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9. ABSTRACT

The massive population shift from rural to urban areas has been one of the most important social- and demographic-change processes in most Latin American countries during the past quarter-century. Increased rates of urbanization were general throughout the already much more urbanized than Africa or Asia and somewhat more so than southern Europe, surpassed all other regions in the rate of growth of its urban population.

This paper focuses on the political attitudes and behavior of migrants residing in squatter settlements as well as other types of predominantly low-income residential zones in Latin American cities. The discussion is limited necessarily to low-income migrants, since data on the more economically advantaged sectors of the newly urbanized population are virtually nonexistent.

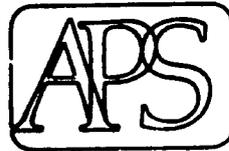
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**The Cityward Movement:
Some Political Implications**

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The Cityward Movement: Some Political Implications

WAYNE A. CORNELIUS

The massive population shift from rural to urban areas has been one of the most important social- and demographic-change processes in most Latin American countries during the past quarter-century. Increased rates of urbanization were general throughout the developing world during this period, but Latin America, which was already much more urbanized than Africa or Asia and somewhat more so than southern Europe, surpassed all other regions in the rate of growth of its urban population. During the 1940-60 period, the population in localities of 20,000 or more inhabitants in Latin America increased at an annual rate of about 5 percent, doubling in about fifteen years, a rate only occasionally realized for short periods in advanced Western nations at a much later stage of economic development. In the same period, cities of 100,000 or over grew at an annual rate of 11 percent, and growth rates of the largest metropolitan areas—most of them capital cities—were even higher. Although some projections indicate a slight decline in the region's rate of urbanization over the 1960-80 period to about 4.4 percent a year, it is expected that by 1980 some 60 percent of the Latin American population will be living in urban areas.¹

Demographers have estimated that at least one-half of recent urban

¹ John Miller and Ralph A. Gakenheimer, eds., *Latin American Urban Policies and the Social Sciences* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1971), pp. 9-10; and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Development Association, *Urbanization Sector Working Paper* (Washington, D.C., April 1972), annex I, p. 2.

growth in the region is attributable to rural-urban migration. What conditions have given rise to the greatly increased mobility of the Latin American population in general, and its growing concentration in large metropolitan areas? Permanent, long-distance internal migration in most countries of the region—with the conspicuous exception of Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay—has been overwhelmingly a phenomenon of the post-1940 period. This population movement has been clearly related to economic growth, reflected particularly in highly expansive occupational structures in the largest “primate” cities. Thus many left the countryside in response to greater occupational opportunities in the cities, as well as deteriorating living conditions and population pressure on rural land. It is not surprising to find that most internal migration in the Latin American countries with the highest rates of urban growth in recent decades has originated in economically depressed agricultural regions where population pressure has been most severe and where the overall level of living has been lowest. The rural exodus has also been accelerated by the rapidly widening gap between rural and urban income, as well as increased access to transportation and information about urban occupational opportunities and other urban attractions.

One of the most significant aspects of recent urban growth in Latin America, as in other parts of the developing world, has been the proliferation of squatter settlements on the periphery of most large cities. The growth of such settlements in many cities has been estimated at between 15 and 20 percent a year, and a doubling of the population in such areas within the next four to six years is in prospect. The population residing in “uncontrolled” settlement zones already accounts for a third or more of the total population in many cities, and it is estimated that by the end of this century the squatter population of Latin American cities will reach between 100 and 150 million.³ In many countries these peripheral settlements, usually formed through illegal land invasions, have been the most important receiving areas for migrants from the countryside over the past two decades. The explosive growth of such settlements reflects the acute shortage of conventional low-income housing units in most Latin American cities, as well as conditions of physical deterioration and extreme overcrowd-

³ Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo, *Vivienda y desarrollo urbano integrado: perspectiva en América Latina*, p. 19, cited by William L. Flinn and James W. Converse, “Eight Assumptions Concerning Rural-Urban Migration in Colombia,” *Land Economics*, 46 (November 1970), 456.

ing in central-city slum zones which make them less attractive as residential environments for both incoming migrants and native-born city dwellers. Perhaps an even more important factor in the growth of squatter settlements is the increasing awareness among low-income urban dwellers of the very real advantages and opportunities afforded by residence in such areas, most importantly the freedom from rent and the opportunities for land and home ownership.

This paper focuses on the political attitudes and behavior of migrants residing in squatter settlements as well as other types of predominantly low-income residential zones in Latin American cities. The discussion is limited necessarily to low-income migrants, since data on the more economically advantaged sectors of the newly urbanized population are virtually nonexistent.

Political Belief Systems of Migrants

The political attitudes and behavior of low-income people entering the urban environment have been the subject of a great deal of speculation by social scientists, journalists, and government decision makers in both the United States and Latin America. It has been customary to predict that the movement of huge numbers of largely unschooled, occupationally unskilled migrants into Latin American urban areas where population growth has not been accompanied by a proportional growth of labor-absorptive industry would have a radicalizing, politically destabilizing impact upon the affected areas. Migrants entering urban centers were assumed to experience severe material deprivation and frustration of mobility expectations as well as personal and social disorganization resulting from the migratory experience. These factors would lead them to become alienated from the existing sociopolitical order and make them "available" for recruitment into radical political movements and various forms of disruptive activity.

In recent years a large body of empirical evidence has been compiled to demonstrate that such predictions were largely unfounded, at least from a short-term perspective.³ Most of this evidence suggests that

³ Reviews of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature are provided in Wayne A. Cornelius, "The Political Sociology of Cityward Migration in Latin America: Toward Empirical Theory," in *Latin American Urban Research*, Francine F. Rabinovitz and Felicity M. Trueblood, eds. (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1971), 1:95-147; and Joan M. Nelson, *Migrants, Urban Poverty, and Instability in Developing Nations* (Cambridge: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1969).

the involvement of migrants, particularly those who are most materially disadvantaged, in all forms of collective violence and overt political protest has been very low. Protest movements that are particularly threatening to the social, economic, or political status quo have often failed spectacularly to gain widespread support among this sector of the population. Nor is there any firm evidence to suggest that the incidence of voting for opposition political parties in urban centers has been significantly increased as a result of in-migration. In some countries with one-party-dominant political systems, such as Mexico, an extremely high rate of urbanization has been accompanied by an *increased* dominance of the incumbent regime at the polls.⁴

It is true that urban centers, particularly the capital cities, have exhibited significantly higher levels of opposition support than their rural hinterlands. There has been a "strong tendency for dominant parties, regardless of their ideology or the type of system in which they operate, to experience substantial falloff in their core area vote. . . . The core area opposition tendency affects liberal, reform regimes as often as conservative, traditional ones."⁵ It is far more plausible to attribute this phenomenon to the higher salience of opposition-party activity in the largest cities, the large concentration of individuals with higher levels of education in such urban centers, as well as to historical antecedents and the nature of urban political culture than to the influx of migrants supposedly more responsive to the appeals of antiestablishment candidates, particularly those of the radical left. In fact, most available survey data indicate a slightly lower incidence of opposition voting among migrants than among the native-born urban population. In those few cases where disproportionate migrant support for opposition candidates has been indicated, such as the case of the 1970 elections in Colombia, where newly urbanized populations appeared to provide much of the support for former dictator Rojas Pinilla and his ANAPO party, the success of such candidates can be attributed primarily to the effectiveness of their campaign organization and their success in identifying themselves most directly with issues of high salience to low-income urban populations.

In ideological terms, migrants have tended toward political conservatism, in the sense of not favoring drastic alterations in the socio-

⁴ See Barry Ames, "Bases of Support for Mexico's Dominant Party," *American Political Science Review*, 64 (March 1970).

⁵ Ronald H. McDonald, *Party Systems and Elections in Latin America* (Chicago: Markham Publishing Co., 1971), p. 302.

political status quo. William Mangin is generally accurate in his contention that "a paternalistic ideology, combined with a 'don't let them take it away' slogan, would be more appealing among urban squatters than a revolutionary 'let's rise and kill the oligarchy' approach."⁶ The migrant's conservatism, as manifested in a fear of the consequences of sweeping social and political change, appears to be rooted in a deeply felt need to preserve the modest but nonetheless significant gains in income level, living conditions, and property accumulation (particularly in the form of a homesite on the urban periphery) which he has achieved. It is also conditioned by the migrant's perception of the opportunity structure in urban areas as being relatively open, and by a continued belief in the potential for future social and economic betterment for himself and particularly for his children within the ongoing system.

Migrants in general have exhibited a very low threshold of tolerance for the risks and uncertainties of antisystem political action. Participation in a land invasion is usually the only instance in which this low level of tolerance for political risk-taking does not serve as an effective deterrent to direct action, and since such invasions are often carried out with the covert support of politicians and government officials, it is doubtful that they are construed by the participants as antisystem activity.⁷ Of course, this does not mean that migrants may not seek to manipulate the political system in nominally unconventional ways, e.g., by attempting to circumvent regular bureaucratic processes of resource allocation by entering into patron-client relationships with ambitious politicians or bureaucrats seeking a personal support base in low-income areas. This is done with considerable frequency.⁸ The migrant's strong aversion to violent or otherwise disruptive, protest-oriented forms of political involvement is often a reflection of his perceptions of what kinds of political strategies and activities are most instrumental in gaining tangible benefits for himself and his community. He perceives little or nothing to be gained by overtly violating the fundamental rules of the game, and

⁶William P. Mangin, "Latin American Squatter Settlements: A Problem and a Solution," *Latin American Research Review*, 2 (1967), 83.

⁷On official involvement in Peruvian land invasions, see David Collier, "The Politics of Cooptation in Peruvian Squatter Settlements" (Paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, September 1971).

⁸E.g., Elizabeth R. Leeds, "Games Favelas Play" (Paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Diego, 1970).

perhaps a great deal to lose by doing so. Given the constraints upon low-income political participation and the nature of elite attitudes toward such participation in a majority of Latin American countries, such perceptions are accurate more often than not.

Contrary to popular assumptions, migrants appear to have relatively low aspirations and expectations regarding their own social and economic mobility upon arriving in the city, and consequently experience little frustration when aspirations for personal mobility are not realized. But even a high level of personal frustration among migrants is not strongly associated with negative attitudes toward the political system, much less with a propensity for radical political activity. The evidence emerging from a number of recent surveys suggests that material deprivation and low rates of socioeconomic mobility among this sector of the urban population must be interpreted within a particular kind of cognitive framework if feelings of relative deprivation and frustration with life situations are to be translated into ideological radicalism or nonsupportive attitudes toward the political system. This cognitive framework, which appears to have developed only among a small minority of migrants to the city, leads the individual to impute responsibility for his deprivation or frustrated expectations to the existing sociopolitical order rather than to fate, personal inadequacies, or other particular aspects of his life situation.

One investigator of political attitudes among Chilean squatters and slum dwellers has found that "the weakness of leftist radical tendencies in the urban lower-class periphery seems less a consequence of the absence of frustration" or material deprivation than of a strong tendency to avoid "imputation of responsibility for personal failures to the social order."⁹ Conversely, a tendency to interpret personal failures in structural terms, i.e., to blame them upon "social injustice, governmental neglect, class privileges, and selfishness of powerful groups," is significantly related to a predisposition toward leftist radicalism among such sectors of the population.¹⁰ Similarly, a study of migrants residing in six low-income areas of Mexico City indicates that the strongest predictor of low political-system support, political aliena-

⁹ Alejandro Portes, "Urbanization and Politics in Latin America," *Social Science Quarterly*, 52 (December 1971), 718.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 713; idem, "Political Primitivism, Differential Socialization, and Lower-Class Leftist Radicalism," *American Sociological Review*, 36 (October 1971), 820-35; and idem, "On the Logic of Post-Factum Explanations: The Hypothesis of Lower-Class Frustration as the Cause of Leftist Radicalism," *Social Forces*, 5 (September 1971), 26-44.

tion, and a predisposition toward unconventional political activity is an awareness of structural inequalities in the society and economy, i.e., inequalities in the distribution of wealth and other values among various sectors of the population. Absolute levels of material deprivation appear to be only weakly related to such political attitudes and predispositions.¹¹ The important question thus becomes, under what circumstances does such a tendency toward "structural blame" or sensitivity to social inequalities develop among newly urbanized sectors of the population? The evidence bearing upon this question is still fragmentary, but it suggests that the kind of cognitive framework under discussion is at least in part a product of socialization experiences deriving from contact with individuals and organizations within the migrant's community.

The Impact of Urban Residential Environments

Most of the field studies conducted in recent years in low-income areas of Latin American cities have revealed considerable differentiation among such areas in terms of political attitudes and behavior, as well as a wide variety of attitudes and perceptions not directly related to the political process. Moreover, the immediate residential environment appears to have a very strong impact upon the processes of politicization and political-attitude formation among migrants entering the urban environment. A partial explanation for this is the relative importance of different agents of political socialization to which migrants are exposed. Large proportions of the migrant population are not employed in factories, offices, shops, or other kinds of stable, structured work environments involving nonsuperficial relationships with co-workers or supervisors. Nor are they likely to be members of labor unions or of political parties. Nor, since they have usually completed their formal education prior to migration, do they attend schools. Thus for perhaps a majority of migrants, the residential environment in which they find themselves upon arrival in the city and at different stages of the urban assimilation process constitutes their most important arena for political learning.

There is a great deal of evidence suggesting that the neighborhood or urban subcommunity rather than the entire city is the most meaning-

¹¹ Wayne A. Cornelius, "Political Behavior in Urban Mexico: The Politics of Migrant Assimilation in Low-Income Urban Environments," (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1972).

ful unit for social and political interaction for cityward migrants. Such communities, especially the squatter settlements, provide important behavioral and attitudinal norms for their inhabitants. Living conditions and land-tenure situations within them help to define the set of needs and problems perceived as salient by the residents. Community leaders and local improvement associations often exercise an extremely important role in structuring opportunities for participation in politically relevant activities, as well as in filtering individual perceptions of the political system and its relevance to the satisfaction of personal and community needs.¹²

Moreover, it is often in the context of the interaction of the urban *barrio* with political and governmental agencies that most of the actual political learning experience of its inhabitants is obtained. A great deal of collective bargaining and negotiation, often extending over a period of many years, go into obtaining official recognition of land-occupation rights and a full complement of basic urban services for such settlement zones. The outcomes of such political demand-making efforts are important determinants not only of levels and types of political participation but of a variety of evaluative orientations toward local and national governments.

The importance of the immediate urban residential environment in shaping political attitudes and behavior among cityward migrants can be illustrated by reference to the styles and referents of political demand-making engaged in by such people. It has often been found that migrants are more likely to engage in demand-making aimed at satisfying some collective need or problem affecting all members of their community than at satisfying some more particularistic need affecting only the individual or his immediate family. This preference for collectively initiated demand-making activity can be explained largely by the fact that there is organizational support for such activity, support usually provided by community-improvement associations. No such organizational resources can normally be drawn upon in attempting to extract particularistic rewards from the political system.

This concentration on demand-making activity aimed at obtaining collective goods is highly significant, because once migrant needs for the solution of basic community problems such as insecurity of land

¹²On the impact of community leadership and organization, see Wayne A. Cornelius, "A Structural Analysis of Urban Caciquismo in Mexico," in *The Caciques: Oligarchical Politics and Authoritarian Rule in the Luso-Hispanic World*, Ronald W. Dolkart and Robert Kern, eds., to be published by the University of New Mexico Press.

tenure or lack of water and sewage systems are satisfied, there is little inclination to engage in demand-making activity with a particularistic referent, and the organizational apparatus which has been created to negotiate with public agencies for solutions to community problems tends to atrophy or disintegrate within a short period. Thus the lowest levels of demand-making activity, as well as other forms of political participation, have frequently been encountered in those settlements which have achieved the highest security of land tenure and the highest levels of service provision and infrastructural development.¹³ There appears to be little or no spillover of demand-making activity aimed at community problem solving into other issue areas of broader social and economic importance, such as the provision of educational or occupational opportunities.¹⁴ This, of course, is of great comfort to incumbent regimes bent upon minimizing demands from mass publics for more costly benefits which might tend to burden the political system beyond its responsive capabilities.

The migrant's community is often the locus of certain kinds of politicizing experiences which have an important influence not only upon the mode of political participation in which he may engage but also upon the overall frequency of his participation. Among migrants to the Mexico City metropolitan area, for example, it was found that the single most important determinant of frequency of political participation is a general disposition to work collectively, i.e., a generalized preference for collectively rather than individually pursued solutions to salient personal and community-related problems.¹⁵ Goldrich's studies of peripheral-settlement residents in Santiago and Lima have also indicated a significant relationship between high politicization and a collective orientation toward problem solving.¹⁶

¹³ E.g., Daniel Goldrich, "Political Organization and the Politicization of the Poblador," *Comparative Political Studies*, 3 (July 1970), 189; and Wayne A. Cornelius, "The Process of Politicization among Cityward Migrants," in *Recent Research on Rural-Urban Migration*, Everett E. Hagen, ed., to be published by M.I.T. Press.

¹⁴ Goldrich, "Politicization of the Poblador," p. 192; and Cornelius, "Political Behavior in Urban Mexico," chap. 10.

¹⁵ Cornelius, "The Process of Politicization"; the second most important predictor of political-participation frequency was membership in politically relevant organizations, including community improvement associations and political parties. On the importance of organizational participation in the migrant politicization process, see Goldrich, "Politicization of the Poblador"; Raymond B. Pratt, "Community Political Organizations and Lower Class Politization in Two Latin American Cities," *Journal of Developing Areas*, 5 (July 1971), 523-42; and idem, "Parties, Neighborhood Associations, and the Politicization of the Urban Poor in Latin America," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, 15 (August 1971), 495-524.

¹⁶ Goldrich, "Politicization of the Poblador," pp. 189-91.

How does this crucially important orientation develop among cityward migrants? The absence of such an orientation, coupled with low levels of interpersonal trust, is frequently cited in studies of rural communities in Latin America to help explain low levels of political participation among peasants. Moreover, in the city, it is an orientation which seems to be internalized over a period of time. Migrants who have resided in urban areas longer are more likely to exhibit a disposition to work collectively than those who have arrived more recently. Thus it is largely a product of urban socialization experiences, particularly collective politicizing experiences such as land invasions, confrontations with the police, government agencies, and landowners, and other community-related experiences culminating in negative sanctions by authority figures. Exposure to such experiences, together with the perception of an external threat to the survival of one's community or to one's security of land tenure within it, appear to be necessary for the development of a strong collective orientation toward problem solving. Such experiences are also strongly related to the development of a high level of community solidarity and a generalized disposition to conform to community norms. The old social-psychological maxim of "out-group hostility, in-group solidarity" has considerable relevance here.¹⁷ It is also apparent that a collective problem-solving orientation enhances the level and quality of participation in community-based voluntary organizations and is directly related to higher levels of participation in self-help-oriented community activity and collective political demand-making efforts aimed at satisfying community needs.

The complex way in which the community context conditions migrant attitudes toward the political system is illustrated by another finding from the Mexico City study. It was found that the best predictor of the overall level of support for the political system among these migrants was access to basic urban services and improvements such as water and sewage systems, electricity, and paved streets.¹⁸ These are collective goods allocated unequally to communities or settlement zones within a city—indivisible, pork-barrel benefits in which individual migrants have or have not shared by virtue of their residence in specific communities. Yet the negative impact of service deprivation upon levels of political-system support and environmental satisfaction may be offset by a feeling that one's community is up-

¹⁷ Cf. Alejandro Portes, "The Urban Slum in Chile: Types and Correlates," *Land Economics*, 47 (August 1971), 243.

¹⁸ Cornelius, "Political Behavior in Urban Mexico," chap. 8.

wardly mobile in a developmental sense and likely to receive future urban improvements and other government benefits. Thus the same absolute level of service deprivation may result in significantly varying configurations of political attitudes in different communities, depending upon the residents' perceptions of rates of community development and prospects for improvements.¹⁹ Charles Stokes's frequently cited distinction between "slums of hope" and "slums of despair" is an important one still overlooked by many government policy makers and planners.²⁰ Perceptions of community development, in turn, seem to be strongly influenced by local-level leadership and the political history of the community, including its pattern of interaction with political and government agencies.

The community context may have the effect of either strengthening or weakening individual attitudes and behavioral predispositions toward politics. The overall frequency of political participation in a community and the frequency of certain attitudes and perceptions (leftist radicalism, civic-mindedness, perceptions of external development, threat to the community's survival or development, and perceptions of community solidarity) exert an *independent* influence upon the residents' political attitudes and behavior, once the age, socioeconomic status, length of urban residence, level of political interest and awareness, and other personal attributes of the residents are held constant.²¹ Thus migrants possessing the same individual attributes may participate politically and evaluate the political system differently, depending on the proportion of those within their immediate residential environment who are politically active or who share some perception or attitudinal trait relevant to the political process.

It cannot be overstressed that even within a city, there is considerable variation in the form and content of political learning experiences obtained from one settlement zone to another. Most studies completed thus far show that intracity differentiation in political socialization patterns was a major source of variance in individual political attitudes and behavior. And differences in the content and outcomes of migrant socialization experiences between central-city slums and peripheral squatter settlements may be even more profound than those

¹⁹ See David Collier, "Squatter-Settlement Formation and the Politics of Co-optation in Peru" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1971), pp. 123-24; and Portes, "The Urban Slum in Chile," pp. 237-39.

²⁰ See Charles J. Stokes, "A Theory of Slums," *Land Economics*, 38 (August 1962), 187-97.

encountered among settlements within the urban periphery. For example, migrants residing in peripheral settlements exhibit significantly higher levels of political participation and satisfaction with their immediate residential environment and with urban life in general, than their counterparts residing in central-city slum zones.²²

The main conclusion to be drawn is that the impact of cityward migration and exposure to the urban environment upon political cognitions, attitudes, and behavior is far from uniform. It is mediated most importantly by contextual variables operating at the level of the urban residential zone. This helps to explain why mere length of residence in the city is such a poor predictor of political attitudes and behavior among the migrant population, a finding which has emerged with considerable consistency in recent cross-national research.²³ Thus it becomes clear that attempts to identify those factors which significantly affect the ways migrants become involved in and form attitudes toward the political process must focus explicitly upon the consequences of different kinds of urban socialization experiences.

Prospects for the Future

Efforts to assess the long-term political implications of cityward migration in Latin America have focused upon the question of intergenerational differences among the migrants and their offspring and upon the potential consequences of declining selectivity among migrants to the city. According to the "second-generation hypothesis," the offspring of first-generation migrants might be expected to exhibit higher levels of political involvement, as well as lower satisfaction with their personal life situation, political alienation, and a predisposition toward radical political behavior. These consequences are attri-

²² Cornelius, "The Process of Politicization"; Portes, "Political Primitivism," pp. 830-32; and John R. Mathison, *Patterns of Powerlessness among Urban Poor*, Studies in Comparative International Development, vol. 7, no. 1 (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1972), p. 79.

²³ Collier, "Squatter-Settlement Formation," pp. 139-40, 170-74; Olga Mercado Villar et al., *La Marginalidad urbana: origen, proceso, y modo* (Buenos Aires: DESAL and Ediciones Troquel, 1970), pp. 224-25, 262-63.

²⁴ See Norman H. Nie, G. Bingham Powell, Jr., and Kenneth Prewitt, "Social Structure and Political Participation: Developmental Relationships, Part I," *American Political Science Review*, 63 (June 1969), 365-68; Alex Inkeles, "Participant Citizenship in Six Developing Countries," *American Political Science Review*, 63 (December 1969); Cornelius, "The Process of Politicization"; Janice E. Perlman, "The Fate of Migrants in Rio's Favelas" (Ph.D. diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1971), pp. 413-18, *passim*.

buted to the second generation's lifelong exposure to urban political stimuli, higher levels of education, and the lack of a rural standard of comparison in assessing their life situation and opportunities for socioeconomic mobility. However, virtually all of the empirical evidence fails to support such a hypothesis. Members of the second generation do not exhibit significantly more negative evaluations of the political system than their parents, nor are they significantly more dissatisfied with the government's performance, frustrated with their personal situation, ideologically radicalized, or politically involved. In fact, data on the eldest sons of rural migrants to Mexico City reveals that they participate in politics significantly less than their parents.²⁴

This last finding can be explained in large part by intergenerational differences in the urban socialization experience. Few members of the second generation in squatter settlements have been involved in the land invasions through which their communities were created, nor in the series of confrontations with authority structures which usually ensues during the period of settlement "consolidation." Apart from these encounters, the most important political learning experiences of settlement residents often result from community-related problem solving and demand-making activity. This kind of activity is most intense during the early years of a community's existence when service deprivation and insecurity of land tenure are most severe. Political activity aimed at solving such problems usually occurs before the offspring of migrant settlers reach maturity. They thus lack exposure to the kinds of socialization experiences which were most important in politicizing the first generation. Not surprisingly, they also exhibit a significantly weaker disposition to work collectively. Evidence of this kind indicates that, to the extent that the second generation is likely to become involved in making political demands, such activity will have a particularistic rather than a collective referent. Its members will probably be more concerned with the requisites for individual social and economic mobility than with community needs and problems which

²⁴ Cornelius, "The Process of Politicization"; see also Adolfo Gurrieri, *Situación y perspectivas de la juventud en una población urbana popular* (United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America, no. E/LACCY/BP/L.2 (Santiago, 1965), pp. 16-18, 24-27; Daniel Goldrich, "Peasants' Sons in City Schools," *Human Organization*, 23 (Winter 1964), 332-33; Herbert D. Friedman, "Los adolescentes de las villas de emergencia de Buenos Aires," *Revista Latinoamericana de Sociología*, 5 (March 1969), 88; Frank M. Andrews and George W. Phillips, "The Squatters of Lima: Who They Are and What They Want," *Journal of Developing Areas*, 4 (January 1970), 221.

can be addressed most appropriately through collective political action.

The political consequences of declining selectivity in migratory flows toward Latin American cities are somewhat more difficult to assess on the basis of available data. During the 1940-60 period, cityward migrants in most Latin American countries were clearly selective, i.e., superior to the populations from which they originated in terms of educational attainment and occupational skills. They were also selective in that they were young. In recent years, however, most countries have experienced a significant decline in selectivity among migrants to the city. This has led some to predict that the influx of individuals not as well equipped to cope with the problems of urban assimilation than those who preceded them would provide a basis for nonsupportive political attitudes and increasing migrant involvement in disruptive political activity.

The available data, however fragmentary, cast doubt upon the validity of this declining selectivity hypothesis. Migrants interviewed in Mexico City were ranked on a summary index consisting of educational attainment, occupational skills, prior urban experience, and income level upon arrival in the city. It was found that migrants scoring below the median had actually achieved a higher level of socioeconomic mobility since arrival in the city than their better-prepared counterparts. The less prepared migrants did exhibit slightly lower levels of personal life satisfaction and stronger feelings of relative deprivation. Nevertheless, these attitudes had not been translated into lower levels of political-system support, higher levels of political alienation, ideological radicalism, nor a stronger predisposition toward unconventional political activity.²⁵

Probably of greater importance in predicting the future political consequences of the urbanizing process in Latin America are a number of structural, situational, and performance variables unrelated to the individual characteristics of migrants or their offspring but bearing upon their life chances in the urban environment. These include the overall expansiveness of the urban occupational structure, the rate of growth of labor-intensive industry, and governmental performance in extending and improving basic urban services. A serious lack of growth on any of these dimensions could eventually undermine migrant perceptions of the openness of the societal opportunity struc-

²⁵ Cornelius, "Political Behavior in Urban Mexico," chaps. 7, 8.

ture and the responsiveness of the government to their most acute needs. These perceptions have previously served to decrease the potential for unrest among this sector of the population. On the other hand, exceptional performance in providing occupational opportunities and access to basic services may also have the effect of increasing the attractiveness of the cities for potential migrants in the countryside, thus contributing to higher rates of cityward movement, greater scarcity of urban employment opportunities, and a greatly increased load on the political system for the provision of urban services and other benefits. This is not, of course, a peculiarly Latin American dilemma. As one comparative urbanist has recently observed, many governments throughout the developing world "allocate a disproportionately large share of their attention and scarce resources to various service functions in large urban centers in order to avert political unrest. This, in turn, perpetuates the highly centralized patterns of migration into primate cities which enhances their momentum for further growth and creates the vicious circle between growth and service demands."²⁶

Even if there is a higher level of frustration among migrant populations in the future resulting from increased difficulties of urban economic assimilation or declining response by the government to the need for services, increased political activity aimed at redressing migrant grievances against the sociopolitical order will probably depend largely on the availability of organizational and leadership resources for mobilizing this sector of the urban population. To the extent that frustrated migrants can be manipulated by ambitious political leaders, there is little to favor the chances of the militant left over the centrist and authoritarian-populist leaders who also vie for their support. In the building of political followings in Latin American cities, the incumbent elites, as dispensers of what goods, services, and patronage are to be had, have a distinct advantage. The supposedly "available" migrant masses may prove to be considerably more resistant to radical efforts to organize and agitate them out of their acquiescence in existing sociopolitical arrangements than has been generally expected by both the forces of reaction and revolution in Latin America.

²⁶ See Salah S. El-Shakhs, "The Urban Crisis in International Perspective," *American Behavioral Scientist*, 15 (March-April 1972), 588.