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POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND REDISTRIBUTION MEASURES IN LATIN AMERICA

by

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1. Spatial Distribution of Population and Socio-economic Change (1950-70)

1.1. Trends in Spatial Distribution of Population

Among the relatively less developed macro-regions of the world, one of the characteristics of Latin America is its high proportion of urban population; it has been estimated that by 1980 almost half of its population would be living in towns of 20 000 or more inhabitans. This character of spatial distribution of population constitutes a relatively recent phenomenon in Latin American countries, making evident a remarkably high rate of urban growth. In fact, by 1950, only one fourth of the total population was living in towns of that size. Even though this growth was accompanied by a great increase in the number of settlements, it cannot be ignored that one of the most significant changes occurred was the population increase in the cities of more than 100 000 inhabitans, which concentrated almost three fourths of the urban population in 1975. Furthermore, in most of the countries, over half of the urban population is located in the main city (often the capital((CEPAL, 1977). Thus, it is possible to maintain that the geographical distribution of Latin American population has been marked by a process of increasing urban concentration, process which has been strengthening over the years.

Changes in spatial distribution of the Latin American population do not refer only to urban growth. Along with it, the patterns of territorial occupation have varied significantly. Between 1950 and 1970, the average density of population practically doubled itself. At the same time, the main administrative divisions of countries with less than one inhabitant per square kilometer decreased from 40 to 20 per cent of the total Latin American area; centers with densities of over 50 inhabitans by square kilometer increased from 1.4 to 5.3 per cent of

the macro-regional area and, simultaneously, their inhabitants increased from 21 to 41 per cent of the total Latin American population (CELADE, 1976). Therefore, in two decades empty spaces are occupied and more populated areas expanded.

While urban population increased at annual rates higher than 5 per cent during 1950-1975, rural population grew at a rate of 1.6 per cent. In contrast to the strong dynamics of urbanization, rural areas seem somehow stagnat, and in some countries (Argentina, Chile and Venezuela) their population even decreases in absolute terms. Since available indicators would permit to assume that natural growth in rural areas should at least be similar to that of urban areas, evidence would be showing a considerable amount of population transfer from the first areas to the second ones. Regardless of differences among countries, it has been estimated that nearly half of the natural population growth of rural areas correspo to transfers towards urban areas which make up from one third to half of the growth of the latter. Since rural-urban migration involve a high proportion of young adults, the redistribution effects of reproductive potential must be added to this direct population movement. Even more, estimates show that almost one fifth of the urban population growth is explained by the fact that some rural areas became urban (reclasification) and by the physical expansion of cities (Gatica, 1978; CEPAL, 1975).

Besides its low dynamics, another distinctive feature of Latin American rural population is its high level of dispersion. Unfortunately, direct measures of this phenomenon are not available; however, some indicators may help to illustrate it. By 1970, little more than one third of Latin American inhabitants lived in administrative divisions with less than 25 inhabitants per square kilometer, density figure considered as a threshold to guarantte fluid social and cultural relationships and to allow diversified economic activities (Herrera, 1976). On the other hand, a study of six countries, using 1960 census data,

showed that in three of them (Ecuador, Panamá and Perú) more than 40 per cent of the population lived in centers of less than 500 inhabitants, and in the other three (México, Venezuela, Chile) this percentage was around 25; the average number of inhabitants in these centers fluctuated between 55 to 100 (Herrera, 1976).

Spatial differences in demographic dynamics are significant among Latin American countries. In the average, it has been found that urban population fertility is lower than that of rural population; this difference tends to increase during the periods of greater urban growth and then to decrease -as the proportion of the total population residing in urban areas increases (CEPAL-CELADE 1975). Even though there is no well developed explanatory framework accounting for this apparently negative association between urbanization and fertility, we may postulate that in urban areas there are conditions favouring a reduction of the reproductive patterns of population: together with a greather possibility of access to education, incorporation of women to the labor market, and the lower levels of infant mortality, there are value references, aspirations and social relationships contributing to changes in the definitions of family size as well as a favourable predisposition to use contraceptive methods (Urzúa, 1978a; Rosen and Simmons 1971). We must keep in mind, however, that inter-regional heterogeneity within a country may produce stronger fertility differences than the ones observed between urban and rural areas (Berquó, 1976). Besides, we can not ignore the fact that urban and rural environments in Latinamerican differ considerably regarding social structure patterns and inequalities resulting from the economic system (Arguello, 1978)

In the same sense that fertility is differentially conditioned by the heterogeneity characterizing urban and rural environments, mortality also differs

significantly. In the average, mortality rates in Latinamerican urban areas are lower than those of rural areas. Such difference is associated to such variables as the level of education, access to and use of the health services, real availability of basic public services. Since the endowment of such facilities tend to concentrate in urban centers, it is not strange that they tend to show lower mortality rates. However, it has been observed that differences in mortality by social classes are greater than between urban and rural population (Behm and Primante, 1978).

As it has been mentioned, a significant part of the greater growth of Latin american urban population is attributed to rural-urban migration. Both the size and composition of migratory currents seem to be conditioned by the ways employment opportunities are distributed among regions, by the prevailing living conditions in them (wages, level of education), by the diversity in social mobility opportunities and by cultural and psico-social factors influencing individuals' perceptions and aspirations for themselves and their children (Urzúa, 1978). Data on inter-census migration for six Latinamerican countries indicate that population movements take place from less developed administrative divisions to the more developed ones; and that the spatial units operating as arrival centers are few; such centers usually coincide with the main metropolitan areas. Besides, it has been observed that in countries with stronger differences among regions, migration rates present larger fluctuations (Arévalo, 1974). In other words, internal migration, acting as an agent of population redistribution, tends to emphasize the concentration patterns and to sharpen inter-regional inequalities.

Among the four types of migratory currents between urban and rural areas, rural-urban movements seem to be predominant in many Latinamerican countries. It has been found that the population retention capacity of the rural areas has

decreased from 63 per cent between 1940 and 1950 (Ducoff, 1965) to 42 per cent between 1960 and 1970 (Gatica, 1978). However, as the percentage of urban population increases, most of the population movements ocurr among urban areas. On its turn, the rural-rural current is particularly significant activities, such with a high proportion of population linked to agricultural activities, such trend is even stronger in colonization areas and lands in the process of frontier expansion, where it is possible to observe significant urban rural movemer One of the distinctive features of Latinamerican internal migration is the fact that its intensity tends to be inversely related to distance (Arévalo, 1975); however, the inhibiting effect of distance probably is diminished by the size of the places of origin and arrival, as well as by the degree of similarity among them (Afevalo, 1978). These last remarks agree with the fact that most of the migratory currents towards the metropolis come from other urban areas and not directly from rural areas.

1.2. Socio-economic Changes

The tendencies and changes of the spatial distribution of Latinamerican population briefly described above, must be understood within the context, of the changes occurred in the social structures and the economy as a whole. Some general considerations will be made, whose actual validity is obviosly different for each country, placing the emphasis on the transformations that occurred in the last two decades and on their spatial effects. We must keep in mind, however, that the patterns of spatial distribution of population are the result of a complex historical process.

During 1950-1975, the average annual growth rate of the Latinamerican gross national product was 5.5 per cent, which implied an increasa of four times its former amount. In spite of the great population growth occurred during that

period, the GNP per capita increased at a rate of 2.6 per cent by year. Along with this expansion, the sectorial structure of the product also changed, thus, for example, industry increased its participation in the GNP from 18 to 25 per cent during this period, whereas the contribution of the agri ultural sector decreased considerably (CEPAL, 1977). As a result, the proportion of agricultural labor force decreased in all countries in an amount not compensated by the low increase in manufacturing employment, while employment in commerce, services and constructions increased significantly, in proportion as well as in number (Urzúa, 1979a). The economic growth registered in Latinamerica, in spite of its magnitude, has proved to be incapable of producing enough working opportunities in productive areas, neither it has contributed to diminish the great productivity differences among and within economic sectors. On the contrary, differences between "archaic" and "modern" technologies prevail; the first ones generate only 5 per cent of the GNP while employing more than one third of the labor force; and the second ones, though producing a high proportion of the GNP, only employ 12 per cent of the labor force (CEPAL, 1977).

In order to understand the economic and social Latinamerican process, as well as its effect on the patterns of spatial distribution of population, the concept "style of development" is quite useful (Pinto, 1976). This concept is defined as the way in which a country answers some basic and unavoidable questions: "the production of what goods is to be favored; who are to produce them and for whom; how and where are they to be produced; how the economic and social benefits are to be distributed, and what role is the state to play in the overall guidance of the whole economic process" (Urzúa, 1979b). Regardless of the specific differences among the differing national situations, in particular the Cuban case, production forms combining agricultural, mining and industrial goods strongly oriented towards the external market predominate in Latinamerican,

together with elements tending to substitute imports in order to satisfy part of the internal demand. Concerning how and where to produce and the ways of distributing the social benefits resulting from the product, frequent references have been made to the concentration tendency shown by the development model prevailing in Latinamerican countries in the last decades.

The concentrating character proper of this style of development has been interpreted as the results of structural heterogeneity; from this point of view it is possible to detect a threefold concentration expressed at the levels of economic strata, the regions, and the social structure. Such situation seems to be determined by an accumulation process in which monopolistic units predominate, by a marked agglomeration of productive activities in a few number of centers, and by the increasing surplus appropiation by the dominant social sectors (De Mattos, 1978). Under such conditions, it is not strange for the labor market to be defined by the restriction of options in productive areas neither that the income distribution patterns show regressive characteristics leading to an increase of poverty. A study related to eight Latinamerican countries indicates that the level of participation of the lower economic groups in the total income has deteriorated (CEPAL, 1977). However, it is necessary to admit that the changes in the productive structure have contributed to a relative expansion of the middle strata, so that the process of income concentracion in the higher groups has not been so considerable.

Changes in the productive structure resulting from the expansion of the industrial sector have had correlative spatial changes. The decisions concerning to location of manufacturing activities favored those areas where there already existed an accumulation of capital, as well as demand and a basic infrastructure of commercialization and distribution. Ussually those areas coincided with the

largest cities and their immediate hinterlands which, for a long time, had benefited from the attraction of resources obtained in other regions of the countries. Thus the industrialisation model tended to accelerate the process of concentration leading to a sharpening of inequalities between the "core area" and the rest of the countries. Such pattern of industrial location has been accompanied by the concentration of concomitant services enabling the emergence in those areas of external economies of agglomeration (Villa, 1977). The expansion of these activities, has not been foreign to the participation of multinational firms, which, making use of protectionist measures designed to stimulate import substitution, have displaced smaller and less efficient producers. Regardless of the fact that initially this model has had a dynamic character, its recent evolution shows serious limitations derived from the use of capital intensive techniques which tend to reduce the capacity of the system to absorb labor force (De Mattos,72). Consequently, the previously described urban concentration tendency, has been reinforced and inter-regional inequalities sharpened.

However, it should be pointed out that urban concentration could have contributed to increase the productivity of the countries by absorbing migrants from other areas (urban and rural) whose contribution to the generation of product was non existant at their place of origin (Geisse, 1978). In spite of the validity of this interpretation, we must bear in mind that in order to analyze the effects of concentration it is necessary to consider both how its resulting benefits are distributed as well as the social cost involved in its generation. Even though available data show that average income in big cities, including those of the lower strata, tend to be many times higher than the average of the countries for the same strata (CEPAL, 1973), we should not ignore that the cost involved in satisfying their basic needs are also considerably higher.

The seggregationist forms observed in those cities, particularly evident regarding housing, transport and consumption patterns, cannot either be left aside.

At the same time that socio-economic changes related to the configuration patterns of urban, industrial and service concentration areas took place modifications of rural sectors were also significant during the last decades. The increased demand for food has been partially met by the expansion of the agricultural product. However, the growth rate of the sectoral product has been much lower than that of the economy as a whole, and even lower than the population growth rate in many countries, particularly those located in the Andean area. Besides, it has been observed that productivity and income levels are considerably lower in rural areas than in urban areas: this fact shows the influence of structural problems affecting the ownership of productive resources and the type of technology used. Inefficiencies in transport and marketing as well as the weaknesses of rural workers' organization also have to be considered.

It has been estimated that the principal factor contributing to the expansion of the agricultural product has been the increased productivity of cultivated land and not the occupation of new lands. Strictly speaking, the expansion rate of the agricultural frontier has decreased, while the expansion of cultivated land decreased from 2.6 between 1960 and 1965 to only 0.5 in the following five years (CEPAL, 1974). Thus great part of the growth of the sectoral product may be considered as the result of the introduction of machinery, most of it imported with state subsidies and assistance (Urzúa, 1979a). Agricultural "modernization" related to this mechanization process and to the emergence of entrepreneurial elements in the countryside, has tended to displace rural labor force as well as to substitute permanent by seasonal labor; such phenomenon has contributed to

population emigration to urban areas or to increase pressure over "minifundios". However, these changes have not involved a replacement of the old "latifundio-minifundio" complex prevailing as the predominant land tenure structure in many countries. On the other hand, agrarian reform programs implemented by different governments have been accompanied by a process of rural political movements, process which contributed to generate entrepreneurs' actions leading to the replacement of labor force by machinery. In some cases, however agrarian reforms have led to the emergence of cooperatives and "asentamientos" which seem to have improved the living conditions of the population involved (Urzúa, 1978b).

In brief the predominant development styles in Latinamerica in an economic and spatial context are characterized by a strong concentration of industrial and service activities in the larger urban areas, as well as by the persistency of pre-capitalist agrarian forms of production in association with "modern" ones, the latter's most important impact being a constant decrease of labor force requirements. From a socio-political perspective, it is possible to detect a regressive income distribution pattern accompanied, however, by a relative expansion of the middle strata and by a more complex social structure; the latter allows, in some cases, the configuration of relatively broad classes and class fractions alliances, even though they be of essentially urban origin. All the above has involved a deepening of the regional and sectorial heterogeneity. This broad picture, so briefly described, seems to have predominated, with variations among countries, during the 1950-1975 period. Recently, there are evidences of the emergence of a "new" style of neo-liberal development, strongly autocratic which has been known as the "comparative advantages development style" (Urzúa, 1979b). The new forms of socio-political organization and the economic projects associated to this emergent style of development are being studied at present and must be

taken into account in order to understand the context in which population policies will be defined or are being defined in some countries.

2. Identification of Policies and Problem Areas: Governments' Perceptions

2.1. Problem Areas and Recommendations for Action

The establishment of the World Population Year in 1974 and the World Population Conference held in Bucharest contributed to expand and increase governments' discussion on population matter. CEPAL and CELADE called to a preliminary meeting (CEPAL, 1974) before the one held in Bucharest, and to a second meeting with the purpose of discussing the implications of the World Population Plan of Action (CEPAL, 1975). Later on, CELADE organized the First Technical Exchange Meeting of Governmental Entities in Charge of Population Policies in Latin America (CELADE, 1978). On the basis of the conclusions drawn from these events, it is possible to outline the critical areas identified by governments regarding population distribution as well as the actions recommended by them.

The report of the Second Latin American Meeting on Population (CEPAL, 1975), includes the critical situations resulting from the interaction of socio-economic political and demographic structures in the specific situations inherent to each country's mode of development, stating among them (CEPAL, 1975: 46).

"(a) urbanization and metropolitanization trends and the imbalance of regional development;

(b) irrational destruction and poor utilization of natural resources;

(c) deterioration in the quality of the environment, particularly in urban areas;

(d) agricultural development trends and their effects on employment, living levels, access to services,... and the exodus from the countryside;

e) inefficient employment opportunities in relation to population growth and urbanization, leading to high levels of underemployment and unemployment".

Five of the seven critical areas identified are strongly related to the population distribution patterns. Discussion is mainly focused on urban concentration trends and in the functioning of the economic system as regards to generation of employment opportunities; there is deep concern with respect to the modes of organizing agricultural production and its effects on the social level, over the exploitation of natural resources, and also in relation to the massive out-migration of rural areas.

Starting from the identification of the critical areas previously mentioned, the Meeting stressed that the establishment of population policy objectives was as important as the specific definition, formulation and use of the necessary ways and means of achieving them, within the context of each country's economic and social development policies. It was recommended that countries should consider some minimun objectives designed to solve obvious problems affecting the quality of life. Thus, the fifth and sixth objectives envisaged were as follows (CEPAL, 1975: 44)

" 5. Action to influence the scatter of the population, migratory movements, population spread and excessive urban concentration by means of comprehensive agrarian, regional and urban development programmes, in line with the countries' interests and within the context of their overall economic and social development strategies.

6. In order to attain those general objectives, the following specific objectives were recommended:

(a) To promote grouping of the geographically scattered population :

through the establishment of communities equiped with the basic services necessary for their overall development;

(b) To adapt population spread to the possibilities and requirements of regional development, on the basis of special human settlement programmes;

(c) To take action to establish and further develop groups of small and medium-sized towns in order to bring urban trends into balance and to improve the planning of urban and rural population centres so as to ensure the efficient provision of public services;

(d) To reorient migration movements from the countryside to the towns by eliminating their causes and respecting at all times the right of freedom of movement and residence within the territory of the State;

(e) The population should be encoureged to remain in its place of origin by means of economic and social incentives conducive to its overall development, such as increased employment opportunities, social organization, the provision of health services, education, housing, social security, leisure facilities, etc.;

(f) Internal migratory movements should be concorded with the requirements of each country's regional development".

Therefore, according to objetive number 5, the various aspects of spatial population distribution should be faced up with urban, rural and regional development measures; among them, the following were pointed out: the need to promote the grouping of scattered population, the numeral increase of small and medium-sized twons, the reorientation of migratory movements, and the implementation of mechanisms designed to encourage population to remain in its place of origin. The First Technical Exchange Meeting of Governmental Entities in Charge of

Population Policies in Latin America (CELADE, 1978) thoroughly analyzed these matters. Some examples of spatial population redistribution policies were pointed out, as well as the need to initiate specific research studies on this field.

2.2. Governments' Perceptions and Policies

Tables I and II have been prepared on the basis of a United Nations survey of government population policies undertaken in 1976 (United Nations, 1979; ECLA/CELADE, 1976). Latinamerican and Caribbean governments have expressed almost unanimously that the present population distribution in their countries is inappropriate; only the Government of Barbados considered it entirely acceptable and the Government of Cuba perceived it as slightly unacceptable (see Table I). These two exceptions seem to be justified by the small size of the country in the case of Barbado (with a surface of 431 sq. kms. and a population of 240 000 people around 1970) and by the substantive reforms introduced in the case of Cuba since the 1959 Revolution. This high degree of consensus among governments show that they have a strong position against disparities in the distribution of population as well as regarding the social and economic structuring of space. This statement is illustrated by the fact that 22 of the 27 countries participating in the survey indicated that a radical action was convenient.

With respect to the policies regarding spatial distribution of population, the vast majority of the governments stressed that the current trends in internal migration should be decelerated (23 cases) and only one (Brazil) was in favour of accelerating those trends. Besides, 21 governments indicated it was convenient to adjust their present urban and/or rural configurations. In other words, the answers to the survey show that the governments share a dissatisfaction

Table 1

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN GOVERNMENTS': PERCEPTIONS AND POLICIES REGARDING SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

(July, 1976)

Countries arranged according to Governments' perceptions regarding overall acceptability of spatial distribution of population	Policies regarding spatial distribution of population				
	Deceleration of basic trends in internal migration[a] and:			Acceleration of basic trends in internal migration[b] and adjustment of urban and rural configurations	No intervention desirable [c]
	Adjustment of rural configurations (rural plus rural/urban)	Adjustment of urban configurations (urban plus urban/rural)	Adjustment of neither rural nor urban configurations		
1. Entirely acceptable:					
No intervention appropriate					
Barbados					X
2. Slightly unacceptable:					
Limited					
Intervention appropriate					
Cuba	X	X			
3. Substantially unacceptable:					
Substantial					
Intervention appropriate					
Brazil				X	
Bahamas		X			
Nicaragua			X		
4. Extremely unacceptable:					
Radical					
Intervention appropriate					
Argentina	X	X			
Bolivia	X	X			
Chile		X			
Colombia	X	X			
Costa Rica	X	X			
Dominican Republic					X
Ecuador	X				
El Salvador			X		
Grenada			X		
Guatemala	X				
Guyana	X	X			
Haiti	X				
Honduras					X
Jamaica	X				
Mexico	X	X			
Panama	X	X			
Paraguay	X				
Peru	X	X			
Suriname	X	X			
Trinidad Tobago	X	X			
Uruguay		X			
Venezuela	X	X			
Total number of countries (27)	17	15	3	1	3

Source: United Nations (1979: vol. II, tables 68-72).

a/ 23 Governments favour intervention in order to decelerate basic trends in internal migration.

b/ Only one Government favours an acceleration of basic trends in internal migration.

c/ Three Governments favour no intervention in basic trends in internal migration.

regarding their present urban and rural space organization patterns as well as a common need for manipulating the population redistribution trends (migration) operating at present.

Table II includes more specific information about 13 Latinamerican countries. Considering the trends towards change registered in selected areas of the countries involved, it is possible to observe that all governments perceive that their metropolitan areas are changing too fast and that this trend constitutes an obstacle to development. There is a slightly lower degree of consensus regarding population change in the rest of the urban areas of the countries, even though more than half of the governments consider that these areas also exhibit an accelerated growth rate which has a negative impact on development. The answers concerning the rural areas differ in a greater degree; this may be due to the characteristics inherent to each country and to the political and ideological orientations of their respective governments. The fact that almost half of the governments (only eleven cases) that stated an opinion regarding population change in rural areas indicated that this change was too slow, might be interpreted as a negative perception as regards to the magnitude of rural-urban migration trends.

In Table II it is also possible to appreciate that when the survey was taken, most of the countries did not have a policy designed to modify internal migration rates to metropolitan areas and to other urban centers; however, the vast majority of the governments indicated they had policies regarding rural zones. Only four cases had no policies at all. Different types of policies were mentioned; some of them were designed to induce changes on industrial location or on agrarian structures, while other aimed at providing public services to the population. It may be convenient to point out that the survey was not specifically

designed to study policy measures aimed at adjusting the patterns of population spatial distribution to the objectives of development (Alberts, 1979). Finally, it was possible to detect that none of the governments perceived population change in sparsely populated zones as acceptable, which might be interpreted as an aspiration to occupy "internal border" zones.

Table 2

GOVERNMENT'S PERCEPTIONS AND POLICIES REGARDING SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF SPATIAL POPULATION DISTRIBUTION FOR THIRTEEN LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES

(July, 1976)

COUNTRY	Government's perception regarding population change in selected areas of the country a/ in terms of conditions (defined as a hindrance or as a positive contribution) for development.			Has the government designed a policy to modify internal migration rates for those areas? If so, when?				Policy measures to be implemented in those areas b/			Government's perception regarding populatior change in sparsely populated zones	
	A Hindrance		A positive contribution	Yes			No				too slow	Satisfactory or too fast
	Change too slow	Change too fast		M	U	R		M	U	R		
ARGENTINA		M/U/R		1970	1970	1970		1	6	15	X	
COLOMBIA		M	U/R	1975	1975	1975		2	6-14	8-9	X	
COSTA RICA		M e/			X	X			6	12	c/	
CHILE		M/U/R				X				10	X	
ECUADOR		M/U e/					X				X	
EL SALVADOR		M/U/R				1975				9	d/	
HAITI	U/R	M		1976	1976	1976		3-4	4-6	9-13	e/	
HONDURAS		M/U/R				X				10	X	
MEXICO	R	M/U		1974	1974	1974		5	5	5	e/	
NICARAGUA	R	M	U	1975	1975	1975		4	6-7	8-11	X	
PANAMA	R	M/U					X				X	
DOMINICAN REP.		M/U/R					X				X	
URUGUAY	U/R	M					X				X	
Number of countries	2/5	13/8/5/	2/1	5	6	9	4				9	0

a/ Selected areas are: Metropolitan areas (M); Other urban centers (U), and Rural Bones (R).

b/ Policy measures identified by governments:
1. Industrial location not allowed within or near the capital city
2. Development of cities within the city
3. Density readjustment
4. Improvement and/or increase of public services and economic activities
5. Health and education programs
6. Industrial development
7. Housing programs
8. Agro-industrial development
9. Rural development, agrarian reform
10. Rural settlement schemes
11. Colonization
12. Social development
13. Social infrastructure
14. Administrative decentralization
15. Border areas programs

c/ Evaluation should be done on the basis of impact on natural resources

d/ There are no sparsely populated zones

e/ Not enough information to provide a definitive answer

SOURCES: ECLA/CELADE (1976), Alberts (1979).

2.3. A Typology of Measures Affecting the Spatial Redistribution of Population

Many efforts have been made to construct typologies of population distribution policies (Fuchs and Demko, 1979; Simmons et al., 1978; Simmons, 1978; Pryor, 1976; Alberts and Villa, 1976; Laquian and Simmons, 1975). For the present purpose, it seems more appropriate to make a list of the different policy measures mentioned by the Latin American countries and presented at the First Technical Exchange Meeting... (CELADE, 1978) as well as at the national development programmes. As a first attempt, it is interesting to mention a grouping of countries according to the orientations followed by their official commitments regarding population distribution (Alberts, 1979) during the period immediately after the Bucharest Conference (1974-1977). It may be mentioned that during that period the functions of national agencies in charge of population policies were institutionalized or expanded; in 15 of the 20 Latin American countries, the spatial distribution of population constituted one of the action fields of such entities (González and Ramírez, 1979).

A first category of countries comprises those having official policies concerning population redistribution; in these countries, national development plans include specific objectives and measures regarding changes in the patterns of spatial population distribution (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela). A second category includes those countries whose national plans contemplate policy measures to adjust population distribution to the objectives of development, even though they have not stated an official population distribution policy (Chile and Cuba). A third category groups those countries whose development plans consider the redistribution of population as a problem but do not include in them specific policy measures to resolve it (Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras and Nicaragua). Finally, there is a group of countries

which do not include specific statements regarding spatial redistribution of population in their development plans, even though some general references on this matter are made (Guatemala, Paraguay, and Uruguay). This tentative typology is also based on the experience accumulated by the different countries, regarding actions over territorial distribution of population incorporated to the development plans (Alberts, 1979). It has been pointed out, on the other hand, that many Caribbean countries have at least an implicit policy designed to slow down the growth rate of the major urban centers, mainly through rural development and industrial deconcentration programmes (Urzúa, 1979a).

Chart 1 was elaborated on the basis of the information provided by the Latin American countries at the different population meetings and the analysis of the aspects contained in their development plans. The list of policy measures presented is not intended to be exhaustive and the four main categories defined must be understood as a first exercise. It should be kept in mind that not all the policy measures included in Chart 1 may be considered as explicitly designed to alter the patterns of population distribution, even though it seems unquestionable that the effects of those measures may be of great significance (and in fact they have been significant). Finally, the fact should not be left aside that policy measures of the same nature may be associated to highly different political and strategic ideas thus affecting their feasibility and the magnitude and significance of their impact (Geisse, 1978).

CHART 1

Policy Measures Affecting the Spatial Distribution and Redistribution of Population 1/

A. Regional Development

- Relief-Aid to Disaster Areas
- Development of Border Zones
- River-Basin Projects
- Administrative Decentralization

B. Urban Development

- Industrial Deconcentration
- Growth Poles and New Towns
- Urban (Metropolitan) Renewal, "In-Town" New Towns, "Satellite" Towns and Suburbs
- Housing Programmes and Social Infrastructure

C. Rural Development

- Agrarian Reform (Transformation of land tenure structures)
- Promotion of Agro-Industry, Small-Scale and Medium-Scale Industry
- Programmes for the Concentration of Scattered Population to Facilitate Access to Services
- Technological Combinations and Training Programmes
- Public Works (Irrigation, Transportation and Electricity)
- Land Settlement Schemes on "New Lands" (Colonization)

D. Measures Aimed to Actual and Potential Migrants

- Information Systems and Labour Offices
- Technical Training
- Educational Reforms (Changes introduced in the curricula)
- Programmes Aimed at Providing Information to Seasonal Labour

1/ This list does not include directly coercitive measures.

3. Policy Measures Affecting the Spatial Distribution and Redistribution of Population: A Summary of Experiences

A condensed synthesis of some experiences of Latin American countries relating to the application of measures such as those in Chart I follows. Unfortunately, it becomes difficult to evaluate the impact such measures have had in terms of the exact volume of population affected directly by them, which establishes serious limitations to the analysis. The examples given are only a sample, which does not intend to be absolutely representative of the actions taken up during the last three decades. Even though the emphasis is centered in the presentation of the measures that have been implemented, it has been considered adequate to make some references to recently stated proposals which appear in the development plans of the last decade.

3.1. Policy Measures for Regional Development

The first activities in regional planning in Latin America go back to the 50's and they were designed to case the social pressures in certain areas or to counteract the effects of natural disasters. Five orders of motivations have been identified to understand the involvement of the State in this type of enterprise. Firstly, the perception of the existence of a growing breach between the needs of the population and the ability to satisfy them through the mechanisms for the production of goods and services. In the second place, the changes in the spatial structure of the economy which brought about the weakening of some regions. Third, the promotion of geopolitical goals which imply the strengthening of frontier areas. Fourth, the need to face the effects of droughts, floods and other natural disasters. Finally, the requirements of the national political administrative apparatus in terms of increasing its managerial ability throughout the territory (Alberts and Villa, 1978).

One operational mode of action in regional planning has been to intervene in underdeveloped zones under the sponsorship of political pressures activated as a consequence of natural disasters. An example is that of North East Brazil where "regular stimulii to action have been provided by the periodic droughts which affect the region.... and which have invariably led to famine and massive migration to the cities. On each occassion the droughts have represented a problem which could not be ignored by the federal government, which has duly adopted a mixture of long and short term policies of assistance, such as supply of food, the establishment of employment gangs, the building of reservoirs and the establishment of special agencies (such as DNOCS) to deal with the problem" (Gilbert, 1974: 241-242). However, the experience of the National Department of Works against the Drought (DNOCS) was highly unsuccessful and was charged of serious corruption. This led to its replacement by an entirely new body, the SUDENE (Superintendency of the Development of the North-East), in 1958. Something similar happened with the program of assistance for the region of Puno in the south of Peru. Various analysts provide indicators which point to the fact that most of the work done by the organizations created with the exclusive purpose of assisting situations of natural disaster, tended to benefit the higher local strata and were unable to counteract the expelling effects over the vast majority of the population (Hirschman, 1965; Dew, 1969; Gilbert, 1974; ILPES, 1978).

Another approach of the "mono-regional" type, apparently inspired by the experience of the Tennessee Valley Authority of the United States, consisted in the promotion of development schemes for hydrological basins. A connoted such case is the one of Mexico which aimed at integral planning linked to a basin and to a hydrological project. According to a study, "from the demographic viewpoint,

considerable migratory movement was expected from the densely population Mesa Central of the country, as a result of the colonization of agricultural lands. This idea originated in 1943 from the statement of the President of Mexico at the time, Avila Camacho, referred to the need to induce a process of exodus, to ease the demographic pressure in the center, through a "March to the Sea" (Lavell, Piriz and Unikel, 1978:20). An evaluation of these programs shows that their economic effects were moderate and that the resulting population movement was minimal,much lower than expected and that, at the same time, much of the benefits obtained were transferred, through financial channels, to the traditional center of the country (Barkin and King, 1970). Even more, the most successful example, in the Tepalcatepec basin where a migratory attraction was generated, such success was clouded due to the high local concentration level of income and to the control of the a assigned lands (Barkin, 1972). Similar situations were experienced in Colombia with the Corporation for different river valleys, even though probably the public funds involved in such enterprises may have been much smaller than in the Mexican case.

The frontier development has been a constant worry for Latin American governments under the influence of geopolitical and national security ideologies. The National Commission for Demographic Policy of Argentina formulated a policy of population redistribution which, officially sanctioned in 1977, states as one of its prioritary goals, the settlement of the frontier areas by creating working opportunities and establishing the necessary facilities for the population (Republica Argentina, 1977). Such goal recuperates a proposal appearing in previous development plans of Argentina, whose effects were apparently quite modes. Similar considerations can be found in the development strategies of other countries which adopt the position known as "live frontiers". The existence

of relatively important population centers along the territorial limits with other nations has been a source of special concern in some countries. Such is the case of Mexico where the National Frontier Program for the north region of the country was established in 1966. The population in the cities of this region had grown at very fast rates as a result of in-migration attracted from other regions as much due to the commercial and turistic boom activated by the exchange with the United States, as to the possibility of finding seasonal jobs in the agrarian zones of the northern country ("braceros"). In addition to the accelerated growth of these cities, the program of braceros came to an end in 1965, all of which ended up in precarious conditions in the urban infraestructure and very high unemployment rates. The programme turned then to the promotion of industries by offering such special incentives (tax exemptions, infraestructural endowments, reduction in import duties) as to attract manufacturing companies with the purpose of absorbing part of unemployment (Lavell, 1972). It has been pointed out, however, that the success would be explained, mainly, by the proximity to the USA, which has a bearing on the utilization, by the corporations, of cheap labor and which gives way to "an increased dependency of Mexico towards the United States" (Unikel, 1976:21).

Regional models have also been utilized as vehicles towards a relative decentralization of public administration. In Chile, Venezuela, Perú an Colombia, group of territorial units have been designed with the purpose of subjecting them to a limited process of management under regional planning organizations. Even though sometimes these agencies have a certain degree of decision-making power, the usual case for them is to operate as intermediary bodies in relation to a national system of resource allocation which keeps operating in a centralized manner.

Even though immediate effects of this particular approach to the problems of spatial population distribution seem to be almost irrelevant, decentralization tendencies have contributed to overcome the state of specific "mono-regional" perspectives, to enter the stage in which regional problems are faced from a national perspective. Within this "new" conceptualization, there is a tendency to substitute the old strategic notions based on multiple variations of the pole or center of development concept by "a more areal vision.... conceptually richer, and more flexible regarding strategy implementation" (ILPES, 1978:54). It is still premature to make appreciations over eventual effects of this "new" perspective upon the guidelines for spatial organization of population. This will depend, however, upon how effectively demographic variables are integrated to the process of regional planning (Alberts and Villa, 1980).

3.2. Policy Measures for Urban Development

From a spatial-physical perspective urban planning has quite a long trajectory in Latin America. An important part of the efforts have centered on urbanistic and residential designs stipulated in "regulating" plans whose prescriptions and recommendations have only quite partially been put into effect, due in part to the limited capacity for action exhibited by the local governmental agencies and partly because of the low feasibility of their propositions (Alberts and Villa, 1976). This situacion tended to change during the sixties, as a result of a greater interaction among planners working at different levels of action. In this way, a new stage of closer relationships between urban planning and the strategies of economic and social development begins, thus allowing for urban planning to become closely linked to regional planning.

One of the most persistent concerns related to the configuration of the urban systems of Latin American countries is centered on the marked preeminence of the bigger cities and the apparent fragility of the urban networks. The absence of intermediate sized cities and the weaknesses of the smaller urban centers have often been mentioned as a relevant problem. Such statements can be said to be almost a constant in the development plans of these nations. Regardless of the fact that this denounce-diagnosis may be liable to oversimpliying risks and biased by assumption of dubious validity, it is worth mentioning some of the measures applied to reduce these eventual "urban deficiencies". Part of the action undertaken are oriented to the strengthening of the intermediate type cities through the utilization of the industrial deconcentration argument or the promotion of new poles aimed at densifying national urban networks.

Many of the efforts done in relation to industrial deconcentration have crasted against the wall put up by the locational factors closely linked to the technological indivisibilities characterizing the "modern" organizational modes of production, which are based on the principles of the economies of agglomeration. A first approach to industrial deconcentration consists in the utilization of financial mechanisms to stimulate such process. The example provided by the National Frontier Program of Mexico has already been mentioned. Another example comes from the SUDENE experience in Brazil, especially after the approval of the article 34/18 that offers important tax reductions and subsidized loans to the firms developing projects in the north-east. Under such sponsorship, industrial investment in the region has increased considerably; however, the industrial plants that have being installed are characterized by the use of labour substitute technologies along with scales of production of such magnitude that have forced the lock out of the small traditional industries of the area. The net result has

been a limited generation of employment opportunities at a very high cost. In turn, the benefits obtained have been reversed to the big corporations located in the south east, particularly in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo where the headquarters operate and from where much of the inputs come. In other words, the regional impact of the industry located in the north-east has been quite limited. Finally, the locational pattens of industry, specially in large cities (Recife and Salvador), tended to intensify rural-urban migration and to deepen regional inequalities (Goodman, 1972; Baer, 1969).

Another mechanism adopted to stimulate industrial deconcentration consists in theapplication of governmental pressures and sanctions. In the national development plans of Colombia and Venezuela industrial location within the main metropolitan areas is expressely forbidden; however, no specific mechanisms to implement such policies are known. The law 20560 of Argentina, created in 1974, denying the possibility of industrial location within a radius of 60 kilometers from Buenos Aires, does not seem to have been any more successful (Marcenaro, 1976). An example of gorvernmental pressures combined with incentives can be found in the city of Arica in the north of Chile. The status of free port was granted in 1953 for the establisment of commercial and manufacturing activities; five years later the government decided that the auto assembling industry and that of electronic equipments be located in Arica as long as thet accepted to gradually incorporate national inputs. In 1964 the status of free port was eliminated and after four years the auto industry moved, almost entirely, towards the central zone where the headquarters had always been located and where the absolute majority of the input producing plants and most of the market could be found. Later on, when Chile left the Andean Pact and adopted a totally industrial

non-protectionist oriented economic policy almost all the electronic industry of Arica either closed down or moved to the central region. In spite of the sfrustrat ions derived from this experience, it is worth noting that during its peak period Arica was the city with the highest rate of population growth in the country.

A third alternative approach to industrial deconcentration is the construction of industrial estates in underdeveloped areas within the countries. It deals with the construction of basic facilities and with infraestructural endowment, frequently done on governmental funds to stimulate the location of manufacturing industries. Most of the Latin American countries have tried out this type of measures with less than satisfactory results. In Peru, a number of cities including some small sized ones, were equipped with industrial estates; this worthy effort did not however, affect the concentration patterns of Lima. Probably, the only relatively successful industrial estate has been the one in Arequipa, one of the largest cities of the country, which was also favoured by state credit lines and tax exemptions, and where the emphasis was centered on handicraft activities, and not on the big industry.

As an alternative to big metropolitan concentration, a number of ambitious development poles schemes in relatively depressed areas of the countries haven been propounded. In many cases, these propositions have not gone farther than being a mere spice to development plans. One exception to this general situation is that of Ciudad Guayana in the south of Venezuela. The Corporation of the Vene suelan Guayana (CVG) was established in 1960 with the purpose of designing and administering a development plan for an almost unpopulated region, located far from the main traditional settlement region (Caracas-Maracay-Valencia) and from the oil production areas (Maracaibo), and where an important amount of

unexploited natural resources could be found (iron ore, bauxite and hydroelectrical potential). The CVG was provided with abundant economic resources and invested with a high degree of autonomy. After a short period of time, a new city linked to an iron and steel plant was built, experiencing an accelerated population growth (from 3 800 inhabitants in 1950 to more than 150 000 in 1970). Undoubtedly, Ciudad Guayana has become an importan attraction center, but its capacity to irradiate regionally has been almost nil thus constituting an enclave with a large floating population and high marginality indices. On the other hand, the high costs involved in the experience have turned it into a prohibitive model for most countries in Latin America (Friedmann, 1969; Rodwin, 1969; Rodwin, 1970).

A typical case of a new city located in a scarcely populated region is that of Brasilia. Its conception, design and execution meant a true opening towards the future which reactivated the Brazilian nationalist ethos. The idea was to sponsor a more intense occupation of the Pratinha to contribute to the utilization of scarcely exploited resources and to the generation of an alternative center to the eventual megalopolis Rio de Janeiro-Sao Paulo (Skidmore, 1967; Ludwing, 1969). The impact Brasilia has had in terms of population, as compared to Guayana City, has affected not only the city as such (close to the 300 000 inhabitants by 1970), but also an ample surrounding area. An axis system converges towards Brasilia and estimates indicate that the rural population of the area has increased in approximately 2 000 000 people by 1970, since the construction of the road Belem-Brasilia (Gilbert, 1974).

Urban renewal schemes have spread considerably among large Latin American cities, fact which does not imply that basic deficiencies of extended physical plants, deeply affected by the use of private cars, have been overcome; this without ignoring the fact that many programmes have tended to sharpen rather than lo . lessen social inequalities in the use and appropriation of urban land. Among the less frequent projects, there is one aimed at building cities within cities, Bogota being an example (Republica de Colombia, 1974: Arenas, 1978). The main purpose of this project is to decentralize large cities into relatively autonomous and multifunctional centers, avoiding congestion and diminishing transportation requirements. A public corporation would be in charge of building those cities and responsible for their adequate planning in order that they provide housing and recreation facilities as well as services and employment opportunities. Each community, relatively self contained, would have a population of approximately 400 000 inhabitants. Even though this initiative seems attractive for the purpose of readjusting the living conditions in the metropolitan environment, its feasibility appears to be quite doubtful considering the limited success in the implementation of the Colombian project and the fact that it has been virtually omitted in the last national development plan of that country.

3.3. Policy Measures for Rural Development

One the previous sections includes a description of the changes occurred in the agro-rural environment in Latin America. Within this context, measures designed to increase agricultural production and in some cases to retain population have been applied. When the government's perceptions on the spatial population distribution were previously described, it was also mentioned that the occupation of populated areas constitutes a most cherished objective. Some of . the efforts made in this direction are summarized below.

One of the common characteristics to most of the Latin American countries has been the relative underdevelopment of the agricultural sector and the low priority assigned to the rural population in public policies. In fact most of the economic schemes that have been implemented have ignored the agro-rural environment or, what is worse, have had detrimental effects over it. It is true however, that not all social groups have experienced equally such consequences, As a way to alleviate these situations, several agrarian reform programmes were institutionalized in the sixties but their evaluation is still not avaibable for lack of information as well as by the fact that its recent development has been less dynamic and in some cases the process has been reversed.

In the time period considered in this analysis, the Bolivian agrarian reform is one of the pioneer cases. Before 1952, the Bolivian agricultural sector was considered as a prototype of productive inefficiency and social inequity. Towards 1950 nearly half of all agricultural land was concentrated in large "haciendas" of over 10 000 hectares that accounte for less than one percent of all landholdings. On the other hand about two thirds of all agricultural properties represented only one quarter of one percent of the agricultural land of the country. (Heath, Erasmus and Buechler, 1968). The majority of the rural population lived under semi-feudal working conditions as share-croppers or peons with practically no salaries. In 1952, with the rise to government of the "Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario" a program of agrarian reform was passed designed to eliminate the "latifundio" with the sole exception of the few commercial agricultural enterprises that were efficiently managed and the indian communities. At the same time measures were taken in order to promote syndicalization as well as the organization of rural workers cooperatives and to supply basic services.

Even though Bolivian agrarian reform was slow and full of bureaucratic constrair the analysts's opinion is that effected changes seem to have improved the material living conditions of the population. It has been estimated that around 8 millions hectares had been redistributed by 1967 to the benefit of almost 200 000 rural families. The coverage of the agrarian reform was not homogeneous throughout the country, being much more intense in some regions like the Cochabamba valleys than in Santa Cruz. It was not possible to go further than distributing the land and weakly organizing some cooperatives; continuous technical support was lacking and there were very few advances with respect to the rellocation of people living in saturated areas in the Altiplano so as to the creation of rural centers endowed with basic services (García, 1970). As a summary of this experience it has been noted that "... the Bolivian reform is best seen as a major social improvement which was achieved at relatively little cost and which has provided an opportunity, still shame-fully neglected, for further rapid development" (Gilbert, 1974: 158).

The Bolivian agrarian reform was accompanied by a relatively important colonization process in the oriental region of the country, process that was stimulated by the construction of the highway between Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. In both Departments there has been ocupation of new lands; thus, for instance, 10 000 families had settled in the area north-east of Cochabamba by 1962. Other 1 500 families had settled in the region of the "Alto Beni" between 1958 and 1968 (Odell and Preston, 1971).

The Cuban case represents a radical approach to agrarian and rural transformation, with a process both rapid and of great magnitude. During a first stage, between 1959 and 1961, the big north-american sugar-cane plantations and cattle-raising enterprises were nationalized and converted into cooperatives. During these two first years of agrarian reform, 4.5 milion hectares were expropriated,

figure representing half the agricultural land of the country (Gutelman, 1967). The formation of sugar-cane cooperatives coexisted with private and cooperative forms of tenure for other types of crops in which more than 100 000 families were engaged before 1961. With the support of redistributive measures the government consolidated itself and was able to deepen the process of change (González, 1980).

Since 1961, and due to the conflict with the United States, a deep turn in the Cuban process takes place. This change was depicted as the transformation of an "... agrarian reform that is anti-feudal and anti-imperialist... into a socialist revolution by command of its internal evolution and of external aggresions" (Che Guevara, 1961:42). The second stage involved the subordination ot the industrialization efforts to the expansion of the sector devoted to agricultural exports (sugar-cane), defined as the central axis of the economy. The sugar-cane cooperatives were converted into "people's farms" and grouped in districts of production conceived as units for the structuration of the national economic space and labour areas. This stage, however, did not imply the extinction of private forms of land tenure; a National Association of Small Farmers was created to organize them with the purposes of plannng agricultural production and providing social services, credit and technical assistance. "People's farms", in turn, were organized on the basis of salaried work and mechanisms of direct administration; they provided employment for some 100 000 workers, two thirds of which were seasonal workers. At the same time, the areas of agrarian development were not only devoted to productive activities but also included marketing activities thus replacing the small rural stores by "people's stores" which have been essential for the increase of the buying power of the rural population, as well as for the development of transport facilities and sets of social services.

The transformation of the Cuban society and economy depends upon an eminently agrarian based model. Nevertheless, the active population of the primary sector has been relatively constant in absolute numbers between 1953 and 1970 (at around 800 000 people) and its relative participation in the total labour force has decreased. At the same time, the labour force engaged in social services, an important part of which is located in the rural areas, trebled; the employment in personal services decreased while the employment in manufacturing and construction industries increased. There was a considerable increase in the rate of female participation in the economic activities, especially in the social services and manufacturing sectors. Illiteracy tends to disappear and the coverage of public health services increases significantly (González, 1980).

One of the postulates of the Cuban transformation model is the rural-urban integration together with the deconcentration of the economic sectores and of public resources. There are indications of a strong socio-spatial homogeneization. Thus, the programmes of the "school in the rural areas" (with secondary education in coeducational boarding schools combining studies with agricultural work) and those of constructing rural towns (endowed with basic services) are all conducive to the end of destroying the rural-urban barriers (Acosta, 1973). The primacy index for four cities decreased from 3.69 to 2.89 between 1943 and 1970. Showing a slow down of La Habana's concentrating effect; the city grew between 1953 and 1970 at a rate much lower than that of the intermediate sized cities of the oriental region of the island. The new rural towns with 150 to 300 families living in apartment buildings, integrated to market relationships and with mechanism of direct management, were already more than 330 communities in 1975. In turn, the "schools in the rural areas" had an enrollment of more than 200 000 youths in 1976 and it was expected that they would provide education to some 700 000 in 1980 (González, 1980).

As it has already been suggested, the colonization activities have had great importance in Brazil and Mexico. These activities are present in the different countries, even in some of relatively small size like Honduras and Costa Rica. In the first of these two, there have been transfers of population toward the coastal areas of the Caribean and specially toward the river-basin of Ulúa-Chamelecon nearby an important center of urban-industrial growth (San Pedro Sula). Paraguay has also experienced a big expansion of its agricultural frontier in its oriental region, with very high migratory rates toward the Parana basin where the big hydroelectric dams of Itaipu and Yaci-retá are presently under construction (Secretaría Técnica de Planificación, 1980).

Policy Measures aimed to Actual and Potential Migrants

There is a number of possible measures that are complementary to the programs of regional, urban and rural development which have been scarcely studied in Latin America and that have not been widely applied. These are the activities exerting influence on the attitudes and motivations of migrants or of those who wish to migrate with the purpose of getting an adequately remunerated employment in the places of their present residence or in other points of the territory of the countries (Alberts and Villa, 1976). Thus, the items included at the end of Chart I can be considered as options that might be implemented. One experience that is worth considering is the plan for labour force migrations of Colombia but its evaluation is difficult because of its recent implementation (República de Colombia, 1976). There is next a synthetic description of the characteristics of this program which is being carried out by the general management office of the National Employment Service.

The objectives of the program (as related to internal migrations) are "to act over the regularization of the temporary flows of rural workers whose movements annually account for several hundreds of thousands in harvest time... the improvement of the socio-working conditions of these workers and their families both in their place of destination and in that of the origin of their migration... the analysis of the problems of retaining the migrant labour force in these areas through development programs that include the possibility of seasonal crop rotation and other short-term programs (thus allowing the permanent settlement of the majority of temporary workers); or through agro-industrial projects that allow the absortion of a greater number of workers" (Republica de Colombia, 1976). In the light of these objectives, pilot projects have been implemented in selected Colombian municipalities; mobile centers for labour migrations have been established in the places of origin of the migrants to provide them with information about job and employment opportunities as well as to take care of the hiring procedures and providing technical and trade-union training. The programme includes aspects of social security related of the families. The mobile centers operate also in the places of destination of the migrants to supervise the fullfillment of the work contracts. This experience was drawn from a detailed previous research on the demographic situation of migrants, the patterns of labour force migration and the working nutritional, health and housing conditions.

4. Conclusions

The patterns of spatial population distribution may be considered as historical results of economic and social change trends corresponding to particular development styles. From such a perspective, many demographic expressions of the process of change might not be liable to modification by means of merely conjunctural action of the state; which implies that governments' actions would be restricted to the adoption of measures contributing to accentuate effects perceived as positive and to palliate implications interpreted as negative. Nonetheless, it must be recognized that certain specific phenomena, assumed to be structurally determined, are in fact the result of political decisions made in the past that could eventually be modified by other policies (Urzúa, 1979a). In this sense, one of the relevant topics for the analysis of the spatial population redistribution perspectives is the study of the nature and role of the state (Gilbert, 1978). To that end it would be neccessary to detect, in the first place, the way in which the decision-making process operates, identifying how power is distributed and the pressures exerted by both national social actors and foreign agents. A thorough analysis of such a topic can only be made on the basis of considering each country separately. It seems enough, however, given the present paper's scope, to point out to the relevance it has for the evaluation of the efforts made to alter the spatial patterns of population distribution.

Even though most of the Latin American governments agree in terms of the identification of problem-areas as regards to spatial population distribution, not all of them can rely on studies providing a diagnosis accurate enough so as to be able to pursue the steps required to face those problem-areas. In fact,

the present population distribution trends as well as their future implications are poorly known in many countries. This is due mainly to lack of basic information and specially to the lack of studies about the factors influencing these trends and their consequences on economic and social development. On the other hand, analysis of costs and benefits involved in certain trends and policy measures are generally omitted. Such analysis should be part of any broad evaluation that takes into account social and political costs considering the interests of the different social actors. In addition to the lack of integrated diagnostic studies there is a scarcity of mechanisms operational enough as to be useful for the attainment of specific objectives. Such would be the case with industrial decentralization (in favour of smaller urban centers) or with the permanent settlement of rural population by means of specific actions undertaken in the agrarian sector (in order to counteract concentrating tendencies). In fact, many of the public policies have little control over intervening factors and where they do have some impact its effects on the size and distribution of human settlements are usually not considered, at least explicitly. (Simmons, Díaz-Briquets and Laquian, 1978)

The brief description made of the Latin American experiencies on the application of policy measures affecting spatial population distribution shows that some of them have had either limited success or effects opposite to the expected objectives. A preliminary assessment of these experiences may be summarized as follows (Alberts and Villa, 1978).

1. Activities in regional planning have been limited, in many countries, to the application, to specific areas, of policy measures designed to: alleviate the effects of natural disasters, to exploit natural resources, to provide tributary exemptions, to build infrastructural endowment, and the like. Even though some of

these programmes seem to have had some effects over the pattern of human settlements, most of them were characterized by a certain degree of isolation. In other words, this type of approach (essentially "mono-regional") does not have as reference framework a global development scheme that makes explicit enough the role of the different spatial units and populated centers in terms of their productive, social and political functions. Strictly speaking, the regional policy and the development model chosen should be consistent with each other (ILPES, 1978). This way, by evolving from a "mono-regional" perspective to the concept of a national system of regions, the regional planning schemes prove to have made some progress as regards to the incorporation of the spatial dimension into the development plans; however, the problem of consistency between the proposals involved in regional policies and the national development model has not yet been solved in a satisfactory manner. is it possible to observe a significant progress in relation to making explicit the demographic effects of the policy measures contemplated in the regional plans. Even less can be said about observed progress regarding the effectiv integration of the demographic variables to such plans.

2. Most of the recommendations suggested at the Latin American meetings on population and most of the identified policy measures for affecting spatial population distribution patterns are close to the concept of a concentrated dencentralization model. One question in relation to it refers to the need for appropriate criteria to selected concentration focii capable of articulating their surrounding territories. A second question concerns the problem of how to modify the strong centralizing forces that have historically characterized the economic and socio-political processes of Latin America. In fact, in the past few years, a limited decentralization process of industrial activities has been observed in

some countries. This process has involved the reallocation of industrial plants that were previously located in central areas of the major cities and the installation of new industries far from those areas. Such seems to have been the case in Argentina where, besides the recent expansion of Cordoba and Mendoza, an industrial axis stretching from Santa Fe to La Plata (around Buenos Aires) is emerging Relative decentralization phenomena, having as scenery the immediate influence areas of large cities, may also be seen in other countries, mainly Brazil (in the areas of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro) and Mexico (in the state of Mexico)

Efforts to decentralize activities such as manufacturing are blocked up by tremendously strong locational forces. Many of the new industries base their production on inputs provided by other plants already concentrated and they require good transport facilities, infrastructure and face-to-face contacts with government's officials and institutions, all conditions to be found in the metropolitan areas of the countries. Besides, a tendency to increase the size of industries as well as to foster labour force productivity has been verified, implying the substitution of enterprises linked to local markets for others oriented towards the national market. This has meant a greater preference for being located in or close to the main metropolitan areas and a lesser creation of employment in other regions. This tendency has been reinforced by the participation of multinational firms in the control of the productive processes. Considering all this, it is possible to think that the free play of the market forces turn the industrially based deconcentration efforts into a relatively non viable venture. In order to reach such objectives, it would be necessary to radically modify the criteria for allocating resources and for evaluating economic efficiency. In general, Latin American experiences : industrial deconcentration and the promotion of locational centers as an alternative to the metropolitan areas have not been very successful. The few

relatively successful cases have had meager effects as regards to the modification of the spatial population distribution and internal migration patterns.

3. Latin American meetings on population have apparently recognized the irreversible character and some of the "positive" aspects of the urbanization process, while at the same time have pointed out to the need for reorienting this process by means of creating new cities and strangthening the intermediate ones. Two arguments are usually used as a basis for action: a) diseconomies would emerge in "too-large" cities; and, b) "compensatory" urban centers should be promoted. However, these arguments are poorly defined: when a big city becomes "too-large" or economically disadvantageous?how these "negative" aspects can be measured against the "positive"conditions? how can alternate urban nucleii be incentivated, efficiently and at a low cost? where can the latter be located?. It seems undeniable that "big cities" acquire such astatus as a result of economic advantages derived from agglomeration; however, little is known about how to estimate, with certainty and in comparable terms, the costs and benefits (and their distribution) involved in such phenomenon. Neither is ther an accurate knowledge in relation to feasible mechanisms to strenghten alternative urbam centers which is particularly the case when these centers are located far from the metropolitan areas. Examples of such case found in Latin America show only a certain degree of success obtained through heavy investments and their population effects seem to be still little promising.

4. Some policy measures for increasing the population retention capacity in rural areas stem from the assumption that an adequate means to such an end lies in the access to the control of land and capital. Aside from the direct pay to the workers, changes in land tenure would provide peasants with a greater control over their means of life. This would become particularly

significant if, at the same time, community type forms of agricultural exploitation were organized, crop yields were increased (for example by means of multi-cropping), agro-industries linked to local resources were established, and basic infrastructure and social services were provided. In other words, it would be possible to retain population in rural areas as long as the differences between rural and urban areas were diminished.

Latin America has a relatively wide experience in the field of agrarian reforms. Many of the schemes applied show that implementation has only been partially met and that effects over population have been less promising than expected. Among the deficiencies encountered by these programmes the following may be pointed out: the slowness of the implementation process, the intervention of complex bureaucratic procedures, the lack of financial support and technical assistance, the strong opposition of powerful vested interests and their resistance to expropriations, and, finally, the unfulfillment of the planned social development activities. On the other hand, foreseeing agrarian reform, many big landowners replaced labour for mechanized equipment to increase the production and productivity levels. Furthermore, the fact that plots tended to be assigned individually has led, in some cases, to aggravate the atomization of agricultural exploitations and to push the pressure for land to the limit. In spite of the above, it would seem that some cases of agrarian reform have contributed to improve living conditions of the rural population and to reduce the migratory pressures through a higher stability of the labour force (Arguello, n.d.).

5. The development of colonization programmes incorporating new lands to the cultivation process, is considered to be a relevant type of measure by many countries in Latin America. Different efforts have been made in this direction;

however, the evaluations of their effects on population are still very scanty. In some cases, colonization activities seem to have been deeply affected by the use of labour saving technology thus becoming a mechanism with little population attraction capacity. In other situations, the colonization process has tended to reproduce traditional forms of agricultural exploitation with large landholdings predominating. In still others there has been a tendency to induce population dispersion which has made it difficult to provide the necessary services.

6. Once the relatively irreversible character of the urbanization process has been acknowledged, it becomes evident that a complete arrest (or reversion) of the migratory rural-urban currents becomes extremely difficult. On the other hand, the implementation of policy measures designed to such an end cannot be considered as an adequate mechanism to face neither urban nor rural problems, unless a radically different development strategy is put forwards to replace the prevailing one. In fact, a spatial population redistribution policy must be a part of global social strategies. It does not seem enough to promote high cost projects designed to change the location of activies whose locational criteria make such change unadvisable or whose characteristics turn them into enclaves. Neither does it seem any more fruitful the adherence to a perspective based solely on sectorial and geo-political considerations.

It is essential that a policy or a set of actions designed to affect the spatial distribution of population be based on a clear identification of problem-areas. This would allow to determine the various intervening factors so as to be able to realize if it is possible to modify them or to adopt measures to make the prevailing tendencies compatible with other economic and social objectives.

Once these elements have been identified it would be possible to choose the means by which to act over different levels of reality. This type of process should require some degree of contact with the population involved. Thus, the spatial population redistribution policies may be understood as a set of measures deliberately oriented to influence the geographical allocation of population. At the same time, regional, urban, and rural development programmes contemplating objectives defined in such a direction, can be considered as part of the above mentioned policies. These policies must be integrated, as the World Population Plan of Action recommends, to the social and economic development plans. Consequentely, it is necessary to always bear in mind that the population is at the same time both the object and the subject of any development process.