Alfonso, *DOMINACION RELIGIOSA Y HEGEMONÍA POLÍTICA* (Bogotá: Punta de Lanza, 1978).



9. The idea that the Church, in its pastoral social mission, can (and should) make social problems into public issues on the political "agenda" is developed in Daniel Levine and Alexander Wilde, "The Catholic Church, 'Politics,' and Violence: The Colombian Case," THE REVIEW OF POLITICS 39/2 (April 1977), especially pp. 243-49.
10. The most comprehensive study of la Violencia is Paul Oquist, VIOLENCE, CONFLICT, AND POLITICS IN COLOMBIA (New York: Academic Press, 1980), an impressive work based both upon primary research and careful re-analysis of existing studies.
11. Laureano Gómez, in poor health soon after assuming the presidency in 1951, ceded the formal office to his hand-picked designate, Roberto Urdaneta Arbeláez, for most of his period of government. Although he only reassumed the title shortly before his overthrow by Rojas Pinilla in 1953, he is considered to have controlled basic policy throughout the period.
12. See Hartlyn, especially pp. 257-67.
13. A conservative view from within the Church itself is given by Dr. Humberto Bronx [Fr. Jaime Serna Gómez] in HISTORIA MODERNA DE LA IGLESIA COLOMBIANA (Medellín: Editorial Argemiro Salazar, 2nd ed., no date [1981?], pp. 391 ff., passim. Valuable documentation is provided by Hernando Navia Varón, YO VÍ CERRAR EL CONGRESO (Popayán: Universidad del Cauca, 1960).
14. Rodolfo Ramón de Roux analyzes the Church's reactions in UNA

IGLESIA EN ESTADO DE ALERTA (Bogotá: Servicio Colombiano de Comunicación Social, 1983). More recent general studies of the bogotazo include Eduardo Santa, QUE PASÓ EL 9 DE ABRIL? (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo, 1982); Gonzalo Sánchez G., LOS DÍAS DE LA REVOLUCIÓN (Bogotá: Centro Cultural Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, 1983); and Carlos Eduardo Jaramillo, IBAGUÉ: CONFLICTOS POLÍTICOS DE 1930 AL 9 DE ABRIL (Bogotá: Centro Cultural Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, 1983).

15. See, for example, Antonio Granados, "La Propaganda Protestante y la Política de Buena Vecindad del Presidente Roosevelt," REVISTA JAVERIANA 22 (July 1944), 3-6, which argues that Jewish financiers are behind the Protestant missions to Colombia. See also James E. Goff, THE PERSECUTION OF PROTESTANT CHRISTIANS IN COLOMBIA, 1948-1958 (Cuernavaca, Mexico: CIDOC, Sondeos, No. 23, 1968), 9/20-9/21.
16. J. Iván Cadavid G. directly links the various oppressors in LOS FUEROS DE LA IGLESIA ANTE EL LIBERALISMO Y EL CONSERVATISMO EN COLOMBIA (Medellín: Editorial Bedout, 1955), pp. 93-114. The Church expended enormous energies in the 1940s fighting the handful of Protestant missionaries that came to Colombia. The depth of its hostility should be understood in terms of the Church's traditional territorial identity. Colombia was a "Catholic country" (even if Colombian Catholics were not acting very much like Christians), and the Church gloried in its identification with Colombian culture. "To attack the Catholic Church by means of the press, as Protestant booklets and publications

do, is to attack the social order in one of its essential elements, therefore, by the very letter of the Constitution such propaganda must be suppressed" (Uldarico Urrutia, S. J., "Los Protestantes ante la Constitución," 23 REV. JAV. [February 1945], p. 19, emphasis in original, quoted by Goff, PERSECUTION, 9/23). In the words of an anti-Protestant song taught to children: "Hundreds of pastors/Invade our country now,/They are devouring wolves/That come to us from abroad" (Abel Sierra Izquierdo, "La Educación Religiosa en Colombia" [Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1965--thesis], p. 115; and Goff, PERSECUTION, 10/22-10/23). Goff, ibid., though highly polemical, provides extensive documentation concerning the position of the Protestant community in Colombia, especially in the 1940s and '50s. The official reply of the Catholic Church is Eduardo Ospina, S.J., THE PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS IN COLOMBIA (Bogotá: National Press, 1954), translation from the original Spanish intended to refute pro-Protestant positions disseminated in the English-speaking world.

17. COLOMBIA EN LA ENCRUCIJADA (Bogotá: Biblioteca Popular de Cultura Colombiana, Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 1951).
18. Quoted by José María Nieto Rojas, LA BATALLA CONTRA EL COMUNISMO EN COLOMBIA (Bogotá: Empresa Nacional de Publicaciones, 1956), p. 285. Nieto Rojas provides a convenient collection of episcopal pastoral letters at the time of the 1949 elections, "Los Prelados Fijan los Deberes de los Católicos contra el Comunismo en las Luchas Electorales,"

Nieto Rojas, *ibid.*, pp. 277-93. It should be recognized, however, that Nieto Rojas has edited the messages for his own Conservative, anti-Communist purposes. See also "Los Obispos Colombianos Hablan sobre Elecciones: Claras Instrucciones se Imparten a los Católicos," EL COLOMBIANO (Medellín), June 4, 1949, cited by Goff, PERSECUTION, 2/48; and Martz, COLOMBIA, p. 84.

19. See Goff, PERSECUTION, 2/47, and Martz, COLOMBIA, p. 92. Builes' relationship with Rojas Pinilla is discussed in the two-volume biography of the prelate by Miguel Zapata Restrepo, LA MITRA AZUL (Medellín: Editorial Beta, 1973) and EL OBISPO TROPEZÓ TRES VECES (Medellín: Editorial Bedout, 1978).
20. See, for example, Navia Varón, YO VÍ CERRAR, pp. 586-604, where he compares the Liberal accommodation of the 1950s with their anticlerical reformism of the 1930s.
21. Gómez' militant lay Catholicism, which always associated the Church with the Conservative party (or at least his faction of it), brought him into repeated conflict with the Hierarchy through his entire political career. Documentation is provided in the book published by the Rojas government meant to show by contrast the general's orthodoxy and obedience, DOS ACTITUDES FRENTE A LA JERARQUÍA (Bogotá: Empresa Nacional de Publicaciones, 1956). See also Bronx, HISTORIA MODERNA, *passim*,<sup>esp.</sup> pp. 408-9.
22. See the documents in Navia Varón, YO VÍ CERRAR, pp. 263, 285-87; the view of Archbishop (and by then Cardinal) Luque, quoted by Pedronel Giraldo Londoño, DON FERNANDO (Medellín:

Editorial Granamérica, 1963), p. 415; and the opinion of Félix Restrepo, S. J. in Rojas Pinilla and Gómez, DOS ACTITUDES, p. 37. See also argument of the Bishop of Tunja, ibid., pp. 29-30, that all governments with which Colombia had diplomatic relations had recognized the new regime, including the Vatican.

23. See Gómez in Rojas Pinilla and Gómez, DOS ACTITUDES, pp. 21-28, 33-36, 49-55.
24. "Pastoral Instruction of the Colombian Episcopate . . . on Episcopal Authority," September 1954, in CONFERENCIAS EPISCOPALES DE COLOMBIA, Vol. II: 1954-1960 (Bogotá: Editorial El Catolicismo, 1962), pp. 24-24, 33, emphasis in original.
25. Alfonso María Pinilla Cote, EL CATOLICISMO, March 1956, included in Rojas Pinilla and Gómez, DOS ACTITUDES, pp. 55-64, especially 58, 61, emphasis in original. A supporting opinion came from the enthusiastic rojista and Catholic lay intellectual, Gonzalo Canal Ramírez, in EL ESTADO CRISTIANO Y BOLIVARIANO DEL 13 DE JUNIO (Bogotá: Editorial Antares, 1955). Canal condemned the involvement of the clergy in the party politics, thereby giving the parties the opportunity:

to exploit religious sentiment as an electoral arm, an abominable custom, a fact that survived until recently among us and was an unsettling influence upon the only unity that we have ever achieved perfectly in Colombia, religious unity. We would not have seen, as we did until recently, a political leader, a party, a government believe itself the only representative of Christ in the nation, with the right to judge the faith and dogma of the citizens, disregarding at times the ecclesiastical Hierarchy itself (ibid., pp. 158-59).

He goes on to criticize the politicized priest:

The Cura Carlista, the one that confounds the cassock with the guerrera and the cross with the pistol, does not fit in any ecclesiastical canon. He is a confused person with an ambiguous conscience, mistaken vocation, and frustrated mission, whose action, in confounding the religious with the profane, harms the profane and corrupts the religious (ibid., p. 160).

The theme obviously fascinated Canal Ramírez. He later wrote a novel about Father Camilo Torres, NICODEMUS (Bogotá: Ed. Canal Ramírez, 1968) which largely concerned the priest's life after joining the guerrillas.

26. The bishops' collective statements of 1954 and 1955 on unions and the C.N.T. in particular are found in CONFERENCIAS EPISCOPALES, II, pp. 34-38, 44-45, and 73-85. On student activities, see EL TIEMPO (Bogotá), June 9-14, 1954.
27. Quoted in REV. JAV. 46 (Julio-Nov. 1956), p. (90).
28. See REV. JAV. 47 (Mayo 1957), p. (31) and, with a defense of the government couched both in theological and constitutional terms, in Navia Varón, YO VÍ CERRAR, pp. 386-97.
29. Zapata Restrepo, EL OBISPO, pp. 214-16; REV. JAV. 47 (Mayo 1957), p. (39).
30. CONSTITUCIÓN POLÍTICA DE LA REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA, 16th ed. (Bogotá: Editorial Voluntad, Colección "Codex Brevis," 1967), p. 133.
31. Collective Pastoral Letter, May 6, 1948, CONFERENCIAS EPISCOPALES, Vol. I: 1908-1953 (Bogotá: Editorial El Catolicismo, 1956), 464-65. See the analysis of the pastoral letter by De Roux, UNA IGLESIA. For a general catalogue of the anticlerical horrors, see Francisco José González, S. J., "Persecución Religiosa en Colombia en el Golpe Terrorista del

- 9 de Abril de 1948," REV. JAV. 29 (Set. 1948), 180-88.
32. CONFERENCIAS EPISCOPALES, I, p. 465; and Pius XII, in his address to the Colombian Catholic Congress of Christ the King, quoted by Goff, PERSECUTION, p. 9/29.
33. Cited by Gilberto Zapata Isaza, PATRICIOS O ASESINOS? (Medellín: Editorial Ital, 1969), p. 263.
34. CONFERENCIAS EPISCOPALES, I, p. 492.
35. Ibid. pp. 501, 502-3.
36. Bronx, HISTORIA MODERNA, pp. 390-91.
37. Nieto Rojas, LA BATALLA, pp. 272-74.
38. Representative statements are their collective messages on charity (1958), the social question (1958 and 1960), and agrarian reform (1960), CONFERENCIA EPISCOPALES, II, pp. 133-142, 157-178, 191-207. A useful overview of programs is provided by Gustavo Jiménez Cadena, S. J., SACERDOTE Y CAMBIO SOCIAL (Bogotá: Ediciones Tercer Mundo/CIAS, 1967). The earlier background is insightfully analyzed by Ana María Bidegain de Ufan, LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE MOVIMIENTOS DE JUVENTUD DE ACCIÓN CATÓLICA EN AMÉRICA LATINA: LOS CASOS DE LOS OBREROS Y UNIVERSITARIOS EN BRASIL Y EN COLOMBIA ENTRE 1930-1955 (Louvain, Belgium: Université Catholique de Louvain, doctoral diss., 1979).
39. An important new study of rural violence under the National Front, after the end of La Violencia per se, is Gonzalo Sanchez and Donny Meertens, BANDOLEROS, GAMONALES, Y CAMPESINOS (Bogotá: El Áncora, 1983).

40. Samuel Huntington synthesizes the conservative arguments for agrarian reform in *POLITICAL ORDER IN CHANGING SOCIETIES* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), especially pp. 374-96.
41. See E. Eugene Havens, Williams L. Flinn, and Susana Lastarriá-Cornhill, "Agrarian Reform and the National Front: A Class Analysis," and Bruce Bagley and Matthew Edel, "Popular Mobilization Programs of the National Front: Cooptation and Radicalization," in Berry, *et al.* *POLITICS OF COMPROMISE*, pp. 341-379 and 257-284. See also Bagley, "The State and the Peasantry in Contemporary Colombia," paper presented at the meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, D.C., March 1982; Ernest A. Duff, *AGRARIAN REFORM IN COLOMBIA* (New York: Praeger, 1968); and *DEBATE AGRARIO: DOCUMENTOS* (Bogotá: Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística, 1971).
42. See, among other works, Gary Hoskin, "The Colombian Political Party System: Electoral Domination and System Instability," paper presented to the U.S. State Department Conference on Colombia, Washington, D.C. November 1981; Dora Rothlisberger and Paul Oquist, "Algunos Aspectos de la Abstención Electoral," *BOLETÍN MENSUAL DE ESTADÍSTICA*, Nos. 268-69 (Nov.-Dic. 1973) [Bogotá], pp. 80-97; and the nuanced analysis of Latorre Rueda, *POLÍTICA Y ELECCIONES*.
43. See *INFORME DE UNA MISIÓN DE AMNISTÍA INTERNACIONAL A LA REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA* (London: Amnistía Internacional, 1980) and *INFORME SOBRE LA SITUACIÓN DE LOS DERECHOS HUMANOS EN LA REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA* (Washington, D.C.: Comisión



Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Organizacion de los Estados Americanos, 1981).

44. See Gallón Giraldo, QUINCE AÑOS, for a discussion of the various emergency measures which have restricted political life.
45. See Francisco Leal Buitrago, "Las Relaciones Políticas de la Institución Militar," paper presented to the meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Mexico City, September 1983; Gonzalo Bermúdez Rossi, EL PODER MILITAR EN COLOMBIA (Bogotá: Ediciones Expresión, 1982); Daniel L. Premo, "The Colombian Armed Forces in Search of a Mission," NEW MILITARY POLITICS IN LATIN AMERICA, ed. Robert Wesson (New York: Praeger, 1982), pp. 151-73; and Gallón Giraldo, LA REPÚBLICA.
46. Epstein, "The Restoration of Regime Legitimacy," has a thoughtful discussion of this question. Two other very good analyses which situate the Betancur government within the larger direction of the country are Daniel Pécaut, "Colombie: Une Démocratie a la Croisée des Chemins," PROBLÈMES D'AMÉRIQUE LATINE, No. 67 (1983), 3-33; and Álvaro Camacho, Alberto Corchuelo, Jorge Orlando Melo, and José María Rojas Guerra, "Colombia en los 80: Hacia una Caracterización de la Coyuntura Histórica en Colombia," BOLETÍN DE COYUNTURA SOCIO-ECONÓMICA, No. 4 (Marzo 1981), 4-43 [CIDSE, Universidad del Valle, Cali].
47. For some of the evidence, see the chapters by Bagley and Edel, A. Eugene Havens et al., and R. Albert Berry, "The National Front and Colombia's Economic Development," (pp.

287-325), in Berry, et al. POLITICS OF COMPROMISE. Miguel Urrutia has argued that income distribution has not worsened, most recently in WINNERS AND LOSERS IN COLOMBIA'S RECENT GROWTH EXPERIENCE (Bogotá: FEDESARROLLO, 1981). Cf. the more mixed evidence in the earlier INCOME DISTRIBUTION IN COLOMBIA by Miguel Urrutia and Albert Berry, (New Haven: Yale University, 1976). See also Marcelo Selowsky, WHO BENEFITS FROM GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE? A CASE STUDY OF COLOMBIA (New York: Oxford University Press/World Bank, 1979).

48. See Alexander Wilde, "The Contemporary Church: The Political and the Pastoral," in Berry et al. POLITICS OF COMPROMISE, pp. 207-236, and the sources listed therein. More recent sources include LA IGLESIA EN CONFLICTO? (Bogotá: CINEP, Controversia No. 44, 1976); S.A.L., UN COMPROMISO SACERDOTAL EN LA LUCHA DE CLASES; DOCUMENTOS 1972-1978 (Bogotá: no publisher, 1978); Alfonso, DOMINACIÓN RELIGIOSA; "Colombie: Dix Ans de Présence Chrétienne dans la Société: Participation et Absence de l'Eglise dans les Luites Populaires (1968-1977)," (Paris: DIAL, No. 460, 6 juillet 1978); and [Andrés Mendoza], LA IGLESIA EN COLOMBIA, (Brussels, Informes de Pro Mundi Vita, América Latina, No. 20, 1980).
49. What Torres did in his life was at least as important as what he said in his writings (the "praxis" of liberationist Catholics that would come later). For sources on Torres, see Wilde, "The Contemporary Church."

50. The sources in footnotes 45 provide documentation of the most visible parts of this phenomenon.
51. See Wilde, "The Contemporary Church," pp. 220-26, and Daniel H. Levine, RELIGION AND POLITICS IN LATIN AMERICA (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 213-254.
52. The only visible dissenter to the National Front among the bishops was the redoubtable Miguel Ángel Builes, of Santa Rosa de Osos. See Zapata Restrepo, EL OBISPO, pp. 45-72. The Hierarchy closed ranks against him then, rejecting his traditional anti-Liberal views in favor of oligarchical bipartisanship. Later through the National Front they maintained remarkable public unity behind that commitment, now against dissenters from the left.

