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LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH IN A TIME OF CHANGE AND CRISIS

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CONTENTS

/Introduction

Introduction

ECLAC's activities in connection with the review of the situation of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean have been carried out in the context of General Assembly resolutions on the question and of the recommendations of member countries of the region.1/ Although the study of this issue began in the region twenty years ago, it has recently taken on a new impetus, with different aspects being emphasized in the light of the changes that have taken place in Latin America and the Caribbean and of the problems that have been caused by the crisis.

In 1983, ECLAC prepared a study 2/ on this question which represented the first effort to look at the situation of youth in the context of the changing developments of the past few decades and of the problems being faced at present.3/ This study was submitted to the first Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Youth Year (San José, Costa Rica, 3-7 October 1983). The Meeting endorsed the study and drew up guidelines for ECLAC's work in this area. These guidelines are set forth in the Regional Plan of Action for Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Youth Year, adopted at the San José Meeting.

In accordance with these guidelines, ECLAC prepared a follow-up study to be submitted to the Second Regional Meeting on youth.

This study reaffirms the considerations set forth in the study prepared for 1983, and, bearing in mind new developments, moves forward to an in-depth study of the situations of the different countries. It discusses new concepts and theories on the situation of youth in Latin America and what it means, and adds an analysis of other questions pertaining to the situation of youth in the region, such as changes in social and economic structures, social institutions as a possible channel for the insertion of youth, consumerism in Latin America and its impact on young people, the meaningfulness of having a job, the importance of the symbolic dimensions of youth as a stage in life, and the identity of youth vis-à-vis social stratification in the region.

I. SOCIAL CHANGE AND ITS EFFECT ON YOUTH

1. The youth of Latin America and the Caribbean: their relationship with the processes of transformation of the social structure, change and the crisis

To understand fully the issue of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean, we must consider it within the context of the significant changes that have taken place in the social structure and, in particular, in the structure of classes and social strata.

The changes that took place over the last few decades in most Latin American countries were not confined to changes within certain groups and with respect to their positions within the system. Rather, the society itself began to move towards a future, rather indefinite mode.

Over a period of thirty years, many changes took place which affected the population. Its spatial position was modified by urbanization; from agricultural occupations or the production of goods with limited technology, it moved on to industrial occupations using advanced technology and occupations in the services sectors providing support to production or in social and community services. From cultural levels of illiteracy, the masses gained access to middle and higher levels of education which up to the middle of the century had been reserved for the élites. Personalized and dependent communications were replaced by mass communications disseminated either by radio and television or by systems established in large human conglomerates of educational institutions or economic organizations. Finally, patterns of consumption changed parallel to the internationalization of societies, the magnitude of which is not under discussion, independently of how they may be evaluated.

In a process of change of this nature, the modern sector already existing in society was too small to assimilate the large numbers of recent arrivals and transmit to them patterns of socialization and assimilation (a clear example being that of the establishment of cities). At the same time, the socialization capacity of families was affected by the large gap between their experience and their actual situation and between the scanty education of the persons who were becoming socialized and the high level of schooling received by those who presumably had already been socialized. This created a generation gap which, in some cases, was perceived as being more serious than the gaps between social groups.

In these societies which were going through the process of change, the mechanisms available for integration into the nascent modern society were very contradictory. Some dimensions, such as education and culture, were much more accessible than others; some popular sectors even began to feel that education enabled them to participate in and influence power. At the same time, those who tried to enter the political community found it a frustrating experience. In some cases, participation in politics simply did not happen; in others, it was only symbolic or effective participation was followed by violent exclusion. Finally,

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as regards income, there was a sort of "external proletariat" made up of smallholders and urban subproletarians whose marginality became more obvious as the average income of the population rose, while those groups that were integrated into the system experienced the ambivalence of alternating stages of progress and regression as regards participation in the fruits of economic growth.

The society to which the Latin American type of development gave rise is a rather contradictory synthesis of some of the features of the so-called society of masses and some features of what was known in the past as the dual society. It is characterized, on the one hand, by poverty and by the existence of a relatively undefined mass made up of the subordinate classes of the rural and urban areas and, on the other, by the more integrated and better differentiated structure of the internationalized sectors of the system of production, both in the country and in the city. The two, of course, are not independent of each other, as there are links between them; often, however, there is an unresolved tension between the two contradictory elements.4/

In this context, we must ask what are the salient features of the social classes and groups to which the young people of the region belong? Theoretically, it is generally agreed that in order for social classes and groups to exist as real groups --or as definite collective entities-- there must be differences among them based on a given lifestyle as regards work and society. This means to a certain extent, that there must be a typical universe as regards culture and relationships. Moreover, social classes and groups may also be described as real groups in terms of the way in which the spheres of production and of social reproduction are linked together in their daily lives.

As regards forms of social stratification, the following transformations --with certain differences from country to country-- have been noted in the region:

There is a diversification of peasant groups as a result of the development of forms of agrarian exploitation other than the traditional combination of latifundia and minifundia and the penetration of activities of the modern capitalistic type.

The recession brought about by the crisis greatly affected the situation of urban industrial workers; moreover, there is great diversity within this group as regards wage levels, forms of organization, types of qualification, etc. This sector is also different from the so-called "informal sector", which in many cases is much larger.

Among the middle sectors, it is now almost trite to make a distinction between the old middle class and the new middle class when speaking of the growing importance of certain new key groups, including the techno-scientists and the techno-bureaucrats, in both governmental and private activities.

As regards the entrepreneurial groups, an agricultural entrepreneurial sector has arisen which has become increasingly important and has displaced the old rural oligarchy. Decisive changes have also taken place in relationships between financial and industrial entrepreneurs or between financial and commercial

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entrepreneurs. In many cases, the particular type of economic model being applied has given financial capital a preponderant role, thus subordinating other sectors to the financial sector. It must not be forgotten that the entrepreneurial sector is linked to the exterior and that this increases its dependency and has an effect on the general orientation of the economy.

As usual, however, what is important in speaking of social classes and groups is not only to describe the situation of each one, but also to point out the structure of relationships among them. Most diagnoses on Latin America agree on the significance of the fact that the development model followed after the Second World War has been exhausted or transformed and that a change has taken place as regards the form of industrialization. The crisis of the development model is also evident at the social level, as there is a crisis in relation between social groups and classes.

One interesting phenomenon is the influence which the processes of structuring and destructuring of classes have within the cultural environment. In societies with a longstanding class structure, such as most of the European ones, there are three types of culture, i.e., the culture of the élite, that of the dominant groups and a popular culture. These different cultures, however, have tended to blend into each other; in some cases, this phenomenon has been attributed to the development of a level middle-class society. It was expected that a similar phenomenon would occur in Latin America if the effects of the industrialization and urbanization process which began right after the Second World War continued without interruption. However, it seems that in Latin America there has instead been a dissolution of previous identities rather than the emergence of a single new cultural pattern; this has been the case despite the visible tendency to adopt cultural consumption patterns characteristic of a degraded mass culture.

This process is particularly complex in the Latin American countries not only because the type of development directed towards import substitution and urban expansion took place within a short time span, usually from the end of the Second World War --except for a few cases in which it began simultaneously with the crisis of 1929-- to the 1970s (since which time a new modality of industrialization has begun in some countries), but also because it is impossible to speak of a clearly structured prior situation.5/

The society that existed before the model mentioned above was characterized by the coexistence, both in time and in space, of different social times; in other words, there were groups which lived in extreme poverty, forms of agrarian relations which involved master-servant relations, and several other modalities of economic and social relations. Urban structures were also extraordinarily complex, there being nuclei of a commercial and financial bourgeoisie with close links to the exterior, middle sectors resulting from the aggregation of different groups and, alongside craftsmen and incipient nuclei of workers, a "plebeian population", the latter term not being used in a pejorative sense.

The process of industrialization which took place after the Second World War (in some cases earlier and in others later) acted upon this complicated social structure and, although in each case this entailed phenomena of acculturation, destructuring and restructuring of group identities and cultural systems, it must

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be borne in mind that, because of the nature of the social structure in question, these identities hardly bore any relation to an overall framework of orientation of social action.

Nevertheless, industrialization had, and in many cases, still has an enormous impact as regards social mobilization and mobility, both geographical --internal migration is a significant phenomenon in many countries of the region-- and occupational.

The difficulties encountered by the classes in trying to establish themselves as "real groups" --some of the elements of which we have tried to outline-- have certain specific effects, many of which directly concern youth. For example, a specific social group may be considered capable of promoting processes of change and bringing new dimensions to history; moreover --as the French sociologist Alain Touraine has pointed out in many of his theoretical works-- a social group may be defined as a social movement to the extent that it perceives itself as being the bearer of a historical option. Thus, although it is common in Latin America for youth to refer to themselves in terms of their social status, e.g., "young worker", "young peasant", etc., only rarely do they see their social class as being an agent of history. This may help explain why there is a predominance in Latin American politics of pluriclass movements, with populism being only one of the most notable examples.

Nevertheless, although class identities may be difficult to establish, this in no way means that social differences have disappeared; on the contrary, new differences have totally or partially replaced the previous ones. Moreover, if class identities do not exist, there is a tendency to strengthen distinctions based on status. Indeed, several studies show how the educational system, which appears to have an equalizing influence, introduces differentiations even within a given level, thus giving rise to different statuses. This is especially evident in the differences that are established between private and public education or between different types of universities.

As is well known, the process of industrialization in Latin America went hand-in-hand with a profound process of secularization. Many different factors acted as powerful incentives for the social mobilizations brought about by rural-urban migration, incorporation into the urban environment or mass education. In many cases it was not possible to establish as shared values ideas such as those concerning the formation of the nation on the basis of social and political participation or the extension of citinzenship. A good example of the difficulty encountered in establishing social values as the industrialization process went on is the fact that, for a long time, the notion of development which, of course, implied both modernization and nationalism, was only conceived, even in technical proposals, in terms of economic growth. In recent years, when the idea of growth seemed to be confined, as a general formula, to that of access to "consumption", the incentive was to gain access to the world of merchandise.

As the nation-building project became generalized, it allowed for the development of mechanisms that would help foster social integration. The idea of generalizing access to the world of merchandise was too fragile a mechanism to

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sustain the social integration that was necessary, and when the possibility of increasing the amount of goods that could be consumed was exhausted, and even if it was only maintained, social integration was seriously impaired. Moreover, the legitimacy of many régimes also depended on the economic success they envisaged or achieved, independently of whether or not they achieve national social and economic integration, so that economic difficulties inevitably affected their legitimacy. In brief, the crisis aggravated certain effects which may be considered as socially damaging because the development pattern adopted did not promote participation, impaired solidarity and lacked elements that would mobilize the people collectively.

The above leads us to an interesting issue. Obviously, crises are not an unfamiliar phenomenon, either in the experience or in the development patterns of contemporary economies; however, societies have often overcome them and, in some cases, have even strengthened themselves, on the basis of a culture, an ethic and a feeling of national solidarity that are inherent to industrial society. This was the case of the European societies, which dealt with their postwar experiences in that way.

One may question whether there were in Latin America social, political and cultural forces which, in fostering growth, could have led to the establishment of an industrial culture, providing an ethic and a "meaning" in the Weberian meaning of the word, while at the same time generating a feeling of identity and solidarity among the different members of the nation.

Although many of the social sectors which played and are playing a leading role in the economy, especially the entrepreneurial sector (in the broad sense of the word) and related groups, did foster growth, they did so to protect those cultural traditions, orientations and value systems which, paradoxically, would inevitably be eroded by growth itself. This is not the place to go into detail on the implications of such a phenomenon or even of the degraded forms of behaviour to which it sometimes led. What is important is to stress the fact that it has a great deal to do with the tremendous impact which the economic crisis has had on the structures which guarantee social integration.

If we were to try to express all the above in a few words, we might say that neither the social structures nor the value systems and standards of the Latin American countries are firmly established and that so far all efforts to achieve this goal have either failed or only partially succeeded. It is hard to describe as types the forms of society existing in most Latin American countries, not so much because of any conceptual difficulty as because of the intrinsic nature of these societies, an underlying difficulty in the reality itself. The question of youth cannot be considered independently of this reality.

One characteristic of Latin America is the speed and depth of the changes it has undergone. Nonetheless, structural change usually leads to social disorganization, political unrest and a search --often precarious and hazardous-- for new values and models. If we bear in mind that in most countries of the region, the industrialization cycle has only lasted a little over three decades, we may

/easily draw

easily draw the conlusion that it is the young people who have benefited most from the unquestionable successes which this has brought with it, but also that they have suffered the most from the upheavals that have inevitably occurred.

2. Youth, change and institutions

The process described above gave rise to a new type of relationship with institutions --in the broad sense of the word-- such as work and education, and with social patterns such as consumption. This involved the breakdown of existing social and cultural barriers; suffice it to mention the significance of crossing the barrier of illiteracy. This is not to say that such barriers disappeared entirely or that new ones were not raised up, but that those individuals who did manage to become incorporated --and they were many-- enjoyed greater social rights, both in quantitative and in qualitative terms, and that the foundations of social inequality were modified.

Young people are often the main actors in these processes and, as the processes continue operating, are greatly affected by them. The situation is now further complicated by the crisis in respect of growth and the development model mentioned above.

It would be interesting to make a detailed study of how consumption, both material and cultural, has spread, but unfortunately not much information is available on this subject. Mention is often made of a certain standardization of consumption, as in the case of the cultural consumption fostered by the mass communications media, or of access to certain forms of clothing or even to certain articles such as radio receivers or others. Although in many Latin American countries this only applies to certain segments of the population, what is important in the dissemination of consumption --with all the limitations mentioned above-- is the fact that a change takes place in the subjective orientation of the action; in other words, the relationship between the person's life on the job and his life off the job changes. In a study on Brazil, for example, it was noted that families even encouraged youth to enter the job market at an early age, as a way of enabling them to have access to the consumption to which they aspire.6/

It has often been said that a distinctive element of the traditional thinking of the working class was to attach a positive value to work as a creative activity. The overvaluation of consumption, on the other hand, leads people to consider work only as a means of gaining an end; in this case, it would be gaining access to consumption. Thus, work will be viewed as more or less worthwhile depending on whether it opens up greater or lesser possibilities of purchasing consumer goods. Hence, anything that serves as an efficient means to this end will be considered valuable.

Evidently, the dissemination, or perhaps more than that, the pressure of consumption and the actual possibility of gaining access to it breaks down --relatively speaking-- the link between life in society and the true foundation of social differentiation, which is closely associated with functional and professional differentiation. Thus, mention is often made of the difficulty of establishing the differences between certain strata of the middel sectors and certain strata of the worker sector, especially if one considers income levels, which are what provide access to consumption.

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If we were to consider in greater depth the different aspects involved in the notion of crisis, we could distinguish between the purely economic aspects, with which we are perhaps most familiar at present, and other aspects which have to do with the fundamental mechanisms which guarantee the social and cultural reproduction of the society. The crisis with respect to the latter aspects may date from much longer ago and be much more complex than the economic crisis. Likewise, we must also stop and think about the crisis affecting the ideological structures or values which gurantee the psychological and the psychosocial integration of individuals in the community. It is a question not only of being able to live, work and study, but also of ensuring that such activities are meaningful.

This, in fact, is what enables us to determine the true nature of a crisis in those socialization processes in which educational institutions and the family play a major role. The process of socialization establishes an individual's identity and the ethical standards, ideology and cultural values which give meaning to his own life and which ensure the cultural and ethical reproduction of society. Education, on the other hand, refers to the mechanisms which enable young people to acquire the knowledge and capacity they need in order to be able to contribute to the material reproduction of society.

Thus, perhaps one of the most interesting phenomena occurring in times of generalized crisis is that how young people relate to institutions, these being understood in the broad sense as, among others, school, family and job. It is a fact that many young people from different strata of society are excluded from the various institutions mentioned above; it is also true, however, that youth often make demands which the institutions, given current conditions, are not in a position to meet.

Inclusion in schooling or higher levels of the educational system --even, in some cases, universities-- does not necessarily mean inclusion in the world of culture and professional activity. Moreoever, at certain levels of education, youth are clearly deprived of certain material and spiritual advantages.

Many studies have shown that, as a result of the crisis the family has become a world in which youth are practically obliged to remain. As regards the economic difficulties arising from the crisis, the family provides a sort of insurance to which a young person must frequently resort. It is thus an element of economic stabilization; it is not clear, however, whether this is beneficial for older youth who need a certain degree of independence.

Exclusion from the job market is obviously aggravated by the crisis and even those who are not entirely excluded from it may often be only partially or sporadically included. As is well-known, in times of crisis, it is the new generations who have the greatest difficulty in finding work.

Exclusion from work in times of crisis does not only affect youth from the blue-collar or popular sectors in general; although it is true that this phenomenon occurs more frequently among them, in some countries of the region, white-collar unemployment is beginning to be quite common, at least in some cases. Young people graduating from universities are not able to find jobs in the professions for which they were trained, and sometimes they do not find any job at all.

/While occupational

While occupational mobility was a characteristic of the industrialization period, the present situation poses serious problems. It appears that, at present, "entry level" or, in some cases, non-entry, has a more decisive effect than it used to on a person's professional and social future. Moreover, it seems that in some cases there is less mobility, and promotion within the company is slower. This has been the case with blue-collar workers, but the changes in how promotions are made have also extended to other areas. Advancement from a job as a day-worker to one as a specialized worker and then to a skilled worker depends not so much on any skills or experience the worker might acquire on the job as on training received through a formal programme outside the job. Something similar is happening in respect of university-level professions, where access to a career depends more and more on post-graduate studies, master's degrees, doctoral degrees and others which have to be obtained by interrupting the actual exercise of the profession.

In extreme situations --which, however, must be seen as a warning signal for the region as a whole-- the main difference as regards the society in general, and youth in particular, is between the employed and the unemployed. Many young people see themselves as being excluded from work as well as from other institutions. In extreme cases, an awareness based on a dialectical relationship between different groups or sectors of society may be replaced by an awareness of exclusion based on the opposition between included and excluded persons. At the same time, those who qualify as "included" may have an awareness of being in a privileged position and act mainly to protect that status.

Along with this awareness of exclusion, there is also, in many cases, a certain feeling of fellowship which may be compared to that associated with the idea of a ghetto, with all the implications that has. It is true, of course, that in this phenomenon, many circumstances are at work, such as the efforts of primary groups to restore the values that seem to have been degraded in the overall society and a defensive solidarity which accentuates the search for security based on interpersonal acquaintances. Also, and this is probably very important, there is an uncertainty about the future of society which reinforces the need to seek satisfaction in fellowship.

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3. The question of young people's commitment to democracy

The difficult situation faced by young people, which was described in the preceding section, naturally gives rise to an interest in formulating proposals and suggesting forms of action to change that situation, bearing in mind that the behaviour, attitudes and orientations of young people are vital factors in the consolidation or preservation of a stable democratic order in the region.

Attention has often been drawn to the capacity for resistance shown by groups of young people. This resistance has been associated with aspects of the current economic situation, and phenomena such as their exclusion from employment or the failure to utilize their intellectual capacities have been cited in order to account for such behaviour. Thus, for example, in the case of the student disturbances of the 1960s and early 1970s, it was said that one of the motivations for these young students' actions was connected with the difficulties which the universities were already having in perpetuating the rapid social mobility which access to higher education had made possible in the past.

It was also noted that their rebellious behaviour was often expressed in extreme forms of radicalized participation which, paradoxically, coincided with the relative inability of existing political organizations to integrate and channel their aspirations and demands.

Other interpretations of the same phenomenon postulated that youth as such is a particular state of being characterized by psychological or other traits which are an inherent part of a certain stage in life.

The problem was to identify the reasons why young people, at certain points in time, appeared to have a dissociative effect on the political order. In most cases, these concerns were actually in reference to students and applied only tangentially to "young workers" or to the young people in other social groups.

The question now is whether or not there is a set of specific characteristics associated with young people in Latin America which, while not entirely removing class differentiations, would allow young people as such to contribute to the process of consolidating and strengthening democracy in the region.

Two negative factors may hinder the achievement of these goals. One is the above-mentioned phenomenon of exclusion, which is obviously exacerbated by the crisis; the other relates to the difficulties which in many cases hamper the mechanisms for mediating between the demands of various sectors and decision-making centres. Under those régimes which have suspended political activities, any such system of mediation --not just political parties-- are obviated almost by definition. In other cases, these mechanisms appear to be overly politicized and it is difficult for intermediaries to function. Due to all these factors, mediatory institutions or groups in most of the region are generally weak. The situation tends to be worse in the case of young people, and the only exceptions to this rule --and then only in some cases-- are stundent organizations. It may therefore be said that young people are excluded to a certain extent from decision-making; this is all the more true in respect of young people belonging to social

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groups which are in a disadvantaged position from this standpoint, as is the case with urban marginal sectors, the peasant subproletariat, etc.

In situations where a given group is excluded, it is difficult for that group to gain a clear view of events or to identify a counterpart to which it can address its demands. The social order (or, more specifically, those political/institutional elements giving rise to such exclusion) is usually perceived as an adversary. As a number of studies have shown, it is difficult for young people to organize at either the political or union level under such conditions, and they are excluded from the social relations which could serve as a basis for negotiation. The possibility of formulating a strategy appears to be very remote, and this leads to passivity and withdrawal or to demands to "have it all right now".

This type of situation therefore leads to a feeling of exclusion and marginality which has been imposed from without in both structural and ideological terms. Institutional exclusion, the problems encountered in forming representative structures, and the difficulty of identifying a counterpart influence the attitudes of young people. The social order is largely a system of regulated participation and conflict, and in the case which is of concern to us here, neither conflict nor participation is possible; unfortunately, such groups have no choice but to take refuge in their private lives, in passivity, anomie or violence.

Under such conditions, it is extremely difficult for adolescents and young people to acquire an "internal identity"; the society in which they find themselves is often a highly disaggregated one and it frequently lacks "meaning" on a principle that would truly permit the integration of its members.

Under such circumstances (and the crisis greatly exacerbates this situation), young people often feel a great deal of uncertainty about the future; in some cases, this leads them to form a type of adolescent subculture through which they attempt to assume a permanent identity, despite the fact that youth is a temporary state by definition and that it is, indeed, only a beginning.

4. The importance of young people in defining the region's options

In a recent study on youth, it is argued that young people are the main point of cultural conflict in society. This focus is a particularly valid one in the history of the Latin American countries, as is shown by the far-reaching political role that has been played by student movements in the region.7/ Moreover, the greatest concentration of people is currently to be found in educational centres and especially universities, whose population is much greater than that of any industrial enterprise; this gives the proposals coming from such sources the power of numbers.

In the above-mentioned study, it is maintained that what appears to be a conflict of interests in society takes the form of a conflict of meaning among young people.

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As a result of the process of social modernization, which began to show its greatest dynamism following the Second World War, social conflicts as a whole took place in reference to the opposing tenets of traditionalism and modernism although, strictly speaking, such an opposition began to arise in ideological terms some time before that point, and the youth movement played an important role in that development. Looking back at the social movements associated with the 1918 university reform in Córdoba and in other locations immediately thereafter, it may be seen that the rebelliousness of young people within the confines of the university focussed on oligarchic decision-making structures, the existence of narrow standards and values, the lack of dynamism and the presence of extreme inequality. Their criticism was not only directed at the university, however, but also took in the entire society. These were ongoing issues during the process of social modernization and they served to crystallize a large part of the ideological basis from which not only young people, but the whole of society, addressed such conflicts.

The transformation which took place, as has already been noted, brought with it the expansion of education, a broader dissemination of information through the mass media, the growth of domestic markets and rapid urbanization. All of this involved collective mobility on a very large scale, as well as an awareness that mobility primarily depended on structural changes; in many cases, large groups supported the processes of transformation as a result.

How can we define the cultural conflict which currently exists in society in an attempt to understand, on that basis, the possible orientations of youth movements?

The phenomenon of exclusion referred to earlier was not unrelated to the opposition between traditionalism and modernism, and constant reference was made to the virtual political, social, cultural and economic exclusion of various groups and sectors of society. Nonetheless, in view of the dynamism of modernization, based on growth, it was thought that this type of exclusion would not be a permanent feature of society. This gave legitimacy to the efforts made to bring about modernization and to the régimes that were committed to those processes, even though exclusion continued.

The present dichotomy between those who are included and those who are excluded is set within the context of a type of economic and social transformation which entails the exclusion even of some groups which were previously included; moreover, such exclusion seems to be taking on an appearance of permanence. Although this is a major problem, not all the options have been exhausted, and perhaps the situation need not be seen in terms of an extreme dichotomy. Indeed, the phenomenon of exclusion/inclusion, although it affects some sectors much more than others, cuts vertically across the social pyramid, and the reactions of each group thus affected are sufficiently varied to make it unlikely that those who are excluded will form a group identify vis-à-vis those who are included.

Mention has already been made of the heterogeneity of the Latin American social structure, which is manifested in every sector, including entrepreneurial, industrial, financial, commercial or agrarian groups, as well as middle-income,

/working-class,

working-class, low-income urban and peasant sectors. Each group's reactions to the modality of economic and social development and its effects, or to the crisis of development, may be of an entirely defensive nature; this defensive attitude may place the group in question in opposition to another social group which is perceived as a threat. Attitudes may also be held which, regardless of the fate of others, are based on the positive factors that the group, as such, sees in the process of change. There will also be attitudes of rebelliousness as regards the position which a group perceives itself as occupying.

In some sectors, individual aspirations of mobility will prevail, while in others the general tendency may be to adopt a passive or indifferent attitude. There may well be instances of anomic behaviour, mainly among those who are excluded, and violence may be the approach taken by some of those occupying a defensive position as well as by those who have chosen to rebel. In all these cases, with the possible exception of those in which highly individualistic or extremely anomic behaviour predominates, primary links of solidarity are reinforced which, nonetheless, are marked by an absence of overall social solidarity. As previously stated, however, the phenomenon which may have the farthest-reaching implications is that type of orientation whose hallmark is its anti-institutionality or, at least, an alienation from the institutional structure.

We might well ask ourselves what types of action can be taken to overcome the contraposition between those included and those excluded and how this might come about. Certainly, the processes referred to earlier are of a greater or lesser intensity depending upon the particular characteristics of the social and economic process in each country of the region. The national studies which have been carried out for presentation at the second regional meeting discuss these specific features, but it can be argued that many of the phenomena in question, although they vary in intensity, are generic to the region.

In addition, however, the situation of young people in the region is set within the context of its societies and they, in turn, are part of a system of international political, economic, scientific, technological and cultural relations.

An issue which transcends the stringent economic conditions and indebtedness faced by the region in its relations with the world centres is the scientific and technological transformation occurring in the centres and the impact which this will have on the development and social organization of the region.

At the level of national societies, scientific and technological dependence can mirror the relationship existing between those who are included and those who are excluded, which was discussed in connection with various groups of young people.

There is a considerable degree of uncertainty about the future, but it seems probable that there will be a progressive scientific interpenetration of societies, culture and production. The challenge now faced by the region is that of preparing coming generations to participate in this scientific culture, in terms of both natural and social sciences. If this is to occur, sweeping changes will have to be made not only in the orientation of its educational systems, but in cultural patterns as well. Science demands social rationality and it cannot be regarded as an enclave technology.

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This dimension of the transformation of cultural and scientific patterns once again points up the problem of extending these patterns to new generations, thus lending even greater urgency to the problem of the inclusion of young people.

II. YOUNG PEOPLE AND POLITICS

Whatever portion of the Latin American countries' political history one may choose to examine, young people have almost always played a part in it. Not only the years of the 1918 Córdoba reform, but many decisive moments in Latin American history as well have been marked by young people. Although it is true that, in most instances, the young people involved were represented by student movements, these were not the only movements which were active, but merely the most identifiable ones. The political visibility of young people is a fact which contrasts with the assertions frequently made as to young people's disinterest in politics. As always occurs, there is some truth to both of these contradictory assertions. In many cases, it is not that young people are alienated from politics, but rather that the ways in which politics are conducted either bypass them or do not attract them. This is perhaps the reason why their presence is much more clearly manifested at times when political styles and modes are breaking down or being redefined, or perhaps it is because their way of engaging in politics is to promote the processes of political change. Either of these two attitudes --that of abstaining from participation or, on the other hand, that of activism-- may therefore manifest itself, depending on the overall circumstances in each case.

In addition to determining the extent of young people's participation in politics, it is also important to ascertain the degree to which young people are committed to democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean and, especially in these times of crisis in the region, to determine the extent to which their demands are realistic. Clearly, young people's realism and commitment to democracy not only hinge upon an express willingness on their part to adapt their behaviour to those objectives. In many cases, institutional democracy becomes distorted in social practice; young people are extremely sensitive to this sort of contradiction, and may come to mistrust political institutions as a result. At this point, it may be helpful to review what was said at the beginning of this paper in regard to the possible forms which young people's anti-institutional behaviour may take.

1. Social determinants of political participation

Obviously, there are specific historical circumstances which go a long way towards accounting for the political processes and participation of young people in each given situation. Nonetheless, it should be borne in mind that the nature of political behaviour and, in many cases, even the possibility of political participation are influenced by the level of development and --more than by the degree of economic development in a narrow sense-- especially by the degree of social development that has been reached. This distinction must be kept in mind because, even if the indexes of economic development are eminently positive, there may be serious shortcomings with respect to social development. Based on a study of social and economic indicators, the countries of the region can be classified according to their level of social development using the data obtained from the

/1970 censuses.

1970 censuses.8/ The components of the social development indicator include variables which relate to education, health and housing. These are weighted variables, with the greatest weight in this indicator being given to the extent of illiteracy, medical attention and the percentage of people lacking formal education in the economically active population. According to this classification, Argentina and Uruguay are in the first category; the second category is made up of Chile, Costa Rica, Panama and Venezuela; the third category is formed by Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru; the fourth category is composed of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

This classification provides an indication of the persistent gaps between a country's economic and social development in, for example, the periods 1960-1970 and 1970-1980. Countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Panama had high growth rates (per capita gross domestic product) in comparison to other countries of the region, but their level of social development was not as high.

The above facts are relevant because the level of social development attained, and perhaps the level of education in particular, have an influence on the possibilities for political and social participation and, especially, on the capacity for autonomous and organized participation. Clearly, these are not the only determinants; the processes of mobilization which are involved in nation-building efforts or which are related to development styles also often open the way to participation.

2. The concept of "political poverty"

The concept of "political poverty" 9/ has been developed in connection with the subject of participation in an effort to explore the bounds within which participation may take place. The original theory is based on the idea that power is a "scarce commodity" to which only some groups have access and that the distance separating a given group from it or the difficulties that a group encounters in gaining access to it are indications of the existence of "political poverty". In fact, there are objective determinants, some of which were mentioned earlier, that give rise to psychosocial attitudes marked by an abstention from participation. People perceive themselves as lacking the means to act, and this prevents them from establishing a social space and from sharing in a certain amount of power.

The concept of political poverty, like the similar idea of economic poverty, can be divided into absolute and relative poverty. The former would describe a situation in which there is a great deal of conscious or unconscious manipulation, while relative poverty would involve a limited amount of manoeuvring room.

Certainly, there are many spheres of political participation, but at least three which are of particular significance should be mentioned. Firstly, there is participation in civilian society, which entails the promotion of organizational capacity and a recognition of the social importance of historical forms of organization, such as trade unions, parties, co-operatives, cultural associations and many others. A second sphere of participation relates to the ability to intervene in the actions taken by the State, while a third sphere concerns the ability to claim specific rights and to exercise them.

/Those who

Those who suffer from political poverty are not organized, do not participate in decision-making processes, lack the means to pursue their objectives --and the level, quality and type of education they have received is of special importance in this connection-- have been invaded by cultural elements alien to them and are, in practice, unable to exercise their basic human rights.

The author of the essay on this subject stresses the influence which education has on the severity of political poverty in a given situation. In this regard, illiteracy might be regarded as representing the most extreme case in which the tools to overcome such poverty are lacking. Hence the importance of basic education, which, in addition to providing specific knowledge and skills, prepares people to exercise their rights as citizens; this is the light in which education has been seen by the social groups in Latin America that have called for the extension of basic education.

Another important effect of political poverty is that it is a factor in the failure to renew a society's leadership; above all, it hinders the emergence of alternative leaders.

Education, despite the fact that it is of decisive importance, is of course not the only factor. This is why a more complex indicator, which shows that political poverty may exist in many of the countries in the region, has been brought into the discussion.

Another possible factor, in addition to the lack of tools, which may contribute to "political poverty" is that power may be exercised in a way which hinders or prevents it from being shared or exercised by others, thus depriving people or social groups that are capable of participating of the opportunity to do so.

3. Young people's capacity for political change in situations where modernization is a recent phenomenon

It is interesting to note that, even in difficult situations such as those described above, important forms of political action are possible which can bring about change; in many cases, young people play a decisive role in the political development of society as a whole.

The changes which have taken place in the structure of Latin American society have given rise to different forms of organization, many of which have come into being only very recently, and young people presumably play an important role in this connection. Young people will only be able to integrate themselves and overcome the factional divisions of older generations, however, if they have the capacity to participate.

It should nonetheless be borne in mind that, in a sense, the political actions of young people can take on certain dimensions --and in some cases, extreme characteristics-- of radicalization, but this is not a widespread phenomenon. Such radicalization may instead relate to the nature of their demands, and this can have an impact on the political orientations and behaviour of society as a whole.

/In those

In those countries where urbanization continues to be an important process, social mobility was initially the predominant orientation among immigrants to the cities; in some cases, however, economic, political and social circumstances hindered the realization of these aspirations. Frequently, the urban environment even became an adverse environment, and the new working classes, in which young people were the first urban generation, had to organize themselves in order to deal with the challenges of urban life.

The identity formed primarily by urban working-class sectors came to be based on a principle of opposition to those who rejected them. The responsibility for this situation was frequently attributed to the government, and these elements became decisive factors in the orientation of political activities and behaviour.

An examination of the course taken by the economic and social process as it related to industrialization and urbanization is helpful in understanding the present situation of young people and their behaviour. In those cases where this phenomenon is a relatively recent one, efforts were made by such mobilized groups to expand social participation through unionization or community development, or it was a result of State actions, such as the reform and expansion of the educational system or other measures. Participation in a strictly political sense was nevertheless more difficult, and social participation was therefore not in accord with political participation.

Past experience, which may repeat itself, indicates that during times of increased constraints (due to the prevailing economic conditions, crisis situations or a reduction in the dynamism of the model of industrialization), people are less willing to accept the implications of expanded participation. Furthermore, a considerable deterioration in the living conditions of certain sectors leads them to express their discontent, and all of this results in an increase in social tension. Although in some recent cases efforts to institutionalize political life have been successful, the economic situation, and in some instances, the economic policy that was applied made the living conditions of working-class and middle-income sectors more difficult. Under such circumstances, young people may become radicalized.

In some countries, political life has made a recovery under extremely difficult economic conditions. Young people may reject a political system which, in their opinion, places too much value on the purely formal aspects of politics. In other cases, an attempt is made to renovate party structures, and young people come to occupy important positions within them.

The political orientation of young people is therefore quite closely linked to a drop in living standards, the cessation of mobility and the ability shown by the political system to establish consensual forms of distributing resources and opportunities. An interesting avenue of inquiry is to determine what conditions lead young people to become apathetic or simply to reject the system, and what conditions give rise to the rejuvenation of parties, unions and community organizations.

/4. Political

4. Political participation and social strata

Young people's participation in politics in Latin America takes different forms depending upon the social stratum or sector to which they belong. In those countries where industrialization is more recent, a large percentage of workers are young people of migrant origins; perhaps precisely because of the importance taken on by their insertion, however, they tend to behave as workers rather than as "young people". Even the efforts made by union organizations to organize young workers as such have rarely produced positive results.

Attention is often drawn to the excessive importance which has been attributed to university students, although this is now changing. University students have often demonstrated a great capacity for mobilization and a high degree of receptivity with respect to a given nation's social problems.

The prominent role of young university students is closely related to the fact that the universities have a symbolic value in many countries of the region and provide a point of reference for national life. Students generally have conflicts with the university structure itself, but these disputes rapidly become tinged with the global political conflict. University students are recognized as a political actor by society and the universities serve as a national political forum for politicians.

As was said earlier, this situation has begun to change. The extension of access to the university to a broader spectrum and the closer association with the masses which results have, for many, diminished its identification with a prestigious élite. What has in fact occurred is that the various specialized programmes of study and universities have become stratified, and the mere fact of being a student is therefore no longer a privileged position in and of itself. Furthermore, this stratification is quite closely linked to a certain quality of education which is oftentimes acquired prior to entrance into the university, and it is the socially privileged sectors which have access to that level of education. The élites thus formed are oriented towards a chain of power, and their prestige is derived from this link, although this does not mean that they form an autonomous élite. Moreover, the universities' monopoly on knowledge has been affected by the emergence within society of centres of learning, research institutes and other institutions which are not necessarily linked in with the society.

In Latin America, the university used to fulfil the socially acknowledged role of "doing society's thinking", but there are now other entities which also perform this function. In addition, political movements have found other channels for disseminating their ideas and proposals, and the university has therefore ceased to hold a privileged position as a forum for debate.

/5. Attitudes

5. Attitudes towards democracy and political institutions

Young people's attitudes towards democracy is a question of obvious importance. Unfortunately, there are very few empirical studies which address this issue. In Bolivia, a journalistic survey of young people in various social sectors was conducted which gathered information on their attitudes in this regard. A total of 27.5% of the survey respondents held a negative view of democracy; some of the arguments they gave were that it was unjust to the people, held back development etc. Democracy was felt to be valid only under certain conditions by 24.6% of the respondents, the conditions being, for example, "so long as it is used correctly", "provided that it is not demagogic", etc. Democracy was viewed positively by 33.8%.

There is a correlation between attitudes towards democracy and attitudes towards politics; negative opinions such as "politics is run by a select few", "politics is a fraud", etc., are not infrequent. This type of negative opinion affects young people's interest in politics. In the above-mentioned survey, 21.5% said that they were interested in politics; 49.2% said that they were not interested and 21.5% did not answer the question. Young people's image of political institutions is frequently quite negative as well.

Extreme cases of apathy or political disinterest among young people are to be found in the region. For example, when people abstain from voting, their absence of motivation is often due to political indifference rather than to an express rejection of the system.

It is true that social institutions such as the family and the schools are not good settings for political socialization in these cases, but it is also true that parties have not formulated youth programmes, nor have they demonstrated a capacity for the political socialization of young people.

6. The situation in those countries where modernization came early

In the countries where modernization came about early on, different factors have affected young people's political orientation and behaviour, and these factors must be taken into consideration. In some of these countries, there was what might be called a "structure of stable roles", and the idea of institutionalizing people's careers faithfully mirrored this fact. The two major keys to possible promotion or individual mobility were formal education and seniority. This meant that young people had a long period to look forward to during which they would have to perform subordinate social roles within highly consolidated structures. For this reason, young people were not often found to feel that that world they faced was a closed and oppressive system. This latent tension could become more intense and turn into open conflict if the economy ceased to grow and the rigidity of the structure therefore became more oppressive. To a large extent, the rebellion of young people, if it can be so termed, was closely related to the rigidity of the social structure.

/Student movements

Student movements took on a great deal of importance, inasmuch as the reaction of students was an ideologized and highly symbolic expression of the nation's impatience with the rigidity of the political system and the frustrations of growth. To some degree, student agitation was closely related to the intellectuals' uneasiness and their conviction that it was possible to apply their knowledge and skills in a positive way. Since student conflicts also led to the emergence of differences of opinion among the upper strata of society, intellectuals --and the students among them-- were faced with a contradiction between the high degree of training they possessed and the actual opportunities they had to use that training. This caused them to question the traditional poles of economic and political power.

It should be pointed out, however, that not all young people questioned the system, and although they were not visible, a large number of young people were conformists who, rather than being indifferent, implicitly accepted the existing values of society.

7. Spheres of participation

In those countries where modernization took place early, under normal conditions there are certain spheres in which the participation of young people is significant, such as the student movement, social mobilizations and even political parties. On the other hand, there is relatively little participation in other spheres, such as in both blue-collar and white-collar trade unions and in the media that shape public opinion.

8. The family and political socialization

The experiences of authoritarian régimes reveal an interesting fact. Such régimes were often preceded by extensive conflicts in which young people took an active part. Attempts were subsequently made to repress those who had mobilized the conflict or who were trying to promote options which diverged from those chosen by the régime, and these measures had a profound effect on young people. Families came to fear the consequences of young people's participation in public life and, due to the prevailing circumstances, young people themselves came to mistrust many State institutions. In self-defence, daily life tended to focus on private affairs, and family ties were thus strengthened, to a certain extent, in comparison to other social ties. In those situations where democratic values were highly internalized into social consciousness, the family performed functions of socialization and preservation in some spheres, as well as safeguarding the cultural heritage from the effects of authoritarianism. In so far as participation in society was concerned, there were severe limitations on political and intellectual activity, and the young people who overcame this type of situation were often only able to do so because they were highly motivated and had a sufficiently sound family background. The socialization of political and cultural values, which could not be manifested in other spheres, took place through the family.

/9. Social

9. Social inclusion and exclusion processes: their effect on political attitudes

With reference to the inclusion and exclusion processes already mentioned, the behaviour patterns of young people in political matters are influenced by this distinction, and even their ways of manifesting conflict are different.

Although in connection with youth one can speak of certain homogenizing effects both of education and of "urban culture", the impact of segmentation is much greater than that of these factors.

Young people who are excluded are powerfully affected by a situation of social disintegration which is often reflected in disruptive conduct in a cultural void, much of which borders on a state of anomy. The marginated young suffer from experiences of disintegration, marked labour instability, unemployment and a breakdown in family cohesion which go hand in hand with political exclusion, social disruption and in many cases the crumbling of collective solidarity. Here one might almost speak of "political poverty", owing to a virtual expropriation.

Among those who are integrated, certain traits of individualism might be accentuated, but in the attitudes of many there are some signs of apathy and even of a degree of conservatism. Some types of conduct were observed which supported the idea of individual mobility; for example, for their professional training they chose options based on "instrumentalism" and specialization and displayed a general trait, already mentioned, of political apathy. Non-conformity, when it existed among the groups of the "included", manifested itself basically as cultural resistance and a rejection of the system of moral guidance.

When the crisis became more marked, however, professionalism and the idea of individual success lost its meaning, since in every sphere the possibilities of employment were restricted. These developments began to modify the behaviour of the "integrated" groups, since their place in society was now much less clear.

Obviously the political attitudes of young Latin Americans vary greatly. There can certainly be no hasty generalizations on the subject, but some of the facts described might serve as a warning regarding present and future challenges.

III. THE DIVERSITY OF SITUATIONS IN THE REGION

1. Typification of social development situations

The set of studies conducted on the situation of youth discloses that, although many problems may be considered common to the different countries, the specific form in which they occur is closely associated with the peculiarities of each case, and it may even be that the ways in which they are solved depend on the particular contexts, where the concrete form in which the problem is interlinked with a given situation is fundamental to the achievement of an adequate response.

The diversity of situations occurring in the region is an accepted fact; hence the need to work out typologies which take this phenomenon into account. The typologies may be purely descriptive, grouping countries and distinguishing them from others on the basis of certain parameters regarded as important, such as their degree of economic growth, their state of urbanization, their quality of life, education, housing or health, and other indicators. There are also more analytical typologies which attempt to group situations around certain processes regarded as being of key importance, such as the conformation of integrated national States, processes of social secularization and formation of articulated social relations, or other elements.

As always, the value of a typology lies in its heuristic value, so that it contains a certain implicit arbitrariness which is only justified by the capacity for explanation inherent in the typology. The object of this paper, rather than to develop a rigorous typology, is to attempt a differentiation that will exemplify the diversity referred to, though obviously the groupings proposed are open to question.

A first group would be composed of countries like Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, which evolved rapidly from a predominantly agrarian social structure to one which is urban and industrial, as shown by the following figures.

URBAN POPULATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION

	1950	1960	1980	2000
Brazil	34.8	46.2	62.8	74.1
Colombia	36.9	48.6	66.3	77.4
Mexico	44.3	51.8	65.5	76.3

Source: CELADE, projections based on the figures of population censuses.

/These countries

These countries are also characterized by high demographic growth associated with high economic growth. The annual average growth of the per capita gross domestic product in the period 1970-1980 (in dollars at 1970 prices) was 6.1% in Brazil, 3.4% in Mexico and 3.3% in Colombia. The regional average amounted to 3.4%; other countries which exceeded the regional average were Ecuador, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic. It is interesting to note that in the three countries in question the gross domestic product per capita more than doubled in the period 1950-1980.

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA 1950-1980

(In 1970 dollars)

	1950	1980
Brazil	273	958
Colombia	409	824
Mexico	513	1 366

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of official information.

Despite this growth, however, there tend to be sharp dichotomies between the poles of development and the remaining regions, between the urban and rural zones and between the sectors included and those excluded in the process of modernization.

It is of interest to compare the global illiteracy rates with those of the juvenile population.

ILLITERACY RATES

Country	Year	Population aged 15 years and over, 1980			Population aged 15 to 24 years, 1980		
		Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Brazil	1980	25.5	16.8	46.3	16.1	8.5	33.6
Colombia	1973	19.2	11.2	34.7	11.0 a/	5.9	22.1
Mexico	1980	17.0	5.9	18.9	8.1 b/	2.1	9.1

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of published census data.

a/ Group 15-19 years.
b/ Urban corresponds to the Federal District and rural to the rest of the country. They represent respectively 15% and 85% of the population.

/The figures

The figures illustrate the differences between the countries forming the category and are attributable to the application in Colombia and Mexico of more dynamic policies of mass education. At the same time they reveal the important changes that are taking place in the literacy training of the young, whose rate in countries like Mexico is equal to half that of adults. In the more populated countries of the region the polarization between rural and urban areas persists as regards the schooling of the new generations; in addition, the relative gaps between illiteracy rates increase among young people as a result of the more rapid incorporation into the educational system of urban than of rural youth. The latter find themselves left far behind because of the importance assigned to literacy in progressively urbanized and modernized societies.

The countries cited experienced the greatest industrial growth in recent years and the growth rate of the economically active population in the secondary sector was higher than that of the tertiary sector. In general employment --although it slackened as a result of the crisis-- has greatly increased as a result of the urbanizing process; even so, owing to the concentration of income, wages in some sectors are relatively low.

A second group consists of countries such as Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela, which also had high economic growth, rapid modernization and the active intervention of the State in the transformation of society. We must not forget the relationship established by the State with the petroleum economy in Venezuela or, in the case of Panama, with the Canal, or again the historic linkage between the State and society which has existed in Costa Rica.

It should be noted that there were fluctuations in growth attributable to the impact of the external sector on the economy, as can be seen in comparing the differences between the growth rates of the gross domestic product in the 1960s with those of the 1970s.

GROWTH OF THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

Country	1960-1970	1970-1980
Ecuador	1.7	5.7
Panama	4.8	2.5
Venezuela	2.2	0.5

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of official information.

/It is

It is also noticeable that modernization seems to improve the general situation of young people, as has happened in Panama, Ecuador and Venezuela, where this process is more recent, if we compare the percentages of illiteracy of the global population and of the young.

ILLITERACY RATES

Countries	Year	15 years and over			15-24 years		
		Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Costa Rica	1973	11.6	4.9	17.0	5.2	1.9	7.8
Ecuador	1982	16.4	6.2	27.7	6.6	2.4	11.8
Panama	1980	12.9	5.2	27.1	4.5	2.3	9.6
Venezuela	1981	15.3	-	-	7.0	-	-

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of published census data.

It is evident that the rates of the latter are below half those pertaining to persons over 15 years of age and in Panama they are almost down to a third, which reflects the repercussions of the educational and social integration policies. However, the gaps between the urban and rural illiteracy rates of juveniles remain high --especially when cultural and linguistic differences are involved-- although they are lower than those that applied to the adult generation in those countries and --a very important factor-- they are close to 8%, which signifies that in a few years juvenile illiteracy will be a residual problem.

The situation in Costa Rica is different, since it made an early start with modernization in a society with urban and rural integration and more equitable patterns of income distribution; hence its literacy indicators are higher and the gaps between urban and rural rates tend to diminish, so that on the basis of the former it can be said that practically the whole population has had basic education.

Bolivia and Peru constitute a third type: their economic growth is relatively weak and the growth rate of the gross domestic product between 1950 and 1980 was 1.8% in Peru and 1.9% in Bolivia. In the 1970s this rate was 0.5% in the former of these countries and 1.9% in the latter. The growth of the per capita gross domestic product, measured in dollars at 1970 prices, was likewise low in that period, rising from US$ 408 to US$ 690 in Peru and 276 to 382 in Bolivia.

The modernization that took place was basically centred on urbanization and educational development. The migrations from rural to urban zones or to areas of greater economic dynamism, as in Boliva, are of extraordinary significance. The

/cultural dualism

cultural dualism deriving from ethnic differences acquires great importance and hence the main issue would seem to be the problem of national integration, which in its turn underlines and points up the importance of the political situation.

ILLITERACY RATES

Countries	Year	15 years and over			15-24 years		
		Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Bolivia	1976	37.3	16.0	53.0	17.3	5.3	28.2
Peru	1971	17.4	7.7	37.7	6.6	2.0	17.3

Source: CELADE, projections based on population census figures.

Peru was the first to transform its education, which has been completed in recent years with the incorporation of the population of school age, reflected in the fall of 20 points in illiteracy among adults and juveniles in rural areas. The global indicator of juvenile illiteracy links it with the countries in the previous category where there was a rapid transition in education.

Bolivia also registered a fall of 20 points in the global illiteracy rate for young people as compared with adults, and even more in the rural population, but its indicators are still high.

The important element in both countries is the role of education as an integrating process in the context of relatively low economic growth and differentiation in the labour market, representing a situation of cultural mobilization of youth in a relatively rigid economic structure.

Argentina, Chile and Uruguay are characterized by their early modernization in comparison with the region as a whole, and this is demonstrated by their urban population percentages.

PERCENTAGE OF URBAN POPULATION

	1950	1960	1980
Argentina	65.0	73.3	81.6
Chile	59.1	67.6	78.7
Uruguay	70.5	77.7	83.8

Source: CELADE, projections based on population census figures.

/Despite this,

Despite this, their economic growth seems to have been much less dynamic than that of the other economies of the region. In the 1970s the growth of the gross domestic product was 0.8% in Argentina, 0.8% in Chile and 2.6% in Uruguay, while the regional average was 3.4%. If a longer period is taken into account, e.g., 1950 to 1980, the growth was 1.5% in Argentina, 1.5% in Chile and 0.5% in Uruguay.

Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that these low growth rates are counterbalanced by a relatively high per capita gross domestic product. In 1950 the average per capita gross domestic product in the region was US$ 439, whereas in Argentina it was US$ 859, in Chile 667 and in Uruguay 956; in 1980 the regional average was 1 007, whereas in Argentina it was 1 345, in Chile 1 047 and in Uruguay US$ 1 423.*/

The illiteracy rates are low for adults as well as for juveniles and are now so low that they are difficult to eliminate entirely in urban areas, while in rural areas there remain small pockets of marginality.

Owing to the early urbanization and the high urban coverage the minimum educational levels now comprise the complete primary or basic cycle. This goal was reached in 1980 by 80% of juveniles aged 15-24 years in Argentina (seven years of primary education), 79% of their Chilean counterparts (basic cycle of eight years) and 81% of Uruguayans in the same age group (primary schooling of six years' duration).

ILLITERACY RATES

Countries	Year	15 years and over			15-24 years		
		Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Argentina	1980	6.1	-	-	3.1	-	-
Chile a/	1980	6.4	4.3	16.8	1.8	1.3	4.1
Uruguay	1975	6.1	5.2	11.0	1.6	1.3	3.3

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of official information.
a/ Instituto Nacional de Estadística (National Institute of Statistics - INE), National Employment Survey, Chile, 1980.

The basic problems, which are found in several countries, are the crises of social and political participation, a very significant factor in the last decade and particularly in Argentina and Uruguay, where there is a certain tendency towards a crystallization of society, i.e., the reproduction in the young generation of the trends and differences that already existed in the intermediate generation and even in that of their parents. This crystallization is expressed in diminished mobility in the labour and educational fields.

/The Central

*/ All the figures are expressed in dollars at 1970 prices.

The Central American countries, excepting Costa Rica, are notable for the size of their agricultural population, even when their advances in urbanization are taken into account. The evolution of their urbanization has been as follows:

PERCENTAGE OF URBAN POPULATION

	1950	1960	1980	2000
El Salvador	17.6	31.4	44.2	54.4
Guatemala	27.0	30.6	36.5	43.1
Honduras	20.0	23.9	38.8	53.0
Nicaragua	33.2	39.9	53.8	66.0

Source: CELADE, projections based on population censuses.

As will be seen, the percentage of rural population will continue high, even in the projection for the year 2000.

The options for growth in each of the countries, taking into account their size, are relatively weak, as shown by the growth rates of their per capita gross domestic product.

GROWTH RATE OF PER CAPITA GDP

	1950-1980	1970-1980
El Salvador	1.4	0.1
Guatemala	1.9	2.5
Honduras	1.1	1.3
Nicaragua	1.3	-1.9

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of official information.

The per capita gross domestic product has been low in relation to the regional average (US$ 1 007 in 1980). The figures in dollars for these countries in that year were: El Salvador, 432; Guatemala, 561; Honduras, 357; and Nicaragua, 341.

It is also important to bear in mind that the persistence of high rates of illiteracy for adults and juveniles is a sign of sluggishness in incorporating youth into society and into the process of social and economic modernization.

/ILLITERACY RATES

ILLITERACY RATES

Countries	Year	15 years and over			15-24 years		
		Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
El Salvador	1971	93.2	22.1	59.3	28.8	10.3	43.4
Guatemala	1973	53.9	28.2	68.6	45.4	20.5	60.4
Honduras	1974	41.6	21.1	54.4	27.1	9.4 a/	n.a.
Nicaragua	1971	42.4	19.3	65.3	35.1	11.5	58.9

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of official figures.
a/ Capital city.

The differences between the indicators of illiteracy for adults and for juveniles are small, and those of the latter continue to show high rates, which, when broken down by urban and rural areas, reflect a growing differentiation, with profound implications for the political processes and national integration.

As is well known, the special conditions of the system of economic and social relations in these countries cause the key problem to be the relation between the State and society, and this aspect has frequently been central to the interpretation of what happens there.

Finally, in the Caribbean countries, it would be necessary to introduce various subtypologies, since the cultural differences (of which language is merely the most apparent), their different economic and social systems, the type of relationship they have established with different centres, and many other elements contribute to the diversity prevailing there. There are obvious differences in their levels of development, one of which may be illustrated by their diverse degrees of urbanization. Similar variations in urbanization are to be found in the English-speaking Caribbean countries.

PERCENTAGE OF URBANIZATION IN THREE CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

	1950	1960	1980	2000
Cuba	47.4	54.1	67.0	78.9
Haiti	10.5	13.0	23.1	31.0
Dominican Republic	21.6	29.0	46.8	62.0

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of official figures.

Again, there are differences in their educational development. In 1980 the percentage of illiterates aged 15 and over was 3.9% in Cuba (there is no illiteracy among the under-24s), 26.4% in the Dominican Republic and 71.3% in Haiti.

/The situation

The situation in the Caribbean is obviously of particular complexity for an aggregated analysis. In the subregion there are cultural and social models of English, Dutch, Spanish and French origins, the latter somewhat transformed in the long history of independent life of Haiti. In addition, the composition of their populations is subject to cultural patterns from African and Asian societies, which contribute specific features to the recent constitution of the nationalities of some of those countries. Finally, linguistic integration has not been achieved in some of them: the official language coexists with creole speech, or different types of "patois" are spoken side by side with indigenous languages or English or Spanish.

In this context, it is important to stress that in the English-speaking countries educational policies were aimed at a basic cultural homogenization which began with the improvement of the primary school, and later extended to high school, the criteria on higher education always consisted of limiting its quantitative expansion by applying selective academic standards. The foregoing distinguishes them from the historical evolution of the Latin American countries --except for those of the Southern Cone and Costa Rica-- which recorded in recent decades a simultaneous expansion in all educational levels and attained high rates of enrolment in higher education without having attained the universalization of primary education.

2. The status of youth in relation to their specific situations 10/

In the first type of countries referred to, the proportion of young people in the population is significant. In Brazil, 20.3% of the population consisted of young people in 1970; in Colombia, 18.2% of the total were young people in 1964, while by 1981 the proportion had increased to 22.5%. The trend to an increase in the importance of the juvenile group might, however, be related to the fact that fertility rates have dropped and the decline in the number of people under 14 years has had an incidence in the value of the recorded figures.

Another important feature is that of migrations, which largely explain the increment in urban population. In Mexico, the urban population increased from 50.8% of the total in 1960 to 70% in 1985. In the case of Brazil, one-third of the population consisted of migrants and this share rose in 1980. The destination of migrants was the urban areas, although quite a few left for agricultural areas with developed capitalist characteristics or for new settlement zones, in which they became incorporated as labourers or squatters.

In the migration processes young people usually represent a higher share than adult migrants. The migratory flow of youth goes preferentially to urban areas and, at least in the case of Brazil, the urban-urban flow is beginning to prevail, for example, from cities in the North-East to those in the Centre/South. The Colombian case exhibits some peculiarities, with a relatively substantial rate of migration --an annual average of 3.2% between 1964 and 1973-- dropping to 2.1% by 1982, which perhaps was due to a decline in the industrializing model as well as to lower population growth.

ENGLISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN: WORKING POPULATION 15 YEARS AND OVER BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION, 1970

Countries	Working population	Primary education			Secondary education			
		Less than 5 years %	5 years or more %	No certificate %	Less than 5 years, "0" level certificate a/ %	Five or more years, "0"/ "A" level certificate b/ %	Diploma/ degree %	Other %
Jamaica	487 269	12.9	70.9	3.6	4.5	2.5	2.1	3.2
Trinidad and Tobago	227 409	11.7	57.9	9.6	7.1	6.8	2.9	3.5
Guyana	147 526	15.1	63.6	5.6	10.4	4.2	1.7	5.9
Barbados	83 502	7.7	51.6	59.3	9.7	4.2	2.2	1.2
Dominica	19 627	12.9	69.1	3.8	8.9	1.5	1.9	1.5
Grenada	25 589	9.0	77.4	3.3	4.9	2.5	1.4	1.2
Monserrat	3 693	10.6	65.3	3.4	12.6	2.4	4.1	1.1
St. Kitts/Nevis	12 197	6.3	71.0	3.6	10.1	2.3	2.6	3.9
St. Lucia	26 416	51.1	30.1	2.1	11.4	1.5	1.7	1.9
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	20 713	14.1	70.3	3.5	7.2	2.1	1.7	0.8

Source: Lawrence D. Carrington, Education and Development in the English-Speaking Caribbean; UNESCO-ECLAC-UNDP Project "Desarrollo y Educación en América Latina y el Caribe", DEALC/16, Buenos Aires, October, 1978.

a/ An "0" level certificate, taken at about 15 years of age, indicates that the student has finished the basic cycle of secondary education.

b/ An "A" level certificate, taken at about 18 years of age, indicates that the student has completed the full secondary education cycle and has the necessary qualifications for entering university.

/It is

It is worth stressing in these cases the special significance of the entry of youth into the world of work. In Colombia the share of youth in the economically active population was 28% in 1970, and from that date it grew steadily up to 1981, whereas the share of youth in the total rural economically active population increased only slightly; data for the age group 15 to 29 years of age --in the country's seven main cities-- indicate an increase for men from 23.6% in 1971 to 44.1% in 1981 and for women from 37.6% to 56%, in relation to the total number of economically active women in the cities.

Similar situations appear to have occurred in countries with high expansion in employment and urbanization before the present crisis. Thus, for instance, according to data from Brazilian censuses for the years 1970 and 1980, the employment rate of people under 15 years nearly doubled, and the rate of activity of people from 15 to 17 years of age living in urban zones rose considerably, especially among men (38.8% in 1970 and 50.4% in 1980). This is in contrast with a trend to a reduction in male economic activity with the extension of education.

In Brazil a large proportion of young people entered the industrial sector, mostly as wage-earners, and it is interesting to note that the services sector has lost importance, even as regards female work. Other jobs such as domestic service --or at another level, teaching-- were less important in terms of incorporation than commerce and industry. In Mexico it is seen that something similar seems to have happened, when the composition of the active population is considered. Thus, between 1950 and 1980 the economically active population in the secondary sector nearly doubled its share in the total, and rose from 13.6% to 25.9%.

The crisis which began to evidence itself around 1980 often resulted in falls in employment, and cases of disguised unemployment began to be frequent among young people, who were also affected by overt unemployment. Jobs obtained no longer corresponded to expectations. In the Colombian case the most outstanding phenomenon was a loss in the relation which existed between more schooling, better employment and higher wages. In 1964, during the development boom of the industrial urban model, the highest unemployment rate was for the illiterate population (23.7%), the population with secondary education recorded a rate of 13.5% and that with university education a rate of 10.8%. In contrast, between 1976 and 1978 the highest unemployment indexes were for those who had finished high school (12.6%) or technical secondary education (21.0%). As in other cases, the underemployment of professionals was significant, and many of them moved to activities different from those of their professional training.

As regards the linkages between education and the economic and social system, the case of Colombia is a good example. As education expanded it came to be considered as a channel for social mobility, which implied the secularization of knowledge and of the ideological basis of the organization of society, the dissemination of values and patterns of urban life, and expectations of modernization and development. However, the exclusion of certain groups aggravated the general situation and, due to the type of education given and to the differentiation of levels attained, new forms of stratification were introduced.

/The case

The case of Brazil shows that economic growth is not always accompanied by homogenization of social development, but often reflects the polarization lines due to disparities in regional development. For this reason, statistical averages often conceal opposite situations such as urban versus rural illiteracy. In the 1980 census it was seen that the schooling level of the Brazilian population remained low, the average years of study being 3.3 for the population 5 years of age and over. Although efforts were made to increase the duration of the schooling period to 8 years, the improvements recorded were in retention in the final courses, not in enrolment in the first four school years. On the other hand, some pupils attempt to improve their educational situation and, at least in the case of São Paulo, young workers often proceed with their studies at evening or night schools.

The Mexican case, which presents more or less similar problems, may be mentioned as an example of an important effort to change the situation. In 1970 illiteracy in the population of over 15 years came to 25.8%, but by 1980 this figure declined to 17% for the population as a whole. In urban areas, between the same dates, the figure declined from 16.7% to 5.9%, and in the rural areas, where the problem is more serious, there was also a substantial improvement, from 39.7% to 18.9%.

In Brazil, with specific reference to young people (i.e., the age group from 15 to 24), illiteracy amounts to 14.5% among males and to 10.8% among females. It is interesting to note in this case, unlike in many others, that illiteracy is greater among men than among women.

Also in this case, despite deficiencies in basic education, a strong expansion in higher education was observed in the past decade, and it may be that this feature characterizes the pattern of this style of development. In 1960 there was 0.3 university students for each 100 students enrolled in the first year of first grade, but in 1980 the ratio was 3.4 university students for each 100 students enrolled in the first year of first grade, so that the relative share of higher education had increased by a factor of 10.

The second group of countries is also characterized by accelerated modernization processes in which the State has played an important role. This State role is clearly perceived in the impulse given to education. Thus, in the case of Panama 11/ a policy designed to increase the number of schools and teachers was implemented, with the result that the proportion of people without education dropped by approximately half between 1960 and 1980, both in rural and urban areas. The percentage of people without education in urban areas, which amounted to 7.6% in 1960, dropped by 1980 to 4.2%, while in rural areas it fell from 44.2% in 1960 to 23% in 1980. Of course there are still important differences between the two areas. It should also be noted that the population with high educational levels increased considerably: in 1960 the population in urban areas with 10 or more years of education came to 18.7% of the total, whereas by 1980 the proportion amounted to 36.3%.

/In Venezuela,

In Venezuela, the educational effort has also continued. For instance, whereas in 1960, 49% of young people between 12 and 17 years of age were incorporated into the educational system, in 1980 the figure was 60.9%.

In Ecuador, the greater retention capacity attained by the school system is also remarkable. In the rural environment in 1962, only one out of every 17 young people between 15 and 19 years of age attended school, but by 1982 the proportion had risen to 1 out of 2.5. In the urban environment in 1962 this figure was 1 for every 2.7, but in 1982 1 for every 1.5.

In terms of total schooling, the typical educational level of a young urban Ecuadorian on reaching adulthood also evolved favorably. In 1962 it was 5.5 years of schooling, in 1974 5.8, and in 1982 11.1, that is, approximately a complete secondary education. The figures show how fast and recent this process has been.

Undoubtedly, the changes in education have had an influence on the type of occupations which young people perform. In Panama, there is an interesting change in the participation of young people in different occupational strata between 1960 and 1980.

PANAMA: CHANGE IN THE OCCUPATIONAL PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE BETWEEN 15 AND 24 YEARS OF AGE

Occupational stratum	Years		
	1960	1970	1980
Non-manual workers	18.7	20.5	27.5
Manual workers and personal services	29.1	41.3	39.5
Low strata in primary activities	52.2	38.2	32.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ECLAC, on the basis of official figures.

/In 1980,

In 1980, the percentage of youth in the non-manual strata rose, while the percentage in the lower strata, engaged in primary activities, fell. It is interesting to note that the percentage in manual labour and personal services rose considerably in 1970 and fell in 1980. This change was caused by the sharp growth of the modern services sector which employs a large number of young people.

In general, where modernization and industrialization have occurred fairly recently, as in this type of countries, the school system has become the main mechanism of social mobility. Some problems are already beginning to arise, however; fo example, there is a growing pressure on jobs requiring higher skills and, potentially, there is pressure to enter the middle and higher strata of society.

In countries of the third type, e.g., Peru and Bolivia, modernization has gone hand-in-hand with urbanization. In Bolivia, urbanization is closely associated with youth; according to the 1976 census, somewhat over half the young people of Bolivia (51%) live in urban areas. This has also occurred to a significant extent in Peru. During the interval between the 1961 and 1981 censuses, the urban population of the country rose from 47% to 65% of the total population and the percentage of youth in urban areas rose from 51% to 70%.

In this regard, it is important to note the effect of metropolitanization. In 1961, 22% of all young people in Peru lived in the capital city, Lima, and in 1981, the percentage had risen to 31%. The phenomenon of migration occurred precisely at the beginning of this period; in 1961, the great majority of urban youth were from a rural provincial background. In 1981, on the other hand, most young people were natives of the cities and thus made up the first urban generation. These young people, who are now part of the urban population, have developed patterns of behaviour which involve breaking with the traditional order.

In the case of Bolivia, socio-spatial mobility is extremely significant not only as regards internal migration but also as regards outward migration. The phenomenon has mobilized youth, since the largest percentage of emigrants are young people.

Beginning in 1952, Bolivia underwent significant political, social, cultural and economic transformations. As regards the economic structure, in many cases ther was a breakdown of the family economic unit and many family members, especially young people, entered the job market.

The housing survey of 1976 shows that the economically active population under age 24 amounted to 31.8% of the total population. Half the youth in rural areas worked, as did 40% of the youth in urban areas. Migration --which, as mentioned before, involved a high percentage of youth-- was clearly motivated by the search fo jobs; in fact, the job market is being shaped by the supply of young workers. It should be noted that unemployment is low among young people; unemployed young people --as well as persons seeking work for the first time-- only amounted to 5.7% of the economically active population between the ages of 15 and 24.

Contrary to the case in other situations, the educational levels of young workers are relatively low, although one must of course bear in mind the educational level of the overall population.

Among the young economically active population, 14.7% have no education, 43.9% have finished some years of elementary education, 20.1% have completed some years of intermediate education and 14.2% have completed some years of secondary education

/The phenomena

The phenomena of internal migration and entry into the job market are also significant. Many young people emigrate to Santa Cruz to work and a large number of temporary workers are young people. It should also be noted that 73% of migrants to Santa Cruz come from an urban background, while most migrants to La Paz come from the country.

Peru has a high percentage of overall unemployment and underemployment in the economically active population as a whole. According to studies by the Regional Employment Programme for Latin America (PREALC), the figures for so-called "informal occupations" were alarmingly high. Despite this situation, a large number of young people entered wage-earning occupations. According to figures available in 1972, 50.7% of young workers belonged to the category of manual workers or employees; this share was higher than that of the total economically active population, which was only 44.4%. Although these percentages dropped in 1981, the proportion of wage-earners among young people (47.4%) was still larger than that of the economically active population (43.1%). The number of independent workers, a category which often conceals underemployment, was high among youth. In 1981, 32.2% of all young people fell into this category, but the percentage among the total economically active population was 41.9%.

It is worth noting the importance of young labour within the family, especially in the rural areas. In 1981, 21.7% of the young economically active population in rural areas was made up of unpaid family workers.

As the educational system expanded, especially during the 1970s, fewer young people joined the economically active population; however, many relatively well-educated young people still have low incomes. This increases tension and can lead to a deterioration of the value which young people attach to education.

Argentina, Chile and Uruguay are considered as a fourth type of countries. In them, modernization occurred somewhat earlier than in the rest of the region. In Argentina and Uruguay, there is a strong trend towards crystallization; there is less mobility, both generational and intra-generational, than in other countries. A salient feature of Argentine society is the reproduction in the younger generation of the trends and differences already existing in the intermediate generation --ages 25 to 35-- and even in the parents' generation, i.e., the age group between 45 and 55. Young people are therefore quite similar to their parents and this would seem to confirm our previous observation that the society is becoming crystallized. With regard to Uruguay, it has often been noted that the society is not very open to expansion, and young people are often faced with narrow and rigid limits, to which is added a certain rigidity in social stratification. It has, of course, been argued that a "middle-class style" is a feature which has permeated Uruguayan society as a whole. This may have to do with the visibility of the actions of middle-class students, although there are still differences with respect to upper-class youth, young workers or rural middle-class youth, the latter being fairly small in number.

/In both

In both cases, the proportion of young people in the population rose more slowly than in other countries of the region. Uruguay has often been mentioned as a country where demographic transition occurred at an early stage so that the population now appears to be an "aged population". It has also been suggested that the main feature of the country is the tendency of most demographic indicators to remain static.

Despite this, one important event did occur after 1970: as a result of the economic stagnation and of the aggravation of internal political and social conflicts, a heavy outward migration began.

The magnitude of the phenomenon is attested to by the following figures: in 1968, negative migration absorbed approximately 20% of the vegetative growth; in 1972, around 60%; in 1973, almost 100% and in 1974, the figure amounted to twice the vegetative growth.

Migration between 1963 and 1975 was predominantly masculine, with 31% being represented by young people. The largest age group consisted of persons between the ages of 20 and 24; this group accounted for 21% of all migrants.

Uruguay is known for having a high degree of urbanization. In 1963, rural youth represented 20.7% of the total young population and this figure dropped to 18% in 1975. Rural-urban migration was not, however, very significant in numerical terms, given the low population living in rural areas. The effect of rural migration may have been more to depopulate the rural areas than to change the character of the urban areas.

In Argentina, the young rural population in small and, what is more significant, is shrinking. In 1960, three out of every ten young people lived in rural areas, while in 1984 fewer than two out of every ten young people lived in rural areas. Nonetheless, there are interesting differences within the country. Thus, for example, in the so-called coastal provinces --except for Santa Fe-- and in the northeast, more than one third of all young people are still living in rural areas.

There is a considerable amount of internal migration, and young people seem to move to provinces where modernization has been fairly recent, such as Santa Fe, Córdoba and the provinces of the Patagonia. The areas in which modernization took place at an early stage --Buenos Aires, for example-- tend to have an older population. This is also true of the areas which are noted for their backwardness. The more recently modernized provinces, on the other hand, are being rejuvenated.

Young people play an important role in migratory processes. During the period 1975-1980, young people represented 26.8% of total migrants in the country, this being defined in terms of inter-provincial migration. During that period, almost half a million young people were migrants.

Despite the fact that the provinces with a more dynamic economy have, as mentioned above, attracted a large number of migrants, it should be noted that there are still no clear-cut poles of stabilization.

/Both Uruguay

Both Uruguay and Argentina have traditionally had high levels of education. In 1950, Uruguay was ranked first in Latin America as regards schooling provided at all levels of education. In 1980, it had lost this ranking.

This is not the only important development, however; inequality measured in terms of social stratification has increased. Around 1960, 32% of all students enrolled in universities belonged to the higher income sectors, while in 1968, the share of these sectors was 27% (compared with the previous percentage); in 1960, the middle sectors accounted for 43% and in 1968, their share had increased by 32%. The popular strata accounted for 12% in 1960 and fell to 10% in 1963.

The case of Chile is important because of the policies that have affected the educational system itself. Between the 1960s and the early 1970s, the educational system was expanded; during the period 1965-1973, this mostly benefited the middle and upper sectors, since the higher growth rates took place at those educational levels. Opportunities for social mobility for the new generations of the middle sectors increased. The contraction which took place after that affected the modalities of higher and elementary education. In the case of higher education, alternatives such as the so-called professional institutes were created, and in the case of elementary education, there was a process of decentralization and adjustment to specific local conditions.

In addition to the policies which had this effect, in 1975, a very abrupt economic adjustment took place which led to a reduction in levels of income. The reaction of some sectors of society to those circumstances led to a drop in the rate of schooling of young people and an increase in their participation in the job market. In those cases, the need to get a job led to a decline in the demand for education.

Another important event was the increase in the differential profitability of education which occurred in recent years. In 1976, young people with a complete university education earned on average a salary 5.5 times greater than those with a complete elementary education (8 years) and 1.9 times greater than those with a complete secondary education. In 1980, young people with a university education received a salary 6.4 times greater than those with a primary education and 2.4 times greater than those with a secondary education.

With respect to the relationship of youth with work, the employment crisis has a long history in the case of Chile. It has a different impact on different social strata and elicits different responses according to the different overall strategies adopted by families. In the lower strata, in times of crisis, young people and women tend to seek jobs as a way of helping to solve the problem of low family income. In the upper strata, on the other hand, in times of crisis the trend is to withdraw from the job market, either because the jobs available do not meet expectations and these people can afford to refrain from working or because they are able to continue as students without the family's income being too seriously affected.

/In the

In the case of Chile, there has been a sharp employment crisis in industry and a drop in public employment as well; this has seriously affected the popular and middle sectors. By comparison, with the reduction of labour employed in the manufacturing industry, there has been an increase in labour employed in other sectors, although this has not compensated for the drop in manufacturing jobs. A comparison between 1971 and 1980 will show that the percentage of young people who are unemployed or engaged in minimum-wage activities, in domestic service, in own-account work and in commerce and marginal services has doubled among the young non-agricultural economically active population. These young people are naturally excluded from what may be defined as a positive insertion in the job market. Those who are excluded are either engaged in marginal jobs (46%) or unemployed (53.4%); the latter percentage is indicative of the predominance of open unemployment in the economy. In addition, even among those who are employed, there is a high level of job instability.

In Argentina, unemployment is lower than in Chile, and Uruguay is in an intermediate position between the two countries, with high unemployment rates from 1982 onwards and half of the open unemployment being accounted for by young people under age 25.

It is interesting to note that, particularly in societies such as that of Argentina, the unemployed or those who have difficulty finding jobs, but have a high level of education, channel their demands towards entry into the university.

Nonetheless, as in Uruguay, many people combine jobs and studies. In 1980, two thirds of the student population of the University of Buenos Aires were working and studying at the same time and 60% held full-time jobs.

In Argentina, the types of jobs held by young people are more or less similar to those held by the economically active population as a whole. Most employed persons work in the tertiary sector, understood in the broad sense as including commerce, services, finance and others. Individually, however, the most important group is still that of skilled industrial workers, and this is also the case with respect to youth. There are, however, some interesting differences. Young people, do not, as one might expect, prefer work in modern industry over traditional jobs; what counts, apparently, is the degree of skill required in either type of job. Thus, young people are under-represented in construction, but over-represented in industries such as clothing and shoemaking, which despite being "traditional" occupations, require certain degrees of skill and qualification.

In a more crystallized society such as Argentina, the family plays a role in the labour market. In industry, for example, it is the parents who introduce their children to their occupation, providing them information on the operation of the market and teaching them skills. Crystallization produces problems, however, since, even though young people often find jobs similar to those of their parents, their educational level is considerably higher.

/Despite the

Despite the aforementioned similarities with respect to insertion in the labour market, young people appear to be over-represented in less desirable activities, as is the case with family workers not receiving a fixed wage, domesti work, own-account work, etc. This is particularly true in the poor provinces.

In Uruguay there is a long-standing practice of combining jobs and higher studies; in 1960, 45.2% of university students were working regularly. Along with this, however, it should be borne in mind that a high percentage of university graduates end up working in jobs which are not related to their chosen prefession.

The decline in the growth rate of the Uruguayan economy, which began in the 1960s, had a sharp impact on youth: by 1968, half of all unemployed persons were young people and this situation still obtains in 1984, with the added problem that overall unemployment is higher. Obviously, youth who did have jobs usually received lower-than-average wages.

The Central American countries, which make up the fifth type, have experience serious political and social problems; paradoxically, these problems are related to the growth of the 1960s and 1970s. The prospects opened up by the establishment of the Central American Common Market generated a certain amount of industrial growth and agricultural diversification, although the two phenomena were not closely interrelated. The Central American countries are still agrarian societies, although they have diversified with new products such as cotton, meat and sugar. Growth has brought with it increased social polarization, inasmuch as it can be said that around 40% of the population live in abject poverty.

Despite the fact that the population is predominantly rural, there is migration to the cities, although the trend is towards concentration in a single city. It should be noted that the development of agrarian economies of a more capitalistic type has led to certain destruction of the peasant economies. Agricultural workers, who can be mobilized for the harvest, have tended to "take refuge" in the cities, where they can do work which enables them to supplement their seasonal agricultural wages. Paradoxically, the cities have become places where agricultural labour is reproduced. It should also be noted that migrants are predominantly among young people, especially illiterate young people.

Another salient feature of the Central American countries is the density of their populations. In El Salvador, population density is two or more times higher than in Europe. Guatemala, Costa Rica and Honduras have a density two or more times greater than that of the United States. In 1983, El Salvador had 260 inhabitants per square kilometre, Guatemala had 77 per square kilometre, and Costa Rica had 49 per square kilometre.

The problems of the young population become very clear when one considers the projections of the labour force, the growth of which is mainly accounted for by youth. The following table is particularly revealing in this regard:

/PROJECTED SIZE

PROJECTED SIZE OF THE LABOUR FORCE 1980-2000

Country	Year				Percentage of change 1980-2000
	1980	1985	1990	2000	
Costa Rica	775	921	1 065	1 319	70.2
El Salvador	1 524	1 845	2 191	2 962	94.4
Guatemala	2 288	2 681	3 096	4 063	77.6
Honduras	1 041	1 255	1 502	2 089	100.7
Nicaragua	834	1 028	1 250	1 737	108.3

Source: Tsui Amy Ong, Illustrative Functional Projections 1975-2000, Chicago, Community and Family Study Centre, 1979.

Finally, reference has been made to the diversity of circumstances to be found in the Caribbean region. In a study of the situation of youth in 17 English-speaking Caribbean countries, it is pointed out that in none of those countries did the younger generation represent less than 16% of the population in 1970 or 1980. Although population growth rates are not very high (1.53% in the 1970s), migratory flows are of undoubted importance, and young people are particularly significant in this respect. In Jamaica, for example, the population between 15 and 24 years of age (94 183 persons), accounted for 32% of the migratory flow in the 1960s. Equivalent figures were 22.3% in the case of Trinidad and Tobago, 46% in Guyana and 27% in Barbados.

The relation of young people with the world of work is also of interest, juvenile unemployment being extremely high in some instances. The above-mentioned study pointed out that it amounted to as much as 88.5% in Haiti and 75.9% in Trinidad and Tobago. In most cases young people represent an important proportion of the working force. An illustrative figure quoted in this respect is that of Saint Christopher and Nevis, where they represent 29.6% of the total working population.

It is nevertheless necessary to bear in mind that generalization is not possible in the case of the Caribbean area owing not only to appreciable differences between the component countries, but also to considerable contrasts in the situation of young people. It is sufficient to mention as an example in this context the differences in the number of students entering secondary education, expressed as a percentage of the 12 to 17 age group; in 1980, this proportion amounted in Cuba to 70%, in the Dominican Republic to 32% and in Haiti to 12%.

IV. PROSPECTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The above-mentioned particulars, the detail and extent of which may be referred to in the relevant documentation,12/ illustrate some of the particular circumstances of youth in the region.

It is often presumed that the young portend the future of a country and endeavours are made to see in them signs of possible future changes in national society. It is perhaps truer to say that in the Caribbean countries the young express more visibly the acute problems of the present and many of the uncertainties of the future. In practice, the situation of the younger generation is as that of society as a whole. The structural changes that have undoubtedly taken place in the region have resulted in the young benefitting from the positive features which these changes unquestionaly entail, but they are at the same time affected by certain traumatic experiences that have also arisen. One of these refers to the social expectations that accumulate during the process of change. For some time endeavours have been made to characterize the region by pointing out that a veritable "revolution of expectations" has been taking place. Although it is true to say that possible dangers have been discerned in the lack of correspondence between those expectations and the conditions that might effectively come about, it is no less true that they have acted as a stimulant in the attainment of new goals and options.

The difficulties always present in the reality of circumstances --which have undoubtedly been aggravated by the current crisis-- may perhaps account for the phenomenon that in other European contexts has been termed "sceptical youth". This scepticism has not been due to frustration over the levels of development attained but may rather be ascribed to a static form of society where "the mixture as before" is to be expected but cultural changes are improbable.

To judge from the relevant indicators, it would seem that the situation of the region has other features. Urbanization has attained surprising magnitude in many countries, with almost two-thirds of the population now living in urban areas in the region as a whole. Urban growth has not been accompanied, however, by the necessary expansion of basic social services. The experience of urban life may thus be in conflict with the expectations entertained by the young and may have given rise to a certain amount of scepticism.

To this should be added the fact that the limited social services in rural areas tend to create an impression of exclusion among the younger population, further stimulating their inclination to migrate to the cities.

The first generations undergoing structural change and urbanization experienced a sense of achievement --not so much in terms of earnings as in participation in social services for their children and in political terms. For subsequent generations educational expansion and the development of a non-manual and industrial labour market have provided a degree of satisfaction of initial

/expectations which

expectations which in some countries soon become transformed into a barrier to social mobility and in others have become converted by the current crisis into a situation of growing unemployment and of inconsistency between educational preparation and available employment opportunities.

Changes in the structure of employment and in the qualifications needed to obtain jobs have been accompanied by the generalization of wage relationships, though in some countries the decline in the number of the self-employed, i.e., those in informal occupations, has been less than expected, while in others, the impact of the crisis and of the policies applied have reversed the wage-earning trend.

Young people currently face a saturated labour market in which high educationa levels do not ensure employment or only open the way to jobs in precarious and poorly paid occupations or in others which are of a similar level to those obtained by the preceding, less educationally qualified, generation but now enjoy less prestige. Finally, young people may suffer prolonged unemployment, increasingly identified with social exclusion.

Improvement in educational levels is one of the most positive developments in recent times but it has nevertheless been observed in some cases that educational qualifications are no longer rewarded by more responsible or better paid employment --a circumstance that gives rise to frustrations with regard to expectations of the social mobility that was formerly associated with education.

Improvement in the educational profile of young people represents one of the region's most significant types of potential. Although under conditions of economic restriction and low individual earnings the individual pay-off of educational investment may have deteriorated, it is important, from a social standpoint, that qualified human resources should find employment that allows them to develop their capabilities and affords them the opportunity to participate in collective decisions.

It is consequently important that changes should be promoted in economic and social organization to make possible the application of more productive and innovative capabilities thanks to the educational levels of the young. More advanced cultural preparation may thus be translated into more rational social conditions, greater efficiency in all the activities carried out in social life, and better chances for the young to intervene in the definition of national development styles and in the organization and management of the units where they work. But it may also be translated into providing better opportunities for young people who are compelled by the crisis to delay their insertion in productive economic life, through the development of dynamic training policies --especially in scientific and technical areas-- designed to help the young to face the new situations deriving from economic and social progress, and which are maturing in the form of a scientific and social revolution despite cyclical periods of crisis.

/As pointed

As pointed out in the initial pages of the present document this scepticism, which may derive from difficulties of incorporation in basic social institutions, may spread to other dimensions of social life, especially with regard to social and political institutions that ensure democratic stability and make possible appropriate changes.

Giving warning of these dangers certainly does not imply disregard of the positive aspects (which are many), however. Consequently, although in order to move towards the solution of the problems of the young it is necessary to solve the problems of society as a whole, it is no less true that the young themselves may represent --and not only in a potential sense-- an effective instrument to this end.

The current crisis may thus be faced in a manner which does not limit the efforts to the recovery of former levels, but is also viewed as an opportunity to correct and submit to discussion the preceding style of development, since its features contain several endogenous elements that particularize and impart gravity to the crisis.

A trend that merely emphasizes the idea of recovery may mean that the only message transmitted to the young is that they should curb their impatience. Moreover, due to the effect of the situations of urgency created by the crisis, the necessary structural reforms must often be deferred, frequently concentrating instead on the adoption of decisions which result (although not intentionally) in the possibilities of participation being restricted. Policies that stress the attitude of "submissive expectancy" without promoting basic changes or encouraging participation are incompatible with the democratic impulses prevailing in the region, and democracy itself may be perceived as a formalism that merely encourages passive adherence.

Policies --not only for the young but also for the participation of those assisting their active participation in the resolution of the crisis and the setting in motion of activities of social interest-- should consequently be drawn up without delay so that by co-operating in the necessary transformation of society they may at the same time transform themselves.

Notes

1/ General Assembly resolution 35/151 of 17 December 1979. ECLA, Regional Plan of Action for Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Youth Year, E/CEPAL/Conf.75/L.3/Rev.2, Santiago, Chile, 22 November 1983. United Nations, International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace, Report of the Secretary-General, A/36/215, New York, 19 June 1981.

2/ ECLA, Situation and prospects of youth in Latin America, E/CEPAL/Conf.75/L.2, Santiago, Chile, 17 August 1983.

3/ See the summary in the annex.

4/ Fernando H. Cardoso, Dependencia e democracia (E/CEPAL/SEM.10/R.14), Santiago, 1983. This paper was presented at the Seminar on Recent Changes in Social Structure and Stratification in Latin America.

5/ Faletto, Enzo and Germán Rama, "Cambio social en América Latina", Pensamiento Iberoamericano, No. 6, Madrid, July-December 1984.

6/ Madeira, Felicia, Os jovens e as mudanças estruturais no Brasil ao longo da década de 70 (LC/R.443), June 1985.

7/ Martínez, Javier, Consideraciones previas para un estudio de la juventud popular urbana en América Latina, LC/R.374, 1984.

8/ ECLAC, Indicadores socioeconómicos y caracterización del nivel relativo del desarrollo de los países latinoamericanos mediante el análisis de las componentes principales, E/CEPAL/R.328, Santiago, Chile, 4 January 1983.

9/ Demo, Pedro, Juventude popular urbana e pobreza política, LC/R.431, Santiago, Chile, 30 May 1985.

10/ For a detailed analysis on the status of youth in the different countries see: Braslavsky, Cecilia, "Juventud y Sociedad en la Argentina", Santiago, ECLAC (LC/R.401), January 1985; Cotler, Julio, "La radicalización política de la juventud popular del Perú", Santiago, ECLAC (LC/R.430), May 1985; Madeira, Felicia, "Os jovens e as mudanças estruturais no Brasil ao longo da década de 70", Santiago, ECLAC (LC/R.443), June 1985; Martínez, Javier, "La estratificación social de la juventud: el caso de Ecuador", Santiago, ECLAC (LC/R.389), November 1984; Martínez, Javier, "Juventud y exclusión social: el caso chileno", Santiago, ECLAC (LC/R.433), May 1985; Parra, Rodrigo, "Juventud y sociedad en Colombia", Santiago, ECLAC (LC/R.334), July 1984; and Terra, Juan Pablo, "La juventud uruguaya en el proceso nacional de los últimos veinte años", Santiago, ECLAC (LC/R.432), May 1985.

11/ Durston, John and Guillermo Rosenbluth, "Panamá, un caso de 'mutación social'", Pensamiento Iberoamericano, No. 6, Madrid, July-December 1984.

12/ See note 10.

/Annex

Annex

SUMMARY OF THE DOCUMENT SITUATION AND PROSPECTS OF YOUTH IN LATIN AMERICA a/

The study summarized in this annex was prepared for the first Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting on Youth, the aims of which were to analyse the present situation and future prospects of young people in Latin America and the Caribbean, with emphasis on the subjects of youth and development, social movements, and programmes and policies for this sector, and to work out a regional plan of action to promote the objectives of the International Youth Year: Participation, Development and Peace.

At the aforesaid meeting the problems of youth were considered on three levels: a) the actual situation of the group aged between 15 and 24 years, b) its relation with society, its changes and its linkage with integral development, and c) the study in greater depth of certain essential topics and advancement in the theoretical and conceptual knowledge of the significance of the condition of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The main aspects considered were concerned with the conceptual difficulties in defining the juvenile group, with the role of youth in relation to the future, and with the responses that society should make to its new members --all of this in the context of the renewed quest for new concepts of development needed for the restructuring of the region. The analysis revealed that the problems of the young reflect the problems of the societies in which they are inserted and that therefore they should be studied within the framework of global economic development and of social and political changes in the region, with special attention to the social, economic and cultural features which, taken together, enable specific groups to be identified.

Consequently, the basic variables of the social transformation of the region were noted, among them the growth of the population, the development possibilities of the economic system, and the increasing differentiation of social activities. Emphasis was laid on the demographic significance of youth, the process of urbanization, the development of industrialization and its effects on the formation of societies with qualitative differences. A review was made of the transformations in agriculture and in educational conditions, and of their repercussions on social stratification. Some concrete aspects whose essential importance was noted at that first exercise in reflection and systematization of knowledge on the condition of youth in the region are: the impact of the speed at which the changes occurred in the region; the difference in tempo and depth evinced by the transformations in the different countries; the sensation of uncertainty about the future development of the region and its influence on the socialization of the young; the increasing gaps between the generations and between the young of different strata.

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a/ E/CEPAL/Conf.75/L.2.

/The main

The main problem is that of the participation of the young, which indeed constitutes a key factor in the orientation of social change and in the creation of the social bases needed for the democratic forms that will enable different styles of development to be applied.

The study examined a number of specific items in greater depth. Thus, in the analysis of the demographic structure, it was shown that the numerical weight of Latin American youth amounted to 20.2% of the population of the region. The growth of the population has been a phenomenon that has coincided with high rates of urbanization (whose tempo has increased considerably in recent decades), and is manifest in the fact that the juvenile group represents a proportion of 65.2% of the urban population. The agricultural population has suffered an aging process which has helped to increase the rural exodus, largely owing to inefficient use of the agricultural population. The demographic trend has varied greatly from country to country, three main groups of countries being distinguished: the first, with 14.8% of the region's population, has low demographic trends and a better relative level of social development, and its population will have a lower relative weight by the year 2000; the second group has maintained high levels of fertility and was slow to urbanize; and there is a third and intermediate group with diverse and polarized trends.

As regards the insertion of young people into the world of work, important changes were noted in the structure of production and stress was laid on the diversity of national situations and trends, including the forms assumed by the industrialization process, the growth of manufacturing industry, the dynamism of the modern tertiary sector and, in contrast, the maintenance of 36% of the economically active population in agriculture. The proportion of young people in the economically active population has been high; it has had important effects on the displacement of adult employment and in other cases has resulted in high rates of juvenile unemployment. Although this has been showing signs of a decline, especially in the youngest group, it is still very impressive in absolute terms and there has been an intensification of its urban character and a growing proportion of young women.

The insertion of young people in the different economic sectors has had differing characteristics. Owing to migration their share in agricultural activity has tended to diminish and urban activity has become markedly segmented, with polarization among the different social strata. If the countries are grouped in accordance with their type of development and its influence on the occupational insertion of the young, it is observed that in the first group participation fluctuates between 24% and 26%, and 80% of the supply is produced in the urban areas, with low rates of growth of the economically active population; in the second group of countries, rural activity is predominant and, in urban activity, the informal sector and domestic service, with high rates of growth expected in the juvenile economically active population. In the third group, the importance of the rural sector is maintained, but it coexists with a large proportion of industries and services of modern type. Apparently the future rate of growth of the juvenile labour force in this group of countries will be lower than in the

/preceding group.

preceding group. In this respect, juvenile female labour has acquired growing importance and, although it continues to be incompletely recorded, especially in the case of agricultural activities, it has registered notable growth. The greatest increase in the participation rates corresponds to young women and in general it is necessary to distinguish the forms of occupational insertion of women in accordance with the different social strata. Noteworthy here is the polarization in the work of women, a phenomenon which has tended to persist. Moreover, the type of development has had an effect on juvenile female labour, which is higher in countries that urbanized earlier, although it has also increased in predominantly agricultural countries.

Unemployment and underemployment are undoubtedly one of the major problems facing young people of both sexes in the region. The lack of employment opportunities has resulted in acute open unemployment and high rates of underemployment, especially in the urban areas. Underemployment is generally reflected in jobs without a future, especially for juveniles in the marginal or low-income strata. The irregular work of young people in Latin America is not complementary to other educational activities, but represents the lack of job opportunities. In the less developed countries unemployment is greater, especially among the less educated, and at the same time it has a general distorting effect, since higher educational levels have begun to be demanded for jobs which do not necessarily require them.

An analysis was likewise made in the document of the educational transformation and its impact on the new generations. It stressed in the first place the great changes that have taken place in the education of Latin American youth in the last three decades, especially the fall in illiteracy, but at the same time the greater discrimination now suffered on account of this, the growth in primary education and the problems encountered by some sectors in completing it, the rise in secondary education and its gradual integration around general cultural training, and the rapid transformation of higher education. The particular features of the educational changes in the different countries of the region were analysed, and it was noted that those which had modernized early had achieved practically total primary schooling and like development at the intermediate and higher levels; a second group of countries had continued to marginate numerous social groups from full primary education but by expanding the higher levels had attained the greatest university coverage; a third group was characterized by differences and inequality between the urban and the rural population and uneven standards among the regions; and a fourth group had adopted integral planning of the educational process. Attention was drawn to the main conflicts and contradictions which have arisen from the transformation of education in these different situations and which have weakened the democratic effect of its expansion.

In view of their importance in terms of numbers and the vulnerability of their condition, the study gave priority to young people in marginal situations. After giving a brief summary of marginality in the region, the form in which is produced was reviewed. The persistence of marginality in Latin America seems closely related to the styles of economic development in the region and linked with the phenomena of concentration. The marginal young have been characterized

/by their

by their insertion at an early age into occupations of a very low level; they have generally not been able to complete their primary education; they have not had access to technical education or to any type of training, and in fact they have not even been able to derive real benefit from the basic education received. Two subjects were mentioned as highly relevant to their situation: their negative socialization and anomic conduct, and their political exclusion. Another type of margination was suffered by rural youth, which has remained outside the processes of modernization and development and has generally constituted persistent nuclei of poverty and deficient social integration. In relation to this group, an analysis was made of the transformations taking place in the rural sector and the particular situation of indigenous youth.

The complexity of the current situation and the future outlook were then discussed. It was pointed out that the economic transformation had been unequal and that the benefits were usually distributed inequitably. The changes affected the different social groups internally and were reflected in processes of different social mobility, in place of global systems of power linked with more or less favourable economic processes.

In this context the crisis was seen as a basic factor and it was noted that the young would be the most affected by it. Among other topics of interest two were discussed: the capacity of the young to pressure for an alternative development style which would be directed to the satisfaction of basic needs, and, secondly, the change that might be brought about by youth in the definition of values that are expressed as social needs.

The uncertainty about the future was seen to be linked in this context with concern over the lack of a precise view on the direction of change and over the state of youth as a reflection of this uncertainty. It seemed clear that the society of the future would be different from that of the present, but this seemed more attributable to discontent with the present rather than to the attraction of the future.

In addition to the changes already outlined, the general anxiety was also influenced by cultural factors. The debate dwelt on certain topics connected with the superposition of cultures, heterogeneity, and essential notions of cultural identity, postulating the cultural challenge of a model for the future and the role of youth.

Another subject discussed was the importance of the relations between generations in a changing society. Although rebelliousness tends to be considered natural at a certain stage of life it has acquired a particular slant in the region owing to the educational gap and the change in occupations which alienates the generations one from another. The options in development styles were reviewed in relation to their linkage with the generational conflict and particularly the political system.

/Another important

Another important item discussed in the study was that of youth and its role in the processes of change. The debate centred on the possibility of considering youth in Latin America as a social movement, given its heterogeneity, and of regarding it as a social actor. The social youth movement in Latin American history was analysed, with emphasis on such aspects as the youth of the 1920s (its demands for democracy and its role in the emergence of a Latin American consciousness), the problem of political options, as a characteristic of the youth movement between the crisis years and the Second World War, and a third period, occurring during the war and in the postwar years, in which there emerged, among other elements, the ideology of modernization.

Some possible aspects of the present youth movement were put forward and, although it was recognized that there was increasing diversity among the topics that interest the young, it was suggested that there were some of a more general type such as the democratic commitment and the role of youth in relation to the subject of integration and the Nation-State.

The last item dealt with concerned the links between society and youth. Two instances were discussed: socialization and social policy. The first instance covered two main socializing agents in the region: the family and education. In the case of the family the various situations were reviewed, including the difficulties that the family faced in its socializing role and its decline as a decisive factor owing to the profound regional changes. Emphasis was placed on the cultural changes, the conflicts of low-income sectors and the complexity of their problems. Over and above the consideration of education as an element for the transmission of skills and knowledge, and recognizing its expansion as the result of social pressure, another three factors were considered as essential in the structuring of an alternative development style in the region: aspiration towards social mobility, the importance given to the cultural dimension, and the desire for national integration. In connection with social policy for youth the difficulties of planning processes and their advances were reviewed, together with the problem of the sectoralization of themes and the difficulty in conceiving policies aimed at social groups involved in the dynamics of development and the emphasis on persons as a goal for society and as active participants in it. Finally, the study raised the question of the urgent need to mobilize and integrate the social forces in order to grapple with the problems of youth in the region. The goals proposed are not to be regarded as mechanisms for integrating youth into the current model of development, since the conditions in force would not permit it; they are rather a form of definition of new development options in relation to youth.

The study presented reaffirms the concepts of the previous diagnosis approved in 1983, and on the basis of new knowledge acquired it explores more deeply the national situations and their diversity. It offers new conceptual and theoretical contributions on the condition of youth in Latin America and its significance and analyses a number of new topics relating to the situation of youth in the region: the changes in the socioeconomic structure, social institutions as a possible channel of insertion for youth, consumerism in Latin America and its impact on young people, the implications of the world of work, the importance of symbolic dimensions in the condition of youth, and the identity of youth vis-à-vis social stratification in the region.