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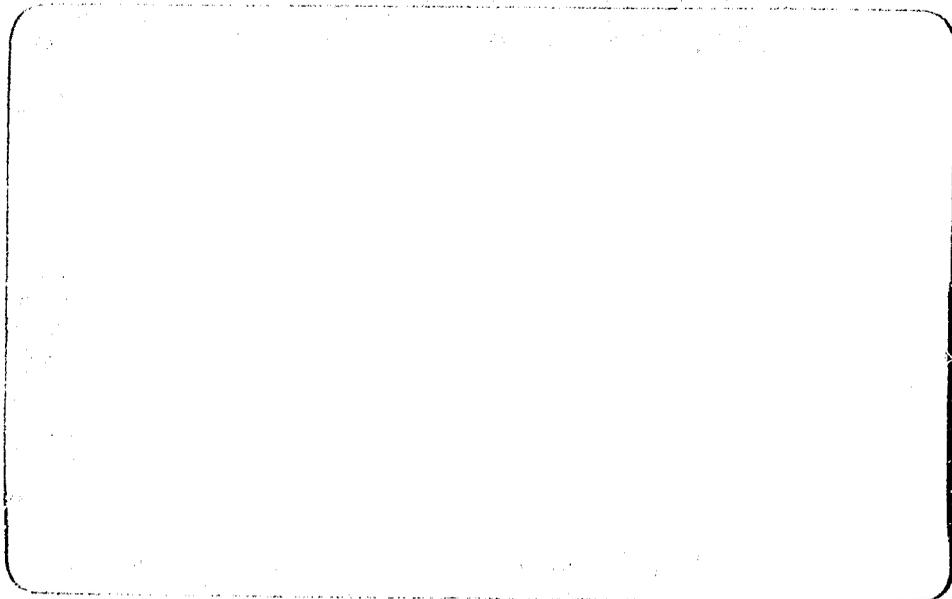
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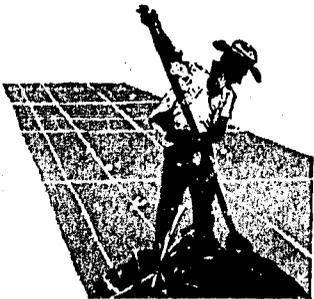
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**No. 12**

**LOCAL POLITICAL PATTERNS  
IN NORTHEAST BRAZIL:**

**A Community Case Study**

**By**

**Belden H. Paulson**

**NOTE: The names used in this report are fictitious, although they  
do represent actual persons in the community.**

**All views, interpretations, recommendations and conclusions expressed  
in this paper are those of the author and not necessarily those of  
the supporting or cooperating organizations.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

In mid 1960 the total of all United States and United Nations technical assistance for Northeast Brazil,<sup>1/</sup> which is considered the most extensive region of poverty in the Western Hemisphere, hit an annual expenditure of about \$500,000. Of the some \$56 million allocated to Brazil during the fiscal decade 1951-1961 under the United States Bilateral Technical Cooperation Program in Brazil, probably not more than five per cent had been devoted to the Northeast.<sup>2/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> The Northeast, for the purposes of the policy of regional development now being executed by the Government of Brazil, consists of the following states:

<u>State</u>	<u>Area (Km<sup>2</sup>)</u>	<u>Population (1960)</u>
Maranhão	328,603	2,492,139
Piauí	250,934	1,263,368
Ceará	148,016	3,337,856
Rio Grande do Norte	53,015	1,157,258
Paraíba	56,372	2,018,023
Pernambuco	98,281	4,136,900
Alagoas	27,731	1,271,062
Sergipe	21,994	760,273
Bahia	561,026	5,990,605

Source: Presidência da República, Superintendência do Desenvolvimento do Nordeste, The Brazilian Northeast, Sudene and Its First Guiding Plan (Recife: Sudene, 1962) p. 1; also, I.B.G.E., Brasil, Sinopse Preliminar do Censo Demográfico (Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 1962) pp. 2-3.

<sup>2/</sup> Stefan Robock, Brazil's Developing Northeast, A Study of Regional Planning and Foreign Aid (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1963) p. 127.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
II. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION PATTERNS IN THE LOCAL MILIEU . . . . .	9
III. LEADERSHIP PATTERNS . . . . .	27
IV. POLITICAL PATTERNS IN THE MUNICIPIO . . . . .	37

(The Land Tenure Center is a Latin American research and  
(training program supported largely by the Agency for )  
(International Development (AID) with cooperation from )  
(the American Nations. )

Suddenly in late 1961 the Northeast was being discussed as the site for a massive "pilot project" for the Alliance for Progress. President Kennedy was asking for regular personal reports on the region. A stream of high level officials, including White House representatives, United Nations Ambassador Adlai Stevenson and a technical survey team led by retired Ambassador Merwyn Bohan, visited the area. President Goulart of Brazil was invited to the United States in April 1962. The chief reason was to sign an agreement with the United States for a major development program in the Northeast. The United States would commit \$131 million over a two year period "for making a fast start on some of the most critical problems of the impoverished region,"<sup>3/</sup> while Brazil would contribute \$145 million. The agreement was announced as the beginning of a long range development operation.

This new interest in a hitherto desolate and forgotten land stemmed from several factors. News dispatches of the New York Times Brazil correspondent had pinpointed the seeming popular restlessness in this drought-ridden region which in territory and population is second only to Brazil itself in all of South America. An NBC one hour television "special" transformed Francisco Julião, federal deputy and founder of the Peasant Leagues in the Northeast, into an international personality fast becoming another Fidel Castro. At the same time an accelerating trickle of data was capturing world interest on the direness of the region's plight: \$140 per capita income (in some rural areas less than \$100) compared to \$410 in southern Brazil; close to half the area subject to periodic drought; wealth in some areas concentrated in a few families, such as in the state of Pernambuco where an elite of sugar families reportedly controls 50 per cent of the State's wealth; some 30 per cent of primary age children actually in school; infant mortality supposedly reaching 60 per cent of births in the extensive mocambo slum sections of Recife, the region's largest city (population 800,000) and one of the world's poorest; heavy outflow from the area of already scarce capital and the channeling of profits into conspicuous consumption or hoarding.

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<sup>3/</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

Undoubtedly the decisive factor behind the "discovery" of the Northeast by the United States, which in 1962 abruptly increased United States aid to the region from only several hundred thousand dollars to \$65 million a year, was "political necessity." With about half of the territory and population of South America Brazil has a strategic role in determining the continent's future course. On the assumption that the Northeast is Brazil's most unstable area and could influence the country's political direction, this region now held a top priority in United States policy making toward Brazil.

Political developments in Northeast Brazil could be understood only in terms of the context of the governmental structures and political value systems of the Brazilians themselves and specifically of the Northeasterners who seem to have evolved their own regional political sub-culture or sub-cultures. Application of United States political values and styles to a people who may be in quite a different stage of economic and political development, with a very different political culture, obviously could lead to evaluations little related to what is actually happening.

The point is that there is a paucity of penetrating political information on Northeast Brazil, not to mention Brazil itself. The United States Consulate has a competent political attaché in Recife, but he can hardly be expected to make comprehensive political studies of the region. Brazilian political scientists in the several universities of the Northeast are virtually non-existent. Little political field research, other than an occasional piece in Brazil's respected journal Revista Brasileira de Estudos Politicos, published in Minas Gerais, a state in Brazil's central region, is conducted by the few professors or students in the region who are genuinely interested in this. Most of our knowledge on what is happening is thus provided by journalistic articles which report developments of "news value," meaning almost by definition that they are oriented toward the sensational. As one Brazilian official put it: "A strike of stevedores becomes the beginning of a civil war, a drop in value of the cruzeiro financial chaos, a local demonstration of students a general Communist upheaval, and so on."<sup>4/</sup>

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<sup>4/</sup> Minister Joao Paulo do Rio Branco, director of Brazilian Government Trade Bureau in N.Y., in address to Rotary Club of New York on March 5, 1964, reported in Brazilian Bulletin, Vol. XX, No. 450 (March 15, 1964).

One has the impression after talking with United States aid officials in the Northeast that large government programs, which presumably are justified to the American taxpayer mainly on their ability to promote "positive" political developments in the region on the basis of very limited political data, are being formulated. As for evaluating future results of their program, the aid officials have the impossible task of structuring guidelines when they have no clear basepoint in the existing reality which can be used as a point of reference.

### Community Political Analysis

Political studies are needed because of the lack of political information, lack of political scientists (Brazilian or international) who are able and willing to apply their skills to this environs, and lack of the usual demands of government programs for crash efforts which have limited use -- or at least limited time -- for the tools of research and scientific analysis to be put to work. This is particularly the case in Northeast Brazil where more of life is politicized than in our own society, yet where political phenomenon have been little systematized and analyzed because political science as a profession is in its infancy.<sup>5/</sup>

It would seem that one appropriate point to begin would be the gathering of basic information in a number of sub-regions of this vast, heterogeneous area. This material in turn could provide a basis for analyzing politics in the whole region. In each sub-region studies could be initiated at the level of the local community.

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<sup>5/</sup> Robock, op. cit., reports the following: "Political science as a field for professional training and research is not developed in Brazil. There are no scientific studies available on political parties, philosophies and history. Furthermore, the United States has little experience and has not developed adequate background for understanding and evaluating political development in the Northeast. If political issues continue to be of supreme importance in foreign aid efforts, as is almost certain in the case of Northeast Brazil, the United States needs to make a major commitment of highly qualified personnel to this problem." p. 186.

From the unit, which for simplicity could be called the local residential community, the analysis could proceed to other levels of political activity. Altogether they constitute the mosaic of the sub-region and whole region and are integrated (or unintegrated) into the nation. What is the relationship of the particular community to individuals, groups and institutional forces from outside the immediate area? Are there strings behind local political events which are pulled from the outside? What policies and actions from the outside have identifiable local impact and who in the community is affected? Are there reciprocal currents of influence between the municipio and outside -- does each have powers and resources needed by the other which permit bargaining and the distribution of benefits through compromise -- or is the community at the mercy of non-indigenous authorities?

In every community there are overlapping layers of persons who participate in varying ways in organizing, running and perhaps revising the social processes of the community. As a minimum condition of social organization, there must be some semblance of peace and order, and a main device men have designed for this purpose is government. Usually there is need to promote additional goals beyond mere peace and order -- such as employment, education, health -- although these can be at a minimum, as is the case in the community here studied. These require decisions to be made and responsibilities to be assumed either by individuals, groups of individuals organized into private associations, or bodies which are bestowed with public authority by whoever holds authority, whether it be local or outside.

An attempt to understand the politics of the community leads to an investigation of who actually governs and who exercises influence and holds responsibility for decisions which may have a widespread effect on the life of the community. Is influence characteristically exercised by isolated individuals or families, or by groups such as political parties or economic interest groups? What factors account for the rise of these persons or groups to formal positions of authority or to informal roles of influence? How do they actually exercise their functions, what is their method and style of doing business? What is their view of community needs -- their definition of "important questions" -- their attitudes on issues such as land and tax reform, promotion of the democratic process, rapid technological change, the Cuban revolution, international politics?

What gradations of power and influence are there in the community in the total political spectrum, from one pole

where people may be excluded altogether from any decision-making influence to the other pole where a few people may play decisive roles as to "what happens?" Some people in the municipio may not even understand the nature of social conflict or that they have a potential role for representing their needs and views in the decision-making process. Other persons, through historical conditioning, economic power, education and training, political manipulation, or other reasons and combinations of factors, have such a concentrated power over some community decisions that the community is virtually their private domain, functioning to service their needs and fulfill their desires. Between these two extremes there can be many types and degrees of participation in local political life. Undoubtedly a number of groups in the total political spectrum can be identified, each with particular characteristics and a political role.

In view of the absence of political information on the level of the local community in Northeast Brazil, the initial study of particular communities should gather such material on the local politics as the following:

Electoral patterns (identification of voters and non-voters and their characteristics)

Political participation patterns other than voting (identification of levels and kinds of political participation, with characteristics of persons in different political layers of the community)

Leadership patterns (identification of persons, and their characteristics, who hold influence due to informal leadership, and identification of persons and their characteristics who select the informal and elected "influentials")

Data on the foregoing, supplemented by other relevant materials, could begin to depict characteristics of the political functioning of the adult population of this particular area and point out kinds of questions to be used as guidelines for subsequent research.

Knowledge of local patterns and of the flow of influence between the community and political configurations on the outside also could suggest the kinds of problems facing the "development agent" in this milieu. Whether the agent would be a member of the local community itself or would be an interested party on the outside -- such as an agency of the

Brazilian Government or an aid program of the United States -- a precondition for "development change" would be an understanding of the existing power structure of the area.

### A Representative Case Study

The present study is a summary and analysis of political data gathered in one community of Northeast Brazil last summer by an interdisciplinary research group of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.<sup>6/</sup> The area selected was a representative municipio (which corresponds to the United States county, normally with one or more urban centers surrounded by a sizable rural area. It is located at the dividing line between the zone of the Mata and the Caatinga and is several hours by dirt road into the interior from the capital city of the State. The Mata is the forested belt of lowlands along the Northeast's coast with a fairly dependable average annual rainfall of about forty inches. The Zone of the Caatinga is a land of recurring droughts and floods due to very concentrated rainfall; its usual characteristic is an agricultural economy of extreme poverty due to low-yield dry farming.<sup>7/</sup>

This municipio was selected because of accessibility to the capital, representativeness in terms of basic socio-economic conditions and population and expression of willingness to cooperate by a number of local leaders in the municipio. There was also one additional factor, not representative of much of the surrounding region, which made this municipio and several others near it extraordinarily interesting. This fact was the existence of a sizable dam adjacent to the municipio, which if fully utilized, might rapidly and profoundly change the economic, social and political life of the area. The dam was constructed ten years ago by the federal government anti-drought agency (DNOCS). Authorities estimate that its waters have the potential of irrigating some 30,000 acres of valley land in this and neighboring municipios. This could trans-

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<sup>6/</sup> This team project was financed by the Land Tenure Center of the University of Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and the University Extension Division.

<sup>7/</sup> Preston James, Latin America, 3rd edition (N.Y.: The Odessa Press, 1959) pp. 409-431.

form the area from a very low-income agriculture characteristic of semi-arid parts of Northeast Brazil to a high income intensive agriculture based on truck farming, fruit and livestock. Since construction of the dam less than 5,000 acres actually have been irrigated. Income on these particular acres apparently has increased greatly. The dam also has potential for hydroelectric power for small industries. The community already has some electricity in homes, but there is also potential for greatly expanded local public utilities.

The study included a questionnaire drawn up with the aim of collecting comprehensive data on a selected sample of families in the community. The questionnaire was administered to 79 heads of family (which included some women) in the urban sector and 104 heads in the rural sector. From the census, the inadequate local maps and conversations with informed local persons, several sub-areas of the municipio were selected as places for interviews. These included the very small part of the municipio that had high income irrigated land and the larger sertão-type area which had dry farming; the main "urban center" or cidade of the municipio and several smaller clusters, vilas or provoados where a number of families were concentrated in a rural setting; a number of farms; several streets in the urban center; and the two main sub-divisions of the urban center. In each of these sub-sections persons were selected at random as subjects for interviews.

A "leader questionnaire" was also used for more open ended separate interviews with a small pre-determined panel of persons. Included here were persons holding formal positions of authority (e.g. the mayor and vice-mayor, priest, and key officials of two entities working in the municipio with authority and funds from the outside) and various persons with reputations of local influence due to factors other than formal positions (e. g. a land owner-businessman who had indicated a special interest in improving local education, another landholder with "advanced" ideas of agricultural technology, several business and rural persons who had been indicated by a number of other persons to be "influential"). In all 21 persons were interviewed in this group. This does not imply total coverage of local "influentials."

This was a cooperative project with a Brazilian University. Seven Brazilians, including specialists in questionnaire interviewing and anthropological research, rural extension and State education planning participated with our University team in data gathering.

## II. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION PATTERNS IN THE LOCAL MILIEU

What are the characteristics of the electorate of a primarily rural community in a relatively isolated area of a very depressed region in Latin America? Is there a possibility of popular control over elected officials by means of periodic elections? Perhaps other forms of participation in community affairs have more political significance than voting in terms of "what happens" locally. What characteristics identify the more politically active citizenry?

Before focusing on these questions of electoral patterns and political participation patterns other than voting, a brief description of the local setting of the municipio -- its historical background, population, territory, land tenure, economy, health and nutrition, education, local government -- is in order.

### The Local Setting

The municipio was founded shortly after the mid-19th century by a landowner from the capital who acquired some land and built a house in this interior point. Enlisting assistance of several other landholders in the area, he pushed for construction of a church. The first Mass was considered the official founding day of the town. Shortly thereafter a parish was created by law and canon law, signifying a new importance for this cluster of habitations that previously had been part of another parish. The municipio was formally created shortly before the period of the Empire in Brazil ended in 1889. Thereafter the municipio's legal status changed with changes in State and national politics.

The population of the municipio is slightly less than 30,000 with about six persons per household. According to the 1950 census more than 90% of the population was rural but it was approximately 80% in 1960. Up until the late 1950's people were moving to the capital city or to southern Brazil in search of economic opportunity. In one year of the middle 1950's more than 100 families departed. By the end of the decade, however, the dam was promising new opportunity and drawing migrants from other municipios deeper in the drought-ridden interior. Our survey indicated that 49 of 183 adults interviewed had lived in the municipio less than five years.

Urbanization is rapidly increasing; today, in contrast to less than 1000 in 1950, almost 10,000 people live in the main urban center.

Because a number of municipios of this whole sub-region may have been carved out of the same original municipio, it is not surprising that some political patterns are integral to the sub-region as such, rather than being restricted to the confines of a particular municipio which may have been arbitrarily created only in recent years. Such is the case here. A State Deputy is a dominant power in this sub-region, representing it in the State Legislature. Likewise, the important federal anti-drought agency, DNOCS, has a decisive role in several municipios served by the dam that is constructed.

An especially interesting phenomenon with important political implications is that the urban center is subdividing into two main sectors: the "old town" and the "new town" located directly next to the dam. The "new town" is only a few years old and is strictly a result of the dam. Already it has about 2,000 people. Many of the men here are construction day workers employed by the federal agency, DNOCS, which not only built the dam but has other public works projects under construction. A number have opened small shops to service this growing complex. Some depend on fishing in the sizable lake created by the dam. What dynamism is found in the municipio is mainly here which, due to this new natural resource, is called "the future center of the municipio." Here a nucleus of leadership is developing with different attitudes from those of "the old town."

The municipio encompasses over 1,000 square kilometers, much of which is semi-arid land characteristic of much of the Northeast where only small dispersed patches of ground are under cultivation due to the harshness of nature.<sup>8/</sup> Over 200 kilometers of internal dirt roads connect the several sub-districts of the municipio which are served by buses. But due to lack of privately owned means of transportation -- often even a mule -- plus a culture characterized by isolation and immobility, there is very limited communication among a sizable part of the rural populace.

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<sup>8/</sup> The arid-type lands of the Northeast are vividly described by Euclides de Cunha in Rebellion in the Backgrounds, 1902; English translation 1944 (University of Chicago Press).

Several hours by relatively good road from the capital city a small nucleus of persons in the municipio who have the inclination, time and money make frequent trips and become relatively integrated into the sophistication and values of the big city. The result is a cultural distance which separates two worlds: the rural populace which seldom or never has contact with the capital, in some cases even with the urban center of the municipio itself, and the relatively small stratum which continues to reside in the municipio -- which is rural or "small town" -- but seeks to identify more and more with the city where there is the image of material comfort and "culture." In addition there are a few persons with property in the municipio who reside permanently in the capital or elsewhere. Apparently they have no interest in the local affairs other than adequate rent from their property and perhaps some political support at election time.

It is estimated locally that 80 per cent of agricultural land is worked by the owners, 11 per cent is rented and nine per cent is operated by administrators on behalf of owners not on the land and in some instances not resident in the municipio.

The number of farms is increasing and the size is decreasing. The small farms with less than ten hectares more than doubled in ten years, the number of establishments of ten to 100 increased, but farms larger than 100 hectares decreased.<sup>9/</sup> Large farms hardly exist here. The average holding ranges from 25 to 100 hectares. The irrigated or irrigable land is characterized by minifundia, one owner sometimes holding several plots dispersed over a wide area. This undoubtedly is one factor behind the difficulty in developing the sizable irrigable basin in the municipio. Few of the small landholders have capital or skills to develop their own plots. They have no training or experience in cooperation and self government, a precondition for organizing themselves for a joint project to bring in irrigation. A further reason is lack of any accurate maps of land boundaries; it would be unlikely that any holder would invest his meager savings for land improvement unless he were absolutely certain as to the perimeter and legal title of the ground involved. Due to the desire to minimize land tax obligations, it is apparent that the vaguely delineated land tenure patterns are not wholly unintentional.

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<sup>9/</sup> The census also indicates that these trends appear to be representative of this State as a whole.

The lack of a striking latifundia-minifundia contrast in this municipio has tended to minimize rural social tension, in contrast to the humid areas on the eastern coast where violence between the large owners and landless tenants periodically erupts on the sugar, cotton and pineapple plantations. At the time this "equality of poverty" appears to have minimized agricultural productivity among all but a few landholders.

Although the mass of the active population is subsistence farming in the rural sector, with a considerable number also in fishing, there is an array of occupations in the urban center such as shopkeepers, cattle brokers, laundry women, masons, carpenters, shoemakers, artisans, bakers, barbers, police. But the largest category are the manual laborers working for DNOCS in construction projects. A number of substantial landholders live in the "old town," while most of the "businessmen" (mainly shopkeepers) are located in the "new" section to service DNOCS operations.

There is no enterprise that could be called an industry and virtually all private enterprises are family-oriented. There is no bank, no food processing activity, no wholesale house or retail store of any consequence, no dealers attempting to sell farm implements and machinery. To date there has been no effort to utilize the potential of hydroelectric energy for small industries to transform food products or other locally available raw materials like cotton into high-value finished goods. As a result, apart from the small stratum of shopkeepers and skilled or unskilled craftsmen, the jobs must be provided by public agencies or agriculture.

The two main cultivations in the dry land areas -- which is most of the municipio -- are cotton and cereal crops (manioc, corn, beans). In the small irrigated cropland the main crops are bananas, cocoa and pineapple. On most of the farms techniques are archaic and have changed little over the years. The 1950 census reported no farm machinery of any kind, but in 1960 more than 10 tractors were listed, undoubtedly the property of DNOCS and the larger farms. Land in the municipio is flat or very gently rolling; therefore, the topography would not create difficulty for mechanization. The problems are lack of capital and technical skill, opposition to risk -- investment and innovation, plus dispersed holdings too small for mechanization without some cooperative arrangements.

Production is too low to allow much exportation and scarcity of food causes relatively high food prices. The main exports are the commercial crops of cotton and fruits. If and when local production can be expanded not only in fruits but in all foodstuffs, including vegetables, dairy products and meat, there are excellent marketing prospects in the rapidly growing State capital.

Meat and eggs sell at high prices in the capital but the bottleneck to a major livestock industry is lack of feed. No efficient low cost feed has been developed; therefore the main recourse for the animals is to forage for themselves in the semi-arid pasture. Inability to develop meat-dairy production is considered one of the most important problems facing the community for it has contributed to widespread malnutrition. If statistics of the local authorities are used, the meat consumption per capita in the municipio totals only ten pounds per capita per year.

There is considerable fishing potential in the lake created by the dam. But at present most of the some 150 fishing families barely earn subsistence because of high rentals for equipment and no marketing cooperative.

Each farm has its own peculiar work relations which depend greatly upon the owner and the initiative, bargaining skill and productivity of the workers. A few farms have relatively good standards. Many are extremely low. One farm that was reported, for example, would pay the head of family 120 cruzeiros (1000 CR equals one U.S. dollar) a day and no food. This, plus a small vegetable plot for supporting a family of eight or nine members would be his income. There would be no opportunity for his children to attend school. Isolated in the interior of the municipio far from the urban center the family typically has resigned itself to a lot of extreme poverty and hopeless social immobility.

It would seem that the municipio has a bright economic future if and when all the irrigable land is transformed for fruit and vegetable farming, a livestock industry is established, favorable market possibilities in the capital city are utilized, the advantageous communications position is exploited (including development of some modest tourism and a hotel-restaurant), cooperative organizations are set up to maximize profits from the fishing potential as well as to introduce mechanization, the workers organize to improve their bargaining position and enforce minimum labor standards, and so on. But these developments require new initiative,

preparation of people with technical skills to carry out these tasks and a political system which both provides the required top leadership and encourages the population itself to bring its economic needs and views into the decision making process.

The needs most urgently felt by the local people are in the fields of health and education. In this community of nearly 30,000 people, there is no hospital, no maternity center, no full-time trained medical personnel. DNOCS employs a medical doctor who works part of three days in the municipio, with medical responsibility for DNOCS personnel. There are two very rudimentary "pharmacies." There is a male nurse who has no professional training but performs all medical services from pulling teeth to small operations. There are also two auxiliary nurses and an unknown number of midwives. There is no public health officer or any program providing for minimum sanitary facilities, control of disease, or even accurate registration of births and deaths other than the service of the priest.

The poorer rural people live in mud huts that have no floors, no bathroom or toilet facilities. (A typical house for a family of 8 or 9 consists of a sitting room, bedroom and kitchen. DNOCS is now constructing a water tower and preparing to pipe water into the urban center. As yet there is no indoor plumbing except in the DNOCS headquarters buildings and in homes of persons who dug wells and arranged for private installations. The mass of the population in the urban center get their water for drinking and other purposes from central irrigation aqueducts or the artificial lake. The rural people use any body of water to be found: river, canal, well, the dammed up lake with little precaution or even understanding about contaminated water.

The diet of the lower classes is principally beans, manioc flour and corn bread, with extremely little protein. Despite widespread malnutrition there has been little effort to utilize the high-yielding irrigable land for developing a feed and livestock industry. Few families raise poultry. Much of the best land is used for commercial crops (such as cotton and fruits) which are largely sold outside the municipio rather than for food production to raise the level of local subsistence.

The people feel strongly about local educational deficiencies. "Schools" are of extremely low quality. There is no high school although this has been the one "reform" attracting some community initiative recently. Vocational schools are non-existent, nor has any provision been made for an adult

literacy effort, kindergartens, or a public library. None of the more than 70 primary school teachers in the municipio has a teaching diploma. The average preparation is two years of schooling. The average monthly teacher salary is about 2,000 cruzeiros (about two dollars), although there have been small increases due to inflation.

There has been no particular effort by the local government, church, or anyone else to radically upgrade the quality and importance of the school system, such as trying to get more adequate teacher training, better attendance by the children, relating schooling to teaching of rudimentary technical skills needed to increase local productivity and generally making the school an intellectual and civic center for the cluster of families residing in its vicinity.

It is locally held that some 80 per cent of school age children do not attend any school. The rural child may have to walk many kilometers to the nearest classroom. If the parents spare him from working the land and pay something for class materials, the main motive seems to be helping him learn enough so he can leave the municipio for the capital city or southern Brazil. As a result, what little is taught tends to prepare the person for emigration rather than effectively facing the environment of the community itself.

The main channels for information come less from the school than from informal contacts and from radio and television. There are some 200 radios in the municipio, mostly in the urban sector. Given high local illiteracy and no local newspaper (the closest center for publications is the capital city), radio is necessarily a principal line of communication for what is happening in the world. There is no movie theatre in the municipio, although there are two movie projectors.

The local government consists of a mayor, vice-mayor and nine aldermen plus one substitute, all of whom receive a small remuneration. These officials are elected simultaneously for four-year terms. While the national and state constitutions provide for local government with considerable authority, in practice the powers are very limited. This is due in part to the political pattern of the community. This study indicates that real power is concentrated elsewhere. In part it is because of the meager resources at the disposal of the local government.

Total annual revenue is about 10 million cruzeiros (or approximately ten thousand dollars) for a population of some 30,000 people. Some 60 per cent of the budget is allocated

for public utilities (public illumination on the several main streets using electric power from the dam, upkeep of roads, sweeping of streets, etc.). Some 14 per cent is for local administration (payment of officials and tax collection). About 8.5 per cent (or less than one thousand dollars) is devoted to public education for the year, while 2.9 per cent is for public health. Some 250 dollars are allocated for public assistance, which is to say there is little public assistance apart from donations provided by the Church for the staggering local welfare needs. There is no money for any economic development activity beyond these bare minimum public utilities. As no large changes in budgeting can be introduced by the local authority without approval of higher administrative powers, the Mayor is, in effect, restricted to a minimal role unless he has unusual political connections on the outside, or, with other local interests, he can multiply revenue through such sources as commercial channels or international assistance.

The Church, too, is poverty stricken with a congregation mainly of non-contributors. As the one priest in the municipio serves a large territory with very meager means, he is seldom seen in much of the parish. The main church is the "old town" of the urban center but several small chapels are scattered elsewhere. Most of the priest's current welfare assistance is provided by United States surplus food, which normally is channeled through him and provides considerable temptation for use as political leverage.

Material resources for any local development work by a public entity are concentrated in one agency -- DNOCS. All important material changes -- the dam, some irrigation, houses for DNOCS employees, water systems, electrification -- wrought in this community by a public agency have been DNOCS financed and initiated. DNOCS also owns a farm administered by two government agronomists. This farm has possibilities for experimental work but is largely unutilized to date and operates the only professional medical service. Assuming that no other points of leadership and initiative emerge from the community itself, the future development of the municipio is in great part in the hands of DNOCS and the interests with which it chooses to associate.

Organized associational life is almost non-existent in the community. The main occasions for a sizable number of people to assemble are the weekly feira or public markets, Sunday mornings, Church Mass and an occasional public meeting called by the local government. Most of the associational

life is in the little drinking and tobacco shops scattered through the urban center and rural clusters of habitations.

Two political parties, Partido Social Democratico (PSD) and Uniso Democratica Nacional (UDN), each with a local secretary and a small membership are formally represented in the municipio. The PSD, controlling eight of the ten Council positions, the mayora. and vice-mayoral posts, and providing local majorities in State and national politics, has been the dominant party for years. But the parties, apart from certain individuals who operate in a highly personalistic manner, rarely meet other than at election time and appear to hold little political influence as such.

To conclude this brief description of local life, we cite a summary statement of the Brazilian coordinator of the research following his stay in the community:

A few years ago this community was completely dominated by poverty, abandonment, illiteracy, banditry and fierce political wars. With the coming of DNOCS, and the initiation of the dam and introduction of irrigation and some public utilities, a new face has begun to rise out of the past. New possibilities for agriculture and small industry are on the horizon. Opportunities for new ideas and initiative abound which may or may not find takers. Everything the government has done has been paternalistic and frequently has done more harm than good. This is the case even for potential advantages like irrigation, because too often the wrong people are helped, food prices go up, the water is used wrecklessly depleting the soil, new production is exported, and the mass of the population does not really change at all.

The community has many types of stratification, not only urban and rural, and economic class; most important maybe is in the realm of attitudes -- for example, the attitude toward manual work which sets apart the classes distinctly, and toward change. There are no Feasant Leagues here yet, not much talk about land reform. There is still the amo phous mass of people on the land, resigned to their fate, with little sense of progress or aspiration, heavily influenced by religion, and mostly outside the political world. Then there are the people on the irrigated land, who are the first to drink the benefits of change and who are the envy of others.

There is DNOCS, which is a life unto itself, but cannot be overlooked for its effects on everyone. There are the people in the urban center where all influence is concentrated. Most of the population is desperate, searching without success for sufficient force to overcome the environment. People have not found their potential. They have become accustomed to listen to promises, especially from politicians, which bear no fruit. The big question still remains: what is their final reaction going to be?<sup>10/</sup>

### Electoral Patterns

Voter registration and voting have steadily increased in the municipio in recent years. In 1958 less than 3,000 persons were registered while in 1962 there were more than 6,800. In elections of those years voting increased from some 2,750 to more than 3,000.

It seems that the legal right to vote is increasing more rapidly than is political understanding and the desire to use this right. Most adults in the urban center already were registered voters -- most of the newly registered voters were persons in the rural areas who had been outside the electorate in prior years or are recent in-migrants.

Functional illiteracy -- inability to read and write with any facility -- is extremely high in the rural area. Although Article 132 of the Brazilian Constitution of 1946 bars voting eligibility to illiterates, there is evidence that a substantial number of them vote. The implication is that either they have qualified for "literacy" through ability to sign their name or the government-appointed electoral tribunal which supervises voter registrations "had its reasons" for augmenting the number of voters. Most literate vote. Article 133 of the Constitution makes voting an obligatory duty.

What are some characteristics of voters and non-voters in this municipio of Northeast Brazil? Can certain patterns such as level of living, length of residence in the municipio, degree of satisfaction, political sophistication and location of residence in the community be formulated?

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<sup>10/</sup> From report of Brazilian research coordinator, summer 1963.

It is virtually impossible to learn the actual income and property of these people. Many of them are unable to read and write and know nothing about keeping accounts; therefore, they themselves do not know. Those who do know are reluctant to divulge information which may prejudice their interests vis a vis the tax collector or perhaps their image in the municipio. A set of objective criteria was established in order that a general "level of living" index be formulated for each family.<sup>11/</sup>

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<sup>11/</sup> The level of living index was formulated by Professor Eugene Wilkening and Dean Yoesting of the Land Tenure Center of the University of Wisconsin.

TABLE 1. Items Composing Level of Living Index.

	Weight
1. Person-room ratio	
1 or more rooms per person	1
less than 1 room per person	0
2. Kitchen	
Separate	1
Not separate	0
3. Stove	
Gas	1
Wood	0
4. Bathroom	
With/without shower	1
None	0
5. Toilet	
Bowl, hole, privy	1
None	0
6. Lights	
Electricity	1
Lamps	0
7. Construction of house	
Brick	1
Mud	0
8. Floor	
Brick/ cement	1
Dirt	0
9. Where obtain water	
Reservoir, water hole, well	1
River, canal	0

A total of "9" would constitute a "high" level of living in this municipio, while "0" a low level. This "high" - "low" definition of course is relative to the environs of the particular area; a "high" could be "poverty-stricken" under current definitions of "poverty" in the United States. Approximately 30% of the persons interviewed approached a "high" rating while about the same number were "low." This in no way implies that the "well-to-do" are of approximately equal number as the "poor," but simply states the numbers who have or do not have these particular minimum conditions of living.

Almost everyone -- urban and rural -- with a "high" level of living votes. However, there is a much higher living level among the urban population than the rural which is another way of saying that the urban people have a higher percentage of voters. The vast majority of the "middle category" living level also vote. Some of the "lows" vote too, however, the main body of non-voters are the "lows." Thus there is a close relationship between people lacking these bare minimal material conditions and minimal political participation through voting.

A very substantial number of the adult population moved to the municipio less than ten years ago, which is approximately the time when construction of the dam was initiated. One might hypothesize that these in-migrants would be among the more politically active segment of the population, presumably having moved with expectations of improving their condition. But this does not seem to be the case because a disproportionate number of voters have resided in the area ten years or more, while the largest group of non-voters is precisely the one with less than ten years residence. However, most of the in-migrants in the urban sector apparently do vote.

While it is hazardous to attempt to assess attitudes, two questions on "satisfaction with local situations" were used in order to register an expression of feelings -- whether "positive" or "negative" -- of the persons interviewed. Of course the content of the reality on which the feeling is based could vary with each person. The questions were: "Are you satisfied in the present place?" "Are you satisfied with the local government and administration?" If the person replied negatively to both questions, the rating would be a "0" level of satisfaction, while a "satisfied" reply would be "2."

Nearly one half of the people interviewed indicated they were "satisfied" on both counts, while only 16% expressed "disatisfaction" on both points. The rural people expressed considerably more "satisfaction" with "the present place" (meaning their home and general environs) than with the "local government administration." This is understandable because the local government is heavily "urban-oriented."<sup>12/</sup>

One could argue that persons least satisfied would be most politically active in that they have the most to gain from applying pressure to bring changes. However, it seems there is no clear pattern of relationship between "satisfaction" and voting. Probably voting has much less to do with this than with certain basic factors which tend to bring satisfaction, such as high level of living.

In view of popular distrust of politicians in Northeast Brazil, the people perhaps turn elsewhere than to political participation for fulfillment. Voting is looked upon as a legal duty for everyone who is literate and has a certain level of living but is not regarded seriously as having much influence upon the matters which concern them.

In all political societies the mere act of voting has minimal political significance. The question is the pattern of factors influencing the vote; for example, the degree of choice, the voter's informedness, his knowledge of the issues, his understanding of what persons and agencies are worth backing because it is in his real interest to support them. In short, the value of voting as an effective form of political participation is related to the individual's political sophistication.

In the local interviewing a number of questions dealt with the person's exposure to communication media and information on certain matters of considerable public import. One might assume, for example, that a politically sophisticated person in the municipio would know the name of the President of Brazil and the State Governor, could identify the major development agencies in the region, and would have access to such communication media as newspapers or magazines and/or radio-television.

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<sup>12/</sup> For example, the Mayor and Vice-mayor are both from the urban center, as are six of the ten elected councilmen, including the Council President. The local budget is mostly committed to urban services. Almost 60 per cent, for instance, is allocated for utilities such as illumination and sweeping of streets, which are strictly urban services.

A chief medium of communication among the rural people is radio and television located in several bar-cafe shops. More urban people listen to radio and television than read magazines or newspapers. Apparently most of the urban people know the name of their President and Governor, while roughly half of the rural do not know the President, although more of them know their Governor. There is a lack of information, both urban and rural, about the key Brazilian agencies with responsibilities for assisting municipios such as this one.<sup>13/</sup>

Virtually all persons with "high" political sophistication apparently are voters. Nearly all the non-voters are "lows," although there are also a substantial number of "lows" who do vote.

Certain sites were selected in the urban and rural areas for concentrated interviewing because of the importance of these rural sub-sections or urban streets in the total life of the municipio and because it was desirable to investigate the degree of "bloc" behavior in a given locale. Was there a tendency for everyone living on one farm, for example, to "follow a leader," or for the residents of the several urban streets to demonstrate bloc political behavior? This could indicate the importance of local-leaders and group organizations.

There is a tendency for common political behavior in terms of voting or non-voting on some of the farms. The head of the farm could have a vital role in determining political behavior. For example on one farm, which has a reputation for poor conditions, non-voting is prevalent, while another farm with a reputation as a "more advanced" establishment has 100% voting. Throughout the urban area there is a heavy preponderance of voters except on one street inhabited by fishermen.

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<sup>13/</sup> Very few persons were able to identify the Alliance For Progress. More of the rural people knew of Pele, Brazil's soccer star, than of President Goulart.

### Political Participation Patterns Other Than Voting

Many persons in the municipio vote because it is an obligatory duty rather than because they expect the results to change anything. Other forms of participation in community affairs may have more political significance in terms of "what happens" locally.

In that Brazilian political parties formally dominate all elections -- national, state and local -- it would appear that local party membership, which presumably has something to do with selection of candidates and issues and organizing of electoral campaigns, would be related to local influence. A second kind of local participation would consist of belonging to some other organization than a political party. In an environs characterized by isolation, with a tradition of fatalism and inability to organize to confront local problems effectively, the mere fact of persons coming together periodically in any form of organization provides opportunities for intellectual stimulation and discussion. Another kind of community participation is involvement during the last two years in some group meetings to discuss local problems. Such problems included a discussion on the need for a high school or the desirability of setting up a co-operative. The person's own statement itemizing any personal actions he or she had taken for community improvement is another factor to be taken into account. A person responding affirmatively on several of these points could be given a "high" Community Participation rating and little or no participation, as here defined, would mean a "low" rating.

Among the urban people maximum participation to discuss some local problem during the last two years reached 25% of those interviewed. Lowest participation concerned the person's own action for community improvement. Level of involvement among rural people was considerably lower.

This is to say that most of the population, voters and non-voters alike, are low in any community activity, the lowest being the non-voters. If they don't vote, it is unlikely they will participate in any other type of community decision-making. Practically all literates vote but this, in most instances, is the limit of their community involvement. Almost no illiterates participate.

The people who do participate in community affairs tend to have a rather high level of living. This seems to be a precondition. Yet, of special interest is the relatively large number in the municipio in the high level of living category who do not participate in community affairs other

than through voting. It suggests that those who have succeeded most in mastering their environment are among the more able of the local population. Yet, they have not focused their interest and skills on community problems. Undoubtedly this is a major reason local natural resources (the dam's potential, for example) are drastically under-utilized.

The evidence indicates that persons with ten years and more local residence have the highest community participation, as has been previously noted to be the case in voting. This is most pronounced in the rural area. In the urban area it would appear that community participation is also beginning with recent in-migrants, although here too, longer term residents dominate.

As regards "state of satisfaction," the "dissatisfied" persons are least likely to participate actively in the community -- contrary to what might be assumed. No effective leadership has sought to work with the "dissatisfied" local population to articulate their feelings politically through voting and active community participation. As one outstanding regional leader of the Northeast has said, this is still the "pre-revolutionary" period in most of the area.<sup>14/</sup> Little "revolutionary" leadership has emerged. The motto of much of the leadership is "don't rock the boat." They tend to postpone the day of rapid change -- the so-called "Coming Explosion in Latin America."<sup>15/</sup>

Most of the persons who participate in the community have a moderate to high level of political sophistication. In fact, people rating highest in community involvement tend also to be high in political sophistication. Very few with low political sophistication participate actively in the community. Of special significance is the sizable number of local inhabitants with high political sophistication who do not participate in affairs of the municipio other than voting. This confirms the fact that many of the more able local people abstain from community involvement, therefore wasting the area's most valuable and scarce resources -- human knowledge and ability.

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<sup>14/</sup> Celso Furtado, "What Kind of Revolution?" Foreign Affairs, Vol. 41, April 1963.

<sup>15/</sup> The title of a recent book: Gerald Clark, The Coming Explosion in Latin America (New York: David Mc Kay, 1963).

There appear to be no particular patterns of community participation at certain locations of residence other than the generalized diffusion of non-involvement. This indicates a lack of any organization or leadership on certain city streets or rural sub-zones of the municipio which try to mobilize people in a residential area for political action. Had "revolutionary-type" organization developed influence in this area, it would probably have established block and sub-zone groups which would have enlisted recruits and galvanized them into action. But traditional type politics in this sub-region of Northeast Brazil minimized the importance of organization. Instead, more informal relationships, which include personal and kinship relations and granting of personal favors in return for political support have been relied upon. It is apparent that certain local leaders discourage popular participation because this could threaten the existing status quo politics.

### III. LEADERSHIP PATTERNS

Some characteristics of the electorate and persons engaged in various forms of community participation have been outlined. Another set of questions is: Who are the persons selected by means of the vote as local "influentials?" The usual connotation of the "vote" is the formal expression of choice through casting a ballot for a candidate for public office; winners are called "elected leaders."

Another form of "voting" is the informal expression of choice. For example, persons in the community may be selected by some of the populace as confidants sought out for private counsel in time of need. They may be influential not only with the people who give them their confidence but with others in the community who know of these informal relationships.

Another way of registering informal choosing of "influentials" is the reputation accorded to particular local persons because of their apparent possession of some specialized skill. It could be assumed that persons with technical know-how have other characteristics which give them potential power, such as a higher than average level of living, political sophistication and actual or potential economic and political power.

A third method for selecting informal local leaders is the identification of those who are popularly considered interested in "helping the community." Whether or not the persons actually perform any concrete actions for community improvement or even are so motivated, they may hold considerable local influence if the people have accorded them this image.

In addition to elected and informal leaders persons holding certain formal positions of responsibility could be considered "influentials" -- they may control authority and material resources which have considerable influence-potential. Such formal positions in this municipio would include the Mayor and Vice-mayor (their positions as a result of electoral success); the priest; the agronomist of the rural extension agency, ANCAR; and three main officials of the one sizable Brazilian Government enterprise, DNOCS -- the chief engineer, the chief agronomist and the part-time medical doctor.

The elected leaders, informal leaders and formal leaders may overlap. For example, the Mayor is all three. Of interest is the manner in which the leader exercises influence -- if he exercises it at all. This in turn is related to the source or sources of his authority. An investigation as to who selected the informal or elected leader may therefore facilitate understanding of whom and what he represents.

As the elected leaders are related to political party organizations, what is the role of the party in local electoral life? Does one party dominate or are there two or more party alternatives? Do the elected officials -- the mayor or town councilmen, for example -- have a substantial role in governing the municipio as distinct from merely holding a formal position? Do the local people elect them to public office because these persons already hold informal influence and voting simply ratifies a pre-existing situation? Does the populace, in any event, recognize them as "influentials" once they become elected officials? Does the Mayor or State Deputy appeal to voters of a high or low level of living, to the politically sophisticated or unsophisticated? Is electoral activity largely pragmatic or is there an ideological basis? What are some general characteristics of the persons holding pre-eminent local influence?

#### Identification of Informal Leaders

Local interviewing showed that no one person was chosen by a sizable number of persons for personal counsel. The characteristic reply to the question, "To whom do you go for advice when you have a personal problem?" was "myself," "my family" or "God." The following people were most sought out: Fernando Cavalcante (Mayor), Antonio Querios (Vice-mayor), Cicero Oliveira (DNOCS engineer), Francisco Querios (State Deputy) and Luis Nascimento (A conomist).

There were 100 different people mentioned who were believed to have specialized skills in agriculture, education and/or commerce. This wide dispersion was most prevalent in the rural areas.

Another way of identifying informal leaders was by listing the persons most frequently mentioned as "interested in helping the community." They include: Fernando Cavalcante, Manuel Rocha, Padre Raimundo and Cicero Oliveira.

There are six informal leaders. All of them were cited by persons from both the urban and rural sectors of the municipio, but, again confirming that the local political center of gravity lies in the urban sector, five of the six pull their major support there.

#### Key Formal Leaders

There are at least seven key formal positions of influence in the municipio. Six of the seven people holding formal authority were mentioned on at least one of the lists indicating informal leadership. Four of them are informal leaders: namely, Fernando Cavalcante, the Mayor who was listed under all three informal leadership criteria; Antonio Querios, the Vice-Mayor and Tax Collector; the priest, Padre Raimundo; and the DNOCS chief engineer, Cicero Oliveira.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Person</u>	<u>Sought for Counsel</u>	<u>Special- ized Skills</u>	<u>Interested in Helping Community</u>
Mayor	Fernando Cavalcante	x	x	x
Vice- Mayor	Antonio Querios	x	x	
Priest	Padre Raimundo		x	x
DNOCS engineer	Cicero Oliveira	x		x
DNOCS agronomist	Valdemar Dantas		x	
DNOCS M.D.	Pedro Vasconcelos			
ANCAR agronomist	Gilberto Costa		x	

Antonio Querios has a very special function in the municipio and it is not wholly by chance that he is Vice-mayor and Tax Collector. He is the brother of the Deputy in the State Legislature, Francisco Querios, who is the dominant

political personality representing the municipio in the outside political world. While the Querios family has some leverage on local influence through economic power (they are among the large land-holding local families: Antonio Querios owns the largest single piece of acreage in the irrigable area; another brother is a leading local small businessman), their special role in the municipio is chiefly due to the political power of the State Deputy and of his "representative" in the municipio, the Vice-mayor-Tax Collector.

The four persons holding the formal posts of greatest influence, in terms of political or spiritual authority and access to material resources, are four of the six informal leaders. In that the Mayor had been in office for only a few months at the time these interviews were conducted, it could be assumed that his elected-formal position was based, at least in some degree, on informal leadership built up during thirty years residence in the municipio and in the position of local delegate of the national statistics office which he occupied prior to his election. A main reason for the Vice-mayor's role undoubtedly is his brother's status. However, he is something of a "dashing personality" in his own right and has built up a close circle of intimates. In addition he is a sizable land-holder. The priest's informal leadership role is mainly tied to his formal position in view of his recent arrival four months prior to this investigation. The DNOCS engineer bases his informal leadership role on a combination of formal authority (he represents more governmental power and material resources than anyone else in the municipio) and a level of competence and enthusiasm to improve local conditions.

Of the three other persons mentioned who hold formal positions, two of them are agronomists. One is Valdemar Dantas, the agricultural director of DNOCS; the other, Gilberto Costa, the director of ANCAR. The latter barely missed classification as an informal leader according to our definition. He won considerable respect among the poorer agricultural people and worked energetically to utilize the meager resources at his disposal. The DNOCS agronomist has had relatively little contact with the local populace notwithstanding eight years residence in the municipio and the resources of a government agency which could contribute substantially to rural technological advancement. The DNOCS part-time medical doctor appears to have taken little interest in the municipio during his year and a half there.

The two informal leaders not yet mentioned, as they hold no key formal position, are Manuel Rocha and Luis Nascimento, two of the most respected business agricultural people in the municipio. Both have had university work. Rocha has substantial business interests in the State Capital city plus a small land holding in the municipio.

Nascimento is one of the larger and most able local land owners. Both of these men are among the more interested in improving conditions in the municipio. Rocha established a small experimental primary school on his farm and has been the leading source of pressure in asking the State Ministry of Education to construct a high school in the municipio. Nascimento has conducted small experiments on his farm. He also is employed as an agronomist on the DNOCS experimental farm.

#### Characteristics of Persons Selecting Top Informal Leaders

What are some characteristics of the persons selecting these informal leaders? These people tend to have an above average level of living and are mainly located in the urban center. In other words, they are the urbanized "upper class." The rural people who selected these leaders also are weighted toward middle to high living level categories. There appears to be no clear living level difference among the supporters of the various informal leaders.

Although almost half of the municipio had moved there within the last ten years, most of the persons selecting the top informal leaders have resided in the municipio more than ten years. They are not concentrated in one street or subsection but they are heavily weighted toward the urban area.

Of most interest is the behavior of persons living near the dam and on the DNOCS "experimental farm" -- the new and most dynamic section of the urban area. It is one of the "modernizing" centers in the rural sector.

Three of the six informal leaders -- Cavalcante, Nascimento and Oliveira -- constitute a nucleus of "change leaders" -- they desire reforms. Rocha has provided leadership in pushing for the one recent local reform -- construction of a high school. The largest concentration of their support comes from the aforementioned two sites in the municipio. On the other hand the chief support for the traditional leaders -- who advocate minimum change -- is found in several main streets of the "old town" and the rural sector.

A good number of those with high political sophistication selected the informal leaders, but in the urban area the largest support comes from those with middle level rather than highest sophistication. It would seem that a number with high sophistication do not recognize any local individuals as leaders. Even as they have a distaste for local political participation, so too they have a modest opinion of the local human resources. This could be a cause of their low community participation.

### The Elected Leaders

Two of the persons who hold key formal positions in the municipio are elected leaders: the Mayor and Vice-mayor. While these posts come from victory at the polls, (although the Vice-mayor also is Tax Collector, an appointive position) they were also chosen as two of the six top informal leaders. The other main elected officials, whose authority is limited to the life of the municipio itself, are the ten town Councilmen.

As a Federal State Brazil is constructed similar to ours -- the local electorate also selects officials for state and national offices. The most important of these are Governor of the State, Deputy to the State Legislature, Deputy to the Federal Legislature, Federal Senator and President of the Republic of Brazil.

This study was limited to the local scene, although it was evident that local political behavior is interlocked with higher authority levels outside the community.

The only person in the municipio who was selected on all three lists used for defining informal leadership was the Mayor. As Mayor he also occupied a key formal position as an elected leader. He won an overwhelming majority in the 1962 local election both in the urban and rural sectors. One could cautiously conclude that he is a genuinely popular local leader. Due to his very short period in the mayorship it would seem unlikely that his status is due only to holding this office. More research is needed to determine the ways and means of access to his place of influence in this local environment and the relationship of holding a formal office to other reasons for prestige. It would be of special interest to find out whether his image would be maintained, increased or decreased if he followed a different course of

action. For example, in the stability of contemporary local politics and the stagnancy of the local economy, would his position of influence stand up if he became an innovator, a force of rapid change?<sup>16/</sup> Would his prestige be sufficient to help mobilize substantial local support?

Information is needed on the role of the ten elected councilmen in the local leadership structure -- whether any of them are among the top informal leaders along with the Mayor and Vice-mayor. Only two of the ten were on even one of the three lists used for identifying informal leadership. None of them is an informal leader or holds any major formal position of responsibility. They are seldom referred to in local conversation. An inquiry into their educational background showed that six had finished the second grade and the remaining four the third grade. This hardly compares with the six informal leaders -- one of whom has an agronomy degree (Nascimento), one engineering (Oliveira), one the schooling of the ordained priest (Padre Raimundo), one several years in seminary (Rocha), one high school (Antonio Querios) and one the fifth grade (the Mayor).

It would seem that the status of this elected office is low and does not attract able people. Any stature and authority associated with the local government is vested in the Mayor and Vice-mayor; on the other hand at least some of the councilmen serve a supporting political role. For example, several are part of the State Deputy's political machine.

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<sup>16/</sup> For example, if he were to push to develop a local association of landholders in the valley for maximizing the use of the dam's waters for irrigation; or if he were to campaign among the small business people to make greater use of the dam's power potential for small industries; or if he were to press for augmenting the tax rate and for stricter collection methods; or if he urged rapid upgrading of the quality of local teaching.

The more politically sophisticated local inhabitants and observers in the capital city make clear that the most important political power in the municipio does not reside in this or the other municipios. This person lives in the capital and is the Deputy representing this sub-region in the State Legislature.

Francisco Querios was born in what today is an adjacent municipio (at the time of his birth they were one municipio). An abstract of his official biography says:

He attended primary school in his native town, completing secondary studies. Since his first high school years, he was an excellent student, winning the good will of his colleagues for straight forwardness and intelligence...

He took pre-law at the traditional high school, graduating later in the Law Faculty. He passed the entire course of Juridical and Social Science with distinction and was one of the outstanding students. After graduating he became a lawyer in the interior of the State...

Entering politics, he joined the Social Democratic Party (PSD), forming around him a large number of friends and co-religionists.

He was elected as a State Deputy, winning re-election...as a simple, affectionate, loyal and ready man.

An informed and educated local person laid out another view of the State Deputy:

This municipio has the reputation of having one of the highest rates of crime in this part of the region. No one actually knows, but it is said that, counting back from a year or two ago, during the last decade there were more than 100 homicides locally, not to mention other acts of lesser violence and injury. Families have a tradition of living by violence here.

The leader of banditry, who dominated this whole area a generation ago lived in a nearby municipio.

Today it is his son who dominates: the State Deputy. He is a paternalistic politician, he tells people what to do, what they should want. He gives favors to those who follow what he dictates.

The government agency DNOCS operates here on the same basis; what is done is done for the people, not by them. DNOCS does the planning and execution of any project it undertakes -- no local leadership is developed. DNOCS came here after a catastrophic drought thirty years ago and has been here ever since.

The people are resigned to a life without personal initiative, although naturally they have hopes that conditions will change. But it is difficult to get them to do anything for themselves, because they live on favors, on being given something and being encouraged to accept that and ask no questions. If a person starts to take initiative and to develop into a leader who could be a rival to the Deputy's coalition, he may even be killed, as has happened more than once. No one is ever arrested after the killings. But I am convinced that today the real problem is not that Querios would kill them -- they simply are afraid.

Although the Deputy lives in the capital, he knows everything that happens, because he works through his people who are here.<sup>17/</sup>

According to the voting records for State Deputy it is clear that Francisco Querios has no articulated opposition. The people interviewed who did not vote for him usually replied vaguely to the question, such as "I voted elsewhere," or "I don't remember" or they refused to answer. The people who voted for him have approximately the same level of living as all the voters. So also was their political sophistication and length of local residence (mostly more than 10 years but larger percentage of shorter residence in the urban part).

His electors are dispersed throughout the municipio. He did not capture the total vote in any particular site. His electoral tactics are highly personalistic rather than based on systematic political organization which through a combination of threats and favors probably could win solid blocs of support at points of concentrated effort. Nevertheless, his percentage is much higher in the "old" traditional

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<sup>17/</sup> From a local interview.

part of the urban center than in the "new town." He gained less than one-third of the vote in the "new town" compared to roughly two-thirds in the "old town." The most likely base for development of a faction to challenge the State Deputy would be in the newer more dynamic sector of the urban center which might welcome a new brand of local politics, drawing upon the abilities of the "new guard" wing of local leaders.

To summarize the relationship between the Deputy and his electors, it seems to be wholly pragmatic. No factors contrast his supporters to other voters. There appears to be little or no ideological basis to his politics; he draws on a cross-section of the electorate. It seems mainly a question of whom he can win with his "carrot and stick" approach and how he can maintain his own influence by discouraging growth of alternative leadership. He does not need a large array of favors to hold his relatively small following so long as he can deprive any other potential leaders of translating their informal influence into political power.

#### IV. POLITICAL PATTERNS IN THE MUNICIPIO

The data thus far presented suggest tentative conclusions subject to further testing on political patterns in the municipio. Certain individuals and layers of influence, each with distinguishing characteristics, can be identified in the community. Various factors, such as family heritage, political parties, electoral success, resources used, policies advocated, relationship of local political configurations to those outside the municipio are seen to facilitate the acquisition and exercise of local power. An outline can be constructed of the flow of influence between the municipio and the outside and the kinds of problems this influence structure raises not only for people in the local community but for the outside "development agent" -- including the United States Government -- who wants to understand what is happening locally and what contribution might be made in the situation.

##### The "Layers of Influence"

How does the adult population in this municipio function politically? As indicated in the adjoining table there are a number of broad layers of political influence and activity into which it can be subdivided: the non-electorate, electorate, political sub-stratum and leaders.

TABLE 2. Political Functioning of Adult Population (Using persons interviewed).

INFLUENCE LAYER	CHARACTERISTICS										
<p>I. <u>Leaders</u>  <u>Top informal leaders</u> (6) combination of 2 of 3 factors: sought out for personal counsel, recognized for specialized skills, interested in helping community.  <u>Formal leaders</u> (3) hold positions of formal authority who not informal leaders.  <u>Elected leaders</u> (1) elected rep. from local community</p>	<p>3 formal leaders least popular appeal;          6 informal leaders broadest appeal;          1 elected leader most political power; level education much above local average; most have specialized skills; 7 of 10 have strong ties with outside; "Change Leaders" (3) have important support in "new town"; "Traditional Leaders" (3) in "old town"; urbanized, upper living level, more than 10 years residence, some political sophistication are their chief supporters.</p>										
<p>II. <u>Political Sub-stratum</u> (excluding leaders) have moderate to high political sophistication and community participation.</p>	<p>Mainly urban, middle to high level of living, mainly more than 10 years residence.</p>										
<p>III. <u>Electorate</u>            All voters, excluding leaders.</p>	<p>Weighted toward urban, mostly literate, higher living level than Non-electorate, tendency more than 10 years residence, mostly middle to high political sophistication and level of satisfaction but low level community participation (except for Political Sub-stratum).</p>										
<p>Total 122</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Political Sub-stratum</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">-----25-----</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Literate Voters</td> <td>70</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">-----</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Illiterate Voters</td> <td>27</td> </tr> </table>	Political Sub-stratum		-----25-----		Literate Voters	70	-----		Illiterate Voters	27
Political Sub-stratum											
-----25-----											
Literate Voters	70										
-----											
Illiterate Voters	27										

(Continued)

TABLE 2. (Continued)

IV. Non-Electorate  
All non-voters

53

Apolitical - outside political world; mainly rural, low level of living, mostly illiterate, tendency less than 10 years residence; lower than average level of satisfaction, low political sophistication, very low community participation.

The non-electorate are the people who do not vote-- 30% of the persons interviewed. Their level of living is the lowest in the municipio. This creates a spiritual hopelessness, a feeling of exploitation which they accept fatalistically rather than confront actively, and a general inability to organize themselves to improve their situation. These people are concentrated in the rural part of the municipio.

Most of them are illiterate, their level of satisfaction is lower than the local median, their political sophistication level is low and community participation very low. Many of them are among the newer inhabitants in the community, resident less than ten years. They are marginal to the political world with virtually no political influence and unattractive as potential clientele for persons seeking influence in that they do not even make use of the minimum political instrument -- the vote.

The second influence-layer is the electorate. Their common bond is that they vote. They are more concentrated in the urban sector, reducing their physical isolation and giving them certain advantages over the rural people of material comfort and social intercourse. They have a higher level of living than the non-electorate. Most of them are literate, although a number of illiterates have managed enfranchisement notwithstanding the constitutional bar. Members of the electorate tend toward a middle to high "level of satisfaction" and have lived in the municipio longer than persons of the non-electorate. Most of them have a middle to high political sophistication, but very few participate in community affairs.

Their main political function has been voting; they attempt to satisfy their needs primarily through private channels rather than community efforts, including government. Persons seeking influence, however, recognize the importance of the electorate and therefore are prepared to bestow various favors and assistances in return for votes.

The electorate can be subdivided into illiterates, literate voters and voters who constitute the political sub-stratum. It could be assumed that the illiterates, although voting, have a lower political sophistication than the other voters, if for no other reason than inability to read. Caution is needed, nevertheless, because the most important form of communication is the radio-television media, not the newspaper. Most local illiterates have a lower level of living than literates. Perhaps they are a sub-gradation between the non-electorate and the literate electorate.

A further division of the literate electorate can be made according to the degree of political sophistication and community participation. It would seem likely that voters who have both a relatively high political sophistication and participation in community affairs are more influential than the others.

A third layer of influence is the political sub-stratum. It could be defined as that part of the electorate with a middle to high political sophistication rating and community participation level. In other words, they have some information on matters of political import and they also participate in community activity where they presumably have opportunities to exercise a bit of influence.

Characteristics of this layer include a relatively high level of living and level of satisfaction, local residence of generally more than ten years and concentration in the urban sector. There were some 25 people identified during interviewing who constitute this political sub-stratum. Thus they not only vote but are informed and somewhat prepared to apply their information and a minimum of energy to activities involving other community members. In view of their role as the most influential sub-layer of the electorate, it could be expected that persons seeking local influence would consider their support a priority target.

The final influence-layer in the community are the men at the top, the leaders. Identification of this layer is based on our previous analysis of local leadership patterns. There were six top informal leaders, using the definition

of persons locally selected on the basis of two of three criteria (sought out for personal counsel, recognized for specialized skill, thought to be interested in helping the community). Of the seven persons holding key formal positions in the municipio, four were rated as informal leaders as well as formal leaders. To this leader list can be added the other three on the basis of their actual or potential influence as manipulators of local authority. Finally there were three elected leaders with influence. As two of these already were included as leaders in one or more of the other categories, we complete our list of ten local leaders with the one remaining elected leader, the State Deputy.

A survey of these ten leaders presents a group of considerable diversity. The three formal leaders not included on other lists, namely Dantas, Costa and Vasconcelos have the most narrow appeal. Costa, however, is respected among a number of the rural people as a competent agronomist genuinely interested in helping them. The six informal leaders have the broadest appeal while the one elected leader not on the other lists has the most political power of these top ten.

The level of education of the ten is much above the local average. It is not only a matter of "literacy" -- most of them have specialized skills. Seven have strong ties with the outside; either they are not indigenous to the municipio or do not at present live there. Their approximate period of association with the municipio, present residence, vocation, employer are as follows:

Name	Time in Municipio	Residence	Vocation	Employer
Antonio Querios	Life	Municipio	Clerical	Municipio
Luis Nascimento	Life	Municipio	Agronomist	DNOCS
Fernando Cavalcante	Life	Municipio	Clerical	Municipio
Manuel Rocha	8 Years	Municipio (also capital)	Land Holder & Business- man	Self- employed
Padre Raimundo	4 mos.	Municipio	Priest	Church

Cicero Oliveira	2 yrs.	Município	Engineer	DNOCS
Francisco Querios	Life	Capital	Politician	State Legisl.
Valdemar Dantas	8 yrs.	Município	Agronomist	DNOCS
Pedro Vasconcelos	1 1/2 yrs	Município (also capital)	Doctor	DNOCS
Gilberto Costa	4 yrs.	Município	Agronomist	ANCAR

All of them have a degree of worldly sophistication. If we discount those who are employed with DNOCS, ANCAR, the Church and the State Government in the capital -- all of whom are in constant communication with seats of authority on higher levels -- there remain only three. Of these, Querios is in close touch with the capital where his Deputy brother is located, Cavalcante regularly visits the capital on official or private business as Mayor and Rocha lives part-time in the capital.

It could be assumed, in fact, that these people have considerable difficulty in providing local "leadership" in the sense of wielding influence through understanding and identifying with an extremely poor, primarily rural município in the interior. For they, especially the persons not born there, probably feel closer to the personality of the capital which is another world. The political effect is that there is no one in the community to bring the needs of the mass of the population to the attention of the public powers to help solve them. Most of the population is either altogether apolitical or participates only minimally in the decision-making process. On the other hand, the top local leadership, through lack of understanding or inclination, does little to perform this function. The people expect little from politics: no matter whom they vote for, there are few if any changes.

Who are the people in the município who selected these individuals as leaders? They are primarily urban, have a moderate to high level of living and political sophistication and local residence of ten years or more. The elected leaders

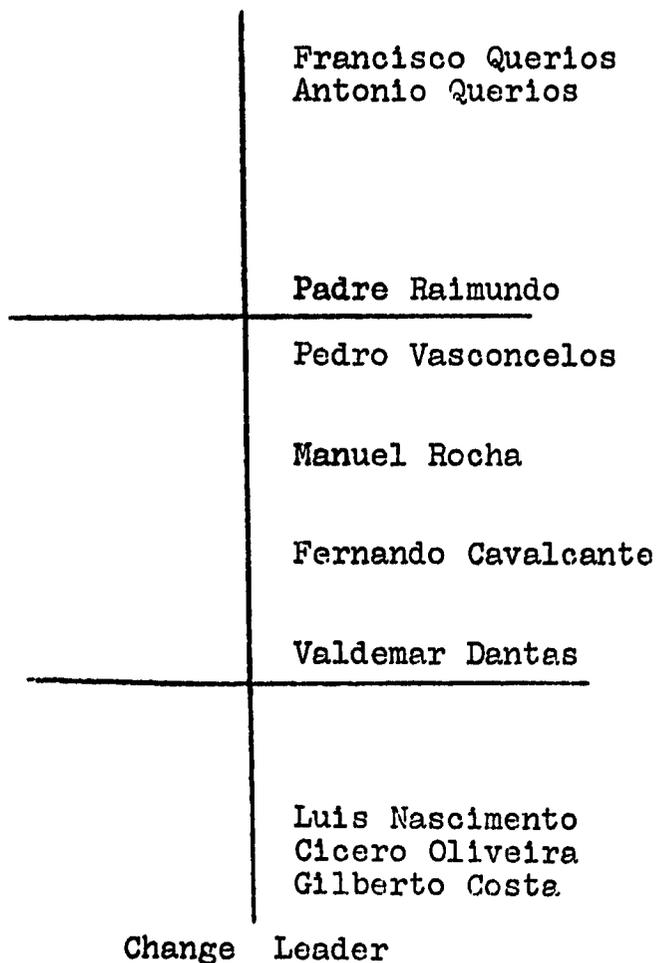
received votes from a wide spectrum in the municipio, including considerable numbers of "lows" and "highs." This could be due to lack of any effective opposition, as both the State Deputy and Mayor displayed a virtual monopoly of electoral power. It could well be the result of a tradition of "pragmatic politics," where people vote for "whoever gives them something," without ideological considerations based on class, education and so on.

### Traditional and Change Leaders

From the complex of data known about these leaders -- each was interviewed last summer -- they can be classified, in a general and tentative way, along the following political spectrum.

#### POLITICAL ATTITUDES OF TOP LOCAL LEADERSHIP

##### Traditional Leader



Traditional Leader characterizes persons desiring to exercise their influence to maintain local political stability, minimizing any fundamental changes toward redistributing economic and political power and discouraging any efforts to develop new local leadership. They favor the traditional pattern of acquiring and using influence.

Change Leader describes persons desiring to use their influence to improve local conditions by means of rapid social and economic changes -- a principal means being to develop new leadership which has specialized skills. They are above all technicians -- they favor "technical leaders" as distinct from "politicians." They would emphasize increasing production rather than simply redistributing property, but they favor land reform if it is associated with technical assistance so that production is enhanced. Their method of exercising influence is by doing technical jobs (such as bringing drinking water to the urban center, extending better agricultural methods to the farmers, etc.) although traditional methods -- especially on the part of the leaders associated with DNOCS -- are not overlooked altogether.

The top layer of influence in the municipio thus could be subdivided by their attitudes toward "rapid change," their ideas about working with and using local human resources for whatever objectives they have and their means for exercising their own influence. At one end of the political spectrum as Change Leaders would be Oliveira, Costa and Nascimento; at the other end, the Querios brothers. The former three are all technicians, two agronomists and an engineer. The Querios have been formed in the traditional mold of politicians in much of the Northeast.

Nascimento is the most politically sophisticated and "intellectual" of the three Change Leaders and the least "action-oriented." Perhaps his sophistication is the reason. Oliveira is in charge of DNOCS operations in the municipio with undoubtedly more authority and material resources than any other local person, including the State Deputy. Oliveira appears secure in his position in that he is a qualified engineer. He has been cautious in using his job beyond the strict definition of the technical tasks assigned to him, although privately he speaks forthrightly as to where his sympathies lie. He knows the prevailing temper of his agency in the capital, which tends toward traditional rather than change politics.

Costa is unique among the local leaders in that his personal orientation is strongly change-oriented and his personality one of outspokenness. He also represents one

of the most change-oriented and least traditional agencies in the region, ANCAR. In other words, the orientation of the authorities in the capital is similar to his own. His main concern, therefore, is less fear of alienating his organizational superiors than as field representative of a semi-private agency with limited authority, not alienating important local interests which might jeopardize his presence in the municipio.

Placement of the other leaders on the political spectrum is somewhat more speculative. The priest apparently has emotional sympathies for the position of Costa and Oliveira. Some of the very poorest people in the parish are the most regular churchgoers and it would require a hard heart not to appreciate the need for change. At the same time the priest is a practical man and knows the traditionally close relationship in this region between the upper echelons of the Church hierarchy and the political leadership. While change is not automatically discouraged, the traditional pattern of politics continues to be strong. The priest respects the group which controls local politics in the classic manner, namely the Querios coalition.

Vasconcelos, the DNOCS medical doctor, spends little time in the municipio and is little concerned with its conditions and politics. By temperament and training, he is closest to the traditional political pattern, but he performs no role on its behalf. He takes no particular actions in the cause of the Change Leaders, notwithstanding the potential at hand due to his position as the only medical doctor in the whole municipio and representing a government agency with large resources.

Rocha is a landholder and businessman who has some property in the municipio but derives his main income from business interests in the capital where he lives part of the time. With the interested support of the Mayor, he has borne the onus of initiative for the only major local "reform" in the recent period, pressure on the State Ministry of Education to construct a high school. Because the project was initially opposed by the State Deputy, this took some courage on his part, until compromises were worked out leading to the Ministry's authorization that the school be built. His present local reputation as an informal leader is based in great part on his "role in education." Local observers believe he has political ambitions -- his major reason for taking these risks. While he indicates interest in certain "reforms," these "reforms" are closely related to political objectives.

Cavalcante, the Mayor, has shown publicly his sympathy toward the attitudes of Costa and Oliveira. At the same time, apart from the temporary quarrel with the State Deputy over the school, there is no evidence that he has been at odds with the Querios. As a member of their political party and a lifetime resident of the municipio, as are the Querios, he is very familiar with local political realities, including his leeway for maneuver before being confronted by the power of Querios. It would appear that the Mayor is close to the Change Leaders in terms of personal empathy, but that he would be cautious in undertaking a major change program even if he had the authority and resources to do so. He would move slowly, preferably with the tacit consent of the Querios.

Dantas is employed as chief agronomist by DNOCS. He favors all the agricultural reforms that any "progressive" would call for, including land reform, but he has done little during his eight years in the municipio to use his position of considerable authority and means for this end. On the other hand, there is no evidence that he has particularly served the interests of Querios. He has a reputation for remaining isolated from the community and abstaining from local participation. Were a "change movement" to gather momentum he could be counted on to join "at the appropriate time" but he would never be the initiator.

In sum, the Leader Layer of influence has what might be described as two competing elites: the Traditional Leaders and the Change Leaders. They are "competing" more in terms of thoughts and potential than in actions of direct political significance, for the Change Leaders are at a disadvantage. Not only are they less politically experienced and shrewd than their opposing elite, but the agencies they represent are unlikely to let them directly challenge the Traditional Leaders. The latter, on the other hand, are first of all political leaders devoted to using all means of influence at their command to maintain their local leadership.

Between these two wings are a number of persons whose sympathies ally them emotionally, in a moderate way, with the Change Leaders. Several of them envisage that "historical necessity" is on the side of change. However, they are also practical men, each with a position to conserve and aspirations to achieve along the road of minimum resistance. They in a sense are a buffer zone in the middle. They have the political effect of encouraging local stability. This in turn favors the Querios, who, more than anyone

else up to the present, have had the role of presiding over the politics of the status quo.

### Some Factors Affecting Influence

Given that the dominant single political force in the community is the Querios group, what are the characteristic means used to gain and exercise power? What factors affect their influence?

The Querios "inherited" their position from their father who is considered to have "unofficially" ruled the area. However, as the Brazilian Government has gradually extended its authority throughout the land, with the aim of integrating the vast northeastern region into the modern federal State, the Querios, as their counterparts elsewhere, no longer can govern quite as did their father -- by use of violence. Homicides have continued and the fear of bodily harm is one reason causing Querios' rivals to move with caution. At the same time traditional leaders have developed more "acceptable" methods of exercising influence.

The Querios' position points up the great importance of family heritage in a society which is relatively immobile and where traditional politics facilitates the passing down of prestige from generation to generation. New competitors for influence start at a distinct disadvantage vis a vis the elite which not only has been prepared by political training and frequently has an advantageous position of economic power and education, but is entrenched in a system which favors the group already with the upper hand.

This dominance of the Querios family is recognized by the top leaders themselves. The State Deputy and Vice-mayor and their family, plus the priest who is rather close to them politically, were widely selected by the other leaders. It is interesting that Nascimento, probably the most sophisticated of the leaders other than the Querios, limited his choice of local "influentials" exclusively to the Querios.

While Querios is one of the real powers of his party PSD, in the State, this Party, like the others, has little organization. Party victories at the polls, especially in the more rural areas, result more from the strength of important individuals than from campaigning or platforms as such.

The local people do not necessarily vote a straight Party ticket for all local, state and national offices.

It is unlikely for example, that a political chieftain such as Querios automatically transfers his own electoral strength to all other candidates running under the label of his Party, especially in national elections. In the Presidential elections of 1960, for example, his Party's candidate, Marshall H. Lott, won the municipio. But the persons interviewed who voted for Querios for State Deputy split their vote for President among Lott, Quadros and other replies.

Were the local "notable," in this case Querios, to feel it of great importance to his personal political status to deliver a large majority for other candidates of his Party, he probably could do it, using traditional methods of influence. Undoubtedly he had something to do with the large local majority given to Marshall Lott, although Lott, as the conservative candidate, was also supported by the Church and other conservative regional interests. At the same time it is interesting that our data indicated that more than half of Querios' supporters in the State election voted for other candidates.

The role of party is portrayed in a short article in Brazil's authoritative political journal, Revista Brasileira de Estudos Politicos, which attempted to interpret some of 1958 elections:

The strength of Democracy is directly related to the power of the political parties...(Here) the parties are weak. The deputy is the leader, the political boss, the one who represents a large electorate. Each deputy thinks exclusively of himself, is little interested in his party. This is an aspect of individualistic politics so prevalent.

Each deputy personalizes local problems and makes them the source of his political prestige and renovation of his mandate...From his party he wants only the label. He does not have a party conscience. What he has is the consciousness of his own political power. For that reason he changes parties as easily as he would change shirts.

In a State where political power is at the mercy of a few influential leaders, where the political parties do not have ways and means to control their deputies, where the parties do not possess real prestige, Democracy cannot help but be weak. The parties...cannot fulfill the constitutional function of directing the political life of the State.

In the elections of 1958, for example, two deputies of PSD disagreed on their main orientation. The State chairman of the party denied them support for the election. In spite of that, they were elected, also gaining the sympathy of the PSD national chairman.

They are parties with no ideological basis. What they do on the State level may be the opposite of the municipal level, or vice-versa, producing the most extravagant alliances...<sup>18/</sup>

However, while the Deputy is primarily interested in his own power rather than the Party's, this must be considered most applicable for national candidates. He would not tolerate, unless he had no power to resist, the election of a Mayor and Town Council in his municipio of a Party other than his own. This would be a major step toward disintegration of his influence in the area. It is not by accident that the Mayor, Vice-mayor and eight of the ten local Councilmen are of his same Party.

Because the Deputy's chief source of power is political rather than economic it is useful -- maybe absolutely essential -- for him to hold a major elective office so that he can integrate the traditional influence of his family into the constitutional democracy of Brazil. As he cannot exercise influence quite like his father did, he must legitimize his power. This he (along with other family members) can arrange by holding appropriate offices won through elections. He has satisfactorily resolved this for the present due to his own position in the State Legislature and his brother's Vice-mayorship.

The great importance to him of these elective offices is a system of politics which virtually guarantees him, and any other candidacy he chooses to support in the municipio, victory at the polls. At this point it is useful to depict his manner of manipulating traditional politics, the resources used to exercise influence, the policies advocated.

Traditional politics, often reported as characteristic of developing areas in the world, work within their own particular setting. In Northeast Brazil the most significant feature of most of the region is the periodic drought. Drought affects not only the rural areas where people on the land feel the first and most direct impact. It also hits the cities which face food shortages and soon feel price rises as food imports are augmented from outside the region. The drought is not only a physical and social factor but

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<sup>18/</sup> Revista Brasileira de Estudos Politicos, Num.8, April 1960.

it has become integrated into the political system. The State Deputy's present influence is not unrelated to the anti-drought agency, DNOCS.

Historically, Northeast Brazil's experience has been that each drought -- the interval between droughts varies greatly -- brings a massive outlay of public resources to the Northeast.<sup>19/</sup> Existing agencies have administered this influx of resources and frequently new ones have been created. A common result has been personalized political, profiteering as indicated by the following description:

If the drought has been a calamity, an even greater one has come with the relief funds either because of the fabulous sums that were misspent or because of lack of patriotism on the part of the administrators of this service. These public relief funds became a means of political deals...commissions were established in all points of the state formed by special friends of the government and they distributed large amounts of money and manioc flour as they pleased.<sup>20/</sup>

Apart from direct relief, the main type of public expenditure has been for public works projects, especially dams and roads. These activities can become highly political.

Dams and roads were built to benefit properties of friends or to consolidate the political influence of some political chief of the interior. This result was frequently achieved also by the federal government turning over works it had constructed to the states or municipalities, which in turn let favored individuals take them over.<sup>21/</sup>

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<sup>19/</sup> The response of the Brazilian public authorities to droughts in the Northeast since 1877 is detailed in Albert Hirschman, Journeys Toward Progress, Studies of Economic Policy-Making in Latin America (N.Y.: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1963) pp. 13-91.

<sup>20/</sup> Excerpt from a report of the Governor of Rio Grande do Norte in R. Pereira da Silva, Trabalhos Relativos aos Estudos de Parahyba e Rio Grande do Norte, Inspeccao de Obras Contra as Secas, Pub. No. 12, Imprensa Nacional, 1910, p. 33, as cited in Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>21/</sup> R. Pereira da Silva, pp. 9-10, cited in Ibid., p.24.

There is a tendency to politicize all of the expenditures. Politics becomes "the politics of drought."

For a person such as the State Deputy who wants influence but himself has limited economic resources, access to such public resources flowing abundantly in time of drought in recent years has become a key to power. Through "properly distributed" use of assistances and favors, whether they be the strategic placement of a road or locational plans for an irrigation aqueduct, a job with one of these governmental agencies or simply drinking water for the town, or money or manioc flour the Deputy can build up and solidify a clientele loyal to him personally. This system of personal loyalties in return for services rendered appears more satisfactory to him than influence based on a strong political party organization. Parties have advantages of mobilizing large numbers and enforcing discipline. But organizations require organizers who gain experience in leadership and develop their own centers of influence. They breed potential rivals. Moreover, one strong organization tends to beget a counter-organization which may threaten his present virtual monopoly of power and substitute cold, impersonal and hard to control ties for those based on personal bonds, family and emotions.

Once the traditional leader has built up his loyal following in the municipio, in this case over a sub-region of several municipios, so that he is the dominant influence over local public authority, he then has access to State powers to protect his interests. The lines of communication between the legally constituted public entity, the municipio, and the higher levels of public authority pass through him or his representatives in the local government. It becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the municipio to take actions or formally make reports which jeopardize his position. Some local observers say this helps to explain the political homicides in this municipio; the Deputy's coalition supposedly has considerable freedom from the discipline of public authority because it largely controls local authority.

To maintain his dominance, the Deputy favors one general policy: discourage any fundamental changes in the economic and social organization of the community, but, at the same time, "do something" to combat local misery. The Deputy has sought to win sizable public funds through DNOCS for temporary increases in work -- at present to install drinking water in the urban center. He recognizes the need for medical facilities. He endorses food distributions handled by the priest (mostly United States surplus). All of these

activities not only improve local welfare somewhat, they are excellent means for exercising his influence through distributing jobs and largesse of all kinds.

In contrast, he discourages attacks on more "fundamental" problems. The above assistances are remedial actions which deal with recurring needs, although in the long run they may help in dealing with fundamental problems. He is unreceptive to such "reforms" as redistributing land, training of specialized labor, development of local groups to plan for irrigation or better schooling. As has been mentioned previously, he opposed the initiative taken by Rocha to organize a local school committee to push construction of a high school. The school will be built -- he had to respect the local demand for it but it is likely that much of the final enterprise will be on terms set by the Deputy through contacts with the State Ministry of Education in the capital.

Above all, he would be unreceptive to efforts for "leadership training," for preparation of a leadership class with technical skills, initiative and broad outlook. Several cooperatives have been attempted in the municipio but are yet to function effectively. While lack of ability likely was the cause, it would not be unrealistic to assume that his coalition would not favor vigorous local cooperatives which provide experience in local self government and the opportunity for initiative and maturation of leadership skills. In short, "reforms" that have the obvious political impact of increasing potential influence of various groups in the community could not but imply a diminution of his own prestige. The traditional leader's rule-of-thumb guide must be highly pragmatic: support any action unlikely to have consequences that challenge his own position; oppose any action that seeks to redistribute power or prepare persons who will recognize that the only means to enlarge their opportunities is by changing the status quo.

The type of program that the traditional leader can heartily endorse is precisely the kind of public assistance that has been channeled into the Northeast during most of this last century. Apart from actual relief, this approach has mainly concerned "physical solutions" -- dams, roads, and other public works. Their construction implies large sums of money for temporary jobs and for temporary stimulants injected into local economies. These things impress the local people: "something is happening" -- they are major endeavors. Moreover, a few key local people who actually are able to use the results of these physical projects -- for example, the agriculturist who has skills and capital to

introduce irrigation with the dammed water, or the person who has an auto or tractor and most benefits from modern roads -- are definitely appreciative of these innovations.

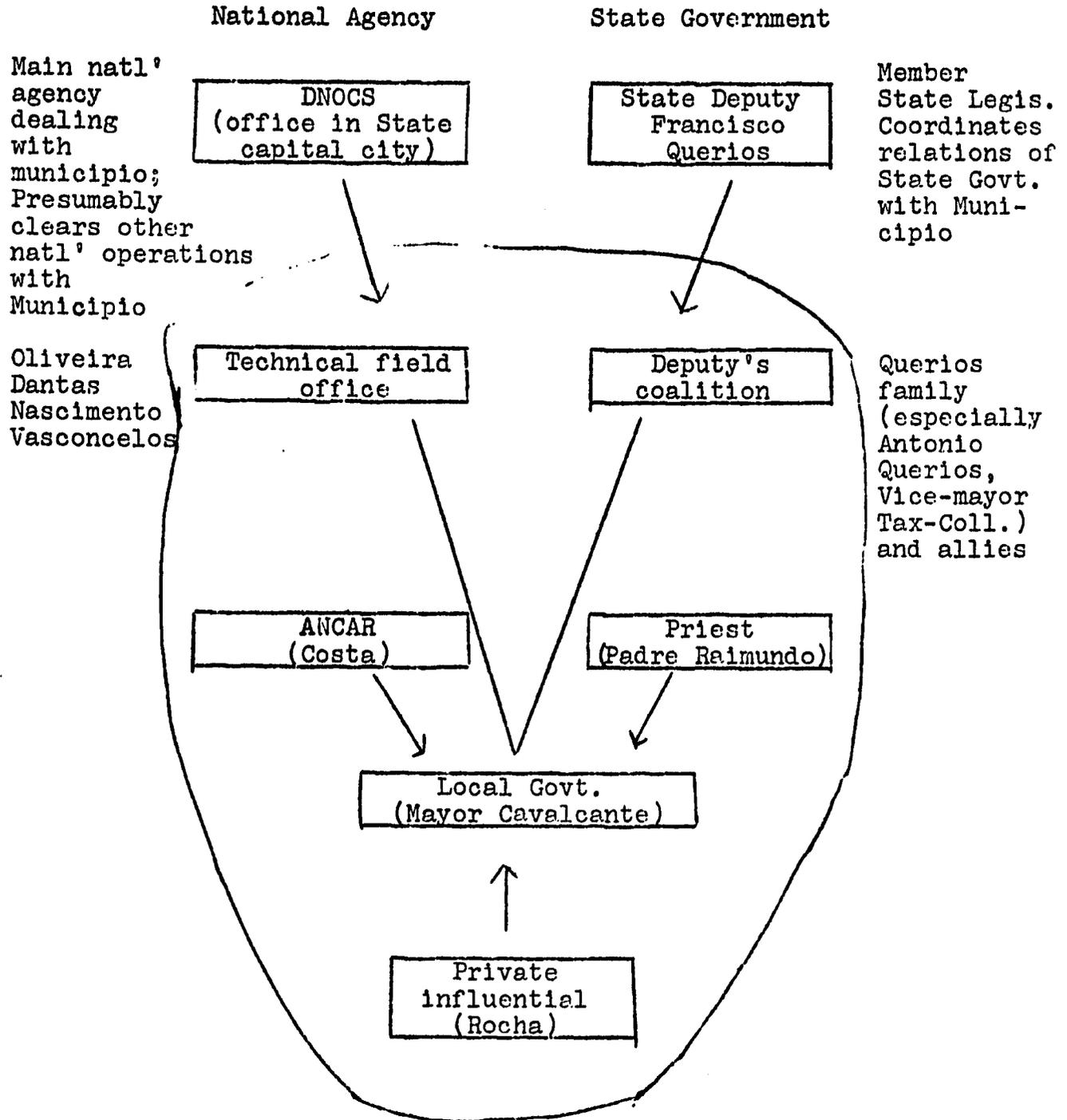
However, the new assets have potentials which remain greatly under-utilized because most of the community has never been prepared and organized to reap the potential profits. As in this municipio, it is apparent that throughout the Northeast there are reservoirs whose waters have been little used for irrigation or power, and roads in the interior, built at considerable public cost, have very little traffic. These things are relatively marginal to the lives of most of the population. Not much has actually changed in terms of the peoples' own attitudes, their political organization, their ability to use these things for economic betterment. A large government agency had come in from the outside with plans formulated by specialists elsewhere to build a dam and undertake other activities. The local people were never involved policy-wise, they paid nothing for these assets, they participated as wage-earners, but no initiative, planning or special ability was required on their part. It is not surprising that upon completion of the dam in this community, the utilization of its tremendous potential has been mainly by DNOCS itself. Little local leadership has materialized in the municipio of almost 30,000 people to plan how to take full advantage of this community resource. This is the way the coalition of traditional leadership, led by the Querios, would have wanted it.

#### Interrelationship of Municipio and Outside

Given the inferior status of the local government relative to State and Federal authorities and in view of the important outside ties of the top leaders in the municipio, an understanding of local political patterns requires an outline of the structure of influence between the municipio and the outside. How does influence flow between the community and the outside world?

Given incomprehensive data, the tentative conclusions here suggested need further testing. The adjoining diagram points the influence interrelationship.

### INFLUENCE INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MUNICIPIO AND OUTSIDE



There are two main centers of power affecting the municipio from the outside, both located in the State Capital. As shown on the diagram, one is the State Deputy. As a member of the State Legislature and important personality in the State government and as the only high elected official from this municipio, he can be considered the most important point of contact of the local power structure with the outside. As his influence is primarily based in politics of the State, his leverage in the municipio is related to his ability to coordinate (if not outright control) relations of the State authorities with the municipio. The Governor or State Ministries would be unlikely to undertake a major program in his municipio without clearing with him.

The other main outside center of power is DNOCS which has an office in the State capital. Over the years it has evolved a very substantial program in this drought ridden State and has invested large sums in the sub-region which includes this municipio. As the only agency of the national government with significant activity here and with a powerful political position in the State, it can be assumed that DNOCS acts as a clearing house for any other national programs affecting the municipio.<sup>22/</sup>

The key question is the relationship between the State Deputy and DNOCS in that between them they have a rather decisive voice over connections of both State and Federal entities with the municipio. It is apparent that DNOCS is cut from the same pattern of traditional politics as is the State Deputy. DNOCS has the material resources, the Deputy has the political influence based on family heritage plus electoral power. As long as the two can work together they hold a preponderant influence over the community. It is well known in this sub-region, including the municipio, that DNOCS has "contributed" to electoral victories. For example, in the 1950 presidential election DNOCS favored Marshall Lott, candidate of the party of the outgoing President Kubitschek of PSD which is also the party of the State Deputy. Lott won decisively in this municipio where DNOCS had important activities, but he lost by a very close margin in the State

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<sup>22/</sup> For example, the federal health agency, SESP, was considering the installation of a medical clinic in the municipio. It was informed, then, that DNOCS had a part-time doctor there and that its intentions should be cleared with this agency, given the latter's long held interest in this municipio.

as a whole. It would seem that the Deputy and the DNOCS office in the capital are close cooperators; the Deputy's main DNOCS problem is not in the capital but in its field office in the municipio.

The diagram points out that the first step in the channel along which the Deputy's influence flows into the municipio is his local coalition. This consists of his brother (the Vice-mayor and Tax Collector) plus other members of his family and loyal allies. They are his local representatives. The priest, also representing a powerful center of prestige with a heritage of traditional politics, qualifies to be included in this coalition. This particular priest at present appears to be "on the outside" due to his short residence in the community and uncertainty as yet where he stands. As the local government, presided over by the Mayor, is the legally constituted local authority, the Deputy's influence is channeled through this to the extent that any decision-making is undertaken by the municipal authority. Actually, there is little local government action, a fact willingly accepted by the Deputy's coalition to whom a vigorous development policy could be considered anathema.

The influence of the DNOCS office in the capital is channeled through the DNOCS field office in the municipio, directed by the chief engineer, Oliveira. Sizable authority is also vested in the agricultural field director, Dantas. The field office influence actually is considerable in that DNOCS represents significant public power and means and the national government in Brazil usually is felt to be more prestigious than the State level. Moreover, DNOCS has authority to expropriate land, as it did for construction of the dam, aqueducts and roads. Its decisions as to selection of sites for expropriation, not to mention size of payment and recognition of legal titles<sup>23/</sup> can have a considerable local impact.

The DNOCS technical office in the community is quite progressive and is sensitive to the need for shifting influence from the traditional pattern. This view, pushed by the representative of ANCAR in the municipio, Costa, has had the effect of strengthening the position of Oliveira for

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<sup>23/</sup> It was reported that many of the claims for compensation by persons holding properties in the area expropriated by DNOCS for the dam more than a decade ago, have still not been paid. While allowing for bureaucratic delays, there is the suggestion that unclear legal titles and political factors have also been directly involved.

within the DNOCS office itself there is considerable variation. Vasconcelos, the part-time doctor, has little or no local influence and has never used his position of potential authority for health development. Moraes, the head agronomist, is progressive but after many years in government service and with a rather satisfactory personal position at present, he is reluctant to take action that might "rock the boat." Nascimento, an agronomist with DNOCS, as well as a private landholder, strongly favors a development program. But he is primarily an "intellectual," wary of actions that challenge the entrenched power of the Querios which he has correctly diagnosed as the dominant local influence. Within DNOCS this leaves Cliveira, who holds top authority for the field office even though he is the youngest of the four and perhaps the least sophisticated politically.

The Mayor's position is difficult. As the seat of local formal -- if not real -- authority, the powers from outside must flow, after passing through their local intermediaries, through his office at least in some degree. His sympathies lie in the direction of the Oliveira-Costa views but he knows the Querios role and the power and traditional pattern of DNOCS activity in the capital city. The Mayor also has to take into account the interests of the few local persons who press him to use his office on matters that concern them such as Rocha's push for the high school. As an articulate informal leader Rocha could disturb the Mayor's local authority were Cavalcante not to co-sponsor the school. But the Mayor's sponsorship could lead to the opposition of the Deputy's coalition as actually was the case until a compromise was effected.

While the foregoing suggests an outline structure of the flow of influence, more research is needed to assess the relative influence of each power center. For example, an analysis of the headquarters -- field relations of DNOCS might indicate the degree of autonomy of the DNOCS field office. Were Oliveira to push forward with a vigorous development effort, gradually forming a nucleus in the municipio of persons who would challenge the traditional leadership, could he proceed with a minimum of interference from headquarters so long as he competently fulfilled the technical tasks assigned him as an engineer? Likewise, were the priest, under the increasing influence of Costa, Oliveira and Nascimento plus his own recognition of growing local desperation, to become a dedicated progressive as priests have in the Northeast, could he throw his weight to the Change Leaders without sanctions from his superiors?

Were several people of the Rocha type -- persons with some economic power, sophistication and ability -- to emerge as active community participants, could they win the Mayor to their side or win the Mayor's office electorally after having built up for themselves an image of "doing something" for the municipio? Were the Mayor's office to become integrated into a Change Coalition, how would the Deputy's group channel its influence -- could the State Deputy circumvent the local government by means of restricting its authority so as to make the office altogether powerless?

More data also is needed on the relationship of the different centers of influence to the different influence layers in the community below the leader level. Which influence center has most prospect of developing favorable ties, for example, with the non-electorate, undoubtedly a significant new factor if brought into the political world? Were a Change Coalition to emerge, would the electorate sacrifice potential favors from the Deputy coalition in order to support a competing group which promises more vigorous action on local problems? How committed is the political sub-stratum to the status quo? How deeply is it entrenched after years of reaping the small favors of traditional politics? Is there a significant segment prepared to risk upsetting the status quo if and when a "development strategy" is offered to the community?

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