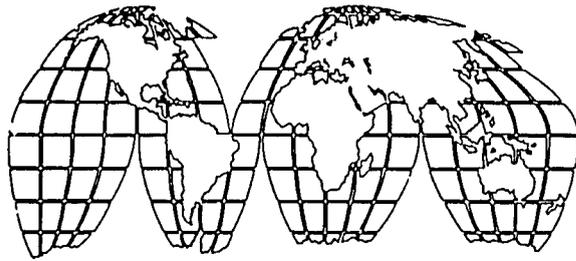


PW. ABCW-771
96267

USAID Working Paper No. 208

Center for Development Information and Evaluation



Civil Society and Democratic
Development in Chile:
A CDIE Assessment

October 1994

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

REVISED DRAFT: NOT TO BE CITED

Civil Society and Democratic Development In Chile
A CDIE ASSESSMENT

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October 28, 1994

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Civil Society and Democratic Development In Chile

Executive Summary

This study is a part of the assessment of the role of civil society in the promotion of democracy undertaken by the Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) of the United States Agency for International Development. The research for this study took place between June and July of 1994. Over a hundred interviews were conducted in Chile in that period and field visits were made to project activities in Santiago, in the Valparaiso-Vina del Mar area and in Concepcion, the three principal urban areas of Chile.

THE SETTING

The Political Transition

The event that has defined recent Chilean politics has been the 1973 military coup that overthrew the democratically elected government of President Salvador Allende, head of a coalition of left parties. Using a reign of terror, the military established its hegemony over the political process for a period that lasted until 1990, when power was returned to a democratically elected government.

The transition from one of the most authoritarian military dictatorships in the history of Latin America to a democracy was characterized by:

- The continuing existence of authoritarian enclaves consisting of the existence of appointed senators, an electoral system that limited the representation of the majority, institutional autonomy of the Armed Forces and police vis a vis the State that restricted popular sovereignty; the failure in the course of the transition to punish or even to bring to light the full range of human rights violations under the military dictatorship; and the continuing presence as commander in chief of General Pinochet.
- A robust economy inserted in the world economy which while it had serious income distribution problems still permitted the government to dedicate its efforts to political matters related to completing the transition to democracy.
- The democratically elected government represented almost the entire opposition to the previous regime. That coalition of democratic forces was the result of a long term effort to develop a consensus among all the political parties of the democratic opposition.

The main problem of this incomplete transition is that there is no national debate about

the future. While the macro economic equilibrium has been not only maintained, but also improved, there is little in the way of developing a long term political vision of Chilean development. This is in effect the price that has been paid for avoiding the conflicts that undermined the previous democratic order.

Political Economy

The military regime sought to foster the complete liberalization of the economy (except for exchange rates), reduction and subordination of the state's role in the economy in favor of the private sector, elimination of all barriers to external competition in the Chilean market and encouragement of foreign investment. It also sought to eliminate critical reforms such as the redistribution of land fostered by the agrarian reform initiated by the Christian Democrats. Initially, the application of this formula led to a crisis and collapse of the financial system in 1982 and a deep economic recession. The economy only began to grow again in 1984. As a result of this crisis, there was a noticeable fall in real salary levels as well as a reduction in social welfare spending.

The democratic government of Patricio Aylwin by virtue of its political and economic orientations was committed to assure the maintenance of a politics of consensus at the same time that it dealt with the requirements of those who had been systematically excluded from economic participation by the previous regime. They were able to convince the entrepreneurial sector that the existing social situation could not be sustained, securing support for taxation and spending adjustments that permitted an increase in social programs as well as an increase in the minimum wage. At the same time, the government was able to assure the business sector that the government would respect the existing economic model.

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Developing Freedom Spaces Under the Military Regime

The "Concertación por la Democracia" (Accord for Democracy) represented a coming together of the principal opposition parties in a political alliance based on compromise. It was facilitated by the discussions within the academic centers that laid the groundwork for setting aside ideological differences, developing a common political strategy to end the dictatorship through instruments made available by that dictatorship (i.e. the plebiscite).

The processes of analyzing the destruction of Chilean democracy, the and the development of a common agenda for action were facilitated by the freedom spaces provided by civil society organizations (CSOs), by their research and their discussions of relevant issues. Those freedom spaces had been facilitated, in turn, by donors had seeking to preserve the social sciences in Chile. That effort was so successful that it can be asserted that the social sciences in Chile and the related possibilities of political discourse flourished in Chile despite the efforts and desires of the military government. Thus, there is a direct link between donor action, the existence of institutional framework for thinking about politics and the re-establishment of a

Chilean democratic polity.

PARTICIPA: A CSO Undertaking Civic Education

Participa is an ideal case of an USAID-supported CSO involved in both a strategy of strengthening democratic culture and of mobilizing for participation. Participa grew out of the Cruzada Civica, an effort established in 1988 and funded by USAID to assist in registering voters for the 1988 plebiscite. The 1988 voter registration campaign proved highly successful. Prior to the campaign, only about 4.5 million out of a potential voting population of just over 8 million had registered. By the time of the plebiscite the electoral rolls included over 7.4 million registered voters. Turnout for the plebiscite was equally impressive, at over 97% of registered voters.

Pinochet's defeat in the October 1988 plebiscite opened the way for presidential and legislative elections in December 1989. In response, leaders of the Crusade organized a second campaign, this time called "Participa" with support from USAID. Participa sought to educate the electorate for the upcoming elections from a non-partisan perspective. Participa received a bridge grant in 1990 and a long term grant in 1991 from USAID.

Participa's activities expanded during 1992 and 1993. Through the grant, PARTICIPA sought to: 1) reintroduce formal civic education in the high schools, 2) instill democratic values in the society at large and promote citizen participation in community organizations, and 3) encourage voter registration and informed participation in electoral processes during the period.

Participa produced secondary and primary school civic education texts, organized workshops for teachers and developed a text for use in a televised course. It trained volunteers to assist in voter registration drives and conducted drives in connection with the 1992 and 1993 elections.

During the last half of 1993, Participa began a process of restructuring aimed at achieving institutional self-sufficiency by mid-1995. Under Participa's new structure, five "strategic action units" were organized: 1) youth, 2) international services, 3) development and social integration, 4) public sector, and 5) special projects. Each unit is responsible for generating projects and seeking funding from both public and private, international and domestic sources.

Participa's restructuring at the end of 1993 culminated a process aimed at making Participa a self-sufficient institution, capable of functioning without USAID support which was scheduled to end in 1995. Participa has found it necessary to professionalize its staff and volunteer corps, to become more institutionally specialized, and to aggressively seek out new sources of domestic and international funding. This process has had other consequences. As the organization has become increasingly professionalized, it has developed a whole new set of institutional interests. As Participa made the transition toward a permanent institution with a broader long-term mission, it became more concerned with institutional survival and growth.

One consequence of these changes is that Participa is no longer the "grassroots" movement it once was which may influence its future role as a civic educator.

The Labor Movement

Just as the 1973 coup decimated the political party structure, the universities and many of the other academic centers, it wrecked havoc on the labor union movement in Chile. The principal national confederation of unions, the Central Unica de Trabajadores or CUT as it was commonly known, was closed down. Union leaders were subject to repression and the union movement lost a significant number of affiliates and as a consequence its capacity to act as either a defender of the rights of workers or as a political force.

The labor movement had a long history, stretching back into the beginning of the twentieth century. By 1970, the year that the Unidad Popular government was installed, unions covered 35% of the work force, with the CUT including 90% of unionized workers within its ranks. Under the Unidad Popular government, the CUT was involved in co-management of nationalized enterprises. As a study undertaken during the Unidad Popular noted, at the moment of its dissolution by the military regime in 1973, the CUT had reached the highest level of legitimacy and representativeness in its history. The dictatorship, seeking to destroy the labor movement and change the terms of labor-management relations, revoked the CUT's charter, seized its assets and promulgated regulations which restricted the right of unionization and curtailed the role that labor unions could play. Union affiliation dropped precipitously to a low of 8% of the labor force in 1983.

Having survived the initial repression in 1973, the union movement in Chile began to reconstruct itself in 1978. With the return of a democratically elected government in 1990, the CUT once again began to expand as national representative of labor interests. The CUT acquired the status of a legally recognized national central union. It brings together 95 national member unions and branches with a total of around 600,000 members and 41 provincial councils. Presently, 70% of all union members are affiliated with the CUT. The number of union members has expanded dramatically since 1988. The unionized sector of the work force has grown from 11.8% in 1981 to 15.7 % in 1992.

The CUT was resurrected under the dictatorship at a point where the main focus of all political activity was the restoration of democracy. Once the formal instruments of democracy were restored through the changes in the constitution in 1989 and the election of Aylwin, the CUT joined with the political parties in assuring the necessary consensus to protect the transition to democracy. The CUT counted on being rewarded for its efforts. It has achieved a restoration of its legal status and a measure of political support for developing its organization. However, it has not been able to win increased economic benefits for its members. To secure greater benefits, it has begun to use mobilization as a political tool to get the government to pay attention to its demands. In response, the government has opened a dialogue to assure maintenance of the existing political consensus. But, over a longer term the CUT will need to show results in order to justify the dialogue.

Women's Concerns

Historically women in Chilean politics have been relegated to a second class position. The women's suffrage movement, although active in advocating its demands for women's right to vote as early as the 1920s, did not achieve its goal of enfranchisement until 1949. The Christian Democratic government of Eduardo Frei Montalva (1964-1970) included a special role for women from the popular classes within its popular mobilization efforts. The Unidad Popular began where the Christian Democrats left off in developing social mobilization through mothers' centers. However, the emphasis was on a top-down promotion of women's participation in society.

The repression associated with the military dictatorship had a dramatic impact on the conditions of women in economic, social and political terms. Women as the relatives of the victims of repression felt the immediate consequences of that repression. They felt the impact of the economic and social policies fostered by the military regime--creation of a free market that wiped out many employment opportunities, elimination or reduction of social services, reduction in government spending on health and education as well as elimination of women's labor benefits.

The adverse circumstances of the dictatorship helped to develop the political skills of women. Women thought through approaches to raising gender issues, human rights concerns and developing survival strategies. They created NGOs dedicated to applied research, political education and supporting organizational efforts at the local and national level. These organizations were supported by a variety of international donors which made it possible for them to build up their institutional resources. They were able to contribute to the process of the transition to democracy with their ideas, their physical presence in marches and demonstrations and their ability to help turn out the vote in critical moments such as the 1988 plebiscite and the 1989 elections.

The end of the dictatorship and the advent of democracy has brought them certain benefits. They have greater freedom to undertake their research, argue their agenda and express their position through such organizations as the National Women's Service (SERNAM) which is an institutional expression of the state's concern with women's issues. However, this very success has provided a new set of obstacles. The financial resources from foreign donors that were the core of support for many of these institutions are disappearing at a rapid rate. Political victory in the creation of SERNAM has left an important question mark--state cooptation of the gender issue. The solution in the short term for many of the organizations and for the women's movement as a whole has been to tighten belts, develop new skills or more sharply hone existing skills as research and technical assistance consultants to the state or to whoever will provide resources and look for alternative sources of funding. The solution for many as well is to approach politics from several angles: at the local level to take advantage of opportunities which may be easier to access than those at the national level (there are more council-persons than deputies, for example), to work through local functional committees such as road paving councils and to organize networks around a critical issue such as divorce. These approaches may also

mean a role for some of the NGOs that can provide the necessary skills and insights to make these choices effective. The issue then returns to the survival strategies for these NGOs.

The Environment

Concern with the environment is a fairly recent phenomenon in Chile. Over a decade ago, in the midst of the dictatorship, Chilean scientists and concerned citizens began to explore the possibility of concerted action to protect the environment and to deal with major pollution problems that threatened the quality of life, the ecology and the economic well-being of Chile. CSOs have been significant actors in developing environmental policies, at first in a virtually closed dialogue among themselves and eventually reaching out with the advent of democracy to government and to a new agency within government, the Comisión Nacional del Medio Ambiente CONAMA (National Commission on the Environment), which has been assigned responsibility for environmental concerns, an agency the CSOs helped to create.

A significant element in the history of NGO involvement in environmental policy was the series of "Scientific Encounters Regarding the Environment" organized by the CIPMA, Center for Research and Planning of the Environment with the support of international donors including USAID. These national meetings held in 1983, 1986, 1989 and 1992 were fora for identifying concerned individuals with the necessary technical skills to assist in policy-making on the environment. This was one mechanism that allowed environmental groups to build alliances with some important sectors of the business community.

Awareness of environmental issues can be considered fairly high in Chile with the media serving to promote environmental concerns. Important issues remain such as reducing air pollution in Santiago, preserving water quality in areas affected by mining, preserving the forests and maintaining the quality of agricultural and fishing resources.

But as is the case with labor and women's issues, environmentalists have to deal with a number of constraints: reduced resources from international donors, dominance of the state over the terms of the debate on environmental policy and the relatively limited strength of a variety of environmental NGOs with limited memberships and limited local resources.

A new factor to be taken into account in the future will be the ability of environmentalists and environmental NGOs to work effectively at the local level, where municipal governments, working with local citizenry. Issues that are seen as affecting a particular community may be more amenable to local political solutions than those same issues raised to the national or international level.

The Future of CSOS

NGOs that operate as Civil Society organizations (CSOs), seeking to influence policies, formulate new agendas and increase the participation of educated citizens in the process of government face formidable obstacles in present day Chile. Having survived a dictatorship,

CSOs face the challenge of massive reductions in support from international donors and only limited opportunities to secure support from local sources within the context of tax laws that do not encourage charitable donations.

The transition to democracy has left issues such as a redefinition of the role of women and their fuller participation within the economic, social and political order, the management of an environment in crisis as well as issues left over from the consequences of unequal development under the dictatorship, the provision of social services across the population, the role of a resurrected labor movement in defining the future of economic growth and the means of reducing the poverty ignored by the previous regime. Women are seeking access; labor is pressing its demands and the political process has responded largely by emphasizing the need for consensus.

Certain lessons can be drawn from donor experience in Chile that would be relevant for donor efforts in similar situations of transition to democracy. Faced with a dictatorship that seeks to destroy the ability to think about and undertake politics, donors can play an important role in building freedom spaces which provide the opportunity to rethink political strategies, develop alternative analytical models and provide the necessary breathing space so that opportunities (such as the 1988 plebiscite) can be capitalized on. Those freedom spaces can also serve to open up the possibility of exploring and promoting new issues such as women's rights and the environment.

Donors can also look to Chile for lessons regarding the ability to make a democratic process richer through such actions as enhancing the capacity of newly democratic groups, for example youth, to understand and operate within a democratic context, i.e. one of the key roles undertaken by PARTICIPA as well as other civic education agencies. Donors can also refer to the degree to which small amounts of resources can assist in rebuilding a labor movement almost destroyed by a military regime.

Donors are leaving Chile at an extremely rapid rate, driven in part by the belief that Chile constitutes an advanced developed country. However, the outcome of withdrawing support without the presence of adequate substitutes may be a fundamental alteration in the role of the agency in question. The important question to be faced is whether these agencies can continue to perform their role as generators of alternative ideas and/or as civic educators, functions likely to be critical to maintaining the vitality of Chilean democracy, particularly in terms of incorporating innovations in democratic thought and practice.

Preface and Acknowledgements

This study is a part of the assessment of the role of civil society in the promotion of democracy undertaken by the Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) of the United States Agency for International Development.¹ The research for this study took place between June and July of 1994. Over a hundred interviews were conducted in Chile in that period and field visits were made to project activities in Santiago, in the Valparaiso-Vina del Mar area and in Concepcion, the three principal urban areas of Chile. The study team consisted of Joel M. Jutkowitz, the team leader, Jorge Giusti who focussed particularly on labor, Philip Williams who focussed on PARTICIPA, Manuel Antonio Garreton who provided an overview of Chilean politics as well as an analysis of public opinion studies and Heather McHugh who assisted in interviews across the board. The team was aided by Anita Rosenbluth and Carla Soto who secured the necessary contacts and conducted library research. Home office support was provided by Mary Said of Development Associates Inc. The team received significant support from Claudio Mundi, Democracy project officer for USAID/Chile and the staff of the USAID Representative's office. Thomas NiCastro, USAID Representative to Chile provided important overviews into the themes covered by the study.

Earlier inputs and insights gained from working with the CDIE civil society team, Harry Blair, Gary Hansen and Mike Calavan during development of the original framework for the study as well as in undertaking the initial field studies in Bangladesh and Thailand were instrumental in assisting to define the tasks undertaken in Chile. Important insights were also gained from continuous discussions with Mal Young of Development Associates Inc..

The final version of the report was put together by the team leader, using inputs from other team members. Any errors or misstatements are the team leader's responsibility.

¹ The framework for this study is contained in Harry Blair et al, **Civil Society and Democratic Development: A CDIE Evaluation Design Paper**, 14 February, 1994.

Civil Society and Democratic Development In Chile

I. Introduction

The event that has defined Chilean politics in the latter part of the twentieth century has been the 1973 military coup that overthrew the democratically elected government of President Salvador Allende. The victory in 1970 of the Popular Unity (Unidad Popular) coalition of Socialists, Communists and their social democratic allies was in the first instance the demonstration of the maturity of the Chilean political system. A set of political parties advocating radical change within the context of the democratic process had successfully achieved a political victory using that democratic process. This success was short-lived. Within a period of a few years (September 11, 1973) a military coup ended democratic government in Chile. Using a reign of terror, the military established its hegemony over the political process for a period that lasted until 1990, when power was returned to a democratically elected government.

A great deal of literature describes the government of the Unidad Popular, the coup, the military dictatorship and the transition to democracy.² Since this study deals with a particular component of the political process, the role of civil society organizations in the re-establishment and maintenance of democracy in Chile, we will focus principally on the relevant portions of the history of that transition to democracy and its continuance. Our concern is the role that civil society organizations have played and continue to play in defining political agendas, advocating those agendas and developing the necessary skills and understandings so that citizens can function in a democratic society and the related role of international donor agencies in supporting such civil society organizations.

It is important to note, because it became a significant factor in formulating the lessons learned from the experience of the Unidad Popular period (1970-73), that a critical contributing factor to the destruction of Chilean democracy was the total disintegration of the body politic. In effect, the normal rules of the game of political discourse broke down. Conflict rose to the level of fundamental values, fundamental concepts of the ordering of society. Under the circumstances, political compromises were impossible. Consensus over the very existence of the democratic order collapsed. The outcome was that the way was open for a politics of naked

² See, for example, J. Ann Zammit ed., **The Chilean Road to Socialism**, Institute for Development Studies, Sussex, 1973; Ian Roxborough, Phil O'Brien and Jackie Rodick, **Chile, The State and the Revolution**, Holmes and Meier, New York, 1977; Federico G. Gil, Ricardo Lagos E. and Henry A. Lansberger, **Chile at the Turning Point**, ISHI, Philadelphia, 1979; Manuel Antonio Garreton, **El Proceso Político Chileno**, FLACSO, Santiago, 1983; Manuel Antonio Garreton, **Reconstruir La Política, Transición y Consolidación Democrática en Chile**, Editorial Andante, 1987, Santiago; Matias Tagle D., ed., **La Crisis de la Democracia en Chile: Antecedentes y Causas**, Editorial Andres Bello, Santiago, 1992.

force. And, a military existed that was willing to use that force at a level previously unimaginable in Chilean history; hence the almost seventeen year military interregnum.

II. The Political Background of the Transition

The regime that was established after the coup was based on a systematic use of terror and repression to eliminate an opposition that at its height had secured as high as half the total vote of the Chilean electorate (in the municipal elections of 1971 where the governing coalition of the Unidad Popular and other parties on the left secured half of the votes cast for mayors and council members). Throughout the process of the consolidation of power and the operation of the dictatorship, the military and those allied with it used a variety of institutional frameworks and strategies to maintain power that involved a continuing process of violation of human rights. That process of repression is described and documented in the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Comision de Verdad y Reconciliacion).³ Aspects of this repression relevant to framing the action of civil society organizations are included in the relevant sections of this report.

In 1980, following recommendations from a study commission, the military junta approved a new constitution for Chile, the constitution presently in effect (with modifications that were the result of a process of negotiation in 1989 between the military government and its opposition).⁴ The 1980 Constitution which replaced the Constitution of 1925 that had established the basis for the democratic practices in existence up until the coup, created two successor regimes, a transitory regime that was to last until 1989 and a protected democracy that was to continue thereafter. The transitory provisions of the constitution called for a plebiscite to decide whether or not Chileans would accept as President a candidate designated by the commanders of the Armed Forces. If the designated candidate had received approval from a majority of the voters, he would have remained in power through 1997. As it turned out, the democratic opposition used this plebiscite in 1988 to vote the military regime out of office by securing a no vote of 55%. The opposition were able to accomplish this by building a coalition of political parties, labor unions and civic organizations that assured a high level of voter registration (around 92% of those eligible) and a high voter turnout (97% of registered voters). The fairness of the plebiscite was aided by the existence of an independent vote counting process which

³. For a summary in English of that report, also referred to as the Rettig report, drawing from the name of the Commission's chair, see **Summary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report**, Chilean Human Rights Commission and Centro IDEAS, Santiago, May, 1992.

⁴ The 1989 reforms eliminated freed the Constitution of some of the limitations on practices normally associated with democracy including freedom of action for political parties. The 1980 Constitution had been set up to assure that any restored democratic order could be controlled.

informed the public of forced the government's hand.⁵ As will be discussed further below, civil society organizations played important roles, both partisan and non-partisan, in making that electoral victory possible.

The transition from one of the most authoritarian military dictatorships in the history of Latin America to a democracy possessed three characterizing features, one essentially negative and two positive, that help to define the new regime:⁶

First of all, the transition was incomplete because of the continuing existence of three authoritarian enclaves. These consisted of institutional arrangements such as the existence of appointed senators, an electoral system that limited the representation of the majority, institutional autonomy of the Armed Forces and police vis a vis the State⁷ that restricted popular sovereignty; the failure in the course of the transition to punish or even to bring to light the full range of human rights violations under the military dictatorship; and the maintenance of a hardcore nucleus of Pinochetism, including the continuing presence as commander in chief of General Pinochet.

The existence of up to seven appointed senators (appointed by the out-going military government) meant that the upper house over-represented the opposition to the new government. The electoral system for both houses of the Congress which under-represented the most populous areas of the country and was biased in favor of electing members of the minority (the opposition to the democratically elected government) also biased the composition of the Congress in favor of the opposition. The autonomy of the military severely limited the ability of the democratically elected government to exercise any formal control over the hierarchy of the Armed Forces or over their budget (which was financed through independent revenue streams outside the control of the government such as the revenues from the sale of copper). The presence of Pinochet as commander in chief both symbolically and practically cast a shadow over the return to democracy--serving as a reminder of the continuing power of the military despite the return to a democratic government.

Secondly, while there were serious socio-economic problems in terms of the distribution

⁵ National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, **Chile's transition to Democracy: The 1988 Presidential Plebiscite**, Washington DC, 1988, pg.3.

⁶ For a more complete discussion of the process of Chilean political transition, see M.A. Garreton "La redemocratización política en Chile: transición, inauguración y evolución". *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y El Caribe*. Volume 4, no. 1, Tel Aviv, January-June, 1993.

⁷ In the past year, that autonomy was demonstrated by the fact that the present President of Chile was unable to remove from office the Director General of the Carabineros, the uniformed police, even though the Director General stood accused of being an accomplice in a political assassination.

of income and wealth, the democratic government inherited a robust economy inserted in the world economy. This allowed the government to dedicate its efforts to political matters related to completing the transition to democracy.

Finally, the new democratic government represented a political first in redemocratization--the democratically elected government that came to power in March, 1990 represented almost the entire opposition to the previous regime. That coalition of democratic forces (as we shall discuss further below) was the result of a long term effort to develop a consensus among all the political parties of the democratic opposition, a consensus that would assure that the destructive forces of dissent and disagreement which had undermined the democratic order in the period 1970-73 would not be unleashed again. Thus, the government included the Christian Democratic party, the Socialist Party, a new political party, the Party for Democracy, the Radical Party as well as several splinter parties that covered the vast majority of those who supported a return to democracy. The democratic government led by Patricio Aylwin represented a political, social and electoral majority, even though that majority could not be fully expressed in institutional terms because of the structural limitations arising from the 'authoritarian enclaves'.

Thus, the transition constituted a special case as compared, for example, with Eastern Europe and the NIS--there was no major economic crisis to confront and no need to build a democratic majority.

The strategy followed by the first democratic government was to separate out the different dimensions of the authoritarian enclaves, to negotiate each one by itself, and to give preference to promoting democratic stability and to the management of economy. The ghosts that haunted the regime were authoritarian regression and explosion of social demands and business disloyalty that could generate the disarticulation of the economic macro equilibrium the government had inherited.

Concerning the institutional aspects, given that the opposition constituted a majority in the Senate due to the appointed senators, the government did not attempt a broad constitutional reform. It focused initially on the democratization of municipalities, re-establishing election of municipal authorities and increasing the role of local government, a process that resulted in the necessary changes to hold democratic elections at the local level in 1992. A broader constitutional reform was sent to Parliament in 1993, but it failed to be passed. In August 1994, the new democratic government inaugurated on March 1994 sent a new package of reforms to Parliament for its consideration.

On human rights problems, the Aylwin government dealt with the issue by creating the Comisión Verdad y Reconciliación (the Rettig commission), disseminating its report, and providing some measure of compensation for victims. An amnesty law, promulgated during the military regime, has effectively precluded most trials of those involved in the earlier stages of repression, but some legal avenues have been opened and some cases are in the courts. The military, as is to be expected, have expressed their opposition to these cases.

With respect to the military, the strategy has been to isolate Pinochet in political terms, while continuing to pay the price of the maintenance of a high degree of institutional power and autonomy on the part of the high command of the Armed Forces.

In 1991 the Aylwin government announced that "transition was over". The country, it declared, should focus on new problems of modernization and expansion of the process of democratization. Two years later, because of public pressures from the military, the government recognized that this announcement was a mistake and that important problems of transition still remained unsolved. In 1994, the Frei government again announced that the new focus of Chilean society was modernization, replacing transition, even though this kind of declaration did not represent a consensus within the government coalition.

Thus, the authoritarian enclaves have been only partially overcome. In institutional terms, the persistence of these enclaves has its importance. Facing them in 1994 is more difficult because there is no longer that "etat de grace" of the inaugural moment of democracy. The paradox is that a very solid socio-economic base existed to undertake democratic consolidation; however, that consolidation has not been completed. On the other side, the governmental coalition has proven its strength and most probably will remain unified during the six year term of the second democratic period.

The main problem of this incomplete transition is that there is no national debate about the future. While the macro economic equilibrium has been not only maintained, but also improved, there is little in the way of developing a long term political vision of Chilean development. This is in effect the price that has been paid for avoiding the conflicts that undermined the previous democratic order. It is a direct result of the importance assigned to a politics of consensus. This politics of consensus has consequences for establishing a political agenda of change of the sort promoted by some CSOs. The success of the center-left coalition (Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia) in administering the government has made that government less responsive to emerging conflicts and new actors in society. The search for consensus and the importance assigned to building that consensus means that there are no institutional mechanisms that ensure the combination between competition and unity among the coalition components. The 1993 elections⁸ in which the Concertación increased their overall vote demonstrates that at present there is no likely alternative to the coalition. The question to be debated for the next presidential election in 1999 will be whether, almost a generation after the return to democracy, Chilean politics will continue to be a politics of consensus.

III. The Political Economy of Chile from Dictatorship to Democracy

The Military Model

⁸ See Oscar Godoy Arcaya, "Las Elecciones de 1993", *Estudios Públicos*, no. 54, 1994, pp. 301-337; José Auth, "Elecciones Presidenciales y Parlamentarias de 1993", *Estudios Públicos*, no. 54, 1994, pp.339-361.

Supporters of the military dictatorship have made much of the economic successes of that regime. In point of fact, the record of the military government, though marked by considerable economic advances, did not display a steady progress in economic development nor was it a process which was free of considerable costs, above all for the most economically disadvantaged sectors of Chilean society. The military initially sought to correct the economic imbalances that had resulted from the combination of government action and domestic and international opposition during the Unidad Popular government of Salvador Allende (for example, there was a hyper-inflation that reached over 800% in 1973), but then proceeded to dismantle the industrialization strategy followed by successive governments since the 1920s. That strategy had emphasized the interventionist role of the state, the need to protect infant industries and to develop an import substitution industrial base as well as to expand economic participation through support of reforms. Those reforms included in the mid 1960s an agrarian reform designed to end large *latifundista* land-holding patterns, vestiges of earlier centuries of agricultural development (an idea supported by both the center, the Christian Democrats, and the left of Chilean politics).

The military regime sought to foster the complete liberalization of the economy (except for exchange rates), reduction and subordination of the state's role in the economy in favor of the private sector, elimination of all barriers to external competition in the Chilean market and encouragement of foreign investment. It also sought to eliminate critical reforms such as the redistribution of land fostered by the agrarian reform initiated by the Christian Democrats.⁹ Initially, the application of this formula led to a crisis and collapse of the financial system in 1982 and a deep economic recession. The economy only began to grow again in 1984 and reached a level of continual sustained expansion in 1986. As a result of this crisis, there was a noticeable fall in real salary levels (falling around 25% in 1985 as compared with 1981) as well as a reduction in social welfare spending (falling around 10% from 1981-1984), a situation not turned around by economic advances in the period 1985-87.¹⁰

A series of economic reforms after 1982-3 stimulated private investment and exports, reducing inflation and fostering a growth rate in the GDP that approached 6% for the period 1985-90. This helped to create a business climate characterized by a high degree of optimism and financial euphoria--translated in to the so-called Chilean economic miracle.

But the costs associated with that miracle have been stated succinctly by Oscar Munoz:

⁹ For discussions of these policies see Oscar Munoz, "Economy and Society in Chile: Frustration and Change in the Historical Process", *ISSJ*, 134, 1992, p. 499. See also Alejandro Foxley, "Experimentos Neo-Liberales en America Latina", *Coleccion Estudios CIEPLAN*, no. 7 March, 1992, Santiago.

¹⁰ See Programa de Asesoría Legislativa, *Análisis de Actualidad: La Política Económica y La Economía Nacional Bajo el Gobierno Del Presidente Patricio Aylwin*, No. 67, March, 1994, p. 8.

The counterpart of this process of changes and transformations has been the impoverishment of wide segments of Chilean society. This has affected not only traditionally poor groups, but also middle classes. Household consumption shows that the ratio between the share of the wealthiest 40 per cent and that of the poorest 60% of the population increased from 1.9 in 1969 to 3.0 in 1988. Real wages, social security payments, **per capita** social public expenditures and employment rates of the labor force were all systematically below the pre-1970 levels during most of the 1970s and 1980s. This worsening of the social situation has frustrated the poor, which was only counteracted by fear, repression and lack of democratic liberties.¹¹

The military government's model, often referred to as the Buchi model for Hernan Buchi, Minister of the Treasury who put it into operation, emphasized exportation over social equity. It succeeded by offering lower taxes to the private sector along with a subsidized exchange rate and state support for controlling salaries and wages. The model worked best in developing low skilled labor intensive agricultural production (e.g. exportation of fruits to the United States).

Under the Aylwin Government

As noted above, the Aylwin government came to office in 1990 with certain economic advantages. In 1989, the growth in the GNP was around 10%, inflation was at 21.4%, one of the lowest points within the past decade and the investment rate was a record 20.3%, exportations were over US\$8 billion and there had been a decline in unemployment although that was largely based on part-time and temporary work.¹²

But there were serious economic problems that had to be met by the new government. There had been an accelerated increase in consumption by upper income groups fed by continuing reductions in their tax burden. On the other end of the economic spectrum, there was a growing discontent among the poorest sections of the society after long years of exclusion, and the presence of a union movement with increased access to the government that was not inclined to accept that the weight of the burden fell on workers while the overwhelming weight of the benefits went to the entrepreneurs.

The government by virtue of its political and economic orientations was committed to assure the maintenance of a politics of consensus at the same time that it dealt with the requirements of those who had been systematically excluded from economic participation by the previous regime. The Aylwin government approached this conundrum by entering into dialogues with the different relevant elements in the society--entrepreneurs, businessmen and labor. They were able to convince the entrepreneurial sector that the existing social situation could not be sustained. Therefore, they were able to secure opposition support for taxation and spending

¹¹ Munoz, *op. cit.*, p. 500.

¹² Programa de Asesoria Legislativa, *op.cit.*, p. 11.

adjustments that permitted an increase in social programs as well as an increase in the minimum wage.¹³ At the same time, the government was able to assure the business sector that the Concertacion would respect the basic terms of the existing economic model. In so doing, the government was able to promote expansion of the economy through 1992 and to assist the export sector to ride out the international recession of 1993. It was able to maintain high investment rates and avoid capital flight while achieving an average growth rate of the period 1990-1993 greater than 6%.¹⁴

Economic challenges that remain for the next government include increasing the level of modernization and related investment in small and medium enterprises, improving the country's infrastructure (taking into account the major environmental problems that exist) as well as the modernization of the public sector. The government of Eduardo Frei also has placed on its agenda a concern with directly attacking the root causes of the existing levels of poverty in the country.¹⁵

In the sections that follow, we will begin by examining the role that was played by civil society organizations in promoting the transition to democracy. We shall then explore an effort to promote civic education and participation that grew out of the campaign to restore democracy. We shall examine as well a more traditional CSO, the labor movement, and several newer CSOs, dealing with women's issues and the environment that are raising new issues and establishing new agendas for the current democratic process. We shall also examine the overall relationship that exists between NGOs in general and the government as well as discussing the role that international donors have played. Finally, we shall look at the future of CSOs in Chile in the light of a significant variable--the withdrawal of international donors from the Chilean arena.

IV. The Media

Historically, Chileans enjoyed ample freedom of press and expression prior to the 1973 coup. Virtually every point of view from the left to the right was represented by a newspaper or magazine. Most newspapers were characterized, as was other aspects of Chilean society, by their party affiliation or political leaning. The dean of newspapers, *El Mercurio*, for example, represented the right wing of the political spectrum. Chile, it should be noted had a high level of literacy, around 90%, and a variety of newspapers were able to secure a broad readership. Radio also covered a broad spectrum of viewpoints. Television was more limited in that there was a national government channel and three other channels affiliated with the principal universities, but even then, television covered a significant range of the political spectrum. This

¹³ Patricio Silva, "Social Justice in Chile", *Development and Change*, vol.24 (1993) p.481.

¹⁴ PAL, *op.cit.*, p.39.

¹⁵ The Minister of Planning, Luis Maira, was recently assigned the task of supervising an effort to develop on an approach to this issue. (Personal communication)

freedom was maintained through the period 1970-73, even in the midst of intense political conflict.

The military sharply curtailed freedom of the press, seizing and closing newspapers and radio stations affiliated with prohibited political parties, restricting access to television. Journalist were persecuted, exiled, imprisoned, tortured and killed for the political affiliations of tendencies. The net result was that the press, including the broadcast media, remained under the control of the government throughout the period of the dictatorship. Media supportive of the regime remained unfettered in a formal sense, but practiced self-censorship in the interests of national security.

With the return of democracy, freedom press has returned. There are fewer newspapers, but this is a function largely of economics rather than of politics. Radio represents a wide range of interests. Television, as in other advanced countries has begun to dominate as a medium with the expansion of existing networks and the establishment of cable hook-ups. (Cable brings in news from other Latin American countries such as Argentina, Mexico, Peru, Colombia and Brazil as well as the United States and elsewhere.) Television has become a forum for debating political issues. In short, the situation has returned to what it was prior to the coup with the addition of modern advances in telecommunications.

V. The Transition To Democracy: Building Freedom Spaces

The Consequence of the Coup for Political Freedom

The military regime that took over after the 1973 coup eliminated all the constitutional guarantees that had been associated with the Chilean democratic process. It declared illegal those political parties that had been part of the Unidad Popular and declared "in recess" all other political parties. Universities were intervened and those academics who were not acceptable to the new government removed from their positions. Think tanks within universities that were considered allies of the Unidad Popular were closed. Many politicians, political activists, government functionaries, labor leaders, journalists and scholars were imprisoned, exiled or killed or became "missing". In short, the Pinochet military regime destroyed both the freedom to undertake political activity and the freedom spaces in which to think about politics.

The dictatorship's repression of political activity and the related repression of social science and political thought can be divided into several stages. Focussing on the issue of the freedom to think, the early years, from 1973 through around 1976, were the years of the most intense repression. Universities were ideologically purified with the greatest burden falling on the state universities most identified with the left. A partial count indicates the magnitude of the repression. Over a thousand professors were expelled from the University of Chile and the

Catholic University in the first round in 1973-74.¹⁶ Almost as many faculty members were eliminated in 1975-76, ostensibly for budgetary reasons from the two universities. Other universities such as the Universidad Tecnica del Estado (The State Technical University) suffered similar fates. (The UTE was invaded the day of the coup and had its name changed subsequently to mark the process of ideological cleansing.)

Existing social science research institutes outside the university that were associated with the left such as the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) lost their charters or were otherwise subject to government pressure. FLACSO closed its international graduate program in the social sciences in Chile in the face of persecution of its students.

Rebuilding Freedom Spaces: The Academy for Christian Humanism

A first step toward rebuilding the possibilities of thinking about politics began with the establishment of the Academia de Humanismo Cristiano (Academy of Christian Humanism) in November of 1975. The Academy was the Catholic Church's response to the patterns of repression that had affected the church's own institutions of higher learning as well as those of the state.

The Academy was an umbrella organization that provided an institutional cover for donor agencies seeking to support the social sciences and related disciplines in Chile. It provided a source of employment for a significant number of social scientists. Its institutional umbrella permitted two other research centers to function in Chile in what was essentially an adverse environment--FLACSO and the Instituto Latinoamericano de Estudios Transnacionales (ILET). Its eight research programs provided employment for around 323 academics. In the period from 1981-1988, the Academy produced a total of 144 books as well as 39 serial publications. (Prior production from 1975-1981 was only 3 books.)¹⁷

Support for the Academy came from external sources including the Ford Foundation, the Inter-American Foundation, Canada's International Development Research Center, SREC of Sweden, NOVIB (Holland) and ICI (Spain) as well as other European governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The Academy provided a meeting place for academic discourse and an institutional framework for international donations. One of its initiatives to expand possibilities for discourse was the creation of study circles. These circles functioned in such subject areas as jurisprudence, philosophy, economy, international studies, and women's studies. The meetings and seminars

¹⁶. In the case of the University of Chile half of those expelled were in the social sciences. Maria Teresa Lladser, "La Investigación en Ciencias Sociales en Chile: Su Desarrollo en Centros Privados, 1973-1988", pp. 221-222.

¹⁷. Ibid. pp.224-5.

that took place under the aegis of the Academy laid the groundwork for the creation of groups specialized in the various areas that formed the subject matter of those meetings, the NGOs that were to emerge in the late 70s and the 80s.

A Critical Analysis of the Past and the Future

A second stage of the expansion of freedom spaces for political thought began in the late 70s. That process was the development of critical analyses of the process of destruction of Chilean democracy, including critical evaluations of the actions of the Unidad Popular government. The study circles formed under the wing of the Academy began to convert themselves into institutions--some professional societies and others NGOs. Several important research centers, (CEPLAN AND PIIE), left the Catholic University to become private think tanks (the former on its own and the latter under the auspices of the Academy). Both of these centers along with political research centers such as FLACSO brought their respective foci to the process of critical analysis of the failure of Chilean democracy.

By the early 1980s, the Pinochet government had defined its long term political goals through the Constitution of 1980. Repression while still present and available as a political tool had been relaxed. Newer research centers along with those already in place began to formulate proposals for alternative ways of returning to democracy. Institutions such as the Center for the Study of Development (Centro de Estudios del Desarrollo/CED) and the Center for the Study of Contemporary Reality (Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Contemporanea/CERC-AHC) held conferences that included international participants to discuss alternative roads for a transition to democracy. CED served as well as a site where political thinkers and political activists from different opposition groups to the dictatorship could come together to present their viewpoints and open dialogues with others.

In thinking through the lessons learned from the experience of the Unidad Popular and in examining changing relationships in the nature of political and economic development internationally and within Chile, opposition groups began to formulate alternative positions that were to lead to fundamental changes in the way they engaged in politics. One important change was a revision of thinking, on the part of the left, regarding the value of Marxist perspectives. Long before the Berlin Wall came down, the Chilean left in its grand majority had rethought its ideological position, adopting a more pragmatic approach to political action.

Another was the commitment of all opposition forces to a view that compromise and not confrontation among opposition forces was an absolute necessity. No major political party wished to be held responsible for the consequences of a lack of consensus in the body politic. The shifts in ideological orientations and the willingness to consider the possibilities of dialogue among former political enemies made possible, at a later stage, the formation of a new type of

political alliance.¹⁸

As the decade advanced and it became clear that popular agitation would not lead to a change in government, the opposition turned to an examination of the options provided by the government itself. The government, secure in its belief that it controlled public opinion, had directed that a plebiscite take place in 1988 aimed at ratifying the extension of its mandate to almost the end of the century. Here again CSOs supported by foreign donations provided the skills and the understanding to help make that alternative a real possibility. The relationship that developed and the roles played by three organizations illustrate the function of CSOs in assisting in the victory secured by the opposition in the 1988 plebiscite.

Innovative Social Science and Political Strategies

A good deal of innovative social science research began to take place in the early 1980s. FLACSO, for example, had begun to test public opinion even though there were no real channels for the public to influence the military government. In advance of the 1988 plebiscite, three political and social think-tanks, CED, ILET and SUR, came together to assist the opposition in developing a strategy and tactics appropriate to mobilizing public opinion in favor of a No vote, a vote that signified a rejection of the dictatorship and an endorsement of the restoration of democracy. One, ILET, had previously brought together scholars from a variety of disciplines to develop policy papers directed at influencing the future of the Chilean polity. Another, SUR, had done extensive work in and was knowledgeable about surveys of urban areas of Chile as well as possessing skills in communications. CED, the third institution, as noted above, had served as a center for discussion among academics and political actors associated with the various components of the opposition. In 1987, the three institutions, working together under the name of CIS, used focus group methodologies to test possible media strategies and messages¹⁹ which assisted the opposition in formulating an approach to communicating the meaning of a "No" vote in the face of formidable obstacles established by the military dictatorship to limit the effectiveness of the opposition's efforts. Other research centers contributed to these efforts with their own studies of public opinion, all largely supported by external donors.²⁰

A second level of support provided by CSOs in the process of transition was the fora for discussions and the intellectual underpinnings for the development of a consensus among the

¹⁸. A discussion of the role of organizations such as CED and VECTOR in this period can be found in Lladser, *op.cit.*, pp.239-244.

¹⁹. ILET had brought in Sawyer, Miller, an international political consulting firm to assist in designing appropriate methodologies for using focus groups in political campaigns.

²⁰. FLACSO, for example, had support from the National Democratic Institute for its survey research.

opposition to form what was to be called the "Concertacion de Partidos por la Democracia" (Accord²¹ of Parties for Democracy). Historically, Chilean politics had been a politics of well-disciplined and organized political parties. Parties dominated the way people thought about politics. In fact, parties so deeply penetrated the discourse of Chilean life that a person was defined by his or her political affiliation in the next breath after their name was mentioned. (You know Jaime Perez, he's a Radical.²²) Party discipline was important--holders of dissident views from those of a given party were likely to break ranks and form a new party. (In that way, for example, the youth wing of the Conservative Party generated the Falange Nacional in the 1950s which then became the Christian Democratic Party and the left wing of the Christian Democratic Party broke away to form MAPU (United Popular Action Movement) in the late 1960s.) Party loyalty frequently impeded processes of coalition-building. Differences in political positions often spawned new parties. This sense of partisanship persisted after the coup. A major concern about the future of Chilean politics in the light of efforts to promote a transition to democracy was overcoming the intensity of partisanship.

The "Concertacion" represented a coming together of the principal opposition parties in a political alliance where all worked together to secure political power, but each retained its own identity and liberty of action. The Concertacion was facilitated by the academic and political discussions within the academic centers that laid the groundwork for setting aside ideological differences, developing a common set of strategies for undertaking an effort to end the dictatorship through instruments made available by that dictatorship (i.e. the plebiscite) and creating a form of political coalition appropriate to the highly partisan nature of Chilean politics. The processes of analyzing the destruction of Chilean democracy by the military, the recognition of the need for a way out of the dictatorship and the development of a common agenda for action were facilitated by the freedom spaces provided by the CSOs, by their research and their discussions of relevant issues. Those freedom spaces had been facilitated, in turn, by the role that donors had played to assure that academic life, and above all the social sciences, could survive the attacks of the dictatorship. The donors concerned, whether international private foundations or government sponsored agencies, supported the work of social scientists engaged in research relevant to the democratic transition, outside the context of the traditional academic institutions (universities and related think tanks) that had been the motor force of Chilean social science in the decades before the coup. That effort was so successful that it can be asserted that the social sciences in Chile and the related possibilities of political discourse flourished in Chile despite the efforts and desires of the military government. Thus, there is a direct link between

²¹ The word "concertacion" comes out of the notion of a harmonious accord or compromise. As a political notion, the sort of compromise that resulted in the formation of the Concertacion represented an important innovation in Chilean politics which required an innovation in the use of political language.

²² A classic description of a person in the 1950s was that he was "Radical, Mason y Bombero", a member of the Radical party, a freethinker on religious issues and hence affiliated with the Masons and a volunteer fireman, often a meeting place for Radical party members.

donor action, the existence of institutional framework for thinking about politics and the re-establishment of a Chilean democratic polity.

VI. Fostering Democratic Culture and Participation: The Case of Participa

Historical Overview

Participa provides us with an ideal case of an USAID-supported CSO involved in both a strategy of strengthening democratic culture and of mobilizing for participation. Yet while its contribution to Chile's democratic transition is unquestionable, its ability to respond to the challenges of the current stage of democratic consolidation may be limited by an overriding concern with institutional survival.

Participa grew out of the "Crusade for Citizen Participation", a voter education campaign launched prior to the October 1988 plebiscite. The idea behind the Crusade was to mobilize Chileans to participate in the electoral process and to do so in an informed manner. The Crusade received substantial support from the Catholic church. During his visit in April 1987, Pope John Paul II promoted the idea of free elections within a climate of understanding and nonviolence, and in August 1987, the Chilean bishops outlined basic conditions for free and fair elections. More importantly, the church provided the Crusade with an umbrella organization, CIVITAS,²³ giving it both the legal and institutional framework and high degree of credibility necessary to carry out its campaign.

Besides the church's backing, the Crusade also received the support of AID, the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIDH), and the Inter-American Center for Electoral Assistance and Promotion (CAPEL). In January 1988, AID provided the IIDH with \$1.2 million to develop and implement a voter education program in Chile.²⁴ The grant was in response to an unsolicited proposal from CIVITAS submitted through the IIDH. Upon receiving the grant, IIDH/CAPEL subcontracted CIVITAS to implement the program.²⁵ Although the IIDH/CAPEL supervised the program and provided important technical and administrative assistance, the campaign was originally conceived of, directed and executed by Chileans.

²³ CIVITAS is a private, non-profit social development organization linked to the Catholic church. Given the political climate, it was unlikely that the regime would have granted the Crusade legal status.

²⁴ In September 1988, the original agreement was amended for an additional \$85 thousand.

²⁵ Checchi and Co., "Evaluation of Voter Education Program in Chile: Inter-American Institute of Human Rights - CIVITAS," Washington, DC., February 6, 1989, p. 1.

What distinguished the Crusade from other parallel efforts was its explicit commitment to non-partisanship. This was no small task given the high degree of political polarization prior to the plebiscite. Not surprisingly, supporters of the regime viewed the Crusade as a creature of the political opposition, especially given that some of its leaders were linked to the Catholic church and to opposition parties. Also, many of the volunteers active in the Crusade, particularly young people, viewed their efforts as complementary to the struggle against Pinochet.²⁶ Nevertheless, the Crusade did go out of its way to refrain from publicly endorsing either the Yes or No campaigns and required of its volunteers a commitment to non-partisanship. In fact, it was because of this very condition that many trainees did not become active volunteers.

During its campaign, the Crusade concentrated on four main objectives: 1) voter registration, 2) informing citizens, 3) citizen control of the electoral process, and 4) stimulating a climate of peace and understanding. Given the national scope of its efforts, the Crusade organized regional supervisors responsible for organizing volunteers in 105 "comunas". Voter training seminars were to be held at three levels. At the first level, the Crusade planned to train 315 communal coordinators in three-day seminars. The second level entailed the training of 7,200 volunteers by the coordinators in one day seminars. Finally, these "second-level" volunteers were to in turn recruit 216,000 "volunteer citizens", responsible for motivating and educating other citizens.²⁷

The results of these efforts were impressive. During March and April, a total of 660 individuals were trained in level one seminars, of which 484 became active volunteers. During May through September, the Crusade organized 517 level two seminars, at which 7,352 trainees committed themselves to the Crusade. Although only organized in 150 comunas, these level two volunteers eventually worked in 208 comunas throughout the country. Besides training citizen volunteers, the level two volunteers organized an array of activities in their respective communities. These included distributing flyers and educational materials, door-to-door canvassing, organizing mock voting centers and political debates. In those comunas with more extensive facilities, volunteers also organized several rock concerts and video forums to encourage voter registration.²⁸

To support its voter education campaign the Crusade produced a number of educational materials, the most important of which was the "Volunteer's Guidebook", containing basic information about voter registration and the plebiscite. Over 200,000 copies were made

²⁶ Interviews with volunteers who participated in the Crusade.

²⁷ Checchi and Co., pp. 3-4.

²⁸ Monica Jimenez, "Mobilizing for Democracy in Chile: The Crusade for Citizen Participation and Beyond," in Larry Diamond (ed.), The Democratic Revolution, pp. 78-81; and Checchi and Co., pp. 38-41.

available to volunteers. In addition, the Crusade published 15,000 copies of "Civic Fundamentals of My Vote", an important reference material for volunteers, and printed millions of flyers encouraging Chileans to participate in the plebiscite. Complementing these activities, the Crusade launched a mass communications campaign promoting voter registration and encouraging citizens to become well-informed about the choices facing them in the plebiscite. After initially giving higher priority to television, the Crusade redirected its efforts towards the radio. Through its use of the radio, the Crusade was able to get its message out, announce its activities to the general public, and keep its network of volunteers updated on events.²⁹

During the months of June and July, the electoral climate became increasingly tense and confrontational. In response, the Crusade initiated a campaign aimed at preventing campaign-related violence. Crusade volunteers organized a range of activities encouraging Chileans to work towards creating a climate of understanding and tolerance. These efforts culminated ten days before the plebiscite in a Human Chain for Peace. In Santiago alone some 100,000 Chileans joined hands in gesture of peace. The result was that by the time of the plebiscite the level of tension had diminished considerably.³⁰

Finally, to ensure citizen control of the elections, the Crusade organized 139 seminars to train 5,284 electoral officials ("vocales") and political party representatives ("apoderados") working in the voting centers.³¹ Although not a Crusade initiative, the Executive Director of the Crusade, Monica Jimenez, also served on the Committee for Free Elections (CEL). The CEL conducted a "quick-count" parallel to the official vote count on the day of the elections. Crusade volunteers played a central role in this endeavor, providing data from some 2000 voting centers around the country. The CEL's parallel count may well have prevented attempts by regime supporters to conduct massive fraud.³²

The results of the voter registration process in the months preceding the plebiscite surpassed all expectations. Prior to the campaign, only about 4.5 million out of a potential voting population of just over 8 million had registered. By the time of the plebiscite the electoral rolls included over 7.4 million registered voters. Turnout for the plebiscite was equally impressive, at over 97% of registered voters. Because other organizations were involved in voter education, it is impossible to know exactly to what extent the Crusade's efforts contributed to the massive voter registration and turnout on election day. For example, IDEAS (Instituto

²⁹ Monica Jimenez, "Mobilizing for Democracy," pp. 81-3 and Checchi and Co., p. 43.

³⁰ Monica Jimenez, "Mobilizing for Democracy," pp.84-5.

³¹ Checchi and Co., p. 44.

³² Monica Jimenez, "Education for Civic Participation," Paper Presented at the Inter-American Conference on Electoral Systems, Caracas, Venezuela, May 15-19, 1990.

de Democracia, Educacion y Accion Social) trained "vocales" and some 70% of the "apoderados" during the months preceding the plebiscite. It organized mock voting centers, and developed educational materials, including a manual for "vocales" and "apoderados". Unlike the Crusade, IDEAS worked explicitly in support of the "No" vote, and worked through a network of existing organizations rather than training its own army of volunteers.³³ Other NGO's that contributed to voter education were CIDE (Centro de Investigacion y Desarrollo de la Educacion) and CESOC (Centro de Estudios Sociales). CIDE, a church-linked organization dedicated to popular education and community development, developed education materials targeted at poor neighborhoods in Santiago and Valparaiso. Finally, CESOC, linked to parties on the democratic left, focused most of its efforts on training "apoderados".³⁴

Pinochet's defeat in the October 1988 plebiscite opened the way for presidential and legislative elections in December 1989. In response, leaders of the Crusade organized a second campaign, this time called "Participa". Like the Crusade, Participa sought to educate the electorate for the upcoming elections from a non-partisan perspective. In support of its voter education program, Participa received a \$470,000 follow-on grant from AID.

Prior to the December 1989 elections, the electorate was asked to vote on a package of constitutional reforms negotiated between the opposition parties (Concertacion por la Democracia) and the regime. Participa contributed to the process by providing voters with information explaining the significance of the 54 constitutional reforms and encouraging them to participate. Given that both sides endorsed the reform package, the turnout was impressive at over 93% of registered voters.

In preparation for the December elections, Participa employed the same methodology used by the Crusade during the plebiscite. It trained a cadre of 913 volunteers who in turn trained over 74,000 "opinion leaders."³⁵ These "opinion leaders" succeeded in contacting over 800,000 citizens through their activities. Unlike the Crusade, however, Participa concentrated its efforts only in the central region of Chile, where some 75% of the electorate resides. In addition to the grassroots activities of its volunteers, Participa organized 12 public forums. These included nine debates for senatorial candidates, a forum on women and democracy, a forum for educators, and another for youth representing the different presidential candidates. To complement these efforts, Participa conducted an extensive media campaign to educate voters. And finally, Participa worked together with IDEAS in training and preparing manuals

³³ Interview with Francisco Javier Estevez, Director of IDEAS, 8 July 1994, Santiago.

³⁴ Checchi and Co., pp. 34-5.

³⁵ Participa began the year with some 300 volunteers. Many of the volunteers active in the Crusade chose to participate in various political party campaigns.

for "vocales".³⁶

Despite the high level of political polarization, the campaign evolved in a climate of normality. On election day over 94% of the electorate cast votes. The voter education campaigns sponsored by the Crusade and Participa, along with the complementary efforts of other NGO's, contributed in a significant manner to Chile's peaceful democratic transition. The legitimacy of the plebiscite in 1988 and the elections in 1989 rested on the massive participation of Chileans and their access to information regarding the choices facing the country. Moreover, it was important that the elections be conducted in a climate of relative peace. This was necessary to restore a measure of democratic civility absent from Chilean politics yet essential to the future of the democratic system. On all these scores, the work of the Crusade and Participa had a highly positive impact.

With the inauguration of the Aylwin government in March 1990, an important stage in the democratic transition was completed. A civilian democratic regime was now in place; however, democratic consolidation required more than just competitive elections. It required dynamic civil society organizations (CSO's) capable of shaping the public policy agenda and demanding government accountability. Within this new context, Participa's leadership concluded that a long-term program of civic education was an essential ingredient in the process of democratic consolidation.

To support its effort to become a permanent institution dedicated to civic education, in 1990 Participa secured a \$400,000 "bridge grant" from USAID via the IIDH. Between May 1990 and May 1991 Participa worked on designing a more structured program of civic education while at the same time carrying on with its regular activities. In addition to its civic education efforts aimed at the general citizenry, Participa incorporated a special focus on women and youth, two sectors of the population historically marginalized from the political process. Activities included seminars to train potential women candidates for the 1992 municipal elections, and workshops to familiarize teachers and students with a new civic education textbook produced by Participa.³⁷

Participa's activities expanded during 1992 and 1993. A four-year \$2.3 million grant from USAID provided Participa with vital resources to carry out its program and make the transition to a permanent organization. Specifically, during the four-year period Participa proposed to: 1) reintroduce formal civic education in the high schools, 2) instill democratic values in the society at large and promote citizen participation in community organizations, and

³⁶ Jimenez, "Education for Civic Participation," pp. 25-30.

³⁷ Participa, "Informe Anual de Actividades: Mayo 1990 - Mayo 1991," Santiago, 1991.

3) encourage voter registration and informed participation in electoral processes during the period.³⁸ In pursuit of these goals, Participa developed four program areas: 1) formal education, 2) civic-electoral processes, 3) intermediary organizations and decentralization, and 4) participation and leadership.

In the area of formal education, Participa produced two editions of its civic education textbook, with an updated version scheduled for 1994. It organized workshops for teachers throughout the country to familiarize them with the content and methodology of the text. In addition, during 1992-93 Participa worked on developing a similar textbook for the country's elementary schools. And finally, together with the Catholic University Television, Participa developed a text for use in the televised course, "We Agree...A Course for Living Democracy."

Regarding civic-electoral processes, Participa focused its efforts on training 1,700 volunteers responsible for training 60,000 "leaders of opinion" during the four-year period. This goal was accomplished by the end of 1993. The training of new volunteers was crucial for Participa's voter registration drives in preparation for the 1992 municipal and the 1993 presidential and legislative elections. For the 1992 elections, Participa's efforts contributed to the registration of 600,000 new voters. Although voter turnout was down from the 1989 elections, the abstention rate (just over 10%) was the lowest ever for elections of this kind.³⁹ In preparation for the 1993 elections, Participa focused primarily on registering young voters. It was estimated that of the approximately one million unregistered about one-half of these were between the ages of 18 and 25. Participa collaborated with IDEAS, the Servicio Electoral, the Ministerio Secretaria General de Gobierno, and the Instituto Nacional de la Juventud in the effort to register some 200,000 new voters.⁴⁰ Turnout for the elections was around 97.5%.

To support the process of decentralization and democratization at the local level, Participa developed a new focus on intermediary organizations and municipal government. It organized public issue forums in seven regions of the country, employing the Kettering Foundation's method of citizen participation, and coordinated several training workshops for municipal officials and members of the new Consejos Economicos y Sociales.⁴¹ To assist these activities,

³⁸ Participa, "Proyecto Iniciativas Democraticas en Chile: 1 Marzo 1991 - 28 Febrero 1995," Santiago, 1991.

³⁹ Patricio Dooner and Eduardo Hill, "Interim Evaluation: Participa," Final Draft, Santiago, October 1993.

⁴⁰ Interview with Participa volunteers who participated in the registration drive.

⁴¹ Under the 1992 Municipalities Law, the Consejos are to be organized in every municipality, including representatives of local community organizations, trade unions, and employers' associations. They are to function as consultative bodies to the municipal councils.

Participa developed educational materials explaining the new municipal system of government.

Finally, under the rubric of "Participation and Leadership", Participa continued to expand its programs oriented toward women and youth. To encourage women's participation in the political process, Participa organized a series of workshops geared toward women from poor neighborhoods in the metropolitan area and a national conference for women leaders and professionals. Its program for youth was even more ambitious. Activities included leadership workshops for leaders from student councils, university federations, political parties and religious organizations; regional youth encounters focusing on youth participation in local government; and a series of workshops focusing of youth and the workforce.⁴²

During the last half of 1993, Participa began a process of restructuring aimed at achieving institutional self-sufficiency by mid-1995. Under Participa's new structure, five "strategic action units" were organized: 1) youth, 2) international services, 3) development and social integration, 4) public sector, and 5) special projects. Each unit is responsible for generating projects and seeking funding from both public and private, international and domestic sources. Another important element in the restructuring is the process of "deconcentracion", by which the regional offices have been granted greater autonomy to elaborate their own projects and to seek their own sources of funding.⁴³

From Campaign to Permanent Institution: Participa's Metamorphosis

Participa's restructuring at the end of 1993 culminated a process that was initiated in 1990 and was aimed at making Participa not only a permanent institution dedicated to civic education but also a self-sufficient institution, capable of functioning without AID support. This process of institutionalization resulted from a combination of factors, including: 1) the changing political landscape, 2) the likely reduction of international funding, and 3) internal institutional dynamics.

First of all, Chile's successful transition to a civilian democratic government and the institutionalization of electoral politics necessitated a reassessment of Participa's traditional civic education activities. Participa's original civic education goals, including high levels of voter participation, citizen control of the electoral process, and a climate of tolerance, largely were achieved by 1994. As elections became an increasingly "regular" phenomenon, voter education appeared to lose its relative importance.⁴⁴ While Participa has in no way abandoned civic

⁴² Participa, "Memoria Anual", 1992 and 1993.

⁴³ Interview with Participa staff, Santiago, 13 July 1994.

⁴⁴ Interview with Andrea Sanhueza, Sub-Director of Participa, Santiago, 4 July 1994.

education, given there are no elections scheduled until 1996, it has clearly shifted its attention to developing new areas of activity.

The termination of USAID support in 1995 and the general reduction of international funding earmarked for Chile has produced an overriding concern for institutional self-sufficiency. Not unlike the case of other NGO's in Chile, Participa has found it necessary to professionalize its staff and volunteer corps, to become more institutionally specialized, and to aggressively seek out new sources of domestic and international funding. Functional units within the organization, including regional offices, are now expected to generate additional resources for the institution.

Finally, the process of institutionalization has a logic of its own. As the organization has become increasingly professionalized and specialized, it has developed a whole new set of institutional interests. During its early history, the Crusade, and then Participa, was organized as a grassroots campaign focused on specific short-term objectives. Mobilizing and organizing an army of volunteers took priority over any concern with institutional consolidation. However, as Participa made the transition toward a permanent institution with a broader long-term mission, it became more concerned with institutional survival and growth.

How has this process of institutionalization affected Participa's activities and, more importantly, how has it affected its ability to contribute to the current stage of democratic consolidation? Increasingly since 1992, Participa has moved away from its traditional civic education activities. The original strategy of training a large cadre of volunteers which would in turn train thousands of "leaders of opinion" involved in door-to-door canvassing has been abandoned in favor of a smaller, more professional volunteer corps involved in specialized projects.⁴⁵ As the Executive Director of Participa put it, "the organization's new tasks require a new kind of volunteer."⁴⁶ Participa's current plan, in fact, calls for just over 500 active volunteers. The need for a more professionalized staff has affected Participa's recruiting practices. Whereas previously many staff positions were filled by volunteers who had worked their way up the ranks, increasingly Participa has looked outside the institution to fill key positions.⁴⁷ One of the consequences of these changes is that Participa has lost much of its

⁴⁵ According to Participa's regional coordinator in Concepcion, the "ideal" volunteers are university students on a professional career track close to graduation. Interview with Alvaro Venegas, Concepcion, 12 July 1994.

⁴⁶ Interview with Monica Jimenez, Santiago, 13 July 1994.

⁴⁷ A good example is the current regional coordinator in Concepcion. Alvaro Venegas was a prominent Christian Democratic student leader at the University of Concepcion prior to the political transition. During the Aylwin government he served as assistant to the Intendente for Region VIII (Concepcion). Before taking over as regional coordinator in 1993, Venegas had never been involved with Participa. Besides bringing to the organization important

projection amongst popular sectors and is no longer the "grassroots" movement it once was.

The relative importance of voter education has diminished. Under Participa's recent restructuring, areas of special attention include youth, local development, training of public sector officials, international consulting, women, and the environment. While one might argue that these areas of activity respond to a more integral view of civic education, it seems clear that they are in large part the product of Participa's overriding concern with institutional survival. For example, Participa's March-May 1994 report states: "The survival of the Corporation depends on the capacity of Participa's staff to offer qualified and needed services that obtain national and/or international funding."⁴⁸ Not surprisingly, since 1993 Participa's staff has been preoccupied primarily with churning out grant proposals to government agencies and international foundations.

During the past year, Participa has had some success in winning government contracts for projects focusing on local development, youth and public sector training. For example, in the area of local development, Participa is one of the implementing agencies for FOSIS's (Fondo de Solidaridad y Inversion Social) "Entre Todos" program in regions V (Vina-Valparaiso) and VIII (Concepcion). The program is intended to promote development projects in selected poor communities. In the area of youth, Participa has a contract with the Ministry of Education to train student leaders in 120 of the country's poorest secondary schools. And finally, Participa has government contracts to coordinate training workshops for Ministry of Education officials, municipal officials, and representatives of Consejos Economicos y Sociales.⁴⁹

Participa's increasing reliance on government contracts may complicate its efforts to remain an autonomous institution. Until recently, substantial levels of USAID support have afforded Participa the luxury of competing only for those projects that fit within its general mission. This situation, however, could change with the termination of USAID funding in 1995. Over the past year Participa has sought to diversify its sources of funding, so as not to become overly dependent on any one source. In addition to government contracts, Participa has developed private fund-raising activities in hopes of creating a permanent endowment and has begun to market its services at home and abroad.⁵⁰ Finally, Participa has been negotiating with

administrative skills, Venegas also brought with him a wide network of political contacts in the region. Interview with Alvaro Venegas, Concepcion, 12 July 1994.

⁴⁸ Corporacion Participa, "Informe Trimestral: Marzo-Mayo 1994," Santiago, 1994.

⁴⁹ Interview with Participa staff, Santiago, 13 July 1994.

⁵⁰ For example, in 1993 Participa was subcontracted by Creative Associates to coordinate a workshop in El Salvador for civic education organizations. It also provided consulting services to the Fundacion Democracia y Desarrollo de Honduras and the IIDH.

USAID for a four-year grant to participate in the development of a regional consortium of NGO's involved in civic education.⁵¹

Participa's metamorphosis has limited its ability to contribute to the current stage of democratic consolidation. An essential ingredient in consolidating Chile's democratic system is a vibrant civil society enjoying autonomy from both the state and political parties. As we noted in the opening section of this paper, many Chilean CSO's participated in the transition process as surrogates for or at least as close associates of political parties which were unable to operate under the constraints imposed by the military dictatorship. A brief exception was during 1983-86, when a process of autonomous social mobilization and organization escaped the control of party leaders. With Chile's transition to democracy, however, political parties have taken center stage once again. The challenge, then, is to foster autonomous social organizations capable of placing new issues on the public policy agenda and demanding government accountability.

Participa is not very well-positioned to contribute to this process. While some of its activities geared toward youth and women are aimed at encouraging their participation in community-based organizations, these efforts are not part of a more integrated approach. Besides encouraging citizens to participate in such organizations, it is also necessary to empower existing organizations. For example, many former Participa volunteers have become leaders of community organizations and are interested in a new relationship with Participa. In the past, they served as the institution's "long arms", carrying out tasks assigned to them. Now, as leaders of community organizations, they are looking to Participa to support them in their struggles.⁵² However, given its overriding concern with institutional survival and marketing its services, it is unlikely that Participa will be able to fulfill such a role.

Participa's involvement in FOSIS's "Entre Todos" program reveals the limits on its ability to foster democratic participation at the local level.⁵³ In regions V (Valparaiso-Vina) and VIII (Concepcion), Participa is one of several NGO's implementing the program for FOSIS. In each region FOSIS has designated a number of poor communities which will benefit from the program. The idea is that each community will present a project which must then be approved for funding by FOSIS. FOSIS requires that in each community a Local Development Coordinator (Coordinadora de Desarrollo Local) (CDL) be organized to foster citizen participation in the process of discussing community needs and deciding on priorities.

⁵¹ Interview with Monica Jimenez.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ This discussion is based on field visits (11-12 July) to Participa's regional offices in Vina del Mar and Concepcion and to three communities participating in the FOSIS project. Interviews were conducted with Participa staff and volunteers, and community leaders.

Supposedly, at the end of the project participating communities will have acquired important skills that will enable them to formulate projects independently in the future.

There are a number of problems with the program that limit its ability to foster community-based participation. First of all, the 7-8 month duration of the project is too short to allow for widespread participation in the process. Also, given the deadlines for presenting projects, social workers contracted by the implementing NGO's tend to play a determinant role in preparing the project proposals. This makes it very unlikely that participating communities will have acquired the necessary skills to formulate projects on their own in the future. Moreover, the program has been implemented in a highly top-down fashion. FOSIS designates those communities eligible for the program and sets a strict dollar-limit on how much communities can request for their projects.⁵⁴ Consequently, it is not at all clear whether the CDL's will continue to function once the projects have been completed.

Another example of Participa's limited ability to foster local-level participation is its participation in a government program to empower Economic and Social Councils (Consejos Economicos y Sociales)(Consejos). Under the 1992 Municipalities Law, the Consejos were to be organized in every municipality in the country. Consisting of representatives from community organizations, they were to function as consultative bodies to the municipal councils. In the province of Quillota, Participa was contracted by the regional government to organize workshops for representatives of the Consejos. The workshops focused on the issues of internal organization, team work, and elaboration of projects. Of the 7 Consejos participating in the workshops, only two are currently functioning. The problem is that the law does not give the Consejos many faculties and municipal councils have the discretion of whether or not to consult them. As a representative of one failed Consejo put it, "people don't want to participate in something that has no decision-making authority."⁵⁵

Participa is not to blame for the problems with these government initiatives; however, the above examples highlight Participa's limited capacity to foster autonomous social organization. Participa's position is that by working with the government on these initiatives, it can influence future projects in a positive manner.⁵⁶ However, Participa may be missing a

⁵⁴ For example, in one community in the province of Quillota, community leaders pointed to lack of housing and property insecurity as the major problems facing residents. However, given that FOSIS had made available only Ch\$3 million for the project, the social worker told them not to include these priorities in the proposed project. Interview with community leaders, Limache, Quillota Province, 11 July 1994.

⁵⁵ Interview, Olmue, Quillota Province, 11 July 1994.

⁵⁶ Participa's director, Monica Jimenez, was especially proud of the fact that FOSIS regularly invites Participa representatives to attend its meetings. According to Jimenez, "in this way we will be able to influence and modify its policies." Interview, 13 July 1994.

fundamental problem: the government's ultimate goal may not be to encourage autonomous social organization. Its goal may be to more effectively channel, community-level demands via government-sponsored organizations. If this is the intent, that leaves little room for more innovative independent initiatives. And yet, if Participa is to contribute to the process of democratic consolidation it needs to be on the cutting edge of creative initiatives that foster a more vibrant, autonomous civil society. Given its recent metamorphosis, it is highly unlikely that Participa will be up to the task.

VII. Rebuilding a Base: The Role of Labor

Rebuilding the CUT

Just as the 1973 coup decimated the political party structure, the universities and many of the other academic centers, it wrecked havoc on the labor union movement in Chile. The principal national confederation of unions, the Central Unica de Trabajadores or CUT as it was commonly known, was closed down. Union leaders were subject to repression and the union movement lost a significant number of affiliates and as a consequence its capacity to act as either a defender of the rights of workers or as a political force.

The labor movement had a long history, stretching back into the beginning of the twentieth century. The CUT had been founded in 1953. Under its leadership, the labor movement grew from a total of 1831 unions with 263,000 members in 1947 to a total of 2177 unions with 305,192 members in 1955. By 1966, organized labor represented 17.2% of the total work force. By 1970, the year that the Unidad Popular government was installed, unions covered 35% of the work force, with the CUT including 90% of unionized workers within its ranks. Under the Unidad Popular government, the CUT was involved in co-management of nationalized enterprises. As a study undertaken during the Unidad Popular noted, at the moment of its dissolution by the military regime in 1973, the CUT had reached the highest level of legitimacy and representativeness in its history.⁵⁷ The dictatorship, seeking to destroy the labor movement and change the terms of labor-management relations, revoked the CUT's charter, seized its assets and promulgated regulations which restricted the right of unionization and curtailed the role that labor unions could play. Union affiliation dropped precipitously to a low of 8% of the labor force in 1983.

Having survived the initial repression in 1973, the union movement in Chile began to reconstruct itself in 1978 with the creation of the Coordinadora Nacional Sindical (CNS) (National Union Coordinator) which brought together unionists associated with the left and the Christian Democratic parties. Out of the base formed by the Coordinadora, the present national confederation, the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (Unitary Workers Central) was established

⁵⁷ Zapata, 1974. According to another source (Barria Seron, 1972) the CUT had a total of 720,000 members in 1972.

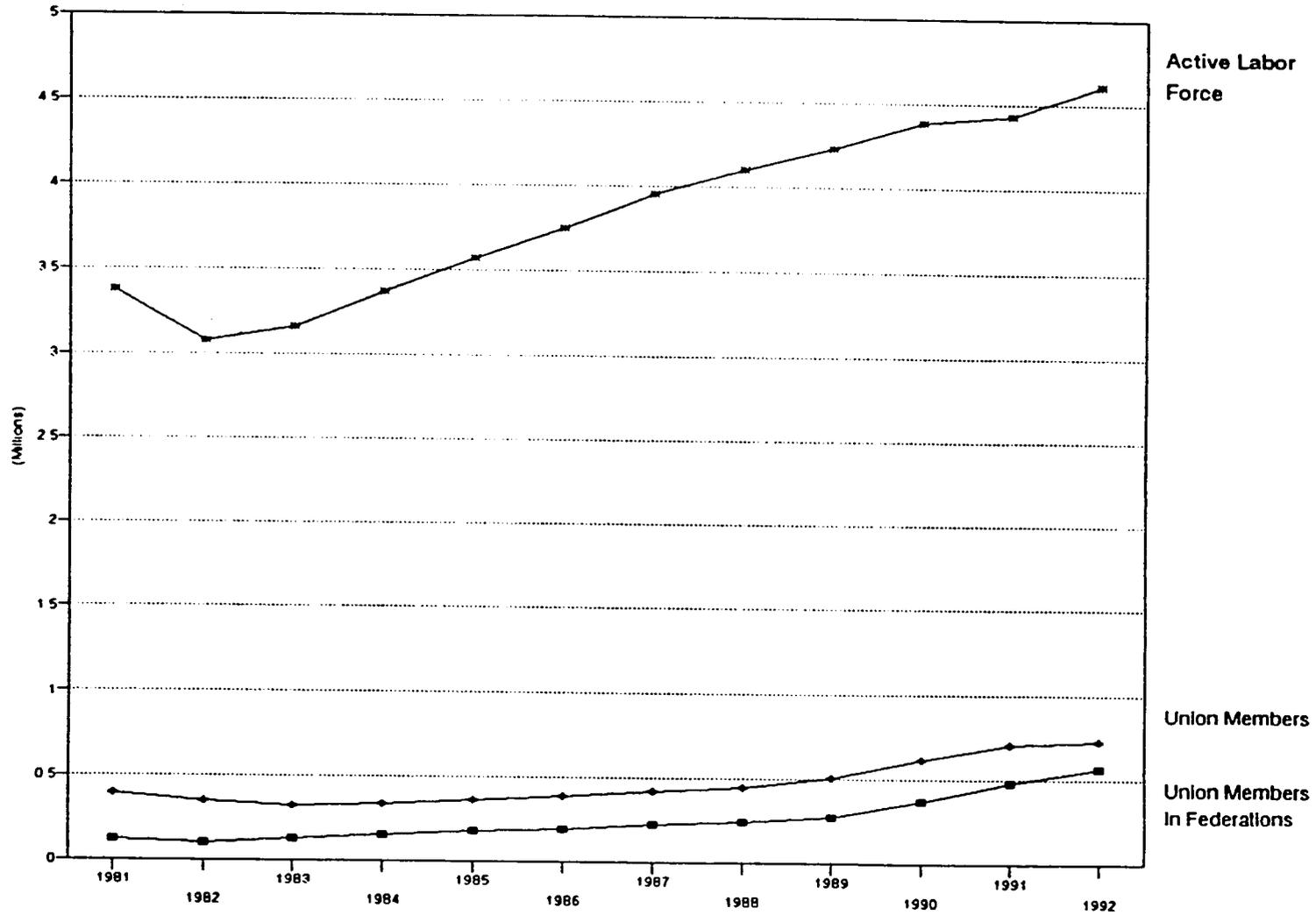
in 1988 using the same initials, CUT, that had been the emblem of its predecessor. The new CUT initiated activities with a total of 307,053 members in affiliated unions. In its constituent convention, the CUT affirmed its links back to previous national confederations, the Federacion Obrera de Chile (FOCH) (Federation of Chilean Workers) established in 1909 under the name of the Gran Federaci3n Obrera de Chile and renamed FOCH in 1919⁵⁸, the Confederacion de Trabajadores Chilenos(CTCH) (Confederation of Chilean Workers) established in 1936 and the pre-coup CUT. It also declared its commitment to a democratic union-building process, rejecting the restrictions imposed by the military government. The final declaration of its inaugural congress proclaimed the CUT's "complete liberty to build our organizations, elect our leaders and mobilize ourselves in defense of our demands."⁵⁹

With the return of a democratically elected government in 1990, the CUT once again began to expand as national representative of labor interests. The CUT acquired the status of a legally recognized national central union. It brings together 95 national member unions and branches with a total of around 600,000 members and 41 provincial councils. Presently, 70% of all union members are affiliated with the CUT. As Table 1 indicates, the number of union members has expanded dramatically since 1988, particularly in the last several years. Comparing that expansion of membership with relatively slower increase in the size of the work force (see Table 1), it is clear that unionization has greatly advanced in recent years with the unionized sector of the work force going from 11.8% in 1981 to 15.7 % in 1992.

⁵⁸ The FOCH gradually fell apart as a result of internal political conflicts. In 1939, anarchists established the Confederacion General de Trabajo (CGT) (General Labor Confederation) which sought to develop a single overarching labor union.

⁵⁹ CUT, 1988

Development of Labor Union Affiliation (1981-1992)



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However, the labor movement remains weak, not only because it represents a far smaller portion of the work force than it did in the late 1960s and 70s, but because of the structure of the movement: over a third of those unionized are in the public sector, reducing union clout in the growing private sector; unions are atomized and have high numbers of leaders in proportion to workers, and those leaders are in the majority relatively new to their functions (10,000 out of 19,782 who became leaders in the last five years).

As important, a significant growth sector of the economy, agriculture, has a relatively weak union structure. Rural unions were legalized under the first Christian Democratic government of Eduardo Frei Montalva (1964-1970), but were severely repressed under the military dictatorship only a few short years later. A critical element in undermining unionization efforts in the agricultural sector is the legal prohibition against organizing seasonal or temporary workers. Agricultural production for export (for example, fruits in the off-season for the Northern hemisphere) it should be noted, is a leading economic sector in Chile. That production depends heavily on seasonal and temporary workers. With 20 per cent of the overall work force in agriculture, and over two-thirds of those agricultural workers in the excluded categories of seasonal or temporary workers, it is easy to see how unionization efforts are hampered in an important sector of the economy.

Under Democratic Government

The labor movement, although not a part of the political party coalition, the Concertacion, that had won control of the government in 1990, was clearly a part of the alliance of supporters of that government. It was rewarded with a certain degree of support from the Aylwin government. The CUT, in turn, adopted a political position of concord and consensus with respect to the Aylwin government. The CUT reached agreements with employers, under the auspices of the government, regarding issues such as fixing the minimum wage, forms of labor-management relations, labor contracts and collective bargaining. The terms of this consensus were incorporated in a Framework Agreement signed in May of 1991. It also heavily invested its time and energy in rebuilding and reconstituting its ranks, seeking to restore the destruction wrought under the dictatorship. The CUT left for a future time the kinds of confrontations that could put in danger the social peace that might threaten the process of transition to a democratic order. In reviewing the achievements of the Aylwin government in 1994, the CUT characterized as its most important accomplishment "the consolidation of the democratic process without great social costs, in particularly difficult circumstances"⁶⁰.

The election of Concertacion candidate Eduardo Frei-Ruiz Tagle⁶¹ as the second

⁶⁰ "Union y Trabajo" (official journal of the CUT) no. 41, January-February, 1994.

⁶¹ Frei was a Christian Democrat like his predecessor, Aylwin, and the chosen candidate of the Concertacion. His father had been the president of Chile just prior to Allende (1964-1971) and was also a Christian Democrat. The Concertacion had had what amounted to an internal primary between the Christian Democratic candidate, Frei, and the PPD-PS candidate, Ricardo

Chilean president of the new democratic era marked a shift in the relationships between the government and the CUT. From the start of the Frei government, there has been a lessening of the consensual dialogue that marked government-labor relations under Aylwin. Early on the national leadership of the CUT characterized the Frei government as center-right. An increased belligerency was also present in the CUT's relations with commerce and industry leaders with the president of the CUT, Manuel Bustos, characterizing his opponents in the following terms: "I do not know whether the entrepreneurs are deaf, or do not listen to what we say or do not understand". On July 11, 1994, the CUT publicly demonstrated its dissatisfaction with the results of the politics of consensus by organizing a march through the center of the capital, Santiago. At this march, the Vice-President of the CUT, Arturo Martinez declared that " during four years we were a part of the social accord. Now, there will be accord, but there also will be mobilization, which signifies a change in the policies of the CUT".

In 1993, the CUT had put the Concertacion on notice that it was dissatisfied with results to date during the transition process, indicating it had hopes for increased recognition of its demands during a second democratic government.⁶² It had expressed its position regarding its expectations a few weeks after the Frei government assumed power in the following terms:

The workers were a decisive factor in the fight to recuperate democracy and we have played a fundamental role in the advance of the process of transition. We have shown undisputable examples of rationality, maturity and democratic vocation. For this, we have the legitimate right to require that greater attention be paid to our legitimate demands and a greater space for participation in the common task of consolidating and expanding democracy.⁶³

Feeling ignored by the new government and believing that its only recourse was to go to the streets, the CUT organized the July 11 march noted above. The immediate outcome was to re-establish a process of dialogue with the government in the form of a bi-ministerial committee with the participation of the Ministers of Labor and the Secretary General of the Presidency (in effect the president's chief of staff) to deal with labor leaders regarding their concerns. As a result of the conversations between government and labor, the government decided to include expanding the faculties of the National Labor Directory and increasing the role of the government and the resources assigned by the government to supervising collective bargaining. Creating that committee, it should be noted, generated some conflict with the business sector.

Lagos, which Frei won. This was a departure from the previous consensual choice of Aylwin.

⁶² In July, 1993, a statement contained in the Declaration de Canelo de Nos laid out CUT's concerns regarding the lack of reciprocity for its support of the democratic process on the part of other social actors, including the government and its political parties.

⁶³ from an editorial entitled "Regarding the changes that are coming" in Union y Trabajo, no.41, Year 4.

In addition to bi-ministerial committee, the government has created another instrument of dialogue on labor-management concerns, the Production Development Forum. This group brings together representatives of the business community, labor, relevant academics, political leaders and parliamentarians from all parties of the government and opposition as well as government officials. The forum, conceived by the Minister of Economics of the Frei government, Alvaro Garcia, is supposed to serve as permanent setting for social consensus building. Its first meeting was held on July 23 and 24, 1994. A principal conclusion of the meeting was that the political, economic and social conditions existed to overcome poverty in Chile and construct a culture of cooperation and solidarity. It may be noted that the government has gone on to develop an elaborate program to combat poverty, with the Minister of Planning taking a leading role.⁶⁴

CUT's Positions On Issues

The CUT has elaborated a set of positions regarding national economic issues as well as concerns regarding the terms of labor organization and action. In its special congress in April, 1994, the CUT reiterated its basic positions on a variety of issues. It declared its opposition to efforts at privatization of such state enterprises as EMPREMAR (the state shipping line), called for the strengthening of CODELCO, the state run copper mining and processing operation, and supported the position of the coal miners working for ENACAR (the national coal mining company). The CUT has taken a position against an extension of NAFTA to Chile, going along with the idea of Chile entering into bi-lateral negotiations with the United States instead. In an agreement signed between the CUT and the AFL/CIO, the two have stated their joint opposition to an extension of NAFTA (Enlace, 1994; CUT, 1994 and AFL/CIO, 1994).

This position is the direct opposite of that held by the Confederacion de la Produccion y Comercio (Confederation of Production and Commerce or CPC), the umbrella organization for all industrial and commercial federations. CPC favors adherence to NAFTA, although it is wary of US attempts to link Chile's affiliation to conditions of union shops and obligatory collective bargaining as well as environmental requirements. These are seen by CPC as limiting the scope of activities of free enterprises.

In the case of the coal mines, the CUT and the coal miners unions have promoted direct action such as marches, hunger strikes and seizures of the mines as well as undertaking negotiations with the government to promote the view that the mines need to be modernized and made more efficient. In counter to this, the state has made considerable investments in the coal mines although without much success to date. The government, the CUT, the miners unions, ENACAR and the local communities (e.g. Lota and Coronel) continue to look for a solution to the problem of the mines and the resultant consequences for the local communities in terms of high levels of unemployment and widespread poverty.

⁶⁴ personal communication with the Minister of Planning, August, 1994.

The CUT, working with public sector unions in the fields of health and education has been raising issues and seeking to develop solutions for the concerns that exist in both areas, growing in large measure out of the legacy of the dictatorship and its approach to the provision of social services. For example, in the area of health, the Federacion Nacional de Trabajadores de la Salud (the National Federation of Health Workers or FENATS) has defined the health sector as one that is the midst of a total crisis. The problem rests, according to FENATS, in the preponderance of health resources dedicated to the private sector in contrast to the public sector which is responsible for the care of the vast majority of the Chilean population (80% are covered by the public sector and 20% by the private sector although the sectors almost evenly divide health resources).

In the area of education, the government is seeking to reduce the number of teachers in the educational system to reflect what is considered to be an excess of teachers in relation to students. The CUT and the Colegio de Profesores (Teachers Guild) are fighting to maintain the number of teachers as well as to improve their salary levels. As with other labor concerns, the Government has created a commission, the Comision de Modernizar la Educacion (The Commission to Modernize Education) with a view toward developing a plan to gradually improve teachers salaries, emphasizing at the same time raising the quality of education. The commission includes representatives of the government, the teachers union, the business community and students. While the CUT and the teachers union participated in the work of the commission, they also undertook a national strike which eventually led to a change in the post of Minister of Education. One can look at other areas such as the textile industry to see similar patterns of political action.

In the past several years, the CUT has used its influence with the political parties associated with the Concertacion (all the principal leaders of the CUT are identified with one or another of the political parties in the Concertacion). It has participated in dialogues of both an informal and a formal nature (inside committees, commissions etc.) with the government and with business, and it has used direct action in the form of marches, strikes and other means to promote its positions.

Training, Education and the CEDUC

As part of its effort to develop its institutional base and to further the issues it supports, the CUT has emphasized the role that educating and training union leaders and members can play. Part of its concern with training and education rests with a concern for promoting educational opportunities through reforms in state-supported education that provide greater opportunities for working class youth to advance through the educational system. This includes a concern with increased need-based financial aid for higher education.

With respect to training, the CUT has stated the need for a joint State-union effort to create a national union school, participation of the union movement in the administration of the National Training and Employment Service (SENCE) and in the Technical Cooperation Service, two key organs of state supported training and increased resources for in-service training for

workers throughout all levels of education from primary through university education. Other education and training concerns include a demand for the return of INACAP (the national training institute) to control by labor as well as management. (Businessmen were given control of INACAP under the dictatorship.)

The CUT received no direct support from international donors during the period from its establishment in 1988 until the advent of the democratic government in 1990. In 1990, support began to flow from organizations such as the international Labor Organization which provided the support that helped to establish a training entity for the CUT--the Corporacion de Educacion y Desarrollo Sindical (Corporation for Union Education and Development) (CEDUC). CEDUC working jointly with the national labor education department of the CUT has provided training in basic principles of union organization and operation, developing the skills of workers in such areas as negotiation, concepts of productivity, professional skills-development, technological innovation, terms of competition, work-related health and safety standards and other issues vital to developing a basis for labor-management relations.

CUT-CEDUC has developed a program of three levels of training:

- Development of worker consciousness through its member unions and federations;
- Training through CUT-CEDUC of middle level leaders who can work at the level of individual unions or federations, and
- Training of upper echelon leaders and technical support personnel, again through CUT-CEDUC, who can take on major leadership and support roles within the CUT and its affiliates.

Since 1993, the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLID) has begun to provide modest support to the CUT and more specifically to CEDUC. AIFLID sponsored a total of 64 educational events in Chile in 1993 for approximately 2,700 trade unionists. In addition, AIFLID, using funds from the National Endowment for Democracy (NEED) provided support to the CUT for its efforts at playing a role in the 1993 presidential election. AIFLID created a bridge between the US labor movement and the Chilean labor movement which had not previously existed. (In the Cold War era, the CUT and its predecessors were allied with Marxist parties and international labor movements antagonistic to the AFL-CIO and its international affiliates.) One example of this new cooperation, joint evaluation of an approach to the extension of NAFTA to Chile has already been discussed. Another instance was the attendance of 20 Chilean labor leaders from the CUT at a two week, all CUT course, at the George Meany Center in Washington, DC. While the course itself was supported by the Center, the labor leaders' unions paid the cost of their travel to Washington.

Conclusion

The CUT was resurrected under the dictatorship at a point where the main focus of all political activity was the restoration of democracy. Once the formal instruments of democracy were restored through the changes in the constitution in 1989 and the election of Aylwin, the CUT joined with the political parties in assuring the necessary consensus to protect the transition to democracy. In so doing, the CUT counted on being rewarded for its efforts by having key demands of a political and economic nature fulfilled. It has achieved certain gains such as a restoration of its legal status and a measure of political support for developing its organization. It has not achieved all that it desires in terms of legal norms that facilitate its growth. More importantly, it has not been able to secure the kinds of gains it sought in expanding the economic participation of either public or private sector union members. To continue to fight for those demands, in certain cases, it has upped the ante--seeking to use mobilization as a political tool to get the government to pay attention to its demands. To some extent that strategy has been effective--government has created new instances of dialogue to assure that the basic mechanism for maintaining consensus continues while the issues are debated within government sponsored committees and commissions. But, over a longer term the CUT will need to show results in order to justify the dialogue. At the same time, it will need to consider how much impact it can have by other means, given the limited resources in terms of membership and financial backing it possesses.

VIII. Generating a New Agenda: Participation of Women in a Democratic Order

First Steps Toward Political Participation

Historically women in Chilean politics have been relegated to a second class position. While in certain fields such as the arts and education, individual women such as the Nobel prize winning poetess, Gabriela Mistral, and the educator, Amanda Labarrca, distinguished themselves, oft times securing international recognition, women as whole were relegated to the role of second class political actors throughout the first half of the twentieth century. The women's suffrage movement, although active in advocating its demands for women's right to vote as early as the 1920s⁶⁵, did not achieve its goal of enfranchisement until 1949.⁶⁶ Women were briefly active in politics in the period from 1949-1953 after they achieved the vote, but in large measure that participation was sharply reduced in the period that followed, sometimes

⁶⁵ The first such movement was the Partido Democrático Feminino (Feminine Democratic Party) established in 1924 to fight for women's political rights. Teresa Valdes and Marisa Weinstein, *Mujeres Que Suenan, Las Organizaciones de Pobladoras en Chile : 1973-1989*, Libros FLACSO, Santiago, 1993, pp. 39-40.

⁶⁶ Julieta Kirkwood provides a discussion of the women's suffrage movement in "Feminismo y Participación Política en Chile" in Eduardo Ortiz ed., *Temas Socialistas*, Vector, Centro de Estudios Economicos y Sociales, Santiago, 1983. See also Julieta Kirkwood, *Ser Política en Chile*, Editorial Cuarto Propio, Santiago, 1990, Chapter III.

referred to as the period of the "feminist silence (1953-1964).

The Christian Democratic government of Eduardo Frei Montalva (1964-1970) inaugurated a policy of popular promotion which sought to increase the participation of lower class groups in society. This effort included a special role for women from the popular classes within the context of organizations such as the Centros de Madres (Mothers' Centers). This effort to incorporate women into programs of political and social action had been a key element in the Christian Democrats victory in the 1964 election. The Christian Democrats institutionalized a national organization of Centros de Madres through CEMA (Central Relacionadora de los Centros de Madres) (Relating Central for Mothers' Centers), chaired by the first lady. CEMA used other state agencies to provide support to the Centro de Madres to undertake self-help, educational and other activities.⁶⁷ The Christian Democratic government provided a legal framework for the Centros de Madres and focussed the bulk of its efforts regarding women's issues in the operation of these centers, overseen by CEMA.

The Unidad Popular began where the Christian Democrats had left off in developing social mobilization through the Centros de Madres. (At the start of the Unidad Popular government, there were around 9000 centers and over 50,000 members.⁶⁸) The Unidad Popular government established a Ministry of the Family as a mechanism for institutionalizing the participation of women in society with a view toward "creating a family capable of participating responsibly in the process of change, as an effective agent of its own realization."⁶⁹ Even under the Unidad Popular, however, the emphasis was on a concern with social issues and not a concern with specifically gender-related issues regarding the status of women, their effective access to political participation and their concern for family legislation. The emphasis was on a top-down promotion of women's participation in society. Women were seen by the Unidad Popular as "mothers, citizens and workers" leading present day analysts of women in Chilean politics to comment that "there did not exist in the (Unidad Popular) period a movement that took into account the feminine demands regarding the improvement of the condition of women; women participated in the political and social process and continued to be defined socially in terms of other, whether that was as mother, wife or companion."⁷⁰ As we shall see below, the advent of the dictatorship coincided with and even can be considered to have fostered a concern with gender related issues, although certainly not by intention.

Establishing a New Base for Feminist Politics

The repression associated with the military dictatorship had a dramatic impact on the conditions of women in economic, social and political terms. Repression which focussed more on males than females, given that males were more likely to be directly active and more highly

⁶⁷ Support included provision of sewing machines and training in literacy.

⁶⁸ Valdes and Weinstein, op.cit., p.63.

⁶⁹ Ibid. p.64.

⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 67.

visible in politics, had an impact nonetheless on women, often a dramatic one. Women as the relatives of the victims of repression felt the immediate consequences of that repression, the loss of loved ones as well the loss of the means of economic support and its consequences. They felt as well the longer term impact of the changes in both economic and social policies fostered by the military regime--creation of a free market that in its initial stages wiped out many employment opportunities, elimination or reduction of social services, reduction in government spending on health and education. Moreover, the government eliminated the range of labor benefits that had protected women in the workplace. Employers were no longer required to provide maternity benefits and in fact could fire women who were pregnant. Free day care facilities were eliminated and the cost of such care increased considerably.⁷¹ Thus, women were faced with increased burdens directly related to the repressive activities of the new regime and its long term economic and social policies.

The military government reshaped the institutional structure created by previous governments to develop women's popular participation. Emphasis was placed on "depoliticizing" the Centros de Madres and redefining the role of women as wives and mothers dedicated to fostering patriotic children, future citizens of the new order. CEMA was converted into a private foundation in 1974, headed by the wife of General Pinochet, the leader of the military junta. The reconstituted CEMA sought to establish control over all centros de madres, even those affiliated directly with the Catholic Church through CARITAS-Chile. The Secretariat of Women was established to emphasize patriotic values and to develop a sense of cooperation with the government's development plans and programs.⁷²

Women through a variety of organizational efforts reacted to this situation in economic and political terms. Women set up what were known as **organizaciones economicas populares** (popular economic organizations) (OEPs) which operated cooperative soup kitchens (**ollas comunes**), tended collective gardens, produced artisanry, organized shopping collectives and in other ways developed strategies for survival under existing conditions of poverty.⁷³ These organizations can be seen at one level as purely economic responses to the existing situation, but as Horacio Walker indicated in his analysis of an **olla comun** in Santiago, the work that was undertaken together by women amounted to a process of consciousness-raising. As he states, "by engaging in the operation of an all-woman soup kitchen, they are criticizing traditional gender

⁷¹ For a discussion of the impact of repression see Patricia M. Chuchryk, "From Dictatorship to Democracy: the Women's Movement in Chile", in Jane S. Jaquette, ed., **The Women's Movement in Latin America: Participation and Democracy**, 2nd edition, Westview, Boulder, 1994, pp.67-70.

⁷² Presidential message 1979-80 as quoted in Valdes and Weinstein, op.cit. p. 78.

⁷³ Chuchryk points to the tremendous growth of these organizations in the 1980s. For example, in the period from 1982 to 1985, the number of OEPs expanded from 495 in greater Santiago to more than 1125, the number of shopping cooperatives from 57 to 232, the number of cooperative soup kitchens from 34 to 232 and the number of artisans workshops from 151 to 332. Ibid. p. 69.

relations from the bottom to the top, they are raising doubts; they are prompting questions; they are seeing themselves differently".⁷⁴

Economic necessity prompted a greater sense of consciousness as women as well as increased skill in undertaking collective action. The political situation led to activity in the area of the defense of human rights. One of the first such efforts was the creation of the Association of Democratic Women (**Agrupacion de Mujeres Democraticas**). Established shortly after the coup⁷⁵ in order to provide support for political prisoners, the group by the late 1980s expanded its role to become a part of the effort to secure the return to democratic rule through efforts at political education. Other organizations such as the Association of the Relatives of Disappeared Prisoners, the Association of the Relatives of Executed Politicians, of Internal Exiles and Ex-Internal Exiles and the Committee for the Return of Exiles, all basically made up of women, helped to stimulate the development of a network of local human rights committees in the late 1970s. Their efforts were aided by the establishment in 1978 of the Chilean Commission of Human Rights, made up of a group of prominent jurists opposed to the regime's repressive activities. The Commission, supported by international donors, worked with these grassroots committees, serving as a protective umbrella against possible repression by the military government.⁷⁶ The grassroots committees, largely made up of young people, both men and women, worked to promote human rights and a return to democracy.

In terms of developing a consciousness of a feminist perspective on the status of women under the dictatorship, one of the first steps, referred to earlier in the section regarding freedom spaces, was the establishment of the Women's Studies Circle (*Circulo de Estudios de la Mujer*). This group which was established under the wing of the Academy of Christian Humanism had its roots in a group of middle class professional women who began to debate gender issues in 1977. The *circulo* focused on research into the condition of women as well as an effort to raise women's consciousness regarding their status. In 1983, the group's perspectives on sexuality, divorce and abortion, which clashed with those of the Catholic Church, led to their expulsion from the Academy. Out of the group two and eventually three NGOs emerged, one of which was the Women's Studies Center (CEM) (*Centro de Estudios de la Mujer*) which in turn gave birth to CEDEM (*Centro de Desarrollo de la Mujer*) (Center for the Development of Women) and the other *Casa de la Mujer--La Morada* (The Morada Women's House). All three are presently functioning although, as we shall discuss below, their roles and resource bases have changed over the past decade. *La Morada* engaged directly in political activism serving as a center for and a meeting place of a variety of feminist groups including the *Movimiento Feminista*

⁷⁴ Horacio Walker Larrain, "The Transformation of Practices in Grassroots Organizations: A case Study in Chile", unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto, 1986 as quoted in Chuchryk, op.cit., p. 69.

⁷⁵ October 1, 1973, three weeks after the coup.

⁷⁶ That umbrella sometimes acquired leaks because the government at times directed repressive measures directly at the Commission whose chairman, Jaime Velasco, ended up being sent into exile on several occasions.

(Feminist Movement) and the Frente de Liberacion Feminino (Women's Liberation Front). CEM and CEDEM were alternative research centers who sought to combine research activities with technical assistance in the support of popular class women's activities. CEM functioned and continues to function largely in urban areas and CEDEM in rural areas although both organizations are located in Santiago.

These NGOs along with other women's organizations such as MEMCH83, an umbrella women's political organization, participated in the effort to promote the transition to democracy. Women's groups presented a specific set of women's demands as part of the Assembly of Civility sponsored by the Chilean Commission of Human Rights in 1986. Prior to the plebiscite of 1988, a group of women's organizations took out a full-page advertisement in the newspaper *La Epoca* to promote the participation of women in the construction of a democratic order based on the equality of condition between men and women. Their demands included the creation of a ministerial level office on women's issues, elimination of sexism and inequality of opportunity based on gender in the educational system and affirmative action to assure that 30% of all decision-making positions in the government would be held by women.

Building a Women's Democratic Agenda

After the victory of the opposition in the 1988 plebiscite and with a view toward assisting in an electoral victory for the Concertacion in the 1989 elections, women throughout the country formed a loose-knit coalition known as the Concertacion de Mujeres Por la Democracia (Women's Accord for Democracy). The idea was not to form a ladies auxiliary to the Concertacion de Partidos Por La Democracia, but to promote an agenda of women's concerns that included the 30% share of decision-making posts, the creation of a national women's office with ministerial rank, development of educational and hiring practices to promote equality, elimination of sexist based education, advertising and the ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, demands echoing many of those contained in the 1988 advertisement.⁷⁷ This represented a significant political advance for because it, like the Concertacion de Partidos, brought together a broad spectrum of women in a single political effort outside the usual constraints of party allegiance. Receiving support from the Swedish and Norwegian governments, the organization operated a campaign of civic education regarding their issues as well as providing support for the women candidates within the Concertacion. The organization had defined its purpose in limited terms--to assist in the electoral victory of 1989. It disbanded after holding a seminar-workshop in 1990 that was designed to bring together Concertacion de Mujeres por la Democracia members from throughout the country for the first (and only) time.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Chuchryk, op.cit., pp. 85-86.

⁷⁸ For a brief review of the history of the organization and the results of its final workshop, see Josefina Rossetti, ed., *Informe Final: Encuentro de la Concertacion de Mujeres Por La Democracia*, Editorial Arge, Santiago, 1991.

While the Aylwin government made good on its promise to create a women's office with the establishment of SERNAM (Servicio Nacional de la Mujer) (National Women's Service) with cabinet rank, it had scarce representation of women in key positions, either elected or appointed. Only 10 of 167 parliamentarians, 3 of 27 vice ministers, 1 of 15 appointed mayors⁷⁹ and only the director of SERNAM at the ministerial level were women. In the second democratic government, advances have been made in terms of the number of ministers (up from one to three) and vice ministers, but these can hardly be considered to be significant indicators of an advance in women's political participation at the highest level of government. Moreover, there are still only a handful of legislators who are women⁸⁰. Other women's concerns, most immediately, for example, enactment of a divorce law,⁸¹ are still on the agenda for the second democratically elected presidential term.

SERNAM is a significant accomplishment that can be claimed by the women's movement. It is a permanent agency of the government concerned with women's issues that seeks "to dignify and to value the role played by women in society; to develop and propose social policies to strengthen the family; to promote programs which dignify and value domestic labor and its indispensable role for the functioning of the family and of society; to support and create channels of participation for all women in Chile; to review current law and to promote legislative change and other policies designed to end discrimination against women and to comply with Chile's commitment when it signed the U.N.'s Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women."⁸²

The issue remains as to whether SERNAM alone constitutes an adequate response to women's concerns. Or, is it the case that the consensus building political process of the Concertacion which looks to smooth over political conflict, does not address the demands of women in the modern world? Raquel Olea, director of La Morada commented that:

SERNAM is the principal achievement of women in a reborn democracy. Its first policies can be seen in the creation of Centers of Information for women, work programs on the theme of intra-family violence, programs for women heads of households, changes in private and public legislation regarding women...Nevertheless, the ties that bind, the negotiations, the internal fights between more traditional and more advanced positions within the concertacion obstruct debating themes more specifically linked to feminism: abortion, divorce, themes regarding sexual options and alternative identities to the norm,

⁷⁹ Only after legislation was changed when the Aylwin government was in office were mayors elected.

⁸⁰ Nine according to an interview with Antoneta Saa, the ex-mayor of Conchali and currently a Partido Por La Democracia deputy for Conchali, a section of greater Santiago.

⁸¹ Chile has no divorce law. People with the necessary resources rely on creating a legal fiction to obtain an annulment of their marriage, a process that often implies getting witnesses to perjure themselves.

⁸² Chuchryk, op.cit. pp.87-88.

remain definitely stigmatized and suppressed from the public agenda.⁸³

The NGOs that had been involved in the effort to promote a women's agenda through the re-establishment of democracy have all experienced a sense of crisis and the need to re-establish priorities since the transition. Part of the crisis is a crisis of human and financial resources. Key personnel from many of the organizations have moved over to positions in government or to take advantage of new opportunities in other fields including re-vitalized universities. The NGOs have invested their resources in developing programs which have been taken over by the state or the universities, such as a program of gender concerns in the University of Chile.⁸⁴ International donors which were the mainstay of the NGOs in the period of the dictatorship have dramatically reduced their support of various of the NGOs. Some of the NGOs have been able to maintain financing sources at reduced levels. Several are engaged in becoming technical assistance and consultative resources for the state with the necessary learning curve in terms of how to organize, write proposals, charge for services and effectively implement consultative tasks. All are engaged in evaluating their institutional plans, resources and structures.

A second level of the crisis concerns the shift in role as advocates of women's issues. The NGOs can no longer count on the strength that comes from being part of a mass mobilization to promote democracy, win a plebiscite and elect a democratic government. Initially, in fact, many NGO personnel were exhausted from the effort to foster democracy. It took time to re-establish an agenda and to restore a willingness to push forward. The recent effort to provide a Chilean NGO position paper for the 1995 Beijing conference on Women helped to rekindle interest in gender issues.⁸⁵ Another approach, advocated by some leaders of women's NGOs is to find ways to participate more effectively in the political process including the presence of women within political structures and the increased incorporation of gender concerns in the operations of the state and its policies.⁸⁶

The entrance of women into national politics in an effective fashion is not an easy task. The attitude of the parties, whatever their position within the government or the opposition, the general attitude of men toward women in politics and the specific limitations of women's defined role in Chilean society are cited by women political practitioners as critical stumbling blocks in

⁸³ Raquel Olea, "La Redemocratización: Mujer, Feminismo y Política", *Revista Cultural de Crítica* 3,5, (July, 1992).

⁸⁴ Interview with Ximena Valdes, Director of CEDEM

⁸⁵ Interviews with Ximena Valdes, director of CEDEM and Rosalba Todaro, Director of CEM (Centro de Estudios de la Mujer). The document that was developed is entitled **Mujeres: Ciudadanía, Cultura y Desarrollo en Chile de los Noventa**, March, 1994.

⁸⁶ see Natacha Molina, "El Estado y las Mujeres: Una Relación Difícil" in **Transiciones: Mujeres en los Procesos Democráticos**, ISIS International, Ediciones de las Mujeres no. 13, Santiago, 1991, pp.85-86.

promoting women's participation in politics. For example, parties of the Concertacion have been reluctant to nominate women for ministerial slots if the fact of that nomination results in the party receiving less important positions within the cabinet. Parties have been reluctant to nominate women in many parliamentary districts, reserving only a few slots for women with proven names or followings. Men historically have made a vocation of politics, have developed their insider networks and been better able to insure that they will be given the best positions or the best opportunities within a given party. Even parties that have made it a practice in recent years of seeking to advance women have demonstrated a reluctance to risk offending party faithful (virtually always masculine) or lose potential advantage within the governing coalition.

Women deputies in parliament have worked to overcome these built-in disadvantages, seeking to develop cooperative relationships with each other on common issues. However, the very limited number of female parliamentarians constitutes an extremely restricted base of action. Within the political process, women have looked at several options to open up alternatives.

One alternative route is to begin with an effort at securing power at the local level within municipal government and through neighborhood organizations such as local road pavement committees and other local action groups.⁸⁷ Another alternative is through a process of networking around specific issues such as the issue of divorce. Currently in Chile, such a network is developing to support a change in the divorce law, a change that is a priority for the women's movement, but not for the Concertacion government.⁸⁸ As Antoneta Saa, PPD Deputy for Conchalí comments, "Securing local positions is not only easier, but also is a type of task that has to do with accomplishments, with concrete things, and this has more resonance with the socialization of women...I believe that women are socialized with a more global vision of reality, not a specialized one. This characteristic which we have to be able to be involved in many things at once, to be conscious of the totality, makes us better at local government."⁸⁹

Conclusion

The adverse circumstances of the dictatorship helped to develop the political skills of women. In the midst of the repression, women thought through alternative approaches to raising gender issues, human rights concerns and developing survival strategies. Those efforts turned into a process of creating a variety of NGOs, dedicated to applied research, political education and supporting organizational efforts at the local and national level. These organizations were

⁸⁷ Mariana Aylwin, Christian Democratic deputy for La Florida pointed to the activity in such committees of the women in her district, a lower and middle class suburb of Santiago. Personal interview.

⁸⁸ The importance of networks as an alternative was stressed by Antoneta Saa in a personal interview.

⁸⁹ Maria Antoneta Saa, "Descralizar El Poder", ISIS Internacional, Ediciones de las Mujeres No. 19, Santiago, 1993, p. 18.

supported by a variety of international donors which made it possible for them to build up their institutional resources. They were able to contribute to the process of the transition to democracy with their ideas, their physical presence in marches and demonstrations and their ability to help turn out the vote in critical moments such as the 1988 plebiscite and the 1989 elections.

The end of the dictatorship and the advent of democracy has brought them certain benefits. They have greater freedom to undertake their research, argue their agenda and express their position through such organizations as SERNAM which is an institutional expression of the state's concern with women's issues. However, this very success has provided a new set of obstacles. The financial resources from foreign donors that were the core of support for many of these institutions are disappearing at a rapid rate. Political victory in the creation of SERNAM has left an important question mark--state cooptation of the gender issue. Mass mobilization of the sort that assisted in promoting the transition to democracy no longer appears as a viable alternative, particularly in the light of the emphasis in government on consensus building. Thus, the solution in the short term for many of the organizations and for the women's movement as a whole has been to tighten belts, develop new skills or more sharply hone existing skills as research and technical assistance consultants to the state or to whoever will provide resources and look for alternative sources of funding. The solution for many as well is to approach politics from several angles: at the local level to take advantage of opportunities which may be easier to access than those at the national level (there are more council-persons than deputies, for example), to work through local functional committees such as road paving councils and to organize networks around a critical issue such as divorce. These approaches may also mean a role for some of the NGOs that can provide the necessary skills and insights to make these choices effective. The issue then returns to the survival strategies for these NGOs.

IX. The Politics of the Environment: Alternative Approaches to Articulating Interests

Concern with the environment is a fairly recent phenomenon in Chile. Over a decade ago, in the midst of the dictatorship, Chilean scientists and concerned citizens began to explore the possibility of concerted action to protect the environment and to deal with major pollution problems that threatened the quality of life, the ecology and the economic well-being of Chile. CSOs have been significant actors in developing environmental policies, at first in a virtually closed dialogue among themselves and eventually reaching out with the advent of democracy to government and to a new agency within government, the Comision Nacional del Medio Ambiente CONAMA) (National Commission on the Environment), which has been assigned responsibility for environmental concerns.

A significant element in tracing the history of NGO involvement in environmental policy-making is to examine the series of "Scientific Encounters Regarding the Environment" organized by the Centro de Investigacion y Planificacion del Medio Ambiente (CIPMA) (Center for Research and Planning of the Environment) with the support of international donors including USAID. These national meetings held in 1983, 1986, 1989 and 1992 were fora for identifying individuals with the necessary technical knowledge and skills to define the range of

environmental concerns in Chile and to begin to formulate policy options. The first encounter was a moment of diagnosis of the problem.⁹⁰ The encounters have moved on to provide further definition of environmental concerns, incorporating a broad section of interested Chileans including a significant number of businessmen (one fourth of the total of attendees at the 1992 encounter).⁹¹

The encounters have been generated by elements of the civil society, but have looked to increase the role of government in the management of environmental problems in two areas: efficient administration of resources dedicated to solving environmental concerns and reduction of the conflicts among social actors who compete for scarce environmental resources (air, land, streets) with a view toward generating compromises.⁹² This emphasis on compromise and conciliation, and on the incorporation of all of the relevant actors in a dialogue constitutes the approach that has most characterized the making of national environmental policy in Chile and is in keeping with the emphasis on consensus building that has characterized Chilean politics in general since the reestablishment of democracy.

The process of consensus building is reflected as well in the effort at dialogue across ideological lines that characterized much of the effort to formulate a law regarding the environment, recently enacted. CIPMA and the Centro de Estudios Publicos (CEP) provided members to a working group that helped to develop bases for the law.⁹³ Reflecting its origins, CONAMA, the government agency responsible for implementing the new law, sees its role as one that promotes the necessary consensus to implement policies in a manner acceptable to Chileans.⁹⁴

CONAMA as an agency is defining its relationship with NGOs. In part a product of the dialogue between NGOs and government, it sees itself as the lead player with NGOs serving as limited partners in a process of establishing new environmental rules and regulations. CONAMA also is serving as a broker between NGOs and foreign donors, transferring funds it receives to environmental NGOs and referring NGOs to possible funding sources. (In this sense it is important to bear in mind that some NGOs such as CIPMA and CEP⁹⁵ have established

⁹⁰. Igor Saavedra, "Evolucion y Aportes de los Encuentros Cientificos", in **Gestion Ambiental en Chile: Aportes del 4º Encuentro Cientifico Sobre el Medio Ambiente**, CIPMA, Santiago, 1992, p.14.

⁹¹. Interview with Guillermo Geisse, director of CIPMA.

⁹² Guillermo Geisse, " La Gestion Ambiental" in **Gestion Ambiental en Chile**, op.cit. pp.28-29.

⁹³ See for example **Bases Para Una Ley General del Medio Ambiente En Chile**, CIPMA, Santiago, 1993.

⁹⁴ Interview with Carlos Pina, Chief, Department of International Relations, CONAMA.

⁹⁵ CEP draws its support from the Chilean business community. It is concerned with research on environmental matters, developing, like CIPMA, a continuous flow of research papers and publications on environmental concerns as well as a wide range of other themes.

international and/or domestic funding sources and contacts which make them independent of the need for CONAMA.)

According to recent accounts, the number of NGOs concerned in some aspect of the environment have expanded tremendously in the last few years, from 22 to almost 300 although only a few are truly specialized in the area.⁹⁶ Most of these organizations have limited membership and limited financial resources. As with other areas of civil society, NGOs involved in the environment are facing donor flight and a necessity to tighten their operations to conform to more limited funding.

The NGOs engaged in the area of the environment do not all conform to the model of a research and technical organization looking to build consensus. There are examples of NGOs that focus on confrontation, that seek to promote a particular ecological lifestyle or that focus on preserving a particular aspect of the environment. For example, the Instituto de Ecología Política focuses on use of confrontation, including international resources, especially ecological activist organizations such as Greenpeace, to draw attention to environmental problems it identifies as critical situations. Another type of NGO, Canelo de Nos looks to promote grassroots development that emphasizes appropriate technology, organic agriculture and women's concerns. It focusses on undertaking demonstration projects at a local level and communicating through print and television the results of its efforts. Another form of organization, Comité Nacional Pro Defensa de la Fauna y Flora Forestal (CODEFF), (National Committee for the Defense of Flora and Fauna) emulates the conservationist approach of World Wildlife Fund and other such organizations. CODEFF is a membership organization, with a membership of 2800, but has not been able to translate that base into a significant financial resource.

Awareness of environmental issues can be considered fairly high in Chile with the media serving to promote environmental concerns. Research centers such as CIPMA and CEP have provided technical resources for policy-making which has led to legislation and the establishment of a state agency for the environment. That agency has taken a lead role in defining future environmental policy. Important issues remain such as reducing air pollution in Santiago, preserving water quality in areas affected by mining, preserving the forests and maintaining the quality of agricultural and fishing resources. Environmental groups have been able to build alliances with some important sectors of the business community, notably those businessmen who are engaged in export activities and who are therefore concerned with environmental conditions that might affect their markets. But, that concern also extends to companies operating in sensitive areas in the domestic sphere, for example a gas pipeline company that has hired an environmentalist to assist in its development plans. The variety of NGOs professing to a concern with the environment also points to the degree to which the issue has drawing power.

But as is the case with labor and women's issues, environmentalists have to deal with a

⁹⁶ El Mercurio, August 10, 1994, p. A 1.

number of constraints: reduced resources from international donors, dominance of the state over the terms of the debate on environmental policy and the relatively limited strength of a variety of environmental NGOs as demonstrated by their limited membership and limited ability to draw on local resources for support of their activities.

A new factor to be taken into account in the future will be the ability of environmentalists and environmental NGOs to work effectively at the local level. Issues that are seen as affecting a particular community may be more amenable to local political solutions than those same issues raised to the national or international level. For example, in 1992-93, local fishermen threatened by mining operations were able to use their access to newly elected municipal authorities to halt development of a mining port, even though their opponents included a national agency and a large international mining conglomerate.

Such action, it may be noted, may expand the impact of environmental activism on the promotion of a democratic order.

X. Relations Between NGOs, the Government and Donor Agencies

Most of the NGOs discussed in this report were created in the period 1973-1989 under the dictatorship. As we have noted in greater detail above, the NGOs that were created under the military regime that possessed any sort of political dimension were likely to face an existence fraught with a potential conflict with the government. Most of them, given that they were established by opponents of the government or were undertaking tasks not sanctioned by the government, were unable to be registered legally as non-profits (government approval being a requirement of that registration). Thus, many took advantage of the freedom of association afforded the for profit sector to become incorporated as profit making enterprises in form, but not in fact. (SUR and PARTICIPA, for example, were established initially under that format.)

Virtually all of the support for these NGOs during the dictatorship came from international donors, most of them motivated by a desire to support efforts at maintaining freedom spaces and promoting a return to democracy. For example, the European Community created a special fund in 1986 to support democratization (designated as the Special Line for Chile), a product of a visit by European parliamentarians. This special fund was disbursed under conditions of utmost security during the dictatorship to assure that the recipient organizations were not subject to reprisals.⁹⁷ The EU sees the model of supporting a transition to democracy followed in Chile as applicable as well to countries such as Vietnam, Cambodia, South Africa, Gaza and the West Bank. Private foundations and bi-lateral government agencies also supported organizations viewed as promoting democracy.

⁹⁷ This special line provided 2 million ECUs in 1987, 2.9 million in 1988, 5 million in 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 4.8 million in 1993 and 1994. (Interview with Marie-Paul Neuville of the European Union office, Santiago.)

With the advent of democracy, the NGOs initially envisioned that support for their activities would expand through their relationships with the government. In fact, the NGOs and the government have established certain lines of cooperation, but has been noted in terms of particular sectors, this does not automatically translate into additional support for NGO activities. NGOs have made important contributions, above all in the early stages of the Aylwin government in terms of providing both conceptual frameworks for action and key personnel. (An example here is the Corporacion de Promocion Universitaria (CPU) (Corporation for University Promotion) which provided leadership in sectors such as health and housing as well as officeholders for key ministerial and sub-ministerial posts.)

The governments of both Aylwin and Frei have created consultative committees as meeting places for government and NGOs within the Ministry of Planning. The government has also opened up mechanisms for using NGOs in a compensated consultative fashion as well as through mechanisms such as FOSIS that use NGOs as extensions of certain government initiatives--as was described above with respect to PARTICIPA. The state, it needs to be noted, does not approach NGOs in a monolithic fashion--a ministry like the Ministry of Planning emphasizes the cooperative nature of its relationships with NGOs while other ministries may place emphasis on controlling or coopting NGO activities, for instance in the area of social mobilization.

But, problems persist in terms of the relations between NGOs, the government and the donors. The most significant concern with respect to the international donors has been noted earlier--most donors have reduced or are planning to reduce their support for NGOs in Chile in the short term, a function of their belief that their programs have achieved their intended purpose, restoring democracy to Chile, of the donors' classification of Chile as an advanced developing country able to supply its own needs and a function of demands existing to support other countries. Most European bi-lateral programs, USAID, the United Nations Development Program and many private foundations are reducing or eliminating their support for programs in Chile.

The government is viewed by the NGOs as being protective of the rights of private organizations, but also niggardly in providing support for their initiatives to fill the gap left by the reduction of direct foreign assistance. As Gonzalo de la Maza, Executive Director of Accion, the Chilean umbrella NGO organization commented⁹⁸:

Regarding state policy toward the non-governmental sector (on the part of the State), this has been marked by a will not to intervene in its workings. This has been translated into the maintenance of the sector's autonomy, but at the same time, the NGOs have not obtained support with respect to the problems resulting from their institutional evolution as well as with respect to their contribution to democracy and development. International cooperation policy has been successful for the state and its components, but has not

⁹⁸ in *Informe de Investigacion Relaciones ONG-Gobierno: 1990-1993*, (mimeo) p.38.

signified any support for the NGOs.

In effect, the state is viewed as having coopted the major part of the available foreign assistance, reducing the role of most NGOs to providers of services required by the state. As shall be discussed further below, this raises a question of the role that NGOs can play in the future as civil society organizations, as independent advocates of alternative policies.

XI. The Future of CSOs in Chile

NGOs and above all the NGOs we have examined that operate as Civil Society organizations (CSOs), seeking to influence policies, formulate new agendas and increase the participation of educated citizens in the process of government face formidable obstacles in present day Chile. The key ones we have examined in the areas of women's issues, labor and the environment operate with an awareness of the partisan nature of Chilean politics, but reaching out within their spheres to a variety of political groups. They in effect exercise autonomy from political parties. Having survived a dictatorship which sought to eliminate all vestiges of democratic process, CSOs face the challenge of massive reductions in support from international donors and only limited opportunities to secure support from local sources. Those opportunities are limited further by a set of tax laws that does not encourage charitable donations by individuals or by businesses.

As important a set of considerations regarding the role of CSOs are the degree to which the transition to democracy has left unanswered a series of questions about how to deal with problems characteristic of more advanced countries, issues such as a redefinition of the role of women and their fuller participation within the economic, social and political order, issues such as the management of an environment in crisis as well as issues left over from the consequences of unequal development under the dictatorship, the provision of social services across the population, the role of a resurrected labor movement in defining the future of economic growth and the means of reducing the poverty ignored by the previous regime. As we have noted, CSOs in the areas of women's issues, labor and the environment have raised issues regarding the need for new forms of political action and new forms of political definition. Women are seeking access; labor is pressing its demands and the political process has responded largely by emphasizing the need for consensus, a need that grows out of the lessons learned from prior political history.

Within this context, certain lessons can be drawn from donor experience in Chile that would be relevant for donor efforts in similar situations of transition to democracy. Faced with a dictatorship that seeks to destroy the ability to think about and undertake politics donors can play an important role in building freedom spaces. Those freedom spaces provide the opportunity to rethink political strategies, develop alternative analytical models and provide the necessary breathing space so that opportunities (such as the 1988 plebiscite) can be capitalized on. Those freedom spaces can also serve to open up the possibility of exploring and promoting new issues such as women's rights and the environment, even if the moment may not be ripe to make such concerns into effective policy.

Donors can also look to Chile for lessons regarding the ability to make a democratic process richer through such actions as enhancing the capacity of newly democratic groups, for example youth, to understand and operate within a democratic context, i.e. one of the key roles undertaken by PARTICIPA as well as other civic education agencies. Donors can also refer to the degree to which small amounts of resources can assist in rebuilding a labor movement almost destroyed by a military regime, a movement that has been able to restore its ability to provide education in union-building skills to its members with the support of international donations.

The other significant set of lessons learned may be summed up in the Spanish saying which counsels against "cantando victoria" (singing a victory song) too soon. Donors are leaving Chile at an extremely rapid rate, driven by a variety of factors including the limited availability of resources and the belief that Chile constitutes an advanced developed country, one capable of maintaining a variety of institutional forms through its own resources. While in theory this is certainly the case, in practice, a great deal of distance has to be covered to effectively assure that at least the most efficient and effective CSOs will remain functioning once virtually all major international donor support has been withdrawn. The outcome of withdrawing support without the presence of adequate substitutes may be a fundamental alteration in the role of the agency in question. This may be the case with PARTICIPA and is most certainly the case with a number of women's organizations and research centers who are rapidly being converted into consulting firms. The important question to be faced is whether these agencies can continue to perform their role as generators of alternative ideas and/or as civic educators, functions likely to be critical to maintaining the vitality of Chilean democracy, particularly in terms of incorporating innovations in democratic thought and practice.