Pacificación y Desarrollo: Clientelism, Community Kitchens, and the Articulation of Social Policy in Contemporary Peru

by

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ABSTRACT

When Alberto Fujimori was first elected President of Peru, he trumpeted the dawn of a new technocratic, neoliberal era in Peruvian politics. Then, throughout his first term in office (1990-1995), Fujimori used a variety of coercive means to advance a hegemonic shift towards neoliberalism that has, thus far, produced economic growth lopsided in favour of foreign investors and a handful of Peruvian capitalists. Following a national constitutional referendum in 1993 which demonstrated that popular support for his regime was tenuous, Fujimori tried to shore up his political position through the implementation of clientelistic social policies. Specifically, Fujimori sought to transform the vast, and traditionally militant, *comedores populares* (Community Kitchen) movement, into a network of support for his regime. In this context, the *Programa Nacional de Asistencia Alimentaria*[1] (PRONAA) - a national food aid program created in 1992 to oversee a variety of projects, including material assistance to the *comedores* - represents an attempt to compete with the *comedores* movement for the hearts and minds of low-income Peruvians. In this thesis I examine the relationship between the *comedores* movement and PRONAA as the locus of a power struggle between community activists and the state in the two years leading up to Fujimori's re-election in 1995. Surveying five decades of social policy - from the 1940s to 1997 - I consider clientelism both as a strategy of containment and as a larger category of analysis that helps to frame the history of social and political relations in Peru.

[1] National Food Assistance Program.

Dedico esta tesis a mi padre, Carlos van Isschot de Torró.

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I take full responsibility for the accuracy of the information that appears in this thesis.

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As they proceeded with conservative modernization, these semi-parliamentary governments tried to preserve as much of the original social order as they could, fitting large sections into the new building wherever possible.

Barrington Moore (1966: 438)

Chapter I: Revolution From Above

Throughout his first term in office (1990-1995), Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori used various forms of intimidation to suppress his political opponents and to advance a major structural shift towards neoliberalism that produced economic growth heavily lopsided in favour of foreign investors and a handful of Peruvian capitalists.[1] In order to help shore up his position, Fujimori worked to promote and sustain traditional clientelistic relationships between low-income Peruvians and the state. Notably, by using government resources to cultivate an ethic of *asistencialismo* - defined by Susan Stokes as "...a sort of charity-mongering that creates ties of dependence" (1995: 58) - Fujimori sought to transform the vast, and traditionally militant, *comedores populares*[2] movement into a network of support for his re-election bid in 1995.

In this thesis I argue that the Peruvian National Food Assistance Program[3] (PRONAA) - created by Fujimori in 1992 to administer a variety of projects, including material aid to *comedores* - represents a direct attempt to compete with the *comedores* movement for the hearts and minds of low-income Peruvians. As Bruce Kay writes: "Rather than working with or complementing organizations already in existence, PRONAA has sought to compete with them instead and to weaken their influence" (1996: 80). Ultimately, I conclude that while PRONAA has engaged thousands of *comedores* members in traditional patterns of clientelism and deference to the state, the Fujimori regime's drive for political hegemony remains unfulfilled. As Kay comments, Fujimori's re-election in 1995 was the result of a combination of factors - especially "the failure of opposition candidates to present credible alternatives" (*Ibid*: 94) and "the still-palpable

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[1] See *The Economist* (February 23, 1991); the *Censos Nacionales* (1993); Cuba (1994); Cameron and North (1995); and Burt (1996).

[2] *Comedores populares* translates as "popular dining halls" or "popular restaurants". *Comedores* are occasionally referred to as "community kitchens" or, less frequently, "soup kitchens" in the academic literature on Peru. I use the Spanish term throughout this thesis.

[3] *Programa Nacional de Asistencia Alimentaria.*

fear of reverting back into the violence and economic crisis of the 1980s and early 1990s" (*Ibid*: 93) - and does not represent a "hegemonic outcome" (Mallon, 1994: 72). Identifying the relationship between the *comedores* of Lima (Peru's capital and by far its largest city) and PRONAA as the focal point of a struggle between community activists and the state during the Fujimori era, this thesis explores the complex interplay between authoritarianism, neoliberalism and clientelism in contemporary Peru.

Clientelism - defined by Susan Stokes as a system of "asymmetrical relations established between two people (or groups)" (1995: 95) who occupy different positions within a socio-economic hierarchy - has shaped relations between the state and low-income Peruvians for decades. Successive governments have used clientelistic social programs in attempts to diffuse oppositional political movements and obfuscate class and ethnic divisions. Clientelism is, in this sense, both a strategy of political containment (manifest as *asistencialismo*) and a larger category of analysis which helps us frame the history of political, social and cultural relations in Peru. Although I focus on clientelism understood as a strategy of containment, clientelism must be understood as a problem that defies simple explanations. As I discuss in Chapter II, the specific use of clientelistic social programs aimed at the urban poor can be traced back to the late 1940s, when General Manuel Odría sought to restrain and co-opt the demands of Lima's burgeoning squatter movements through nominal recognition and state-sponsored philanthropy. Nearly fifty years later, the persistence of both clientelism and authoritarianism belies the acute contradictions between Fujimori's apparent commitment to neoliberalism as an economic panacea, and the actual perpetuation (and in some respects, aggravation) of Peru's socio-economic ills.

In this thesis, I broaden the scope of current discussions of social policy in Peru[4] by linking substantive primary research on PRONAA (conducted in 1995) to complex

[4] See the work of Burt (1996); Thorpe (1995); Abugattas (1994a); Stokes (1995); and Portocarrero (1994).

hegemonic processes that have been played out in the low-income neighbourhoods of Lima through the latter half of the 20th century. In doing so, I consider, as Scott does in the Forward to *Everyday Forms of State Formation*, the extent to which "the state's hegemonic project [has] itself been influenced by the force of popular experience and of mobilized popular expectations" (1994: viii). Taking a cue from Scott, hegemony can be defined either as the realisation of a specific political or economic project (e.g. neoliberalism) or as a process of negotiation and dialogue which persists through long periods of history (e.g. the development of clientelist social policy in response to protest movements). As Florencia Mallon writes:

> First, hegemony is a set of nested processes, constant and ongoing, through which relations are contested, legitimated and redefined at all levels of society. According to this definition, hegemony is hegemonic process: it can and does exist everywhere, at all times. Secondly, hegemony is an actual end point, the result of hegemonic processes (1994: 111).

Given that the outcome of the struggle between the *comedores* movement and the Peruvian state is uncertain, this thesis focusses on the intricacies of hegemonic process rather than on hypothetical end points.

The *comedores* have always been hotly contested terrain, where clientelism and autonomy, like government and community-based political goals, clash. In order to understand and assess the impact of clientelism as a political strategy of containment - which is the primary purpose of this thesis - we must see the *comedores* as a locus of hegemonic relations, and a point of intersection between the contradictory tendencies of clientelism and autonomy in Peruvian history. Thus, while both the *comedores* movement and the Fujimori government have fashioned their goals and strategies through a practical political engagement, they have also been influenced by broader societal dynamics. The clientelism embodied by PRONAA is, in this context, indicative of the conspicuous shortcomings of neoliberalism, of the challenge to neoliberalism that the *comedores*

represent, *and* of deeply entrenched, contradictory patterns of social and political conduct in Peruvian society.

The tension between clientelism and autonomy within low-income communities in Lima points to the complexities of the hegemonic processes evident in recent Peruvian history. Stokes notes that many neo-Marxist theorists - notably Scott in *Weapons of the Weak* (1985) and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (1990) - eschew the notion of the "intellectual or cultural domination of the oppressed" as key aspects of hegemonic processes, in favour of a "more structural understanding of class domination" (1991a: 265). In an effort to shed some of the more elitist assumptions of Marxist theory, theorists such as Scott have employed the logic of pragmatism in efforts to render lower-class compliance with authoritarianism transparent:

> Workers are not fooled by the bourgeoisie's efforts at ideological mystification; their frequent quiescence reflects organizational barriers to revolution, strategic calculation that rebellion would be fruitless, or the material or political co-optation of working class leaders[5] (*Ibid*).

If deference is an affect, and clientelism a role-play, then hegemony, understood simply as domination, is indeed an impossibility. But if it is defined, following the new readings of Gramsci, as the contestation and negotiation of political, social and cultural relations, then hegemonic process can be seen as the articulation (rather than the incorporation or elimination) of multiple differences and contradictions (Hall, 1991: 58).

In practice, hegemonic processes are frequently decentred and reconfigured by what Stuart Hall refers to as discursive "interruptions" (1992: 282) which bring key differences and contradictions to the fore. In this regard, Fujimori's neoliberal agenda has been decentered by the *comedores*' local and community-level economic, cultural and political "interventions" (*Ibid*), and vice-versa. As Arturo Escobar writes, the survival of

[5] As quoted in Stokes (1991).

alternative models, such as that embodied by the *comedores* movement, highlights the clash between capital and community: "The persistence of local and hybrid models of the economy, for instance, reflects cultural contestations that take place as capital attempts to transform the life of communities" (1995: 99). Embedded within the *comedores*' cultural contestations are ideas for broad-based socio-political transformation which will ensure the continued displacement of Fujimori's neoliberal project: "Although the social projection of subaltern languages rests largely with social movements, it calls for strategies to modify local, regional, and international political economies" (*Ibid*: 100). Yet while the *comedores* movement has thrived throughout the Fujimori era, its traditional cooperative ideology and political goals have themselves been decentred and challenged by the resurgence of clientelism in Peruvian politics and society.

It is valuable to study the dynamics of clientelism in contemporary Peru through the lens of hegemony theory precisely because of the apparent resilience of the Fujimori regime. Although Fujimori has been unable to decisively rebuff the *comedores*' challenge, he has successfully "established some point of identification" (Hall, 1991: 59) between his government and a significant percentage of Peruvians. As Hall explains:

> Capital...recognizes that it can only, to use a metaphor, rule through other local capitals... It does not attempt to obliterate them; it operates through them. It has to hold the whole framework of globalization in place and simultaneously police the system: it stage-manages independence within it, so to speak (*Ibid*: 28-29).

Standing at the crossroads of Peru's most prominent democratic and anti-democratic trends, Lima's organized *comedores* movement is an ideal location for interpreting hegemonic political and cultural processes in neoliberal Peru.

The Politics of Barbarism

Fujimori's orthodox free-market economic program - characterized by the deregulation of markets, the elimination of state subsidies, the privatization of state enterprises, the downsizing of government bureaucracy, and the streamlining of political power - was, at the outset, very traumatic for many Peruvians. The structural violence required to initiate the so-called Fujishock in 1990 ushered in an age of "barbarism" unparalleled in recent Peruvian history.[6] Exponential growth, an end to hyperinflation and a return to relative economic stability were eventually achieved - in large part through the privatization of Peru's once sizeable public sector[7], a rapprochement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and a comprehensive structural adjustment program - but were offset by increasing unemployment and poverty rates. After one year of economic restructuring, 60 per cent of Peru's total population continued to live in poverty (Portocarrero, 1991: 13), and 73 per cent of Lima's residents (*limeños*) were either underemployed or unemployed (*Ibid*: 18). By 1996, some 75 percent of Peruvians said their personal economic situation had either stayed the same or worsened since Fujimori first came to power.[8] Like so many people thrashing about in rising water, the victims of the ongoing economic crisis have found themselves grabbing hold of anything they can - including one another - to stay afloat.

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[6] "Barbarism" is the term used by Manfred Bienefeld to describe the world envisioned by neoliberal economists. Making a reference to Robert Reich, a renowned champion of neoliberalism and advisor to the US government, Bienefeld writes: "In the fiercely individualistic and competitive world [Reich] envisages, society will lose its capacity to manage the resulting centrifugal forces. Efficiency will eventually take a back seat to survival" (1994: 105). I use the term here because of the evocatively precise way it describes the socio-economic reality in contemporary Peru.

[7] Fujimori has vowed to sell or liquidate all of Peru's state-owned interests by the end of his mandate (*Economist* February 12-19, 1994: 43).

[8] This figure is taken from a UNICEF study conducted in 1996, which found that some 53 per cent of Peruvians earned the equivalent of $47 US or less per month. This information can be found at the web site <ekeko.rcp.net.pe/unicef/data/data12.htm>.

As a direct result of the neoliberal structural adjustment initiated by Fujimori, the *comedores* movement grew exponentially. At the beginning of 1991 there were an estimated 2,107[9] *comedores* in Lima, a figure that more than tripled in the next three years. Currently, according to Rosa Espinal of the *Comedores* Federation of Lima and Callao (personal interview, 1996) and others (Béjar, 1993: 12), as many as 12 per cent of metropolitan Lima's more than six million[10] residents eat at *comedores* every weekday.

Comedores populares operate on a cooperative premise: by pooling economic resources and taking shifts in a communal kitchen, women can save themselves time and money. Most of the *comedores* currently operating in Lima are tucked away inside the adobe, brick and thatch homes of low-income families, while others are either set up in public squares, opened for several hours a day in community halls and schools, or run out of buildings built specifically to house them. Some *comedores* are fully equipped with large gas stoves, pots, pans and refrigerators, and offer seating for people who choose to eat on the premises. Others are more modest - using small coal or wood-burning stoves and water drawn from nearby public cisterns, and offer few amenities. There are *comedores* located high on the dusty hills of the new, semi-rural suburbs of metropolitan Lima, as well as in the city's old colonial centre, blocks away from the presidential palace.

The primary functions of the *comedores* are to provide communities greater access to food (Cuentas, 1994a: 17), and to create spaces for developing friendship and solidarity between low-income women (Espinal, personal interview, 1996). The *comedores* which dot Lima's vast urban landscape have also been bases of support for feminist, left-wing and anti-government political activity (Andreas, 1989: 12). Over time, Lima's independent

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[9] According to *Fomento de la Vida* (Promotion of Life), a Lima-based non-governmental organization (NGO) that supports the work of *comedores* (Mansilla, 1992: 33). Current estimates suggest there may be as many as 7,000 *comedores* in Lima, and 10,000 in all of Peru (Avensur, 1993: 10).

[10] *Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática* (1993).

comedores movement has come to embody a strong voice against government neglect of low-income neighbourhoods.

Not surprisingly, the free-market structural adjustment program instituted by Fujimori in 1990 ushered in a particularly acrimonious era in *comedores*-state relations. Lima-based *comedores* activists joined a growing chorus of dissidents who opposed the so-called Fujishock (Moyano, 1993: 36; Poole, 1992: 152). Today, the *comedores* movement is calling for the creation of comprehensive social services and programs that address the living conditions of low-income families in Lima (Espinal, personal interview, 1996). As Rosa Landavery, director of the National Commission of *Comedores Populares* writes, "We not only prepare food, we also develop proposals for change for the country"[11] (1994: 43).

Comedores have been organized by the National Commission of *Comedores Populares* since 1986 and the Federation of *Comedores Populares* of Lima and Callao since 1991 (*Ibid*). When the Federation was established, it identified as its primary political mandate the conquest of social rights *vis-á-vis* the Peruvian state (Mansilla, 1992: 51) and the training of *comedores* organizers in a variety of practical life skills, under the banner of "Self-Management, Democracy and Autonomy"[12] (*Ibid*: 60). While it is a truism to say that no two *comedores* are exactly alike, and that rifts between *comedores* movement leaders and their grassroots members are fairly common, the women who work in *comedores* have participated in many public demonstrations of political solidarity.[13] And it is precisely because of the public identification of common goals and the

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[11] "*...no sólo elaboramos los alimentos sino también elaboramos propuestas de cambio para el país*" (all translations are mine).

[12] "*Autogestión, Democracia y Autonomía*".

[13] The political activities of the *comedores* movement will be discussed in detail in Chapter III.

recognition of common leadership that we can speak of an organized *comedores* movement. As Chafetz, Dworkin and Swanson submit:

> Social movements are a form of collective behaviour involving grassroots group mobilization. They arise as a response to social strains (Turner and Killian: 1872) and are typically composed of several groups of organizations connected by... at least some shared definitions among movement adherents concerning the nature of the strains or problems confronting them and the changes desired to rectify these (i.e., "consciousness") (1990: 303).

While the *comedores* constitute a strong, independent socio-political movement and bulwark against neoliberalism, they do *not*, as some authors suggest (Andreas, 1989), represent a "privileged" counter-hegemonic political space. As Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe comment, it would be naive to idealize social movements such as the *comedores*, which are quite clearly the product of political dialogue and hegemonic process:

> ...there are no privileged points for the unleashing of a socialist political practice; this hinges upon a 'collective will' that is laboriously constructed from a number of dissimilar points. Nor can we agree, therefore, with the other dominant tendency in the discussion of new social movements, which consists in a priori affirmation of their progressive nature. The political meaning of a local community movement... depends upon its hegemonic articulation with other struggles and demands (1985: 87).

Since its genesis, the organized *comedores* movement has defined itself as an interlocutor with the state, representing the interests of low-income communities, and women in particular, who make up the vast majority of *comedores* members. As such, the *comedores* movement has been a locus of social and cultural interpolation, deeply affected by hegemonic political processes.

In spite of its collective strength and size, the *comedores* movement's influence has been transformed and circumscribed by the rationale of neoliberalism. That is to say, as Fujimori's neoliberal reforms have constricted and 'rationalized' (Abugattas, personal interview, 1994) the parameters of government investment in Peruvian society, the *comedores*' demands for comprehensive, democratic social programs seem untenable. Out of the chaos created by former Peruvian president Alán García's heterodox economic policies[14] has emerged an apparent broad-based quiescence with the current regime, and a simultaneous decline in the influence of socio-political movements and traditional political parties alike. Fujimori, who offered order in a country torn by the forces of hyperinflation and armed insurrection, is widely perceived to be the only viable political option. Thus, the outcome of the 1995 elections has strengthened the president's resolve to continue applying neoliberal policies, overriding, at least temporarily, the social reforms advocated by the *comedores* movement.

As Giovanni Arrighi writes, conservative tendencies are typical in societies experiencing hegemonic or structural crises: "As systemic chaos increases, the demand for 'order' - the old order, a new order, any order! - tends to become more and more general among rulers, among subjects, or both" (1994: 30). The order embodied by Fujimori - characterized by militarism, charismatic leadership and clientelism - is fundamentally retrograde, evocative of a bygone era of *caudillismo* and oligarchic politics. Whether the emerging neoliberal, neo-authoritarian regime can take root and constitute a sustained hegemony is, therefore, doubtful. In a country where "hegemonic outcomes" have been

[14] I discuss the García regime in depth in Chapters II and III.

notoriously elusive (Mallon, 1994: 72), it seems unlikely that Fujimori's clientelist schemes will be able to resolve the contradictions that have caused nearly perpetual socio-political instabilities in Peru.

If the transition to neoliberalism were to gel, it would have to be deemed legitimate, over the long term, by a substantial proportion of Peruvians from different social groups and classes. In Gramsci's terms, hegemony *can* be articulated by a state that represents the interests of a priveleged group, but only if the state is widely perceived to be representative of the common good:

> It is true that the State is seen as the organ of one particular group, destined to create favourable conditions for the latter's maximum expansion.... conceived of, and presented, as being the motor force of a universal expansion, a development of all the 'national' energies (1971: 181-82).[15]

In this conception, a hegemonic outcome may exist when the claim that state power is being exercised for the national good is promoted and broadly accepted. In the Peruvian scenario since 1990, we can identify the ascent of a reactionary politics based on a dearth of viable alternatives, and on fear of disorder and instability. Without clear sustained popular support for the current neoliberal project, the need to buttress the state through clientelistic and authoritarian means will not recede, and the neoliberal hegemony will remain elusive. However, the outcome of the transition period initiated by Fujimori will have to be judged in historical terms. As Felipe Portocarrero and María Elena Romero write: "The effects of this 'authoritarian modernization' and its duration are still a long way from being clear"[16] (1994: 12).

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[15] As quoted in Arrighi (1994: 28).

[16] "*...los efectos de esta 'modernización autoritaria' así como también su duración se encuentran todavía lejos de ser claros*".

This lack of clarity - typical of such monumental transitionary periods (Arrighi, 1994: 19) - can be attributed in large measure to the disarticulation of pluralist politics and the concomitant development of an implicit neoliberal consensus amongst a majority of prominent Peruvian politicians. Indeed, while neoliberalism was never debated openly during the 1995 electoral campaign - an issue I discuss in some depth in Chapter IV - each of the major candidates vying for the presidency favoured the continuation of neoliberal reforms. So, instead of engaging in open discussions about the nature of the changes under way in Peru, Fujimori played heavily on people's fears, and used the various institutional arms of his regime, including PRONAA, to promote clientelistic relationships between the state and the electorate.

Since 1992, PRONAA officials have spent much of their time handing out sacks of rice or potatoes, and administering "work-for-food" programs in towns and neighbourhoods around Peru. They have also bestowed gifts such as stoves and other kitchen equipment on selected *comedores*. According to *Comedores* Federation director Rosa Espinal, PRONAA's work is transparently clientelistic and overtly political: *comedores* are most likely to receive PRONAA donations during electoral campaigns; *comedores* which are *not* affiliated with the Federation invariably receive larger and more frequent contributions; and PRONAA's work is often accompanied by media fanfare (personal interview, 1996). As economists at Peru's *Banco Central de Reserva* (Central Reserve Bank) admit:

> Except in those cases when [the government] undertakes programs where they exchange work for food, or special occasions, the distribution of food is irregular[17] (*Estrategias de Alivio de la Pobreza*, 1993: 55).

[17] "*Excepto en estos casos en los que se ejecuta programas donde se entrega alimentos por trabajo o convenios especiales, la distribución de los alimentos se realiza de manera no regular*".

Accepting government hand-outs means there is pressure on *comedores* leaders to pander to visiting state officials or, at the very least, to keep their lips sealed on political issues. For *comedores* members (*socias*), government charity, most frequently associated with electoral campaigns,[18] may also be seen as rewards for political support at the polls.

Chapter Summaries

In the following chapter (Chapter II), I discuss the historical bases of clientelism in Peru. Beginning in the late 1940s with the military regime headed by General Manuel Odría, and ending with the populist regime headed by Alán García in the late 1980s, I trace patterns of clientelism through more than four decades of public policy. Using mostly Peruvian secondary sources, I focus on government policy toward the citizens and popular organizations of Lima's *pueblos jóvenes*,[19] who have emerged as potent political actors.

In Chapter III, I examine *comedores*-state relations since the early 1980s, as well as relevant points of comparison within the broader literature. In particular, I focus on the relationship between the organized *comedores* movement and PRONAA between 1992 and 1995. In order to illuminate the Fujimori regime from within, I look at a variety of pro-neoliberal writings, including works by former finance minister Carlos Boloña Behr (1993), and social policy advisor Javier Abugattas (1994a; 1994b; 1995), as well as articles in the Peruvian government newspaper *El Peruano*.

In Chapters IV and V, I assess the impact of PRONAA on the *comedores* movement, and the significance of clientelism within Peru's contemporary political culture. I look closely at the re-election of Alberto Fujimori, and argue that although Fujimori has many critics (including many *comedores* leaders), the lack of any viable alternative

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[18] Cárdenas, Gladys. "*Pronaa reparte alimentos y almanaques con fotografía del presidente-candidato*," *La República* April 1, 1995 (A4).

[19] The term *pueblos jóvenes* (young towns) refers to the low-income settlements that surround Lima.

candidates made his re-election inevitable. In light of the current pro-neoliberal, authoritarian climate in Peru, I argue that PRONAA represents a strategy designed to buoy Fujimori's apparent popularity among low-income Peruvians. Information for these chapters is drawn mostly from primary sources (including interviews I conducted, newspaper articles, and a transcript of Fujimori's televised victory speech on the afternoon of April 9, 1995).

In Chapter VI, I consider how the *comedores* movement's responses to Fujimori may constitute radical strategies for engaging with the current socio-economic and political reality in Peru. I look at critiques of the Fujimori regime, of PRONAA, and of social policy issues, that *comedores* leaders and their allies in feminist and popular organizations have put forward. Using both primary and secondary sources, I discuss some of the counter-hegemonic possibilities and limitations embodied by the *comedores* movement, and suggest possible areas of further research.

The counter-hegemonic possibilities exemplified by *comedores* contrast starkly with the "authoritarian core" (Petras and Vieux, 1994: 5) of the Fujimori regime. As Maxwell Cameron points out, while the Fujimori government has a democratic face, the "other face of the regime is a secretive and corrupt government within the government that operates above the law and does not wish to be held accountable for its actions" (1996: 1). Fujimori's *auto-golpe*,[20] his legal amnesty for all military personnel who participated in the war against *Sendero Luminoso* (*Ibid*: 4), and his propensity to rule by decree (Petras and Vieux, 1994: 8), all suggest that he is deeply contemptful of formal democracy.

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[20] On April 5, 1992 Fujimori orchestrated a coup against the Peruvian Congress and judiciary. For a period of several months after what has been described as a "self-coup" (or *auto-golpe*), Fujimori suspended all civil liberties, arrested some of his most prominent opponents, and governed the country by decree.

Arrighi describes the upper echelons of capitalism - the boardrooms of businessmen, politicians and presidents - as the darkest of the "shadowy zones" of capitalist history (Arrighi, 1994: 24). He characterizes this layer as especially "hard to see because of the actual invisibility or the complexity of the activities that constitute it" (*Ibid*). Writing, as he sees it, in an age characterized by the disarticulation both of pluralistic politics and of industrial capitalism, Arrighi challenges scholars to try and light the blind alley that is "the top floor of the house of trade" (*Ibid*: 25):

> Today - when world capitalism seems to be prospering, not by thrusting its roots more deeply into the lower layers of material life and market economy, but by pulling them out - is as good a time as any to... explore the real home of capitalism... (*Ibid*).

On the cusp of a historical juncture when Peru's few remaining nationalist economic structures are being rudely unearthed by the tools of a top-down neoliberal revolution initiated by Fujimori in 1990, Arrighi's challenge must be taken up.

Chapter II: Social Policy and Clientelism in Historical Perspective

The establishment of Lima's first large popular districts - then called *barriadas* - in the 1940s (Sánchez: 25) was tantamount to a series of tidal waves that forever altered the city's landscape. The arrival and settlement of large numbers of low-income indigenous people in Lima over the past 50 years has had an irrevocable impact on the character of the Peruvian capital. Extending out from the *Plaza de Armas* in front of the Presidential Palace, Lima's grand old avenues, boulevards and squares have been claimed by the tens of thousands of *cholos*[21] who use them as informal markets and meeting places. Following these same routes out to the suburbs, the monuments of Peru's colonial history fade away in the distance, and vast, self-built (Burt, 1995: 19) working-class communities come into focus.

Established through hard work, cooperation and reciprocity, the *pueblos jóvenes* of Lima are living monuments to popular ambitions for broader social and political democracy in Peru.[22] Set up in defiance of the Peruvian state and real estate speculators (Riofrío: 78), they have always been fiercely contested. Some of the most significant political battles in recent Peruvian history have, in fact, been waged between *barriada*-based social and political organizations - including the *comedores populares* movement - and the Peruvian state. These battles have tended to coincide with structural or hegemonic crises that have brought the concerns of *barriada* residents into direct conflict with governments attempting to defend elite business interests and/or their own political

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[21] In this instance, the term *cholo* is used to identify the ethnically-mixed migrants who have come (mostly from the highlands) to settle in Lima in recent decades. Formerly used pejoratively to describe *campesinos* (peasants) of indigenous or mixed Spanish-Andean origin, the term has gained new popularity as a signifier of unity amongst Peruvians whose primary allegiance is to indigenous, Andean culture.

[22] For further information about how Lima's *pueblos jóvenes* have become symbolic of Peru's potential capacity for democratic self-governance, see Burt and Espejo (1995). They write: "Though they have not yet managed to create a new democratic social order, the residents of Villa El Salvador in Lima did transform a squatter settlement in a vast and inhospitable desert into a liveable community of nearly 300,000 people" (19).

power. It has been during such disruptive conjunctures that the complex machinations of Peru's fundamentally conservative, authoritarian state have been most apparent. In the words of James Scott, it is at such moments that "the curtain is parted" (1985: 329).

As Stokes describes, the large-scale land invasions that began in the late 1940s constituted breaches of the "fundamental rules in a highly elitist society" (1995: 24). These invasions, much more so than the limited housing actions which had occurred in the previous decades,[23] were both a literal and a metaphoric transgression of ethnic and class-based norms and laws that had upheld Peru's traditional neo-colonial social structure. Indeed, much of the land claimed in the Lima area by settlers in the 1940s and 1950s was actually owned by a small handful of family dynasties (Sánchez: 49) and protected by laws which "favoured land speculation" (*Ibid*: 50). So even though the settlers' "audacity" was not deemed to be an immediate threat to the "broader social or political order", it demonstrated that large numbers of low-income, indigenous Peruvians were prepared to cast off their customary deference and make demands on government (*Ibid*). In other words, the invaders challenged their subaltern position within the existing socio-economic hierarchy and reminded the custodians of the state that political rule in Peru had to be negotiated.

The experience of the land invasions, and the communities' initial struggles to gain legal title to land, foreshadowed an explosion of grassroots neighbourhood organizing that has shaped political discourse at the municipal and national levels right up to the present day. As Stokes writes, this kind of organizing was radical in that it used social and kinship relations as the bases of political solidarity:

> ...the Peruvian experience suggests that the loci of political socialization other than the work place - schools and shantytown organizations - can play a more important

[23] As Degregori, et al, wrote: "Metropolitan Lima acquired its current physiognomy in the last four decades" (1986: 20)

> role in moulding and even transforming political consciousness than the directly work-related experience of the urban poor (1995: 98).

Here, Stokes calls for a serious re-consideration of the traditional Marxist assumption that politicization takes place first and foremost in the workplace. The rapid expansion of the so-called informal economy (de Soto, 1989) which has translated into a profound re-definition of the relations of production in Peru, underscores the importance of looking at *barriada*-based organizations as some of the most important political groupings in the country. It is in the context of the land invasions and the political configurations they established that community groups like the *comedores* ascended to prominence in national politics.

Central to any consideration of the current relationship between *comedores populares* and the state is an understanding of the fundamental tension between autonomy (audacity) and clientelism (deference) that has defined *barriada*-state relations for so many years. As Degregori, et al, describe in their excellent study of the *barriada* of San Martín de Porres, the political importance of *barriada* organizations has been recognized by the Peruvian state for decades:

> Since their emergence, the '*barriadas*' [of Lima] have captured the attention of the state and of private institutions, who immediately tried to coopt them through *asistencialismo*[24] (1986: 194).

Economically and socially vulnerable, yet politically influential, *barriada* residents, and the organizations they have created, have been seen by Peruvian leaders as potential threats, on the one hand, and as political opportunities, on the other.

As I shall demonstrate, since the 1940s the presence of the state in the *barriadas* of Lima has inspired resentment and violence, as well as praise and profound ambivalence,

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[24] "*Desde su aparición, las 'barriadas' llamaron la atención del Estado e instituciones privadas, que en un primer momento trataron de cooptarlas a través del asistencialismo*".

amongst *barriada* residents and groups. State organisms, such as PRONAA and its predecessors, have been seen as benevolent institutions, by some, and as intrusive extensions of essentially undemocratic regimes, by others. Understanding the history of state intervention in *barriada* life is important because, as Mallon writes, this understanding will illuminate the manifold hegemonic patterns and processes being replicated today:

> As the products of conflicts and confrontations, institutions have embedded in them the sediments of earlier struggles. Uncovering these helps us understand not only the history of how they were formed, but also their present character and future potential (1994: 69).

In this light, the development of clientelistic policies by the Fujimori regime reflects hegemonic struggles that can be traced back to government responses to the settlement of the first large shantytowns in and around Lima.

A glance at Peruvian history since the late 1940s will reveal that numerous Peruvian leaders have tried - with varying degrees of success - to defer social unrest precipitated by structural crises by intimidating opponents, and by establishing clientelistic ties between the state and *barriada* residents.[25] Identified by some of the most important observers of recent Peruvian political and economic history[26] as a crisis of political and economic cohesion and stability in an era of rapid change, the current situation reflects, in high relief, long-standing clientelistic and authoritarian trends in Peruvian history. Thus, the purpose of the historical/theoretical survey I undertake in this chapter is two-fold: to look at the origins of what amounts to a hegemonic crisis in contemporary Peru, and to

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[25] Needless to say, clientelistic politics have been practised in the Peruvian countryside as well (especially in recent years, since the rise of *Sendero Luminoso* threatened to wrest entire highland regions from state control). While rural politics are crucial to Fujimori's overall political strategy, they are beyond the scope of this thesis.

[26] Hernando de Soto (1989); Carlos Boloña Behr (1993); María Elena Moyano (1993); Julio Cotler (1994); Susan Stokes (1995); and Rosemary Thorpe (1995).

establish a basis for discussing the current regime's authoritarian and clientelist responses to this crisis.

My inquiry begins with a brief descriptive précis of the "traditional despotism" (Moore, 1966: 416) that existed in Peru during the reign of General Manuel Odría. I then compare and contrast the Odría regime with the "corporatist" regime of General Juan Velasco Alvarado, who cloaked his statist project under a veil of popular, socialist reforms (Petras, 1994: 4). Using the Odría and Velasco cases to establish historical precedence, I then consider the "transition to democracy" which occurred in 1980, and the subsequent failure of the Peruvian state (first, under Belaúnde and, most dramatically, under García) to articulate and promote sustainable democratic policies. The focus of this section is the regime headed by Alán García: Peru's first true "neo-authoritarian" president, who blended traditional autocratic and clientelistic political tactics with heterodox, nationalist economic policies. Being careful to highlight the structural continuities that have allowed Peru's authoritarian state to endure through the first ten years of post-transitionary, civilian rule, I turn my attention (in the following chapter) towards the period begining in 1990 with the election of Alberto Fujimori.

The Oligarchic State

One of the striking things about Peruvian political practice in the 1990s is the extent to which it resembles the political practice of nearly fifty years earlier, during the reign of General Manuel Odría. During his tenure (1948-1956), Odría personified the Peruvian state and all of its contradictions. The "Happy General" - as he was known, because of the lavish parties he threw for like-minded dictators like Nicaragua's Anastasio "Tacho" Somoza - helped to bring "remarkable" economic growth to Peru (Poole and Renique, 1992: 112). Between 1950 and 1955, US investment in Peru doubled (from US$145 million to US$305 million) and national industrial investment increased by 76 per cent (*Ibid*).

Like Fujimori, Odría undertook direct, oftentimes coercive, actions to ensure his economic achievements would not be stalled or derailed by political opponents. In this context, it is crucial to recognize how armed military might and centralized power structures provided authoritarian continuity through to the last years of what is frequently referred to as the "oligarchic" (*Ibid*: 102) era of Peruvian politics. As Thorpe explains in a recent report published by the Inter American Development Bank:

> ...the endurance of this [oligarchic] system until the 1960s rested upon its ability to be highly exclusive. Political power was heavily centralised in Lima, and in the executive, typically in the person of the President. This was reinforced by extensive periods of military rule combined with the weak development of social and political movements at least until the 1970s (1995: 4).

In 1952, Odría introduced the Law of Domestic Security (Vargas, 1993: 283), a measure which effectively banned the activities of both the labour-supported *Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*[27] (APRA) party and the Peruvian Communist Party (PCP). Not coincidentally, both the APRA and the PCP had been amongst the first groups to point out how few Peruvians actually benefited from the rapid economic expansion that was occurring, and a good number of both parties' militants were either imprisoned or forced into exile[28] (Collier, 1975: 134).

Much like Fujimori, General Odría used state resources to create clientelistic social programs designed to pacify the potentially volatile - but generally peaceful - *barriada* communities. In response to the organized land invasions that occurred in Lima during his

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[27] The American Popular Revolutionary Alliance.

[28] As Poole and Renique note (1992: 110), the APRA had a history of conflict with governing parties and leaders, especially those most closely allied with the military. For instance, in 1932 APRA leaders from the northern city of Trujillo launched an ill-fated armed insurrection which resulted in many deaths on both sides, and the execution of hunderds of APRA militants.

presidency, Odría concluded - after some initial hesitation[29] - that incorporation, rather than brute force and marginalization, could be an effective and prudent strategy for responding to the demands being placed on his government (Stokes, 1995: 26). Provocative though they were, land invasions were judged by Odría to be latent threats to the stability of his regime, at worst, and political opportunities, at best. As David Collier writes: "Odría actively promoted the formation of new settlements. He also made extensive use of settlements as a source of political support" (1975: 135). While never wanting to fully acquiesce to squatters' demands, Odría decided it would be wiser to try and avert serious protracted confrontations by settling disputes through negotiation and offering squatters nominal assistance.

Hoping to take advantage of the social cohesion that existed in these communities to mobilize support for his government, Odría began using state resources and social programs more systematically to appease and contain *barriada* residents. Once a *barriada* was established, its residents tended to remain tightly-knit and united in their use of various legal forms of lobbying and protest to gain land titles and to be connected to metropolitan utility grids. So, in the name of political stability, promises were made and, in some cases, provisional land titles were negotiated between the squatters and the Odría regime (*Ibid*). Then, several years into his presidency, Odría set up institutions which, much like PRONAA today, stressed face-to-face relations between state officials and

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[29] Odría never appeared genuinely sympathetic to squatters' demands, and it is essential to remember that demonstrations of government lenience were usually prefaced by attempted evictions. As Stokes points out, Odría viewed the squatters, first and foremost, as nuisances: "[Odría was] sensitive to landowners' and urban developers' indignant calls for the defense of private property, and rarely did a squatter invasion fail to provoke at least an effort at eviction" (1995: 25-26).

barriada residents.[30] As Stokes comments: "...urban lower-class politics in the oligarchic state period was the politics of clientelism" (1995: 22).

Besides doling out food and clothing to demonstrate government largesse, the General praised the *barriadas* as admirable examples of "self-help" (Stokes, 1995: 26). As Stokes points out, the Odría government celebrated some land invasions, naming *barriadas* after national heroes and persons associated with his government. He also tried to associate them with the urban capitalist values of hard work, home ownership and individual self-reliance:

> Odría actually encouraged land invasions. Conservative policy makers tried to cultivate an ideology of squatter "self help": squatters should be granted small plots if they could prove through hard work and initiative that they deserved to be home owners (1995: 26).

In some key ways, the values of Lima's new settlers meshed well with the official government line. Understandably, most settlers aspired to be included, rather than excluded, and were heartened by the recognition they received from the state.

Odría's recognition and support of Lima's *barriadas* prompted one long-time resident of San Martín de Porres to declare: "Thanks to Odría, we have San Martín de Porres!"[31] (Degregori, et al, 1986: 135). Such declarations of praise for Odría - and the "traditional despotism" (Moore, 1966: 416) he embodied - must be understood as complex. It is true that through the act of invading and securing lands in and around Lima, many people succeeded in rupturing certain patterns of deference to the state. However, prominent residual trends of paternal governance that can be traced back to the colonial era persisted, as did the fundamental power imbalance between the settlers and the state. As Degregori, et al, point out, the General's popularity amongst settlers was

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[30] The first large *barriadas* set up in Lima were the result of land invasion along the Rímac river in what is the San Martín de Porres district today (Degregori, et al, 1986: 22).

[31] "¡*Gracias a Odría tenemos San Martín de Porres*!"

derived in part from his ability to play the role of the *buen patrón*: the strict-yet-benevolent colonial-style landlord who relied upon a matrix of hierarchical and moral relationships to maintain his position:

> Traditionally, amongst the Andean peasantry there existed the image of the "señor gobierno": a personified state, like an all-powerful, but absent, distant and inaccessible boss[32] (1986: 135).

Indeed, in Moore's terms, Odría's ability "to perform a variety of tasks" and "supervise activities essential to the working of the whole society" (1966: 416) allowed him to govern pragmatically, yet omnisciently and mercifully.

Appearances notwithstanding, Odría was mortal. Following a national wave of strikes in 1955, and a brief, though violent, anti-government uprising in the southern city of Arequipa in the same year, Odría's hold on power ebbed, allowing a surreptitiously assembled coalition of APRA militants and opportunistic members of the General's own government to ensure that he was thrown out of office (Poole and Renique, 1992: 112).

Although discredited by most of his peers, and a good portion of the citizenry, Odría remained popular amongst *barriada* residents. Only six years after his fall, Odría launched a surprisingly well orchestrated - though unsuccessful - campaign for the presidency. Likening themselves to Argentinean populists Juan and Evita Perón, Odría and his wife María Delgado swept into Lima's working-class neighbourhoods, bearing "clothing and trinkets" in an effort to win votes (Stokes, 1995: 22). Odría ended up winning 36 per cent of the popular vote in the *barriadas* (a tally 50 per cent higher than that won by the labour-supported APRA) (*Ibid*). His popular appeal in the *barriadas* reflects, as Collier points out, the fact that during the 1950s, demographic change (i.e. the settlement of the *barriadas*) precipitated a shift away from traditional class-based politics

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[32] "*Tradicionalmente, entre el campesinado andino había prevalecido la imagen del 'señor gobierno': un Estado personificado como patrón todopoderoso pero ausentista, lejano, inaccesible*".

(Collier, 1975: 135). By affecting a populist stance and implementing clientelistic policies which appealed directly to non-unionized *barriada* residents, Odría managed to undermine the APRA and the large unions, which had formerly been considered legitimate representatives of the working classes. And, as Collier writes: "This feature of government policy would appear again under the military government which came to power in 1968" (*Ibid*).

The Corporate State

The one great anomaly in twentieth century Peruvian history was the bloodless *coup d'etat* that brought self-proclaimed socialist General Juan Velasco Alvarado into power on October 3, 1968. The Velasco era - characterized primarily by corporatist politics and nationalist economics - should be understood, not merely as an exception, but as a transitional period that marked the end of traditional oligarchic despotism and the birth of a new political culture based on ideologically-driven conflict (Paquette: 402) and popular participation. By coupling traditional military, autocratic and clientelistic strategies with a socialist doctrine, Velasco conceived of a new Peru in which disenfranchised peoples, especially *barriada* residents, could be full participants. He was, however, careful to ensure that popular participation in Peruvian society would be delimited by a vast state-run bureaucracy.

Velasco's ostensibly socialist reforms were supported enthusiastically by many low-income Peruvians. However, *some* low-income Peruvians - especially members of various organized labour, social and political movements - saw Velasco's reforms as manipulative attempts to control independent political organizing. Yet another group of (mostly wealthy, conservative) Peruvians were outraged by Velasco's policies, and fought against them until the General was overthrown in 1975 by a mutinous clique of right-wing military officers (North, 1981: 103). During his seven year tenure, Velasco simultaneously orchestrated unprecedented popular mobilization (through government programs),

provoked the radicalization of many independent *barriada*-based community groups and trade unions, and incited a reactionary backlash.

When Velasco assumed the mantle of President, Peru's landed aristocracy was all but defunct, profits generated from Peru's once booming mining interests were at a low ebb, and another wave of urban settlement - the largest in Peru's entire history up to that point, during which the *barriadas* more than tripled in size - was underway (Collier, 1975: 129). The sum of these facts amounted to the most significant period of hegemonic and structural change in more than twenty years, and created a window of opportunity for the relatively unknown General Velasco and his comrades-in-arms to step into. Velasco had identified what would be the first opportunity in Peruvian history to displace the country's colonial economic system and promote a more nationalist, import-substitution framework (Dore and Weeks, 1996: 13). Simultaneously, organized labour, *campesino* and urban squatters' groups had mobilized in an effort to advance their own aims. The mere fact that Velasco chose to overthrow Fernando Belaúnde Terry's faltering right-wing government in 1968 demonstrates not only the perceived weakness and ineptness of the oligarchy, but Velasco's desire to shut out the burgeoning popular movements as well.

Two limited, but potentially contagious, Cuban-styled highland rebellions (led by Hugo Blanco in 1962, and Hector Béjar in 1965) were, according to some observers (North, 1981: 42), the signals that first called the military's attention to the volatility of the political situation in Peru. As General José Graham Hurtado, one of President Velasco's top advisors, admitted in 1972: "It was the guerrillas who rang the bell that awakened the military to the reality of the country" (*Ibid*). What sealed Velasco's decision to act was the Belaúnde government's contemptuous neglect of the profound problems that Blanco and Béjar's rebellions had brought to light.[33] Firstly, Belaúnde's failure to collect US$144

[33] According to Thorpe: "By the 1960s, all studies agree in placing Peru among the world's most skewed income distributions" (1995: 9). By 1963, the poorest 40 per cent of Peruvians made 8.8 per cent of all personal income earned in the country. Peru's modern

million in unpaid taxes from the foreign-owned International Petroleum Company prompted a visceral nationalist backlash (Poole and Renique, 1992: 115). Moreover, Belaúnde's failure to deliver promised agrarian reforms, his imposition of wage ceilings, and his anti-union activities, all threatened, as Poole and Renique point out, to "heighten social tensions and radicalise the popular movement" (*Ibid*).

Confronting this situation, Velasco surmised - as Odría had before him - that the most powerful weapon at his disposal was not necessarily the army he commanded, but the state resources he could use to develop clientelistic projects. Velasco believed the best way to disarm the radical left was to legislate an end to class conflict. By demanding that Peruvians rally around state-sponsored social programs, Velasco sought to co-opt the independent efforts of Peru's organized popular movements and unions. However, unlike Odría's patchwork, reactive policies, Velasco's policies were extensive and proactive. As Joe Foweraker argues:

> The reforming military government in Peru (1968-75) successfully coopted urban social movements in Lima by setting up parallel organizations, bringing neighbourhood associations into public administration, and sponsoring self-help housing (1995: 65).

In these ways, Velasco attempted to reorder the social and political relations in the country in such a way that would make all Peruvians (especially the poor) more dependent upon, and answerable to, the state.

Under Velasco's direction, the Peruvian state also expanded to fill in the fissures left by the economic shifts occurring in Peru. Notably, Velasco's government presided over some of the most dramatic land and market reforms ever seen in any Latin American country (North, 1981: 7), and nationalized many of Peru's most profitable resource-based industries, including mining and fisheries. During the Velasco years:

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industrial sector, producing more than 60 per cent of the country's GDP, employed only 23 per cent of the active labour force (*Ibid*).

> State intervention to promote industrialization and social programs increased spectacularly; public ownership swelled from 11 to 26 per cent of value added [Gross National Product] while the share of foreign capital fell from 21 to 8 per cent (Cameron and North, 1995: 14).

Velasco's reforms made Peru a pariah in international investment circles for a number of years, and have since been identified by neoliberal advocates as the cause of many of Peru's current economic problems. Misguided or not, Velasco established a high-water mark for state ownership of industry and agriculture in Latin America.

Economic reforms notwithstanding, it is the growth in the number and scope of social functions performed by the Velasco regime that are of greatest interest in this study. Hand in hand with the nationalization of industries, the creation of state-run cooperatives, and the nominal recognition of indigenous peoples' ancestral rights to land, language and culture, came the invention of new controls, frameworks and limits. Employing the Peasant Communities Statute of 1970, Velasco attempted to restructure some 2,337 indigenous communities as farming cooperatives, disregarding "traditional community structures such as the *ayllu*" (Bourque and Palmer, 1975: 190). Though only partially successful, this was the first significant state-sponsored attempt - since, perhaps, the Toledo reforms in the 16th century - to impose an extensive matrix of definitions and rules on the lives of the country's marginalized peoples.

The key difference betwen Velasco's reforms and virtually all previous efforts at manipulating social relations in Peru is the effective way in which he employed the prevailing language of democractic, progressive change to justify his policies. The National Office of Young Towns (*Oficina Nacional de Pueblos Jóvenes*), created by Velasco in 1971, ministered over the baptism of Lima's *barriadas* as working class *pueblos jóvenes*, a semantic change which subsumed them under the official "popular" creed of the regime (Degregori, et al, 1986: 126). While ostensibly created to deliver services, the *Oficina* served, above all else, to help extend the tentacles of the state into

the poorest districts of the capital (and other Peruvian cities). As Degregori, et al point out, the *Oficina* helped to organize communities on a block-by-block basis and generated a paradoxical dynamic: "On the one hand encouraging popular organizing, on the other, insisting that it occur within the parameters established by the state"[34] (*Ibid*). By aligning the official discourse of the state with that of the popular sectors, Velasco took Odría's strategy of recognizing community-based organizations one step further.

More so than the *Oficina* - whose interferences in *barriada* life seemed somewhat symbolic by comparison - the most pervasive and manipulative social institution created by the Velasco regime was the National System of Social Mobilization (SINAMOS), created in June, 1971 as "an umbrella organization for a number of government-created trade unions, neighbourhood associations, and peasant federations" (Poole and Renique, 1992: 118). SINAMOS officials acted as envoys of the central government - *in locus parenti*, as it were - charged with the task of reorganizing existing socio-political structures and guaranteeing the implementation of the first wave of reforms and nationalizations. After its creation in 1971, SINAMOS officers moved quickly into posts around Peru in what some authors (Collier, 1975: 155) have described as blatantly aggressive moves against independent organizing - especially that being done by the Communists, the General Confederation of Peruvian Workers (*Confederación General de Trabajadores del Perú*) (CGTP), and the teachers' and miners' unions (Poole and Renique, 1992: 119).

In Lima, SINAMOS' activities were focused on redefining and institutionalizing the government's relationships with neighbourhood organizations:

> In remaking squatter associations and their links to the state the government's aims were, as Henry Dietz has noted, "simultaneously (and paradoxically) the encouragement and the control of local, autonomous decision-making" (Stokes, 1995: 37).

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[34] "*...por un lado impulsa la organización popular; por otro, pretende que transcurra estrictamente por dentro de los parámetros establecidos por el Estado*".

Not surprisingly, feelings of "widespread resentment" (Poole and Renique, 1992: 118) eventually developed towards Velasco amongst many politically-organized sectors of Peruvian society (especially in the union and urban squatter movements) who saw SINAMOS as state-sponsored political subterfuge. As North comments: "The political process of the Velasco years, in summary, was defined by a constant expansion of the conflicts throughout the society, and an increasing alienation of all fractions of civil society with respect to the Revolutionary Government" (1981: 27).

In February, 1975, a small group of angry protesters took advantage of a police strike to burn down the central office of SINAMOS in Lima (Stokes, 1995: 44). The offices were never rebuilt, and the program was all but discontinued.[35] Six months after this event, Velasco was replaced by the more conservative, less nationalistic, General Francisco Morales Bermúdez. General Morales wasted no time dismantling some of the key institutional foundations of the Velasco state. Much to the delight of Peru's bruised national bourgeoisie, Morales committed himself to a liberal approach to economics, and, in 1979, passed a new constitution which enshrined free market principles. "But," as Stokes writes, "the legacy of Velasco, his championing of participation...was to produce a level of social mobilization that would help bring an end to military rule itself" (*Ibid*).

In spite of Velasco's authoritarian leadership style, and his record of centralized decision-making, some *barriada* residents look back on the 1968-1975 period with some degree of fondness (*Ibid*: 40). In carrying out their study in San Martín de Porres in the late 1980s, for instance, Degregori, et al, recorded one woman's musings on the Velasco military *junta*:

> ...contribute, he said, not with money, but with your

[35] Interestingly, while SINAMOS was dismantled, some of its projects and links continued to operate for years thereafter. In a few documented cases, offices of COPRODOES (The Committee to Promote Development) - a SINAMOS-affiliate - remained active until 1990 (Stokes, 1995: 41).

> presence, with your support, with work for your people, your district, your neighbourhood... Its true, I liked this and I liked Juan Velasco because he was with everyone (1986: 201).[36]

In this interview excerpt, Celedonia[37] - a long-time resident of San Martín who met Velasco once during an informal meeting at the office of a SINAMOS affiliate in the district - remembers the General as a "generous" man, and laments the fact that his immediate successors showed comparatively little concern for the *pueblos jóvenes.*

The nostalgic feelings of people like Celedonia should be understood as rife with the same kinds of ambiguities and tensions that characterized relations between poor Peruvians and the state during the Odría era. Fondness for Velasco should definitely not be read as expressions of unconditional or blind support for statist paternalism. Rather, considering the massive, difficult changes that Peruvians have endured in the past few decades, such feelings should be seen, primarily, as reflections of contemporary grievances, as well as relativist conceptions of the government support - conditional though it might have been - that was lost with the end of *Velasquismo.* After all, Velasco, who has been vilified by the current regime, and its neoliberal supporters, is remembered for having supported some of the goals of the organized left in Peru, and for having dealt a symbolic blow to the *ancien regime* of landlords and oligarchs.

However, the political pretensions of the Peruvian state under Velasco were, in the final analysis, disproportionately large compared with its capacity and willingness to develop sustainable economic markets, and its willingness to respond to the growing demands of *barriada* organizations. While touting socialist principles, Velasco maintained a highly-centralized, asymmetrical power structure that reinforced the pillars of Peru's

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[36] "*Aporten, decía, no con dinero, con su presencia, con el apoyo, con el trabajar por su pueblo, por su distrito, por su barrio...Es verdad y a mí me gustaba Juan Velasco porque estaba con todos*".

[37] No last name is given by the authors.

authoritarian tradition. Within a context of economic uncertainties and social upheaval, Velasco created a vast, yet inefficient and weakly-articulated corporatist state that, only temporarily, provided Peru with leadership and a sense of direction.

Transition to Democracy

Comparatively disinterested in controlling the pace and direction of community-level development, General Francisco Morales Bermúdez chose instead to fight sporadic, pitched battles against community socio-political groups, offering them occasional concessions. This sharp return to reactionary politics hardened and deepened class divisions - as articulated by left-wing parties and unions that had cut their teeth during the Velasco regime - and resentment towards the state grew. "The lived experience of those intense years contributed in a decisive way to seal a leftist orientation and a radical, democratic and nationalist identity [in the *barriadas*]"[38] (Degregori, et al, 1986: 201). In fact, by the latter half of the 1970s, left-wing politics - embodied by the newly convened United Left (*Izquierda Unida*) (IU) and a myriad of popular social movements, including the *comedores* - had gained prominence in the *pueblos jóvenes* of Lima.

Setting a precedent that would be repeated in the 1980s, and again under Fujimori at the beginning of the current period, Morales began his political tenure by instituting a series of anti-inflationary measures and wage controls that significantly lowered real incomes. In pursuing efforts designed to court international financial institutions (especially the IMF), curb inflation, limit the rising debt, and bolster the confidence of big business, Morales outraged the organized sectors of Peruvian society (Poole and Renique, 1992: 121). And so began a push-and-shove cycle of reactionary governmental reform, popular protest, and counter-reform that would last until the mid 1980s.

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[38] "*La experiencia vivida en esos años intensos contribuye de manera decisiva a sellar una orientación izquierdista y una identidad radical, democrática y nacionalista*".

In 1977, 1978, and 1979 massive[39] national strikes were mobilized by a broad coalition of unions and social movements. These strikes stand as some of the largest urban uprisings ever in Peruvian history. And as various scholars have noted, *barriada*-based movements played important roles in ensuring they had an impact. Stokes points out, moreover, how community-based actions in support of the strikes also raised the political profiles of community activists in Lima's *pueblos jóvenes*:

> When neighbourhood committees, women's clubs, youth groups, parish members, or even sports clubs from poor districts [of Lima] set up barricades to keep buses off the roads during the national strikes, their activities received much attention in the national press (1995: 46).

At least initially, Morales responded to anti-government actions, riots and strikes with curfews, union-busting measures and the suppression of independent news media (*Ibid*). However, ultimately "unable to halt the momentum of unrest", he was forced to consider pragmatic solutions, and take steps towards establishing formal democratic political structures in Peru (Poole and Renique, 1992: 121).

The first significant step towards formal democracy taken by the Morales regime was the establishment of a Constituent Assembly in 1978, which was followed by the rewriting of the Peruvian Constitution in 1979, and presidential elections in 1980. The 1979 Constitution reflected the tensions of the political age during which it was conceived. It contained provisions which guaranteed workers' rights, alongside provisions which expanded the executive's right to govern by decree on a number of key issues. In practice, the Constitution was used to justify neoliberal reforms much more so than it was used to defend workers' rights. According to Thorpe: "The renewed social contract implied by the 1979 Constitution became virtually an empty letter" (1995: 6).

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[39] Nearly 1.4 million Peruvian workers participated in the national strike in 1978 (Stokes, 1995: 45).

For many Peruvians, the transition to formal democracy had come too late, and offered little promise. That said, a number of political parties and groups saw the transition as an opportunity to advance their partisan agendas. So, as radical political groupings attracted more adherents, and more mainstream parties jockeyed for power, acute tensions that had existed in the *barriadas* since the early 1950s came to the fore. As Degregori, et al, write: "During this new phase, independence and clientelism clashed in a more direct fashion"[40] (1986: 203). In effect, the two tendencies existing in the *barriadas*, which Velasco had attempted to exploit simultaneously through the agents of his "socialist"/corporatist state, cleaved in dramatic fashion.

This bifurcation was seen by some (such as *Sendero Luminoso* leaders, who launched their war against the state on election day, 1980) as an opportunity to foment revolutionary enthusiasm, and by others - such as the National Confederation of Business Institutions in Peru (*Confederación Nacional de Instituciones Empresariales Privadas*), formed in 1979 - as an opportunity to push forward a free-market agenda (Stokes, 1995: 48). The resulting polarization pitted radical left wing groupings like *Sendero Luminoso* against more moderate parties like the United Left (who, in *Sendero*'s estimation, were the Trojan horses of a Velasco-style "bureaucratic" capitalism). Meanwhile, the radical "new right" - represented by the *Confederación* and, later, by Mario Vargas Llosa's Freedom Movement - closed ranks, and Peru's traditional political parties, the Popular Action (*Acción Popular*) and the APRA, prepared for an electoral campaign.

Neo-authoritarianism

As had been the case under Morales, during Popular Action President Fernando Belaúnde Terry's second administration (1980-1985) community organizations were largely ignored, pro-business reforms promoted, and Peru's armed forces strengthened. As Poole and

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[40] "*En esta nueva etapa, independencia y clientelismo chocan de manera más abierta*".

Renique write, although Belaúnde had promised a million new jobs, economic growth and political stability, he eventually "left behind a country racked by economic instability, political violence, and a military apparatus significantly strengthened by the counter-insurgency campaigns" (1992: 126). García and the APRA, by contrast, sought to update Velasco's strategies, and to work with both popular movements and traditional unions - as well as the armed forces - to advance their goals.

Long before the *Acción Popular*'s electoral defeat, APRA activists were trying to replicate the grassroots organizing strategies that *comedores* and other groups were using. The APRA - whose traditional bases of support had been organized labour - recognized a tremendous untapped potential in the large numbers of new immigrants who populated Lima's mushrooming young towns. As Carol Graham points out in her study of social policy in the García era, by the mid 1980s 25 per cent of all Peruvians lived in Lima's low-income neighbourhoods, and they represented a formidable political force:[41]

> The recognized failure of decades of government policy to address the needs of this rapidly growing population, as well as the sporadic attempts to co-opt its political support, most likely provided incentives for the APRA team to focus on the urban marginalised population (1991: 97).

The APRA strategy proved, at the very least, to be a successful way of winning votes. Marshalling its considerable resources to establish party-run *comedores* and cultural groups, they actually succeeded in sweeping Lima's twelve poorest districts in the 1985 presidential campaign[42] (*Ibid*).

Elected into power by an enormous mandate that left more conservative candidates reeling, García committed himself to national advancement through "social democracy"

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[41] As Graham notes, the population of Peru had also doubled between the 1950s - when the first *barriadas* were settled - and the mid 1980s (1991: 92).

[42] The APRA-affiliated *Comedores del Pueblo*, run out of so-called Mothers' Clubs, will be explored in greater depth in the following chapter, as a more direct point of comparison to PRONAA.

(Poole and Renique, 1992: 127). As described in his book, *A Different Future*, García pledged to find innovative solutions to Peru's most pressing and threatening problems, including the looming debt crisis and the *Sendero Luminoso* insurgency (*Ibid*). The failure of García's heterodox interventionist approach to government and economics eventually forced him out of power. But not before he had constructed a vast web of social programs which strongly reinforced clientelistic ties between ordinary Peruvians and the state.

As I discuss in detail in the next chapter, the *Acción Popular* had also tried to organize party-sponsored *comedores* and other community-based groups, but their elitist track record and their comparative lack of grassroots organizing experience made their efforts pale in comparison with those of the APRA. The APRA was, after all, Peru's oldest mainstream political party, and had a decades-long history of organizing (*Ibid*: 109). For their part, the United Left tried to work directly with existing popular groups and independent *comedores* organizers, warning *limeños* that "*Comedores APRA-AP: fácil aparecen, fácil desaparecen*"[43] (Graham, 1991: 99). But, they too lacked the resources, numbers and historical relationships needed to compete with the APRA machine. In spite of holding considerable power in municipal councils, including the mayoralty of Lima, the United Left were unable to make much of an impact during presidential elections.

Once in power, the APRA expanded its clientelistic networks to shore-up its high level of support. The most noteworthy of these networks was run by the vast Temporary Income Support Program (*Programa de Apoyo de Ingreso Temporal*) (PAIT) (*Ibid*: 91). Through the PAIT, half a million Peruvians were enlisted to undertake communal public works projects for minimal payment (sometimes in food). While the García regime never tried to fundamentally alter the socio-political structure in Peru, the PAIT program took

[43] "Popular Action and APRA *Comedores*: Easily Appear, Easily Disappear".

on massive proportions unlike anything seen since SINAMOS was discontinued. Modelled both on SINAMOS, and on the Minimum Employment Program (*Programa de Empleo Mínimo*) instituted by Augusto Pinochet in Chile (*Ibid*: 128), the PAIT had little to do with "social democracy" and more to do with partisan political ends. As Graham notes in her study of PAIT activities in Lima:

> [The PAIT] highlights the sectarian and undemocratic traits of the party that proved to be barriers to its capacity to govern both at the municipal and central governmental levels (*Ibid*: 91-92).

Employing some 500,000 people (the majority of them women) (*Ibid*: 102), PAIT projects - which included "rubbish collection, reforestation, painting walls and fences, building sanitation facilities..." (*Ibid*: 100) - served as stand-ins for real, sustainable social and/or job-creation programs.

The fact that the PAIT employed mostly women (76 per cent) is of particular importance to this study because it suggests that the APRA government recognized women as a significant political constituency, and women's organizations as a significant political force (*Ibid*: 102). As Graham notes, the opportunity to earn wages, however low, was not easily passed up by women, who were the "poorest among the poor" (*Ibid*: 103). This, in turn, impacted upon a variety of women's groups:

> The PAIT proved to be a benefit for many families, but also acted as a disruptive force... The PAIT also disrupted many existing community organizations, such as the mothers' clubs and communal kitchens (*Ibid*).

According to Graham, of those women who participated in the PAIT, roughly half had been active in women's organizations. "Of those, about half remained in their programs, going to kitchens after the PAIT work, or to the Glass of Milk (*Vaso de Leche*)[44] before

[44] The *Vaso de Leche* committees, established by Lima's United Left mayor Alfonso Barrantes in 1985, were state-sponsored, comunity-run programs designed to combat malnutrition in children (Poole and Renique, 1992: 92).

work" (*Ibid*: 123). The impact of the PAIT on women's groups was significant, and fueled a direct competition between the APRA and the independent *comedores populares* movement which continues to this day (discussed in Chapter III).

García's eventual fall from grace - due primarily to economic mismanagement and accusations of corruption - marked the emergence of a serious crisis in Peruvian politics. Young, charismatic and progressive, García had swept into office like a gust of wind (Poole and Renique, 1992: 127). He was, to that point, the most popular president in Peruvian history. He went on to enjoy a honeymoon period with the electorate during his first year, producing economic growth (8.5 per cent), encouraging an increase both in private investment (23.5 per cent) and real wages (40 per cent), and lowering inflation (by more than 50 per cent) (*Ibid*: 128). By the end of his five-year term, however, García had lost the voters' confidence completely. After a severe economic crisis hit Peru, García's clientelistic, partisan social programs were made transparent. And, perhaps most significantly, García's failures foreshadowed the collapse of public confidence in Peru's incipient democracy.

Democratic Façade

For generations, Peru's democratic institutions have served as a façade, concealing a massive authoritarian edifice, weakly articulated social programs and a fragile economic system. Borrowing a phrase from E. P. Thompson, Mallon describes the Peruvian system as a "great arch" that fails to connect political and ideological superstructures to ordinary citizens' lives. Comparing Peru to Mexico, which has been dominated so completely by the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*), she writes: "In Peru, solid construction of the 'great arch' stopped somewhere around halfway, and the rest of the structure was composed of veneer" (1994: 106).

Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil and Peru (to name just five examples) have all experienced "transitions to democracy" in the past two decades that have left class and

military structures virtually untouched. Commenting on the rise of what they term "neo-authoritarianism" in Latin American countries such as Peru, Petras and Vieux write:

> The transition from military to civilian regimes has brought the introduction of electoral processes, the establishment of elected parliaments or congresses, and, in some cases, greater individual freedom, but these regimes have continued to function within an authoritarian framework and to pursue policies totally at variance with democratic procedures (1994: 4).

Many political observers[45] have written about the alleged "transition to democracy" in Latin America, and how military coercion and unilateral decision-making continue to characterize national politics throughout the region.[46]

The irony of the new authoritarianism in Latin America is, according to O'Donnell, the weakness of the political parties and public institutions (such as the judiciary and the legislature) that are meant to ensure democratic governance (1993: 73). In the Peruvian case, the state apparatus is particularly weak (*Ibid*: 71) and incapable of interpolating or engaging marginal populations (such as *barriada* residents) hegemonically. It is precisely because of this weakness that successive Peruvian governments, from Odría to García, have tried to avert crises through clientelist social policies and authoritarian tactics.

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[45] O'Donnell (1993); Malloy and Seligson (1988); and Petras, et al (1983, 1994).

[46] In March of 1996, President Carlos Menem of Argentina claimed sweeping powers over economic matters in an attempt to push through an adjustment package not unlike Fujimori's (Serrill: 56). In other countries, President Ernesto Samper (Colombia) has also claimed "emergency" powers over the economy, General Augusto Pinochet (Chile) continues to head the armed forces, and military personnel in Guatemala and Mexico continue to enjoy impunity in spite of well-publicized human rights abuses.

Chapter III: PRONAA and the *Comedores Populares* of Lima

In his polemical endorsement of neoliberal reform, *Cambio de Rumbo* (Change of Course), former Peruvian finance minister Carlos Boloña Behr posits that Peru's long history of economic stagnation, continuous, except for intermittent boom-bust cycles, has been perpetuated primarily by the indiscretions of big government (Boloña, 1993: 1):

> Ours is the history of the triumph of politics over economics. Politics has been able to meddle in economic affairs through the progressive concentration of power in the hands of government and through a series of measures which [governments] undertake for their use and expansion[47] (*Ibid*: 9).

Employing this rationale, Boloña helped Alberto Fujimori design and implement one of the most orthodox "free-market" structural adjustment programs hitherto seen in the Americas (Gonzales, 1993: 56). The so-called Fujishock (Poole and Renique, 1992: 150) precipitated a two-year period (1990-1992) of social and political insecurity in Peru during which economic restructuring took precedence over all other considerations. At the end of this period, however, Fujimori had to confront the political consequences of what he had done. By 1992, opposition to the president's policies (expressed by diverse groups, including political parties, guerrilla insurgencies, and community organizations) threatened to retard the process he had initiated in 1990 (Mauceri, 1995: 7). Ironically, Fujimori would end up consolidating the powers of the state (most conspicuously during his 1992 *auto-golpe* and through the 1993 Constitution), and practising the kind of old-fashioned politics so maligned by Boloña, in order to defend the economic prerogatives of his neoliberal agenda.

The first thing Fujimori set out to do in the months following his 1992 self-coup was to design a new Constitution that would define Peru's economic future in neoliberal

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[47] "*La nuestra es la historia del triunfo de la política sobre la economía. La política se ha entrometido en los asuntos económicos a través de una progresiva concentración de poderes en el gobierno y, con respeto a él, de una serie de jaloneos por su usufructo y extensión*".

terms, strengthen the powers of the ruling executive, and allow him to run for re-election (Mauceri, 1995: 32). In October of 1993, the new governing document was approved by a slim 51 per cent of the valid votes cast[48] in a national referendum (Mauceri, 1995: 13). And despite a vigorous cross-country campaign (Pásara, 1994: 13), it was rejected decisively in 11 of Peru's 25 Departments (Cotler, 1994: 6). In the final analysis, these results seemed to demonstrate that a sizeable percentage of Peruvians wanted to check Fujimori's political power (Mauceri, 1995: 13). Still, the Constitution was praised by the business community - "private investors were heartened by the improved political situation as well as the new constitution's endorsement of the economic liberalization process" (Lasagabaster, 1994: 5) - and served notice that Fujimori was going to eschew naked authoritarianism in favour of more pragmatic strategies.

Of the hegemonic struggles waged during the latter half of Fujimori's first term, one of the most remarkable - for what it reveals about the contradictions of neoliberal economic reform, and the president's desire to boost his sagging popularity - was that which pitted the state against the *comedores* movement. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the emergence and proliferation of the *comedores populares* movement since the late 1970s, within the context of hegemonic processes and power struggles that have been played out in the *barriadas* of Lima, focussing especially on the neoliberal era. To begin, I highlight government responses to the growth of the *comedores* movement during the regimes headed by Fernando Belaúnde (1980-1985) and Alán García (1985-1990). I then undertake a detailed *exposé* of Peru's National Food Assistance Program (PRONAA) since 1992, carefully charting specific residual and emergent trends which connect PRONAA to the historical/hegemonic processes examined in the previous chapter. In doing so, I lay bare three central issues: the increasing concentration of wealth (due to

[48] A 35 per cent rate of absenteeism was recorded (considered high in Peru, where voting is mandatory), and some 10 per cent of all ballots counted were either left blank or spoiled (Cotler, 1994: 6).

neoliberal restructuring), the centralization of political power (personified by Fujimori), and the development of clientelistic social policies in response to a perceived hegemonic crisis (exemplified by PRONAA).

One of the most important conclusions we can draw from the survey of relations between *barriada*-based groups and the state elaborated in the preceding chapter is that in times of economic change and crisis, government officials have tended to favour short-term clientelistic programs over policies based on notions of social and political rights. The continued use of clientelistic programs in neoliberal Peru underscores this point and, as such, calls into question both the willingness and the capacity of the state to deal effectively with the negative effects of its economic policies. Commenting on the endemic nature of this problem throughout contemporary, neoliberal Latin America, Mexican sociologist Carlos M. Vilas writes:

> [The] characteristics of neoliberal social policy severely limit its capacity to fulfill a legitimizing function for the political system. In fact, social policy is essentially reduced to putting out fires so that situations of extreme social tension do not become larger political problems (1996: 18).

PRONAA typifies the kind of short-sightedness that has precluded the establishment of strong social policies and programs in most Latin American countries. As such, there can be little doubt the Fujimori regime is guilty of repeating the historical propensity Thorpe describes as political and economic "*cortoplacismo*"[49] (1995: 8).

Two recent studies, including Thorpe's (which was produced by the Social Agenda Policy group of the Inter American Development Bank) point to the destabilizing effects that neoliberal policies can have on countries that are not braced by strong and responsive state institutions. Pointing to the recent Mexican *peso* crisis by way of example,

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[49] *Cortoplacismo* can be translated roughly as "short term planning" or "short-sightedness".

economists at the World Bank issued a wake up call to Latin American and Caribbean governments in their recent publication *Latin America After Mexico: Quickening the Pace* (Burki, 1995: 1). As the title of this document suggests, analysts at the World Bank are calling for a retrenchment, rather than a recall, of neoliberalism. Their admonition that "a strong state is a prerequisite for a strong economy" (*Ibid*: 6) comes through quite explicitly as a recommendation that Latin America's neoliberal regimes stay the course. The authors counsel that "deregulation and privatization will have to be furthered and deepened" and that "a trade regime characterized by openness to the rest of the world must be kept in place" (*Ibid*: 11). Still, the World Bank document reflects a genuine concern that the twin demons of political and economic instability may be revived if the negative side-effects of neoliberal adjustments, namely "poverty and inequalities" (*Ibid*: 1), are not curtailed or at least mitigated by effective social programs (*Ibid*: 5).

After implementing the first stages of his neoliberal restructuring program, it appeared that Fujimori had no intention of providing assistance to those who were adversely affected by the structural adjustment, and had no plan to help create jobs. As such, the president and his advisors presided over their neoliberal shock program with "complacency, self-congratulation and a sense of triumph" characteristic of other pro-neoliberal Latin American leaders at the time (*Ibid*: 1). However, unlike Mexico - a country once described by Peruvian Nobel laureate Mario Vargas Llosa as the "perfect dictatorship" - Peru was on the brink of a real socio-political cataclysm when Fujimori came to power in 1990 (Lasagabaster, 1994: 4). With no equivalent to Mexico's hegemonic PRI government keeping the country glued together, Peru's future was being defined by rampant hyperinflation in excess of 7,000 per cent that threatened to destroy the economy, and by a radical Maoist insurgency that threatened to overthrow the state. Given Fujimori's initial neglect of social concerns in such an extreme context, it was inevitable that his neoliberal revolution would require naked abuses of power (such as the

infamous *auto-golpe* of 1992) and transparent attempts to manage social relations through clientelistic programs (such as PRONAA).

In his efforts to repair the damage done by the García regime and court international creditors, Fujimori began his tenure by reducing and/or eliminating tariffs, import taxes, price subsidies and wage controls, auctioning off national industries to foreign investors, and renegotiating Peru's foreign debt. The macroeconomic consequences of the so-called Fujishock - including dramatic increases in economic growth (measured in terms of GDP) and foreign investment, and a steady decline in the rate of inflation - were hailed by the international media as miraculous.[50] However, the real human costs of propelling what the *Economist* dubbed "the world's fastest growing economy" were in many ways catastrophic.[51] The negative effects of massive lay-offs in the public sector, cuts to transfers to local governments, hikes in interest rates, and deep gouges made in the area of social spending were less publicized than Fujimori's alleged triumphs. By 1993 real wages had fallen to one third of what they had been in 1988, the unemployment/underemployment rate was about 80 per cent (Cuba, 1995: 12), and half of all *limeños* were living in a state of indigence described by Catherine McClintock as "critical poverty" (1993: 113).[52] By 1994 the rate of poverty in Peru was holding steady at roughly 51 per cent.[53]

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[50] See the *Inter-American Development Bank* "Economic and Social Progress in Latin America Report: 1993" (October 1993) and the *Economist* "Reforming Latin America" (November 26-December 2, 1994) for more information, and Burki, Shahid Javed and Sebastian Edwards "Latin America After Mexico: Quickening the Pace" *The World Bank* (June 1995), for direct references to the very positive way in which the Fujishock was received by the international business community.

[51] At the end of 1994, the *Economist* estimated Peru's annual economic growth rate (measured in terms of Gross Domestic Product) at 12.5 per cent (November 26-December 2, 1994).

[52] Of the total number of people living in poverty in Lima today, a sizeable percentage constitute what Vilas identifies as the "new poor" - the survivors of government

Simple statistics on income and poverty rates in Peru are useful, if inherently inadequate, guidelines in analyzing the impact of neoliberal economic reform on the lives of the urban poor. As Susan Lobo points out in her detailed study of life in the *barriadas* of Lima, most *pobladores'* income is irregular and comes from many different sources (1982: 46-48). Although published in 1982, Lobo's study is instructive for observers of contemporary politics in Lima. After all, the structural adjustment administered by Fujimori in 1990 only increased the level of economic insecurity amongst low-income *limeños*. Massive lay-offs - including the dismissal of 150,000 public employees (Poole and Renique, 1992: 152) - disrupted the few enclaves of secure wage labour that existed in 1990. In 1989, roughly one out of every two *limeños* worked, at least part-time, in what social scientists refer to as the informal sector, and impromptu public markets outnumbered official, regulated markets by a factor of five-to-one (de Soto, 1989: 65). By the mid 1990s, the percentage of *limeños* who derived some income from work in the informal economy was closer to 90 per cent (Cuba, 1995: 12), and unregulated markets have grown to a grand scale.[54]

Fujimori's team of spin doctors - including officials like Boloña - celebrate the entrepreneurialism of Peru's *informales* under the rubric of neoliberalism, while so many

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downsizing, rural collapse, industrial deregulation and the privatization of state-owned companies in the past few years (Vilas, 1996: 16).

[53] According to the World Bank, taken from the web site <www.worldbank.org/html/extdr/offrep/lac/perus.htm>.

[54] The market street Jirón Gamarra in central Lima is home to 7,000 small businesses (including manufacturing and retail) and employs nearly 40,000 people (Adriansén, 1993: 30).

Peruvians earn a living selling cough drops, band-aids and razors at street corners and on city buses from dawn to dusk. From candy to magazines, to transistor radios, to televisions, to automobiles: this is the capitalist teleology championed by neoliberalism's supporters. However, at the end of the day, "self-reliance" means a palm-full of coins and a ride back to the *pueblos jóvenes* for an increasing number of *limeños*. There is no realistic chance that the average *ambulante* (street vendor) who spends their day hawking cheap, disposable consumer goods will ever be able to invest their income in lucrative sales ventures. Yet, this is precisely the kind of so-called 'market solution' being promoted by neoliberal pundits like Boloña.

The more than five thousand *comedores populares* which were established during the early 1990s (Avensur: 10) is equally eloquent testimony to the jarring impact Fujimori and Boloña's structural adjustment program had on many low-income Peruvians. As Thorpe comments, "this has been a side-effect insofar as it has in large part been a response to the relative absence of the state" (1995: 8). In 1980, at the end of the nationalist military era, there were a mere handful of *comedores* in all of Lima. Following eight years of relatively moderate economic liberalization, there were some 1,500 autonomously-run *comedores populares* in the city (*Ibid*). By 1991 the number of *comedores* in Lima had increased to 2,000 (Mansilla, 1992: 33). Just two years after that, the figure had more than tripled (Avensur, 1993: 10). Sheer numbers, combined with strong leadership from the *Comedores* Federation of Lima and Callao, the National Commission of *Comedores Populares* and support from feminist organizations, has

transformed these neighbourhood groups into the largest grassroots urban socio-political movement in Peruvian history.

The *Comedores Populares*

The number of women who work in a given *comedor* ranges from 10 to 150,[55] and as many as 500 people may eat the foods prepared at any one *comedor* on a particular day. While each *comedor* has its own history and distinctive character, there are certain characteristics common to all of them. All *comedores* are volunteer-run organizations which provide *almuerzo* (lunch, the largest and most important meal of the day in Peru) to volunteers and their families, as well as to other community members, at a low cost, five or six days per week. Meals, including soup, a main course, and occasionally dessert, are prepared in large quantities and sold for 50 *céntimos* to 1.5 *nuevos soles* (approximately 25 to 75 cents US) per serving. Generally speaking, people bring pots or plastic containers to the *comedores* in the early afternoon and either take their meals home or to their place of work. Meals are eaten right away, or are saved for family members who do not return from work until the evening. Limited seating or space is also sometimes available for people to eat on-site.[56]

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[55] Keeping in mind that numbers vary quite dramatically, in the *pueblo joven* of Condevilla, there are an average of 30 *socias*, or members, per *comedor* (Avensur, 1993: 15).

[56] At some *comedores*, especially those located closer to downtown Lima, people with no formal link or affiliation to the *comedor* make up a sizeable proportion of the clientele. At some of these *comedores*, there are even sandwich boards on the sidewalk in front of them advertising the "*almuerzo*" of the day.

Comedores are community-oriented institutions which focus primarily on the daily nutritional needs of their members' families. Membership is, generally speaking, conditional on the fulfilment of volunteer work requirements (which vary according to the needs of each *comedor*), and on the members' attendance of group meetings and workshops (Avensur, 1993: 13). According to a study conducted by a social work student in the *pueblo joven* of Condevilla in the early 1990s - from which we can extrapolate certain broad tendencies - the vast majority of *comedor* members choose to get involved because of "economic problems" (*Ibid*: 14). In this survey of some 50 *comedores*, 58 per cent of respondents said that they had no major barriers to participation, although 35 per cent cited work and unsupportive male partners as hindrances (*Ibid*: 15). Respondents listed solidarity, food, friendship, meetings and skills training[57] (in that order) as the things they liked best about working in *comedores* (*Ibid*: 16). The negative aspects described by the women polled in the survey included the failure of some members to live up to their responsibilities, a relative lack of organization and solidarity among members at some *comedores*, and what they describe as "bad relations between the directors and the bases" (*Ibid*: 23).

Just as divisions and rivalries may develop between *comedores* in a given district (Salazar, 1993: 9), divisions have been known to develop within individual *comedores* (Avensur, 1993: 23). The way in which *socias* and *dirigentas* (directors) relate to one another seems to depend largely on the leadership style of a given *dirigenta* or board of directors (*junta directiva*) (*Ibid*: 24). Consequently, a variety of political tendencies -

[57] "*capacitación*".

ranging from the democratic to the autocratic - may exist in a given *comedor* concurrently. In some *comedores*, undemocratic tendencies may reinforce the passivity of members *vis-á-vis* the *junta directiva*, and militate against the development of counter-hegemonic oppositional politics. As Avensur observes: "It is possible that *comedores* which function in this manner only end up feeding the hungry"[58] (*Ibid*: 27). In other cases, however, *comedores* members develop strong affinities with one another which translate into political solidarity.

The picture that emerges from these selected observations is that of organizations that are highly functional, yet subject to problems and internal contradictions that are fairly common in Peruvian society. Thus, as I stated in Chapter I, while *comedores* may not necessarily constitute "priveleged spaces" of radical political praxis, they are politically charged spaces from which concrete strategies for changing Peruvian society emerge. Understandably, the political goals of the *comedores* movement have been defined primarily by the very real economic problems which their members confront everyday. In practical terms, pressuring government to provide sustainable, non-partisan systems of support to low-income families has been the principal objective of the *comedores* movement since the mid 1980s.

Comedores vs. the State

Through their various political activities - which have included participating in protest marches, lobbying, conducting educational programs, and supporting left-wing and

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[58] "*Es posible que los comedores funcionen en tal manera que cumplen solamente con la finalidad de dar de comer al hambriento*".

feminist movements[59] - *comedores* organizers and members have challenged both the logic of neoliberalism and the persistence of clientelism in Peru. And, because of their organizational successes, *comedores* have always been subject to government scrutiny and attempts at co-optation and manipulation.

The relationship between the *comedores* movement and the state has always been defined by a strong tension between autonomy and clientelism. And, as one group of authors confirm, this pattern corresponds to long-standing tensions in Peruvian history:

> ...the contradiction between clientelism and autonomy is at the very heart of those state organisms that have been responsible for relating to popular sectors[60] (Degregori, et al, 1986: 140).

As Lobo documents in her detailed study of life in the *barriadas* of Lima, state intervention into the lives of low-income *barriada* residents invariably has political implications (1982: 31). From the wholesale resettlement of *pobladores* into state-sponsored, planned communities, to the delivery of food to the *comedores*, government programs have always been conditional. Whether the conditions are explicit (as in the case of state housing projects which redefine living arrangements) or merely implied (as in

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[59] In response to anti-government activities, agents of Peru's anti-terrorist police, have accused *comedores* leaders of collaborating with *Sendero* and *Tupac Amaru* guerrillas, and have had them locked up. Amongst the most high-profile cases of *comedores* leaders persecuted by the Fujimori regime under this pretence are Santosa Layme Béjar, Gilda Tineo and María Luisa Salvatierra (all from San Juan de Lurigancho in the eastern outskirts of Lima) (Burt, 1994: 30). Ironically, *comedores* leaders have also been targetted by *Sendero*, who have employed tactics of intimidation to make inroads.

[60] "*...la contradicción entre clientelismo y autonomía llega al corazón mismo de los organismos estatales encargados de relacionarse con los sectores populares*".

the case of foodstuffs and cooking pots distributed by government agencies to *comedores* during election campaigns), they have always existed (Valenzuela, 1995: 31).

The history of *comedores*-state relations dates back to 1980, when President Fernando Belaúnde Terry created a number of so-called Family Kitchens (*Cocinas Familiares*), under the auspices of the National Office for Food Aid (ONAA, established in 1977). Run by Belaúnde's wife, Violeta Correa, the Family Kitchens replicated the basic structures of the few autonomous *comedores populares* that existed at the time, and served as the executors of government and international charity (Salazar, 1993: 7). Not coincidentally, the Kitchens were created a mere two years after the very first self-defined *comedor popular autogestionario*[61] was established by a group of women in the *pueblo joven* of El Planeta (Mansilla, 1992: 17).

The establishment of the *comedor* "Aurora Vivar" in El Planeta in 1978 is a benchmark which symbolizes the genesis of the contemporary *comedores populares* movement. Prior to this, the handful of *comedores* - sometimes referred to as *ollas comunes* (common pots) or *clubes de madres* (mothers' clubs) - that existed in Lima tended to be isolated from one another and relatively apolitical. Most were also tied directly to the Catholic Church and/or to various levels of government, and had not developed independent political identities (Andreas, 1989: 14). By the end of the 1970s, however, a number of *clubes de madres* had become more politicized through a gradual process of exposure to liberation theology and feminism. As Carol Andreas comments,

> In the 1970s, some Mothers' Clubs escaped the bounds of

[61] *Autogestión* (self-management), is defined in the Statutes of the *Comedores* Federation of Lima and Callao (quoted in Mansilla's Appendix) as "...the capacity of organizations to administer and generate resources with autonomy" (1992: 2).

> *asistencialismo* and became centres for grassroots organizing efforts aided by progressive nuns and influenced by the Popular Church movement and feminism (*Ibid*: 14).

Andreas points out that the organizational support provided to the *comedores* by progressive Catholic and feminist groups helped see many *comedores populares* through their "initial political crises" and encouraged them to pursue organized political engagement with the state and other community-based groups (*Ibid*: 18).

In the 24 *pueblos jóvenes* that make up the district of San Martín de Porres, for instance, *comedores* organizers were also influenced by *Alternativa*, a locally-based "Popular Education and Research Institute" that has provided funds, equipment and educational support to *comedores*[62] since its establishment in 1978 (Huamán, personal interview, 1995). In San Martín, as in other areas of Lima, the political orientation of the *comedores* movement was also partly influenced by various political parties, especially the United Left (Salazar, 1993: 66). As I discussed in Chapter II, the relationships between feminist, leftist and popular organizations and the *comedores* were part of a broad process of popular mobilization that took place in various sectors around Peru at the end of the 1970s. In the context of such activity, Belaúnde's Family Kitchens can be seen as outposts of the state in a multi-faceted community-based battle for political hegemony in the *barriadas*.

While Belaúnde's Family Kitchens anticipated the work of García's state-run *Comedores del Pueblo* (People's Dining Halls) by several years, they were never as

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[62] While *Alternativa* staff and volunteers have been involved primarily in supporting the work of *comedores autogestionarios*, they do work with a broad spectrum of community-based groups, not all of which espouse progressive or feminist ideals.

influential or as widely dispersed as the latter (Barrig, 1991: 9). Beginning in the early 1980s, hundreds of *Comedores del Pueblo*, run out of APRA-affiliated Mothers' Clubs, set up shop throughout Lima (Mansilla, 1992: 14). APRA strategists knew of the tremendous benefit their party could gain in terms of electoral support by replicating the networks of the existing *comedores* movement. By being able to reach a similarly large and well-organized constituency, and by using communal work and food as the media of their political propaganda, the APRA party would surely expand its grassroots support (*Alternativa*, 1991a: 3). Testimony to the success of this program was the fact that in the 1985 elections, 50 per cent of García's electoral support in Lima came from the capital's most impoverished districts (Cameron, 1991: 198).

According to the first group of women to attend a national gathering of *comedores* activists in 1986, García's *Comedores del Pueblo* constituted a crude attempt at undermining the embryonic political work being done in many politically-independent *comedores* (Salazar, 1993: 37). *Comedores* organizers maintained then, as they do now, that *comedores* should be respected as autonomous, non-partisan grassroots groupings that represent the interests of low-income women and communities. Towards this end, following the first National Meeting of *Comedores Populares* in July of 1986, they sent an open letter to President García (from which the following is excerpted):

> The so-called Family Kitchens and the recently created *Comedores del Pueblo*, which have used the organized autonomous *comedores* as their model, are being promoted by the state as elements of its social policies. This situation symbolizes a lack of recognition of legitimate interlocutors, by the government and the existing state

organisms, and has provoked, in many cases, divisions and confrontations[63] (Mansilla, 1992: 41).

The "divisions and confrontations" alluded to in the letter refer to the organizational and political splits that had developed between *comedores autogestionarios* and all other *comedores* at that time. The letter - which was prefaced, "We, of the *Comedores Populares Autogestionarios*, Say the Following..." - publicly identified the stakes and boundaries in this new site of struggle with the state, and attempted, for the first time, to lay bare the clientelistic political machinations and props hidden behind García's populist government.

Since 1986, when the National Commission of *Comedores Populares* was first convened, the leaders of the *comedores* movement have maintained the conviction that national social policy must be planned in consultation with grassroots groups. The Commission's insistence that the government do so by formally recognizing and supporting the work done by *comedores populares* volunteers dates back to September 1988, when they joined other groups in protesting President García's devaluation of the Peruvian currency and his imposition of wage controls (*Alternativa*, 1991a: 8). The shock felt in Peru as a result of García's fiscal decisions prompted riots and protests in Lima, and served as a key political stepping stone for the emerging *comedores populares* movement. Their landmark "Protest with a Proposal, Without a Response"[64] - launched in 1989 to

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[63] "*Las denominadas Cocinas Familiares y Comedores del Pueblo, de reciente creación, han tomado como modelo las organizaciones de Comedores autónomos, siendo promovidos desde el Estado como parte de sus políticas sociales. Esta situación ha significado un desconocimiento por parte del gobierno, un desconocimiento de las organizaciones existentes, legítimos interlocutores, provocando en muchos casos divisiones y enfrentamientos*".

[64] "*Protesta con propuesta, sin respuesta*".

demand direct government subsidies to all *comedores*, regardless of their affiliation - was the movement's first major campaign to secure government support for their work (*Ibid*: 8).

In direct response to the growing concerns and demands articulated by the *comedores* movement, the García regime established the Direct Assistance Program (PAD) in 1989, which was supposed to provide an impartial institutional structure to oversee all food aid programs in Peru (*El Peruano* February 5, 1992: 19). In practice, however, the PAD gave preferential treatment to the *Comedores del Pueblo*, and fostered "competition between poor people" for government funds (Barrig, 1991: 9).

By this time, the APRA government was one of four distinct political groups vying for political influence through the *comedores*. The United Left (IU) municipal government had already set up a *Comedores Populares* Support Office to run programs designed to bring together *comedores* organizers from around the city (Mansilla, 1992: 14). Simultaneously, *Sendero Luminoso* guerrilla activists began making inroads within some individual *comedores* (although this phenomenon is extremely difficult to document) (Andreas, 1989: 18). The fourth group with an interest in using the *comedores* movement for political ends was the Democratic Front (FREDEMO), the political movement led by then presidential candidate Mario Vargas Llosa. Through its social assistance wing, the Program for Social Support (*Programa de Apoyo Social*), FREDEMO created a variety of community-based projects, including soup kitchens (Vargas, 1993: 163). Run in a classic clientelistic, gendered style by the candidate's wife Patricia, the Program for Social Aid turned out to be as ephemeral as Vargas Llosa's candidacy.

The Fujimori Years

In the midst of so much conspicuous charity-mongering, Fujimori's triumph at the polls in 1990 can be seen - at least in part - as the result of millions of protest votes against underhanded, politics-as-usual in Peru.[65] In his first year in office, however, Fujimori perpetuated a long-standing tradition of minimal social spending in Peru (Portocarrero, 1991: 60) by reducing spending on social services and programs to 1.5 per cent of Peru's Gross Domestic Product (*Cooperación*, 1994b). Through cuts to health, education, and agricultural loans, Fujimori reduced total social spending to less than one third of what it had been ten years earlier (*Ibid*).

While Fujimori certainly accelerated the process, a precipitous decline in social spending can actually be dated back to 1986. According to the Fujimori government's own calculations, between 1986 and 1992, social spending dropped from more than $3 billion US to less than $750 million US per year (*Presidencia*, 1995: 24). These figures, which account for all monies spent on education, health, and basic judiciary services, as well as food aid, reflect both the state's inability and reluctance to commit funds to social investment over time. During the late 1980s (under García), corruption, debt, currency and political crises caused social spending to plummet. Beginning in 1990 (under Fujimori), this acute anti-social tendency was quickened and justified in accordance with neoliberal precepts.

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[65] Fujimori's two electoral victories (1990 and 1995) are discussed in greater detail in the Chapter IV.

The Fujimori government's approach to social spending was exemplified, at the beginning, by its Social Emergency Program (PES), a collection of inadequate stopgap measures which were only partially implemented. Of the total amount of funds allocated by Fujimori for social programs in 1990, some $50 million US were spent on the PES, which directed capital towards the "*Vaso de Leche*" program and supplies towards some selected *comedores populares* (*Banco Central*, 1993: 47). The $50 million spent by the PES in 1990 (and the $60 million spent by it in 1991) represented a mere 20 per cent of what its directors were budgeted to dispense, a fact which reflects the biases of its principal architect, neoliberal advocate Javier Abugattas (Elías, 1992: 54). Abugattas intended the PES as a cushion that would soften, but not catch, the fall many low-income Peruvians would inevitably experience during the first years of the structural adjustment (*Ibid*). And, as Abugattas confirms, while the PES was specifically designed to aid the poorest of the poor (especially those living in rural areas and in the *pueblos jóvenes*), it was never intended to redress social and economic inequalities (*Ibid*: 55).

In *Cambio de Rumbo*, Boloña justifies such short-term social planning in Peru on the basis that long-term programs reduce the effectiveness of neoliberal reforms and inhibit the free market. He writes; "The objective is to reduce state intervention in social sectors, because instead of producing the expected positive results, it has created distortions"[66] (1993: 79). Boloña's desire to do away with what he calls the "benefactor" state (*Ibid*) was echoed by Abugattas during the two interviews I conducted with him in 1995. During the course of these interviews, Abugattas described PRONAA as "confusion" and

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[66] "*El objetivo es reducir la intervención del Estado en los sectores sociales, ya que ella no ha rendido los frutos esperados, sino más bien ha creado distorsiones*".

maintained that the Fujimori regime still intends to do away with social programs, and other such "distortions" of the free market economy, altogether. When pressed, Abugattas admitted that emergency relief programs may still have a role to play in Peru, but that they should be phased out. It is his contention that the need for social programs should decline in direct proportion to raw economic growth. During the second interview (July 14, 1995), Abugattas sketched a rough graph showing two divergent lines: one labelled 'poverty' plunging down towards the 'x' axis, and the other marked 'growth' rising steadily into the stratosphere of possibility. In an article written in 1994, Abugattas argues that the government's role in such a scenario should be nominal: to facilitate "sustainable economic growth" through rational, responsible fiscal policy (1994a: 1).

The belief that a liberalised marketplace would naturally compensate average Peruvians through the creation of private sector wealth and jobs has proven to be dubious. As Eliana Chávez of the Centre for Studies in Development and Participation[67] highlights, the initial risks taken by the Fujimori government did not produce the trickle-down miracle its supporters claimed it would, and were not offset by the PES. In the anthology *Pobreza y Políticas Sociales en el Perú* (Poverty and Social Policies in Peru), Chávez writes: "The social compensation initiatives developed during Fujimori's rule have not produced any results"[68] (1991: 240). In her study, Chávez skilfully points out that the PES was not only insufficiently funded, but ill-conceived. In designing and implementing the PES,

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[67] *Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo y la Participación.*

[68] "*Las iniciativas de compensación social desarrolladas durante la gestión de Fujimori no han dado ningún resultado*".

Abugattas and Fujimori "did not take previous experiences into account"[69] and, as a result, created a top-down program as incoherent as it was insufficiently funded (*Ibid*). Chávez points out that the PES is analogous to Chile's Minimum Employment Program and Bolivia's Emergency Social Fund,[70] both of which were created by authoritarian neoliberal governments to cover up the negative effects of their macroeconomic programs.

PRONAA: a Return to Clientelism

It was no coincidence that the Fujimori regime dramatically augmented social spending after the constitutional referendum. Indeed, the president's fear that his popular support might be tenuous over the long term (with an eye to running for re-election in 1995) was the main reason behind his new approach to social spending. Thus, in recognition of some of the demands of Peru's well-organized grassroots social movements (including the *comedores* movement), Fujimori increased social spending in dramatic increments in each of the following three years. Revenues earned from privatization, as well as monies made available through IDB and World Bank loans specifically designated for social projects, fuelled this trend (*Cooperación*, 1995: 7-8).

The first major clientelistic initiative of the Fujimori government - the Social Development and Compensation Fund (FONCODES) - was created in 1991. However, FONCODES - which concerns itself primarily with infrastructural projects (schools, sewage systems, etc.) - operated at a fraction of its capacity until after the *auto-golpe* and

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[69] "*...no se han tenido en cuenta experiencias previas*".

[70] *Programa de Empleo Mínimo* and *Fondo Social de Emergencia*.

referendum (Burt, 1996: 34). Between January and September of 1992, for instance, FONCODES spent a paltry 33 per cent of its total budget (Elías, 1992: 22). In the aftermath of Fujimori's referendum, however, FONCODES spending increased exponentially. Between January and May of 1993, FONCODES spent $125 million US - "$38 million more than it had spent in all of 1992", according to Jo Marie Burt (1996: 34). And as the 1995 elections approached, FONCODES' activities became increasingly strategic and propagandistic,[71] and were often accompanied by formal ceremonies presided over by President Fujimori himself. As *Alternativa* director Josefina Huamán comments, "Foncodes is a new version of the clientelistic state. It reinforces the extreme personalism of this government and the idea that Fujimori *is* the state" (Burt, 1996: 35).

Amongst the new social programs strengthened by Fujimori was the Peruvian National Food Assistance Program (PRONAA), a clientelistic, centrally-administered institution that would compliment the president's populist rhetoric leading up to the 1995 elections. Through PRONAA (and other, similar programs), Fujimori replicated the same patterns of old-fashioned state paternalism he had pledged to defeat through technocratic innovation, neoliberalism and a thorough cleansing of Peru's notoriously corrupt and ineffective political establishment.

The clientelistic *modus operandi* of PRONAA was clearly illustrated on the occasion of an interview I conducted with Rodolfo Muñante, PRONAA's gregarious,

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[71] FONCODES, which is known to by-pass requests from regional governments (Thorpe, 1995: 26), is based on a highly-centralized, "demand-driven" model (Burt, 1996: 35). That is to say, locally-based groups apply to FONCODES for funding and, if their petition is accepted, money is channelled directly to them. For more information on FONCODES and its activities, see Burt (1996), Thorpe (1996), *Cooperación* (March 1995) and FONCODES (1995).

shirt-sleeved Director.[72] That afternoon, we were joined in Muñante's office by a group of women representing half a dozen *comedores populares* from Villa El Salvador (a large *pueblo joven* in the southern expanse of Lima).

"*El señor* is so good to us... like a father,"[73] declared one of the women matter-of-factly. "Come on," retorted a red-faced Muñante with an awkward chuckle and a wink in my direction, "you don't believe that".[74] Muñante seemed much more uncomfortable than any of the women, who had dropped by to thank him for helping them set up a *típica* (souvenir) shop in Lima's international airport that would raise money for *comedores* in their district.

It is unlikely the *comedor* organizers who dropped by that afternoon actually view Muñante as a father-figure, but their choice of words speaks volumes about the way politics are often negotiated in Peru. For many of the thousands of *comedores* activists who, with increasing frequency, require some government aid to keep their organizations afloat, appeasing state officials is fairly routine. Perfectly aware of the precarious financial situations of most *comedores*, the leaders of Lima's organized *comedores* movement maintain that no one should have to ask for government hand outs, that the state has a responsibility to provide no-strings-attached support to all *comedores*.[75] This said, the women who head the *comedores* movement also know that unless government programs -

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[72] Muñante has since been replaced as PRONAA Director.

[73] "*El señor es tan bueno con nosotras... como un padre*".

[74] "*Por favor... No creen eso*" (July 14, 1995).

[75] In 1992 a law was passed by the Peruvian Congress requiring the state to subsidize the work of all *comedores*. The lobbying efforts that helped push the so-called "*Comedores* Law" through is discussed in "Conozcamos Nuestra Ley: Solo Así Podremos Difundirla y Defenderla" (1991), a pamphlet put out by *Alternativa*, a popular education and research institute in San Martín de Porres in Lima.

such as those administered by PRONAA - form part of a broader, far-sighted universal social policy platform, they will never amount to more than *asistencialismo.*

When PRONAA was created in February 1992, its rational, technocratic mission statement was published in the official government daily newspaper *El Peruano.* Identifying PRONAA as a means of sustaining the unfinished work of the provisional Emergency Relief Program (PES) over an indefinite period of time, the declaration read "...it is necessary to continue with these services in a *permanent and rational* manner, in accordance with a severe austerity program in public spending"[76] (1992: 19). Signed by the president - as well as the two highest ranking officials in the government executive, the President of the Council of Ministries, Alfonso de los Heros Pérez-Abela, and the Finance Minister, Carlos Boloña - Supreme Decree 020-92-PCM described the responsibilities of PRONAA in clear and concise language: to administer all government food aid programs and campaigns and to develop new programs, when necessary, to combat indigence in Peru (*Ibid*). PRONAA was to replace ONAA and PAD (both of which still existed on the books at that point), and would be governed by the Council of Ministries (*Ibid*).

Created primarily as the administrator of food aid, and as an interface between the state and the *comedores populares*, PRONAA epitomizes the new, neoauthoritarian, neoliberal clientelism that exists in contemporary Peru. By handing out food to *comedores* every once in a while, and by demonstrating the full extent of government largesse during crucial political junctures (such as election campaigns), PRONAA has attempted to win and maintain popular support for the Fujimori regime amongst *comedores socias* and their families. By celebrating the *comedores* as great symbols of entrepreneurial self-help and know-how, PRONAA has also attempted - both explicitly and implicity - to exert some kind of ideological control over the people who work in

[76] "*Es necesario continuar con estos servicios de manera permanente, racional y, de acuerdo a un severo programa de austeridad en el gasto público*".

them.[77] And, by maintaining PRONAA through highly centralized government structures, the Fujimori government continues to demonstrate its apparent contempt for democratic processes. In short, PRONAA engages in the kind of top-down, short-term "poverty management" that will do nothing to change or significantly mitigate the structural bases of poverty in Peru.

At the end of 1992, responsibility for PRONAA was transferred to the Ministry of the Presidency (MIPRE), a kind of mega-Ministry which streamlined the financing and governance of social spending in Peru. Conceived by the APRA in April of 1985, the MIPRE had functioned for several years as one of the main public relations engines of Alan García's populist regime. Using funds allocated to the MIPRE, García built the colossal National Museum in Lima and presided over the construction of an aborted elevated commuter train project, whose concrete pylons stand in south-east Lima as a permanent monument to García's failures. Described in one recent government publication as a "monster of the state"[78] (*Estado Peruano*, 1994: 18), the MIPRE was unceremoniously closed down in 1990 and presumed dead. Revived in May of 1992, the MIPRE has been recast within a neoliberal ideological framework. In the context of deregulation and downsizing, the MIPRE is now meant to facilitate the "modernization" of the Peruvian state, through "the optic of sustainable development" and "rational and focused spending"[79] (*Ibid*). It was, according to Fujimori and his advisors, the ideal institutional home of PRONAA, and all other programs designed to offset the temporary shock of structural adjustment, because it could keep these programs on a short fiscal leash (*Ibid*: 18).

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[77] The ideological influence wielded by PRONAA is, as I discuss later in this chapter and again in Chapter VI, difficult to gauge. Like Odría's celebration of the *barriadas*, PRONAA's celebration of the *comedores* has been nominal and limited to symbolic acts.

[78] "*...monstruo del Estado*".

[79] "*...modernización... óptica del desarrollo sustentable... gasto racional y focalizado*".

However, in reviving the MIPRE, Fujimori has succeeded in awakening a monster. In line with several other authoritarian innovations introduced by Fujimori in 1992, the MIPRE assimilated the powers of several lesser ministries and claimed nearly 10 per cent of the national budget (*Ibid*: 3). Much of the jurisdictional powers previously located in the Ministries of Housing, Transport and Education have been transferred into the MIPRE (Thorpe, 1995: 23). Within the MIPRE are concentrated ten social, infrastructural and regional "development" programs, each of which is "managed directly by the minister of the *Presidencia*" (*Ibid*). Contrary to the government's stated goals, these programs have been run in a manner which privileges politics over rational economic considerations (*Cooperación*, 1995: 7). Though it no longer exists "to satisfy Aprista fantasies"[80] (*Estado Peruano*, 1994: 3) such as the elevated train project, its principal mandate has been to react to shifting social political demands through the delivery of emergency aid and services.

Initially charged with delivering "Emergency Aid Programs" and promoting infrastructural projects, PRONAA's current activities can be classified into two main areas: direct food aid and work-for-food programs (Elías, 1992: 21). In section 1.3 of PRONAA's first substantive Managerial Report (*Informe de Gestion: 1992-1995*), the organization's objectives, which directly correspond to these two areas of work, are described in the following way:

> a. To elevate the nutritional and sustenance levels of the population living in extreme poverty.
>
> b. To generate productive and permanent employment that allows for the improvement of levels of income of populations living in extreme poverty (1995: 2).[81]

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[80] "*...para satisfacer fantasías apristas*".

[81] "a. *Elevar el nivel alimentario y nutricional de la población en extrema pobreza*. b. *Generar empleo productivo y permanente que permita mejorar los niveles de ingreso de la poblacón en extrema pobreza*".

The organization's current stated objectives reflect a shift away from infrastructural projects, and a more direct focus on the administration of various food aid programs. While a total of nine sub-projects - including the delivery of meals to people suffering from tuberculosis, and the provision of food to pregnant mothers, among others - are run by PRONAA, *comedores*-related ventures are among the organization's most well-known. And because they affect independently organized community-based groups, PRONAA's *comedores* projects are its most politically significant and controversial activities (Giullen, 1992: 34).

Since 1992, PRONAA has provided direct financial subsidies to approximately 2,400 of the more than 7,000 *comedores* in Lima (*Informe de Gestión*, 1995). Calculating the cost of an average meal consumed in a *comedor* to be worth 25 *céntimos* (12 cents US) - an estimate equal to about one half of what *comedores* organizers say an average meal costs - PRONAA claims to pay for up to 178,486 meals per day (Cuentas, 1994a: 18). Since its inception, PRONAA has also distributed a wide variety of food (including rice, corn flour, oil and wheat) and materials (such as pots, stoves, etc.) to thousands of *comedores*. According to its own figures, PRONAA distributed 130,216,060 *nuevos soles* (equivalent to roughly $65 million US) worth of food in 1995 alone. Its figures also show that, from 1992 to 1995, the total amount of food distributed by PRONAA increased between 18 and 25 per cent annually. However, there is no simple means of calculating what percentage of the annual total of food aid distributed by PRONAA went to *comedores autogestionarios*, and what percentage was distributed through the work-for-food programs or other means (*Ibid*).

In one of its few public documents, PRONAA identifies its primary purpose as "Delivering food aid to the most nutritionally vulnerable and highest risk groups [in Peruvian society]"[82] (*Informe de Gestión*, 1995: 1). Thus, much like the PES, PRONAA's

[82] "*Brindar Asistencia Alimentaria a los grupos poblacionales de mayor vulnerabilidad nutricional*".

primary mandate is what Abugattas refers to as "damage control"[83] (personal interview, July 14, 1995). By targetting specific populations deemed to be "high risk", PRONAA officials reinforce a philanthropic view of social services. The issue of "damage control" - discussed in some depth in Chapter IV - stands in stark contrast to PRONAA's claim that one of their goals is to "go beyond *asistencialismo*"[84] (*Ibid*). Indeed, most of PRONAA's activities - particularly its "work for food" programs, which recall the *aprista* PAIT - clash sharply with this claim. With funds and donations in-kind from the American International Development Agency (AID) (*Informe de Gestión*, 1995: 10), the European Community and other international and national sources, PRONAA's chief vocation is the distribution of food aid to target populations. Neither the *comedores*, which appear at the top of PRONAA's list of *receptoras* (beneficiaries) (*Ibid*: 3), nor any other grassroots group of Peruvians play an active role in determining PRONAA policy.

The activities of PRONAA *are* governed and monitored by no less than seven administrative committees, offices and other coordinating and advising bodies (*Ibid*: 1-2). Moreover, PRONAA has dozens of joint projects that it runs with Peruvian businesses (which are contracted to supervise work-for food programs), non-profit groups (which attend to children, the sick and the elderly), schools, government ministries, and others (*Ibid*: 10). PRONAA also runs programs with multilateral lending institutions, transnational NGOs, and foreign governments (*Ibid*). Nevertheless, PRONAA's decisions are made primarily by its executive officers, who "formulate, implement, supervise and evaluate"[85] the objectives and actions of PRONAA, subject to the approval of the Minister of the MIPRE (*Ibid*).

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[83] "*control de daño*".

[84] "*...ir más allá del asistencialismo*".

[85] "*...formular, ejecutar, supervisar y evaluar*".

According to Rosa Landavery, the current director of the National Commission of *Comedores Populares*, PRONAA is indeed both a politically-driven and an undemocratically-run institution. As Landavery states: "PRONAA is a government institution, that is quite clearly directed by the office of the President of the Republic"[86] (Miloslavich, 1995: 26-27). Asked whether she - as the representative of Peru's nearly 10,000 autonomously-run, affiliated *comedores* - had ever been able to access the directors of PRONAA to discuss the issue of food aid, Landavery replies that while PRONAA officials have made overtures to contact some of the district-level representatives of the Federation, none of these efforts have produced sustained dialogue (*Ibid*: 27).

As Landavery points out, the gap between *comedores* movement organizers and PRONAA officials contradicts the spirit of the so-called *Comedores* Law which was passed a few months after the inauguration of PRONAA. The very first article of Law 25307 (which went into effect on July 18, 1992) recognizes, in no uncertain terms, the important social functions performed by the *comedores populares* and other popular women's organizations, and declares the state's commitment to support these functions:

> [The State] declares the work of the Mothers' Clubs, *Vaso de Leche* Committees and *Comedores Populares Autogestionarios*... and other grassroots social organizations to be a national priority.[87]

Elaborated in the ensuing twelve articles of the law are pledges to create a special support program for grassroots, community organizations, and to provide all *comedores* (regardless of their affiliation) with a subsidy equivalent to 65 per cent of the value of the food rations distributed by them (*Ibid*). Article 5 of the law also outlines the government's

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[86] "*...el PRONAA es una institución más del gobierno, que está manejado muy claramente desde la Presidencia de la República*".

[87] "*Ley Número 25307.*" *El Peruano* (July 18, 1992).

pledge to support the work of social organizations (such as the *Comedores* Federation, or groups such as *Alternativa*) which work directly with *comedores* (*Ibid*).

As mandated in the *Comedores* Law, PRONAA has itself undertaken some training and education projects in selected *comedores* (*Informe de Gestión*, 1995). Most notably, through such projects, PRONAA has launched programs designed to promote the development of small for-profit businesses out of *comedores*. In one PRONAA publication, the goal of these projects is described in the following way: "to increase levels of income, work and small business activities".[88] Through a small number of *comedores* (most of which are not affiliated with the National Commission or the Lima Federation), PRONAA officials have run accounting and marketing workshops. The most obvious results of this work include the PRONAA gift shops that exist in the departure gates of several airports in Peru (including Lima's international airport). In 1995, PRONAA boasted of a total of 68 small businesses running under the auspices of PRONAA throughout metropolitan Lima. And while most of these - which produce a limited variety of goods, from school uniforms to handicrafts - are still dependent on PRONAA funds for their operation, Muñante indicated that PRONAA's intention is to eventually facilitate their entrance into the marketplace[89] (personal interview, 1995).

Rosa Espinal dismisses the possibility that PRONAA can transform the *comedores* into viable small businesses (personal interview, 1996). Besides the fact that *comedores* have always been run as not-for-profit cooperatives, Espinal insists that the market is simply too tight, and *comedores* members' personal finances too unpredictable, for the *comedores* to even consider turning a profit. Her view is validated by a 1994 study which

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[88] "*...mejorar los niveles de ingreso, trabajo y actividades microempresariales*" (*Promoción Microempreserial*, 1995).

[89] PRONAA's *Promoción Microempresarial* (Small Business Promotion) program has become more important since this study was conducted in 1995, but that information is beyond the current scope of this thesis.

shows that *comedores* members' reliance on food aid has increased substantially since the Fujishock, and even more so since the advent of PRONAA. According to data collected by FOVIDA,[90] in 1994 the average *comedor* was reliant upon external aid and subsidies to cover 23.2 per cent of its total costs (Cuentas, 1994a: 17). Not only is the price of a meal served at a *comedor* subsidized by outside donations, but, because of cash shortages among members, and the irregularity with which PRONAA and other agencies deliver food, *comedor* organizers rarely have the option of planning long-term budgets which are prerequisite elements of any business plan (*Ibid*: 18).

The exigencies of the neoliberal economy have inspired an unprecedented number of Peruvian women to come together and share the costs of running *comedores*. If unchecked, these pressures also preclude the possibility that *comedores* will soon be able to adopt competitive, for-profit principles in the manner advocated by PRONAA. Indeed, the constant economic difficulties faced by the women who run *comedores* provide the government with leverage with which to try and undermine the organized *comedores* movement. The fact that government material support to *comedores* has increased thus reflects both the continuing political prominence of the *comedores* movement, and the relative economic precariousness of individual *comedores socias*. At the same time, the fact that the pledge of a 65 per cent state subsidy to each and every *comedor* remains unfulfilled reflects the government's desire to retain tight control over the distribution of food and funds to the *comedores*.

How the *comedores* defend their relative independence and new-found political strength hinges, in the short run, on the credibility of the Fujimori regime, and its willingness to recognize and confront the structural deficiencies of its neoliberal, neo-

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[90] *Fomento de la Vida* (Promotion of Life) (FOVIDA) is a Lima-based non-governmental research and educational organization that works closely with the leadership of the *comedores* movement.

authoritarian foundation.[91] If the Fujimori government continues on its current path, more direct confontation between *comedores* and the state is inevitable. If the regime invites *comedores* organizers to participate in social policy planning more actively, then an ethic of negotiation will emerge. Either way, the neoliberal economic model must be questioned more fundamentally than it has been thus far.

Neoliberal Panacea

Deep inside the windowless offices of the Ministry of Economics and Finance, Javier Abugattas, a senior advisor to Fujimori on social policy issues, snickers when he hears mention of PRONAA (personal interview, July 14, 1995). To Abugattas, Muñante is a political anachronism. While conceding that PRONAA may have a limited role to play during what he sees as a difficult, but necessary, period of adjustment to neoliberalism, Abugattas warns against the kind of clientelistic, short-sighted policy planning that PRONAA represents. However, unlike many *non*-governmental critics of PRONAA, Abugattas does not anticipate the need for a social safety net. Quite the opposite according to Abugattas, social security will be provided in the marketplace, and social programs can be phased out in direct proportion to economic growth over the next decade or so.

In a document published in July of 1994, Abugattas (then serving as an advisor to the Prime Minister of the Peruvian Congress) outlined the rationale for the establishment of programs such as PRONAA. In it he appears to contradict his own neoliberal philosophy. He writes,

> While private national and foreign investment will allow for the generating of higher employment levels for the PEA [Economically Active Population], it is false to

[91] The future of the *comedores* movement, as such, is discussed in the final chapter (Chapter VI).

> assume that the work places created will be sufficient to satisfy the demands of the population. As a consequence, the current deficit in terms of basic needs will tend to maintain itself over a long period of time[92] (1994a: 1).

Abugattas' acknowledgement of the shortcomings of neoliberalism has not yet translated itself into a firm commitment to long term social programs. As I discussed in Chapter I, after several years of record-setting economic growth rates (calculated in terms of GDP), the Peruvian government has come to realise that employment figures are not going up, and that the proportion of the population living in poverty is not going down significantly. Still, during the interviews I conducted with Abugattas, the spurious notion that private investment inevitably translates into jobs for those occupying the lowest echelons of society was very much in evidence.

Fujimori's transparent neoliberal, neoauthoritarian political manipulations have galvanized some of his critics (including those in the *comedores* movement), yet none have been able to mount a viable grassroots counter-hegemonic movement that threatens to change the current neoliberal course. Ironically, the few sustained efforts to unseat Fujimori (such as the electoral challenge mounted by former UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuellar in 1995) have emerged from the ranks of the traditional bourgeoisie. Mario Vargas Llosa, the prodigal son of traditional *limeño* society who, in 1990, rallied Peruvian conservatives behind his campaign for the presidency, remains one of Fujimori's most petulant and prolific critics. In the epilogue to his autobiography, Vargas Llosa offered the following bitter, incisive critique of Peruvian politics under Fujimori:

> The rhapsodies of the regime... speak of a new stage in the history of Peru, of a social renewal, of the end of political parties made up of bureaucratized and encysted hierarchies, blind and deaf to the "real country," and of the refreshing leading role being played in civic life by

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[92] "*Aún cuando la inversión privada, nacional y extranjera, permita generar mayores niveles de empleo para la PEA, es irreal asumir que las plazas de trabajo creadas serán suficientes para satisfacer las demandas de la población*".

> the people, who now communicate directly with the leader, without the distorting mediation of the corrupt political class. Isn't this the old refrain, the eternal monotonous singsong of all the antidemocratic currents of modern history?
>
> There is nothing new under the sun, except, perhaps, the fact that the reborn authoritarian harangue is now closer to fascism than to Communism, and can count on more ears and hearts than the old dictatorships. Is this something that should make us rejoice, or instead feel terrified as we face the future (1993: 531)?

Vargas Llosa's words elegantly summarize some of the more crucial elements of the argument I have put forward thus far. Yet his words also reflect the naiveté of a person who has either failed to (or refused to) recognize the inevitability of authoritarianism in contemporary, neoliberal Peru. The former presidential candidate who once pronounced the mantras of neoliberalism seems oblivious to the fact that authoritarian politics have been renewed and strengthened wherever the neoliberal economic model has been applied in Latin America. As such, Vargas Llosa's commentary can serve as an excellent segue as we turn our attention toward Fujimori's re-election in 1995, and the hegemonic processes which continue to the present day.

Chapter IV: Re-electing a *Caudillo*

Fujimori's re-election on April 9, 1995 marks a clear victory for the proponents of neoliberalism in Peru. The significance of the popular support Fujimori received at the polls - 65.1 per cent of the total electorate (*Expreso* April 10, 1995: A5) - is, however, widely contested (Kay, 1995). Peruvian scholar Manuel Castillo rightly suggests that the 1995 election results are significant primarily because of what they disclose about "the way in which the state relates to society"[93] in Peru (1995: 10). Addressing this very issue before an international press corps at Lima's *Hotel Crillón* on the afternoon of his historical triumph, Fujimori offered the following explanation:

> The Peruvian people have re-elected Alberto Fujimori. I believe they have chosen the path of order, discipline and progress. It is the only road which will allow us to move forward as a country[94] (Fujimori, 1995).

Fujimori's assessment is, at least, partly right. Between 1990 and 1995, Peruvians (and low-income Peruvians in particular) put two of their greatest preoccupations - the instability and chaos created by *Sendero* and hyperinflation - behind them. As Béjar comments, "[Peruvians] support Fujimori because they fear inflation and desire stability and tranquility"[95] (1993: 18).

The political compromise and economic austerity that Fujimori demanded of the Peruvian people in the name of combatting these problems were, in many voters' minds,

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[93] "*La manera en que el Estado se relaciona con la sociedad*".

[94] "*El pueblo del Perú ha reelegido a Alberto Fujimori. Creo que han elegido el camino del orden, de la disciplina y del progreso. Es el único camino que va permitir salir adelante el país*".

[95] "*...simpatizan con Fujimori porque temen la inflación y quieren estabilidad y tranquilidad*".

offset by substantial gains (Miloslavich, personal interview, 1995). Still, it is striking that, in spite of the "*amplísimo respaldo*"[96] (Fujimori, 1995) he received at the polls, Fujimori's recalcitrant temperment has not mellowed. Instead of resting on this cushion of legitimacy, Fujimori appears to have grown more strident. Why is it that in April of 1995, the vast majority of Peruvian voters chose to re-elect an unrepentant *caudillo*? Do the results of the 1995 elections constitute, as Fujimori insinuates, a mandate to carry on implementing neoliberal reforms through authoritarian means?

In this chapter, I argue that Fujimori's rise to power and re-election were facilitated by four main factors: the reigning in of hyperinflation, the pacification of *Sendero Luminoso*, the fall of Peru's traditional political class, and the development of a neoliberal consensus amongst the current generation of Peruvian politicians. Support for Fujimori was, in this context, based on fear of instability, the disarticulation of pluralist politics, and on the inability of any existing political party or grouping to broach a viable alternative model that addressed popular concerns. Thus, I conclude that Fujimori's re-election in 1995 does not constitute a "hegemonic outcome". Neither does it portend the consolidation of such an outcome in the imminent future.

The purpose of this chapter is to critically examine Fujimori's electoral victory in 1995 in light of the ongoing shift to neoliberalism and the persistence of clientelististic relations between low-income communities (and community groups) and the state. Fujimori's 1995 re-election was not - as some authors have suggested (Bruce, 1995: 25) - an instance of political hoodwinking by a populist pitch-man who roamed the country

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[96] "broad support".

peddling false promises to low-income voters. On the contrary, the Fujimori phenomenon emerged in response to very real crises in Peru. Fujimori promised order where there was war, authority at a time when there were no legitimate leaders, discipline in a society plagued by economic chaos, and the potential for progress amidst fears of regression.

In order to contextualize the 1995 electoral results, I examine Fujimori's record of authoritarian governance (before and after April, 1995) in some detail, explain the concomitant demise of traditional party politics and the rise of neoliberalism in Peru since the transition to democracy in 1980, and assess the significance of Fujimori's victories over hyperinflation and *Sendero*. Ultimately (in the following two chapters), I assert that in the absence of democratic institutions such as participatory social programs, the relative stability that Fujimori has achieved will be ephemeral.

One of the main reasons why it is imperative to provide some contextual explanation for Fujimori's re-election is precisley because the 1995 electoral campaign was so remarkably insubstantial. Rather than talk openly about the shift to neoliberalism during the campaign, Fujimori stressed the idea of direct democracy by travelling to the far corners of the country to demonstrate what he refers to as his "permanent contact with the people"[97] (Fujimori, 1995). Besides employing well-worn clichés about his personal capacity to deliver services to communities (Bruce, 1995: 25), Fujimori maintained that because he is not a member of a traditional political party, he is more empathetic to the "asprirations" (*aspiraciones*) (Fujimori, 1995) of ordinary people. As acting President and commander of the armed forces, Fujimori also used Peru's border conflict with Ecuador as

[97] "*...el contacto permanente con el pueblo*".

a nationalist platform from which to demonstrate his leadership qualities (Brooke, 1995: A4). Indeed, while all of the major presidential candidates favoured neoliberalism, none debated its substantive themes. As Peruvian scholar Eduardo Ballón suggested at the time, "[Peruvian] politics have been converted into theatre. There are gestures, there is performance, but there is no discourse"[98] (personal interview, 1995).

Historic Elections

At first glance, President Fujimori seems to be an anachronism, more akin to populist autocrats like Manuel Odría than to his main electoral opponent in 1995, Javier Pérez de Cuellar (Burga, 1995: 21). Fujimori's authoritarian and militaristic proclivities prompted Peruvian writer Sinesio López Jiménez to comment:

> ...the actual transition [to formal democracy] has been fulfilled, but, the way in which the forces of authoritarianism have triumphed, its outcome will not necessarily be a democratic regime, but a new authoritarian regime re-legitimated by the electoral process. *Mutatis mutandi*, Fujimori will be a kind of Odría for the '90s[99] (1994: 6-7).

As Odría did before him, Fujimori has struck a populist authoritarian pose, using his position to appear both iron-willed and munificent. Taking a longer look, however, it becomes clear that Fujimori stands apart from both his current opponents and his

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[98] "*La política se ha convertido en una 'teatralidad'. Hay gestos, hay performance, pero no hay discurso*".

[99] "*...la actual transición habría culminado, pero, en la medida en que habrían triunfado las fuerzas autoritarias, su desenlace no sería necesariamente un régimen democrático sino que podría ser un nuevo régimen autoritario relegitimado por el proceso electoral. Mutatis mutandi, Fujimori sería una especie de Odría de los 90*".

predecessors. Fujimori - who, in 1995, won the largest landslide in Peruvian history, and whose party won 65 of 120 seats in the Congress[100] - is one of the most powerful and most popular Peruvian presidents to emerge in decades. His resemblance to Odría is as ironic as it is striking because of the fact that his autocratic rule, unlike Odría's, has been legitimated through open, free and fair elections.

Despite accusations of fraud[101] which briefly cast a shadow on the electoral process, Fujimori's re-election victory was convincing (Bruce, 1995: 23). With most of his support concentrated in the *pueblos jóvenes*, Fujimori won 63.5 per cent of the popular vote in metropolitan Lima (nearly triple what his rival, Pérez de Cuellar - whose support came mainly from middle class districts - won) (*Expreso* April 10, 1996: A4). Fujimori won similarly decisive majorities in every department in the country, except for the northern Amazonian region of Loreto, where 47.9 per cent of votes were cast in his favour (compared to 33.5 per cent cast for Pérez de Cuellar). The poor showing by Peru's traditional parties - the APRA won 4.2 per cent of the popular vote and 8 congressional seats, while the Popular Action won 2.4 per cent and 4 seats and the United Left won less than 1 per cent and 2 seats (*Ibid*) - signalled the end of what Fujimori condemns as rule by "partyocracy" (Fujimori, 1995). Thus, the final tally in favour of Fujimori - ten percentage points higher than what it had been five years earlier (Cameron, 1991: 304) - vindicated the president's long-standing claims to popular support for his government.

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[100] *Expreso* April 10, 1995 (A5).

[101] In an open letter delivered to the president the day before the vote, a group of nine opposition politicians, including Pérez de Cuellar, demanded a suspension of the elections. They were reacting to the revelation of a plot to print up as many as 500,000 votes in favour of Fujimori (Lauer, 1995: 5).

Fujimori's 1995 campaign slogan, "*El Perú no Puede Parar! La Reconstrucción Nacional Debe Continuar!*"[102] was a resonant and effective device, in part because it was the only positive message aired during the weeks leading up to the April election date. In the absence of any forward-looking alternatives - Pérez de Cuellar ran a campaign of complaint, focussing on large and complex problems such as hunger and unemployment - Fujimori's promise of a trickle-down miracle and relative stability was a fairly easy sell. Edith Rojas, a mother of ten from one of Lima's poorer districts, explained why *she* voted for Fujimori in the following way: "I support him because I am poor and because he will give us help".[103] Expounding upon that point she revealed: "Fujimori has done away with terrorism and with the Congress. Now, for the elections he sent our *Club de Madres* [*comedor*] bags of wheat, milk, soya and oil".[104] Rojas' decision to vote for Fujimori reflects popular expectations that the man who broke the back of the *Sendero Luminoso* insurgency and who curbed the excesses of the political class can also, eventually, deliver economic relief.

Authoritarian Continuity

If, as Mallon affirms, "those in power...rule through a combination of coercion and consent" (1994: 70), then Fujimori is a ruler cast in a classical mold. As O'Donnell writes,

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[102] "Peru Cannot Stop! National Reconstruction Must Continue!"

[103] "*Lo apoyo porque soy pobre y él va a dar ayuda*" (Valenzuela, 1995: 30).

[104] "*Fujimori ha terminado con el terrorismo y el Congreso. Al Club de Madres, ahora para las elecciones, ha mandado sacos de trigo, leche, soya y aceite*" (*Ibid*).

states are complex, inherently authoritarian structures, and necessarily perform some coercive functions which formalize and maintain socio-economic contradictions:

> The state is... a group of social relationships that establish order in a determined territory, and finally supports it with a central coercive guarantee. Many of these relations are formalized through a legal system that is overseen and backed up by the state[105] (1993: 62).

Although O'Donnell refers here to *all* states, it is clear that in Peru the social relations he describes are more rigid, and the coercion he alludes to more conspicuous. The significance of Fujimori's re-election, like the dynamics of clientelism, must therefore be understood within the context of Peru's highly authoritarian state structure and political traditions, and the threat of instability which continues to loom over Peruvian politics.

Since 1990, Fujimori has relied on coercion, including support from the armed forces in the battle against *Sendero*, to maintain political order in Peru. As one author observed: "The cornerstone of Fujimori's state reconstruction coalition was the Peruvian military" (Mauceri, 1995: 20). Fujimori's reliance on army support has been especially obvious since his *auto-golpe* of April 5, 1992. On that day, Fujimori broadcast a message on Peruvian television declaring the establishment of an "emergency government of national reconstruction" and the suspension of the constitution (McClintock, 1993: 159). Safely ensconced in army headquarters, behind a phalanx of soldiers, Fujimori cited inefficiency and incompetence in Congress, corruption in the judiciary, and unrest caused

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[105] "*El Estado es... un conjunto de relaciones sociales que establece cierto orden en un territorio determinado, y finalmente lo respalda con una garantía coercitiva centralizada. Muchas de esas relaciones se formalizan mediante un sistema legal provisto y respaldado por el Estado*".

by *Sendero* as the main reasons behind his actions (*Ibid*). Thus, he stated: "There was nothing else to do"[106] (Gonzales, 1993: 51).

Denouncing *Sendero Luminoso* and castigating opposition politicians to justify the *auto-golpe* proved to be an effective strategy. According to some opinion polls, Fujimori actually enjoyed greater "widespread popularity" after the *auto-golpe* than before it (Mauceri, 1995: 7). This apparent burst of support (which contrasts with the modest 31 per cent approval rating he enjoyed just one year earlier) should, however, be contextualized (Poole and Renique, 1992: 151). Deeply disenchanted with the politicians who sat in the Congress and afraid of *Sendero*, many Peruvians, especially low-income Peruvians, had reasonable grounds for approving of the coup.[107]

While the *auto-golpe* of April, 1992 remains the most durable symbol of Fujimori's authoritarian career, his well known alliances with armed forces personnel, especially advisor Vladimiro Montesinos, can actually be traced back to before the 1990 elections (Obando, 1996: 32). In the final throes of his surprising 1990 electoral campaign, Fujimori was nearly ruined by charges of tax-evasion. At the time, it was Montesinos - a lawyer who had served as an officer under both Velasco and Morales before his discharge from the army upon being accused of corruption and spying for the CIA (Vargas, 1994:

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[106] "*No había otra cosa que hacer*".

[107] It is important to point out that there is some debate in the existing literature as to how Fujimori's popularity was affected by the *auto-golpe*. Mauceri argues that 75 per cent of Peruvians approved of the *auto-golpe* (1995: 7). McClintock, on the other hand, claims that Fujimori's popularity dipped from 56 to 41 per cent in the immediate aftermath of the *auto-golpe* (1993: 117). Either way, what is important to understand is that the social instability and political opposition that had prompted Fujimori to act continued more or less unabated after the coup.

12) - who helped ensure that the charges would not stick (Obando, 1996: 32). Montesinos went on to assist Fujimori in the restructuring of the armed forces command and, two years later, in the execution of the *auto-golpe*.

Notwithstanding his cosy relationships with officers he has promoted to high ranking positions within the military, Fujimori continues to argue that his mandate is based on direct contact and trust between himself and the "humble" Peruvians he identifies as his most ardent supporters (press conference). In this context, the introduction of direct democracy through referenda - specified in article 190 of the 1993 Constitution (Pásara, 1994: 10) - was celebrated by Fujimori as a means of broadening ordinary citizens' participation in government and circumventing "the mediation of the political class" (Cameron, 1996: 4):

> Democracy naturally requires a balance of powers. But this balance of powers does not suppose that the executive submit to the whims of a legislature that does not let the executive work[108] (Fujimori, 1995).

Fujimori thus insists that the principle of direct democracy supercedes the checks and balances of the traditional political structure.

Fujimori's unwillingness to submit to the alleged whims of the legislature has been practically constant. Indeed, each time opposition politicians or groups have attempted to use the referendum law to test the Fujimori regime, the president has used his congressional majority, in concert with his considerable executive powers, to "emasculate" (Cameron, 1996: 4) the very principles he purports to uphold. The most recent example

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[108] "*La democracia naturalmente supone equilibrio de poderes. Pero ese equilibrio de poderes no supone tampoco un sometimiento del ejecutivo a los caprichos de un legislativo que no deja funcionar el ejecutivo*".

of such action occurred in September, 1996 when the Peruvian Congress passed a piece of legislation allowing Fujimori to run for president for a third time (*Ibid*). Many opposition politicians complained the legislation countervened the spirit of the 1993 Constitution (which allows presidents to serve two consecutive terms), and rallied to undo it. In direct response to a proposed referendum on the issue, the representatives of Fujimori's *Cambio 90/Nueva Mayoría* (Change 90/New Majority) organization changed the law to require a 60 per cent ruling of the Congress for the calling of any referenda (*Ibid*).

Fujimori's arbitrary and naked manipulations of the political system are well known, and he is no apologist for his behaviour. He has, for instance, appeared flattered when asked whether he likens himself to Chile's notorious General Augusto Pinochet. And during the press conference held on the occasion of his re-election, Fujimori openly justified his past transgressions - including his *auto-golpe* and his frequent abuses of executive powers - in familiar terms. What is the purpose of democratic procedures, he asked, if they obstruct the processes of "national reconstruction" that he has set in motion? Stirring up memories of April 5, 1992, he explained the following:

> Democracy, limited soley to voting, with injustice, without basic services, without opportunities, is a devalued democracy. And not just in Peru. I am convinced that democracy must renew itself... and that democracy cannot just be word games played every five years[109] (Fujimori, 1995).

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[109] "*La democracia únicamente limitada al voto, con injusticia sin servicios básicos, sin oportunidades, es una democracia que se devalua. Y no solamente en el Perú. Yo estoy convencido en el mundo, la democracia tiene que renovarse... y que la democracia no sea palabras que se juega cada cinco años*".

In colloquial terms, one might say Fujimori believes the ends justify the means. In this case, the ends in question are social order (as opposed to social democracy) and economic growth (as opposed to economic security or equity).

In spite of his obvious aversion to democratic procedures, Fujimori has cited the scope of his re-election in 1995 as evidence that the Peruvian people agree with and trust his approach. Asserting, just a few hours after his re-election, that he and his team of hand-picked technocrats are more capable of running the country than any political party, Fujimori said:

> We have a democracy that seeks efficiency, and efficiency is being achieved without political parties. Because this partyocracy left the country in ruins. I am convinced that those democracies in which the political parties do not respond to the aspirations of the people are not democracies. The citizens of those countries will also eliminate political parties and elect completely independent people... Here we required order and discipline and a strong hand against terrorism. What this government has done is recover the principles of authority. It is not authoritarianism. It is something very different... Because what Peru needed was exactly this. Now the country is calmer. There is greater security. And with security there are possibilities of development and of investment[110] (Fujimori, 1995).

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[110] "*Tenemos una democracia que busca eficiencia, y la eficiencia se está consiguiendo, sin partidos políticos. Porque esa partidocracia dejó al país en ruinas. Yo estoy convencido que aquellas democracias en que los partidos políticos no responden a las aspiraciones de los pueblos... eso no es democracia. Los ciudadanos de esos países también van a eliminar a los partidos políticos y a elegir personas completamente independientes... Aquí se requería orden y disciplina, y mano dura contra el terrorismo. Lo que he hecho con este gobierno es recuperar los principios de autoridad. No es autoritarismo. Es una cosa muy distinta. Pero lo que el Perú necesitaba es precisamente eso. Ahora el país está más tranquilo, hay seguridad. Y de haber seguridad hay posibilidades de desarrollo, y de inversiones*".

The logic of the neoliberal, neo-authoritarian model is neatly encapsulated in Fujimori's statement: eliminate axe-grinding political parties, down-size government, increase stability through the authority of the president, and the conditions for economic development will emerge. His statement also draws attention to the primary reasons why, at the formal political level, he has been able to rule virtually uncontested: fear of terrorism and economic insecurity, and, as I examine in the next section, the collapse of pluralistic politics in Peru.

Political Vacuum

The disarticulation of traditional party politics and the rise of a neoliberal consensus in Peru has resulted in an apparent political vacuum. With the disintegration of the United Left, the Popular Action, the APRA, and other lesser parties, it is widely believed that there are no real political choices left. As Alvaro Vargas Llosa points out in 1994's *The Madness of Things Peruvian*, some of Peru's oldest political parties have given way to new "political groupings", like Fujimori's *Cambio 90*, and "picturesque presidential aspirants like the representative of the Israelis of the Universal Pact" (9). In this scenario, the central dilemma facing voters in 1995 was less about what kind of change is necessary for Peru, and more about who would be most competent and trustworthy to manage the process of change already underway.

In 1990, Fujimori promised Peruvian voters "honor, technology and work", while campaign posters described him as "a president like you" (Oliart, 1996: 18). Writing in 1996, Patricia Oliart notes, "Fujimori's speeches are [still] laced with constant attacks

against traditional politicians for being uninterested in the fate of ordinary Peruvians" (*Ibid*: 19). Fujimori's claim that he stands outside of the realm of traditional politics is, of course, spurious. Nevertheless, his assessment of Peru's traditional political parties - most of which have lost their legitimacy as a result of corruption and in-fighting - is more or less accurate.

Ten years earlier, Peru's social democratic and socialist political parties (the APRA and United Left, respectively) claimed *they* were the only true representatives of "ordinary Peruvians". And together they won 75 per cent of the popular vote in the 1985 presidential elections (Rochabrún, 1996: 23). Times have changed substantially in the interim. In 1989, the IU experienced a messy ideological debacle that resulted in the formation of a new party, the Socialist Left (IS), and the eventual defection of former Lima Mayor Alfonso Barrantes to the new grouping (Poole and Renique, 1992: 136). The APRA - who, between 1985 to 1990, governed Peru for the first time in their sixty year history (*Ibid*: 107) - led Peru into economic and social chaos, and (as I discussed in the previous two chapters) reproduced some of the worst aspects of traditional partisan politics. The economic failure of the APRA under García, which I examine in the following section, has also served as a convenient justification for Fujimori's neoliberal policies.

Capitalist Consensus

During the current, tumultuous juncture in Peru's economic history, the trickle-down benefits of neoliberal economic restructuring seem far off indeed. Yet, because the

previous governments' mistakes are so fresh in many Peruvians' minds, the mirage of hope offered by Fujimori, however transparent it may seem to some observers, has a strong allure. In a recent article, Mauceri cites widespread disenchantment with traditional politics as one of the *primary* explanations for Fujimori's popularity leading up to the 1990 elections:

> Following the perceived failures of populism and socialism, neoliberal economic thinking gained significant ground in the late 1980s throughout the region and benefited directly from the belief in a lack of viable policy alternatives (1995: 19).

By the time Fujimori came to power, the shift to neoliberalism was, thus, already in high gear.

By mid 1990, Fujimori committed himself to creating one of the most "open" economies in the western hemisphere. As Jesús Zamora-León, manager of investment banking for Peru's largest financial institution, the *Banco de Crédito*, boasted in a recent interview: "[Since 1990, Peru] has the most liberal economy in South America in terms of foreign investment and taxation rules" (*The Financial Post* March 15, 1996: P4). International enthusiasm for Fujimori's model can best be assessed by noting that foreign capital investment in Peru increased 64.9 per cent between 1994 and 1995 (*Ibid*). Through a generous privatization program, which oversaw the sale and/or liquidation of 173 of 183 state-run companies over a six year period (Castillo, 1996: 27), Peru has become one of the most privileged destinations for foreign investment capital in the entire world (*Financial Post*, 1996).

Fujimori's rekindling of relations with international investment and finance capital was, however, no simple feat. As Carol Wise, herself a staunch critic of Fujimori, concedes, when Fujimori came to power he "inherited the unenviable job of rationalizing the most distorted economy in South America" (1993: 85). In 1990 the country was afflicted by an astonishing rate of hyperinflation estimated at 7,600 per cent per annum (Glewwe, 1991: 34), and a national unemployment/underemployment rate hovering above 50 per cent (Burki, 1995: 16). At the time of the 1990 elections, neoliberal pundits blamed these grim statistics on the legacy of Alán García's interventionist economic strategies.

Characterized by Boloña as "irresponsible" and "corrupt", García's policies have been rightly, if disproportionately, blamed for many of the problems that have plagued Peru's economy in the 1990s (Glewwe, 1991: 16). Still, there is no question that García's ill-advised policies - beginning with his abortive attempt to nationalize the banks, and his declaration of a unilateral moratorium on debt repayment (*Ibid*) - were used by his opponents to justify the radical free market backlash which has ensued. Boloña, an economist who once served as Director of Economics at Hernando de Soto's pro-neoliberal ILD,[111] does not pull his punches when describing García (Poole and Renique, 1992: 151). He upbraids the former President according to the dictates of *laissez-faire* capitalism: "The politics of strong state intervention, and disregard for inflation and fiscal deficits produced tremendous chaos, slowed down production, and increased poverty" (Glewwe, 1991: 18).

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[111] *Instituto Libertad y Democracia* (Liberty and Democracy Institute).

As Conaghan, et al, explain, a stern "anti-statist" consensus which had been building up amongst sectors of Peru's national bourgeoisie since the late 1970s had a lot of influence in shaping Fujimori's policies (1990: 4). At the time of the 1990 elections, pro-neoliberal business leaders, and their foreign allies, were well-represented by several organizations (most notably the *Confederación Nacional de Instituciones Empresariales Privadas*)[112] and research institutes (such as the ILD) (Wise, 1993: 96). These highly-organized special interest groups were founded by people who opposed what they believed to be a tradition of excessive government meddling in Peru's economy, exemplified during the Velasco era and, more recently, during the García years. And while most of them supported Vargas Llosa instead of Fujimori during the election campaign in 1990, they, ultimately, found the latter remarkably amenable to their proposals (Boloña, 1993: ix).

The impact of neoliberal economic policies on Peru's political landscape was immediate. Not long after the 1990 elections, a variety of groups - including the *comedores populares* - who had opposed Vargas Llosa's pro-neoliberal campaign, rallied against the unexpected Fujishock. Still, Fujimori's succesful rapprochement with international financial institutions, his eventual defeat of hyperinflation, and his capture of *Sendero* leader Abimael Guzmán helped to take the wind out of his opponents' sails. As Ballón explains:

> In strict economic terms, there are more poor people today, there is less work... but there is greater stability. So, symbolically, psychologically, there is room for hope that didn't exist five years ago. The economy was off course, the country was in pieces, the

[112] National Confederation of Private Business Institutions.

> state wasn't functioning, and it looked like *Sendero* could win the war against the state[113] (personal interview, 1995).

Given the economic and political burdens that he had inherited, Fujimori's victories over inflation and *Sendero* had a significant effect on many low-income Peruvians.

Statistics demonstrate quite clearly that the bulk of Fujimori's electoral support in 1995 came from low-income communities (who had been most vulnerable to inflation), and communities that had been hardest hit by the civil war. In the *pueblo joven* of Villa El Salvador, and in the department of Ayacucho - both of which had suffered tremendously during the war against *Sendero* - Fujimori won 70 and 70.1 per cent of the popular vote, respectively (*Expreso*, 1995: A4). Another significant, if less populous, strata of Peruvian society which supported Fujimori was the business elite. Ballón explains the demographics of Fujimori's popularity in the following way:

> I think that Fujimori's support comes from the sectors with the highest incomes in the country as much as it does from the sectors with the lowest incomes. From the richest and the poorest. The richest want order, security and extraordinary business. The poorest have received order, security and the fantasy of success through the market. It is a fantasy that lasts a moment and then flies away, as we have seen in other countries in the world. But it is a fantasy that has a certain amount of weight. For the poor, until '90, their vision of life was very short term. You might know what you were going to eat today, but never knew what you were going to eat tommorow. Now, with Fujimori, let's say you might know that you can eat 11 days out of every month. And that is a substantial difference. *Sendero* has

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[113] "*En términos económicos estrictos, hoy día hay más pobres. Hay menos empleo, pero hay más estabilidad. Entonces simbólica y psicológicamente, hay un espacio para la esperanza que no existía hace cinco años atrás. La economía se derrumbaba, el país estaba en pedazos, el estado no funcionaba, y el Sendero parecía que podía ganar la guerra contra el estado*".

> disappeared and these sectors were the most vulnerable to *Sendero* because the rich sectors had means of protecting themselves - private police, and all of these security measures. So, the defeat of *Sendero* has been felt as a triumph of Fujimori. That says a lot...[114] (personal interview, 1995).

Whether it was because they believed in the neoliberal fantasy, because they benefitted directly from foreign investment or privatization, or simply because they were granted a modest respite from inflation and war, low-income and wealthy voters alike tended - as I have already indicated - to express overwhelming support for Fujimori.

It is both difficult and complicated to speculate why so many low-income *limeños* voted for Fujimori in 1995. Anecdotal evidence is the only source of clues available, and it would be wrong to assume that low-income Peruvians had any one main reason for supporting Fujimori, or not. We can conclude that what Fujimori offered the poorer people of Lima was, first and foremost, stability. As Miloslavich says,

> This process denotes the contradictions of the people who voted for Fujimori. Evidently, two factors were influential: the fact of the war, and inflation. It is very difficult to debate politics with a citizenry that is convinced that the most important thing is peace[115]

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[114] "*Yo creo que el apoyo de Fujimori viene tanto de los sectores con los mayores ingresos del país como de menores ingresos. De los más ricos y de los más pobres. Los más ricos desean orden, seguridad y extraordinarios negocios. A los más pobres se les ha dado orden, seguridad y la fantasía del éxito a través del mercado - es una fantasía que dura un rato y que vuela, como hemos visto en otros países del mundo. Pero es una fantasía que tiene cierto peso. Para los más pobres, hasta el '90, su visión de la vida era una visión muy corta. Se podía saber que se iba a comer hoy día, pero nunca sabía qué va comer mañana. Ahora con Fujimori, se sabe que se puede comer 11 días al mes, digamos. Y eso es una diferencia sustantiva. Sendero desapareció, y estos sectores eran los más vulnerables a Sendero, porque los sectores ricos tenían cómo protegerse - policías privados, y todos estos modos de vigilancia y seguridad. Entonces, la derrota de Sendero se sintió como un tipo de triunfo para Fujimori. Estos dos elementos son suficientes. Es decir, no es poca cosa...*"

(personal interview, 1995).

Peace, even understood narrowly as stability, cannot be underestimated in a country ravaged by some fifteen years of brutal civil war and seemingly irreversible hyperinflation. It is for this reason that, as Peruvian scholar Gustavo Gorriti argues, "there is a large percentage of citizens who, while not sympathizers of Fujimori, believe he is a necessary evil" (1995: 25).

As for the wealthiest citizens in Peru, their enthusiasm for Fujimori can be explained in similar terms. Following the embarrassing electoral defeat suffered by Mario Vargas Llosa in 1990, hopes for a conservative, right-wing revival were suspended. In spite of his pretensions to the contrary - "We would create something of broader scope and more flexible than a political party" (Vargas, 1993: 152) - Vargas Llosa's FREDEMO was made up primarily of former Popular Action and Popular Christian Party activists who were, indeed, seen as "aristocratic" (Poole and Renique: 143) and out of touch with most Peruvian voters. Vargas Llosa's failure to win the 1990 elections - in spite of "lavish spending and US-style media campaigning" (*Ibid*: 145) - thus convinced the bulk of wealthy Peruvians to throw their weight behind Fujimori in the years which followed. As Manuel Castillo points out: "The [Fujimori] government didn't have to wait long for business to express its support" (1996: 26).

While support for Fujimori amongst the business elite has been emphatic and continuous since 1990, "some Peruvian industrialists have begun to grumble about high

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[115] "*Este proceso marcó cuáles son las contradicciones de la propia ciudadanía que votó por Fujimori. Evidentemente, dos factores han influido: el asunto de la guerra, y el asunto de la inflación... Es muy difícil debatir políticas en una ciudadanía que está convencida que lo más importante es la paz*".

interest rates, the weak domestic market, and dumping by big foreign companies" (Castillo, 1996: 25). Industrialists, who benefit the least from Fujimori's open-door policy towards foreign companies (tarrifs on imported goods have been reduced to less than 25 per cent of what they were in 1990) are understandably ambivalent about certain aspects of the Fujimori program (*Ibid*: 27). However, the cautious complaints expressed by the Association of Exporters and various Chambers of Commerce are unlikely to offset the pro-neoliberal pressure exerted by the large resource-based industries (especially fishing and mining) and the IMF (*Ibid*: 30).

Ballón points out that the largest groups of Peruvians who have consistently opposed Fujimori come from the middle classes. There are, according to Ballón, very few places in the neoliberal, privatized Peruvian economy for civil servants, professionals, bureaucrats and intellectuals (personal interview, 1995). For some of the same reasons, some low-income earners - including state employees, people who have worked for national industries, the families of people persecuted by the armed forces during the war against *Sendero*, and many politically-organized *pobladores* and *campesinos* (peasants) - have opposed Fujimori throughout the 1990s.

Neoliberal Risk, Clientelistic Insurance

Given the economic and political instability which characterized Peru in the late 1980s - "Peruvians vividly remember the calamitous results of Alán García (1985-1990)" (Castillo, 1996: 26) - Fujimori has gone a long way towards assuaging popular fears. However, Fujimori's responses to disturbances in the prevailing political and economic systems -

namely, popular protests such as those mounted by the *comedores* movement - have been essentially defensive. Most significantly, Fujimori has revived clientelistic traditions and, when necessary, ruled by decree, to try and ensure that his neoliberal project is not displaced.

Upon being re-elected, Fujimori declared: "The reforms will continue and be deepened so Peru can become more and more efficient"[116] (press conference). However, in describing the government's imperative to continue implementing market reforms, Abugattas admits that there has been (and will continue to be) a need to treat the casualties of Peru's neoliberal revolution. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Abugattas insists that while the economy can basically take care of itself, some "damage control" may be required:

> ...there is a confusion between what is, in my view, damage control and the promotion and improvement of incomes - they should be distinct things. Damage control is more a question of health, and the other a question of development[117] (personal interview, July 14, 1995).

As the clientelistic activities of PRONAA highlight, the "damage" alluded to by Abugattas is both economic and political. By exploring the relationship between clientelism and authoritarianism in contemporary Peru, I have located some of the mechanisms used by the Fujimori regime to try and maintain stability (quiescence) in low-income communities.

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[116] "*Las reformas van a continuar y a profundizarse para que el Perú se vea cada vez más eficiente*".

[117] "*Hay una confusión entre lo que, para mí, es control de daño, con promoción y mejora de ingresos - deberían ser cosas distintas. El control de daño es más una cuestión de salud, el otro es más de desarrollo*".

Clientelism - understood primarily as a medium of personalist, authoritarian rule - is a valuable concept for contextualizing Fujimori's purported commitment to direct democracy, and his apparent popularity. While the Fujimori regime's clientelistic institutions betray the acute contradictions that continue to characterize Peruvian society, they have also been key components of Fujimori's overall political strategy. In the following chapter, I discuss and explore the political repercussions of clientelism (as represented by PRONAA) on the *comedores* movement, and on Peruvian society, broadly speaking, leading up to and immediately following Fujimori's 1995 re-election.

Chapter V: Neoliberal Social Policy as "Damage Control"

"On the urban front," writes Thorpe, "the *comedores populares* have been the outstanding focus of communal organization" (1995: 144). The *comedores*, whose cooperative mode of operation conflicts significantly with the neoliberal philosophy of the Fujimori government, have been enthusiastic players in the negotiation of political rule in Peru since the late 1980s. Fujimori's re-election in 1995, preceded as it was by a renewed emphasis on government social spending which directly impacted upon the *comedores*, thus precipitated intense negotiations and discussions on the issue of social policy amongst community-level organizers, government officals and scholars in Peru. Taking into account the proliferation of current debates on social policy - in Peru, as elsewhere in the rapidly changing global economic system (Arrighi, 1994: 1) - this chapter focuses on the political significance of clientelism in Peru leading up to the 1995 elections.

From the outset, Fujimori's neoliberal project was advanced and instituted hand-in-hand with authoritarianism. The results of the 1993 Constitutional referendum then served - as I discussed in Chapter III - as a straw vote, or poll, indicating to Fujimori that support for his neoliberal regime was tenuous. The referendum can be seen as a political benchmark, after which Fujimori began using traditional clientelistic means to buoy his popular appeal. We can identify Fujimori's post-referendum political strategy, in Thorpe's words, as a "recourse to personalism" (1995: 8). Thus, Fujimori aspired to the position of "transcendant guarantor", or autocrat capable of filling in the "empty space", or political vacuum, created by the failure of formal democracy in Peru since 1980 (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 186).

In these ways, the current conjuncture is no blind alley. PRONAA - based as it is on charity and marginalisation, rather than entitlement and inclusion - belies both the conspicuous contradictions of the neoliberal system and the historical deficiencies of Peruvian democracy. The transition to democratic governance in 1980 has failed to produce enduring peace and economic development in Peru (Thorpe, 1995: 9). Instead, Peruvians have experienced what Mallon calls a process of "political refragmentation"

(1994: 71) and disarticulation due to irreconcilable contradictions within the political and social systems.

In this chapter I argue that clientelistic programs such as PRONAA have been used - as Abugattas suggests (personal interview, July 14, 1995) - primarily to mend the political "damage" caused by economic restructuring and authoritarian retrenchment under Fujimori. Social programs that go beyond temporary, targeted damage control - considered, in the words of Abugattas, to be "distortions" (*distorsiones*) of the economy (*Ibid*) - are anathema to neoliberalism. Abugattas believes the activities of the government should ideally be limited to managing the country's finances in a responsible manner: "One has to ensure macroeconomic conditions"[118] (*Ibid*). Beyond sound management, Abugattas concedes, governments ought to be prepared to deal with socio-economic and political contingencies. The continuing need for political damage control in Peru thus confirms that Fujimori has, like virtually all Peruvian presidents before him, failed to "ensure macroeconomic conditions" which allow for equitable growth and, by extension, long-term stability.

The identification of clientelism - understood primarily (though not exclusively) as a medium of manipulation used by the state to defend a certain agenda and power structure - is an excellent point of departure from which to begin mapping-out the emerging neoliberal, neo-authoritarian political configuration in Peru. Such an exercise will allow us to begin to "part the curtain" (Scott, 1985: 329) on the Fujimori regime, and further contextualize the 1995 election results.

I explore different conceptions of what social policies and programs can and should be, with the goal of identifying the inherent inadequacies of neoliberal social policy in contemporary Peru. I contrast neoliberal understandings of social policy (elaborated primarily by Abugattas) with various critiques of neoliberal social policy developed by

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[118] "*Uno tiene que asegurar condiciones macroeconómicas*".

representatives of the Lima-based *comedores* movement, their allies in feminist and other non-governmental organizations, and academic observers. From these critiques, I extrapolate broader conclusions about the social responsibilities of the current Peruvian government. While the current regime has a "double responsibility"[119] (Miloslavich, personal interview, 1995) to provide essential social services *and* to compensate Peruvians for the negative effects of the Fujishock, Abugattas is right in saying that social programs are irreconcilable with neoliberalism. If there is no concerted effort on the part of the state to promote employment or redistribute wealth - as Thorpe says, "the allocative efficiency of the market cannot simply be assumed without an adequate institutional framework" (1995: xi) - the compensatory impact of social programs such as PRONAA remains essentially marginal.

Drawing on interviews, and a variety of primary written sources, I locate the *comedores* movement and PRONAA within the current debate about the importance and meaning of social policy in Peru. Pulling the main thematic threads of this thesis together, I argue that in the absence of meaningful, participatory social programs that maintain certain standards of welfare to all Peruvians, PRONAA serves to reinforce structural inequalities, while attempting to foil alternatives such as those put forward by the *comedores* movement. "These programs are..." as Vilas writes "used as patronage tools to create and maintain clientelistic relationships" (1996: 22). Ultimately, I conclude that while Fujimori's authoritarian style of rule (strengthened by his re-election in 1995) may help to ensure the advance of neoliberalism, programs such as PRONAA point to the continuing elusiveness of a decisive "hegemonic outcome" in contemporary Peru (Mallon, 1994: 72).

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[119] "*doble responsabilidad*".

Democracy and Participation

In delineating the social policy needs of Peru, Thorpe identifies four key components: education, health and social security, housing, and the administration of justice (1995: iii-iv). These areas of concern correspond to fundamental standards that communities must fulfil in order that their members may work, live, and govern themselves peacefully and sustainably. Thorpe points out, moreover, that these social functions are best fulfilled by strong, local authorities and decentralized public institutions, in concert with non-governmental agencies and community groups (*Ibid*: 125). Her guidelines are, in this sense, mostly practical. However, embedded within her argument is an assumption that due to the contradictions and incongruities that routinely occur in capitalist economies, governments have a responsibility to provide and manage democratic institutional mechanisms and frameworks which allow the basic social needs of their citizens to be satisfied. As *Alternativa* director and long time activist Josefina Huamán suggests, "a direct relationship between the citizen and [political] power is impossible through the mediation of a *caudillo*... you have to rebuild something in between"[120] (personal interview, 1995).

Bringing the social-democratic imperative to the foreground, the Lima-based *Fomento de la Vida* (FOVIDA) institute identifies social policies as integral elements of macroeconomic policy. They reject the neoliberal concept of a separation between the economic and the social, favouring instead a self-conscious conflation of the two. Their conception - which bears a strong resemblance to the Keynsian principle of the welfare state (Vilas, 1996: 17) - contrasts starkly with Abugattas' damage control:

> Social policies are instruments which serve to create adequate living conditions with the goal of providing welfare for the population and, in this way, contributing

[120] "*Una relación directa entre ciudadano y el poder [político] no es posible a través de un caudillo... Hay que reconstruir algo en el medio*".

> to the development of the country. Social policies should form part of a national development strategy, linked to an economic policy that guarantees employment, health, housing, education and other necessities (*Fomento*: 1995).[121]

Thus, both FOVIDA and Thorpe agree that social policies must form part of a broad democratic vision of social development, linked to the realisation of basic, equitable living conditions for all citizens. As Peruvian feminist scholar Amalia Cuba asserts, "it is not sufficient to stabilize [the economy]"[122] if macroeconomic policies do not lead to sustained growth and more egalitarian development (1995: 1).

Thorpe develops her argument in favour of the democratic design and administration of social policies quite extensively, highlighting the importance of dialogue between the state and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the *comedores populares* (1995: 141):

> This issue is so sensitive, and so important, that we would suggest as a top priority that a small group of well respected independent observers be asked to review the whole situation and its history, recommend an acceptable system of evaluation, and consider how collaboration with this key sector could be strengthened (*Ibid*: 143).

The incidence of "conflict" (*Ibid*: 141) between NGOs and state programs is, according to Thorpe, symptomatic of historical asymmetries between government and civil society in Peru, as well as a long history of economic mal-development. The solution, Thorpe concludes, is a matter of political will: "...there has to be a process of consensus building,

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[121] "*Las políticas sociales son instrumentos que sirven para crear condiciones de vida adecuadas a fin de lograr el bienestar de la población y así contribuir al desarrollo del país. Las políticas sociales forman parte de una estrategia de Desarrollo Nacional, que está muy vinculada a una política económica que garantice empleo, salud, vivienda, educación y otras necesidades*".

[122] "*...no es suficiente estabilizarse*".

and in the end only the central government can initiate and organise that process" (*Ibid*: 153).

Thorpe's carefully-worded prescriptions for institutional reform in Peru are extensive, but in many ways miss the core of the problem: the Fujimori government's neoliberal orientation fundamentally contradicts the consensual political processes that could lead to more coherent social policies. As Vilas writes:

> Neoliberalism considers the growth of poverty to be a pathology, not a consequence of the economic system. Hence it isolates poverty from the process of capital accumulation and economic development, and reduces the solution to designing specific social policies (1996: 16).

As Feminist activist Diana Miloslavich says, the Fujimori regime has treated poverty as a marginal issue, and has virtually ignored the community-based organizations that work within Peru's low-income neighbourhoods (personal interview, 1995). Instead of consulting community groups, NGOs, etc., neoliberal social programs tend to "target" (Vilas, 1996: 20) specific beneficiary populations, especially the indigent. Such programs therefore overlook the larger structural issues which are among the root causes of the current economic crisis.

That Peru's economy is grossly inegalitarian is, of course, a historical truism. Described by Thorpe as having one of the most skewed economies in Latin America, in terms of income distribution, Peru is indeed a model of mal-development (1995: 9). Even Abugattas admits that the country's "social deficit" (*deficit social*) is substantial (personal interview, 1995). In spite of significant economic growth, the overall rate of poverty in Peru (defined in terms of personal income) has remained high since the 1960s, when the poorest 40 per cent of Peruvians received a meagre 8.8 per cent of total personal income (Thorpe, 1995: 9). In 1970, 50 per cent of Peruvian households lived in poverty (*Ibid*: 13), compared with 53.6 per cent in 1991 (*Ibid*: 14). And, according to government

figures calculated in 1994, 48.3 per cent of all Peruvians suffer from some form of malnutrition (*Mapa de Necesidades*, 1994: 1513). While the rate of poverty (especially extreme poverty) is much higher in rural areas than in the cities, the rate of poverty in Lima has jumped from 28 per cent to roughly 50 per cent in the past twenty-five years (Thorpe, 1995: 13). In three of Lima's most populous *pueblos jóvenes* - San Martín de Porres in the north, San Juan de Lurigancho in the east and Villa El Salvador in the south, respectively - 15, 41.2 and 48.5 per cent of all children suffer from malnutrition (*Mapa de Necesidades*, 1994: 601).

The sharp economic disparities that continue to seperate wealthy and low-income Peruvians challenge distinctions between economics and politics. These disparities also call into question the neoliberal practice of targeting specific populations with material assistance, instead of developing universal programs that address the widespread deficiencies of the system. As Felipe Portocarrero and María Elena Romero argue, "...the breadth of the problem [in Peru] demonstrates that... the dichotomy between focalized relief programs aimed at the poorest people and more comprehensive universal social policies is a false dilemma"[123] (1994: 58). Targeted social programs like PRONAA reinforce and justify inequalities by making need, rather than entitlement, their organizing principle. And social programs that are divorced both from the concept of social "rights", as well as from consensual collaboration with civil society, invariably reinforce patron-client relationships.

The absence of democratic, universal social programs in contemporary Peru - "one of the weakest points of the Fujimori government has been its deficient management of social policies"[124] (*Ibid*: 71) - is, however, not simply a by-product of Fujimori's top-down

[123] "*...la amplitud del problema demuestra que, en cierto sentido, la dicotomía entre programas focalizados de alivio a los más pobres y políticas sociales universalistas de carácter más comprehensivo es un falso dilema*".

[124] "*...uno de los puntos más débiles del gobierno del presidente Fujimori ha sido el deficiente manejo de la políticas sociales*".

neoliberal revolution. Social policies have been neglected by a long succession of Peruvian regimes, all of which have favoured a social management approach over a social democracy one. The few services which have been made available to low-income Peruvians over the years have, by and large, been associated with repressive regimes:

> Historically, Peru has not had social policies, as has been the general model in the world, or like in the more developed countries of Latin America such as Argentina... There have been many public workers, public administration workers, but this has not meant that there has been a state capable of promoting social policies... Rather, there has always been a state that has never even provided even basic services[125] (Huamán, personal interview, 1995).

It is especially distressing that, while the number of poor people living in urban areas has risen steadily since the 1960s, "the state has barely touched their lives other than as a predominantly repressive force" (Thorpe, 1995: 7-13). Even today, while some 30 percent of *limeños* can be counted amongst the "new poor" (casualties of the economic adjustments undertaken by García in 1988 and by Fujimori in 1990), the government is making no substantive efforts to update and improve social programs (*Ibid*: 17).

The fact that social spending during the first three years of the Fujishock was about one quarter what it had been in 1984-1986 (measured as a percentage of GDP), and that the modest social emergency programs created by the regime were only partially implemented, reflects the strict logic of neoliberalism being applied in Peru (*Ibid*: 16). In an editorial that appeared shortly before the 1995 elections, a Peruvian human rights organization openly accused the Fujimori government of shirking its fundamental social

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[125] "*Históricamente, el Perú no ha tenido políticas sociales como ha sido el modelo generalizado en el mundo, o como en los países de America Latina más desarrollados como Argentina... Habido muchos trabajadores públicos, trabajadores de la administración pública, pero eso no quiere decir que no habido un estado capaz de llevar adelante políticas sociales... Más bien siempre ha habido un estado que nunca ha proveído ni siquiera servicios básicos*".

responsibilities by implementing less expensive, less effective emergency programs instead of comprehensive social policies:

> [The state] uses an incorrect definition of social policy. They confuse social programs with compensation programs, or with the alleviation of poverty. That is not as it should be, because social policy refers to the responsibility of the state to guarantee, through public policies, the basic welfare of the population and the rights we all have to equality of opportunities as citizens and, as such, as equals.[126]

The band-aid emergency relief programs were, quite simply, not designed to strengthen the four components of social policy identified by Thorpe.

Huamán argues that Fujimori has "chosen an economic policy which subordinates all other policies"[127] (personal interview, 1995). Driven by lopsided capital growth rather than jobs, the Peruvian economy simply cannot compensate for vast differences between people in terms of wealth. "Of the 15.7 million jobs created in all of Latin America in the last five years, 13.6 million of those came from the [low-paying] informal sector" (Vilas, 1996: 25). Such trends, exacerbated in Peru by the Fujishock, simply cannot be mitigated, let alone reversed, by programs like the PES or PRONAA.

Thus, Miloslavich argues that the current government has both a responsibility to redistribute income in such a way that supports underemployed and low-income families, and a responsibility to reverse some of the effects that its neoliberal policies have had on Peruvians, generally:

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[126] "*...se añade una definición incorrecta de política social. Se la confunde con programas sociales o con programas compensatorios de alivio a la pobreza. Y ello no es así, porque la política social se refiere a la responsabilidad del Estado de garantizar, a través de políticas públicas, el bienestar básico de la población a partir del derecho que todos tenemos a la igualidad de oportunidades en nuestra condición de ciudadanos y por tanto, de iguales*". *Informe Anual.* "Derechos humanos y sociales en el Perú," Asociación Pro-Derechos Humanos y Centro de Asesoría Laboral: 1994.

[127] "*Han elegido una política económica que se subordina el resto de la política*".

> I believe this government has a double responsibility. Because I think that the economic policy they are implementing has made the extent of poverty much greater... the social costs have been very high to achieve the economic statistics that exist at the moment[128] (personal interview, 1995).

Ironically, the Peruvian government has also acknowledged this "double responsibility". In a document first published in 1993, Abugattas outlines the need to "improve the quality"[129] of permanent social services (including education, health and basic justice) and "improve the results"[130] of emergency programs (including food assistance) (1994: Section 5). Abugattas' document - which directly foreshadows Thorpe's work - addresses social needs, yet remains subject to the limitations of neoliberalism and does not offer any practical long-term plan. Indeed, towards the end of the document, it is indicated that all types of "social support"[131] (*Ibid*: *Gráfico* 3) should be decreased steadily between 1993 and the year 2000. Assuming that the Fujimori government's macroeconomic policies will continue to perpetuate Peru's socio-economic problems and divisions, there can be little room to discuss the substantive recommendations put forward by Thorpe, et al, within a neoliberal paradigm.

Miloslavich also faults PRONAA's design as being a top-down and anti-democratic reflection of the entire Fujimori regime. As she says, "It is not an organization that saw as

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[128] "*Creo que este gobierno tiene una doble responsabilidad. Porque creo que la política económica que están implementando ha hecho que la brecha de pobreza se haga mucho más extensa...el costo social ha sido muy alto para lograr esta estadística económica que existe en este momento*".

[129] "*mejorar la calidad*".

[130] "*mejorar los resultados*".

[131] "*apoyo social*".

its function the participation of the beneficiary population"[132] (personal interview, 1995). Huamán believes that PRONAA's activities are based on familiar, traditional notions of clientelism that have been implemented in Peru and other Latin American countries before, with similarly dubious results: "[PRONAA] is not the product of creative thinking... that we are going to do something specific in Peru, that we are going to look at the poverty and welfare conditions"[133] (personal interview, 1995). The evidence supporting Huamán's contention is compelling. Examining three well-known Latin American cases - Chile, Mexico and Bolivia - Agosín and Davis point out that neoliberal reform has never been accompanied by comprehensive social projects designed to mitigate its predictable negative impact (1996: 55). On the contrary, structural adjustments have invariably been associated with authoritarianism, and, in the case of Chile, state terrorism. In Peru, the decisive shift to neoliberalism coincided closely with the collapse of political debate and the recourse to personalist rule (Thorpe, 1995: 9).

In an interview conducted several days prior to the 1995 elections, Eduardo Ballón rightly compared Fujimori to past Peruvian presidents who demonstrated highly personalist styles of political rule:

> Fujimori is a fundamentally authoritarian personality with populist characteristics - the populism of the old politicians who we fought. His gifts of computers, of schools are the gestures of the old populist logic of Latin America (personal interview, 1995).[134]

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[132] "*No es un organismo que haya previsto en su funcionamiento la participación de la población beneficiaria*".

[133] "*[PRONAA] no es fruto de un pensamiento creativo... que vamos a hacer una cosa particular en el Perú, que vamos a mirar las condiciones de bienestar y la pobreza*".

[134] "*Fujimori es un personaje fundamentalmente autoritario con rasgos populistas, del populismo y de los viejos políticos que hemos combatido. Sus regalos de computadoras, de colegios, son gestos de la vieja lógica populista de América Latina*".

Ballón's assertion must be understood as significant precisely because Fujimori has failed to produce the social justice that he professes to believe in as a fundamental axiom of democracy (Fujimori, 1995). In this sense, clientelistic institutions clearly serve as political stand-ins for inclusive, participatory social programs that correspond to the fundamental rights articulated and promoted by groups such as the organized *comedores* movement.

Ideological Undertones

Understanding popular support for Fujimori in light of his political strategies is crucial, not because it is possible to quantify the impact that clientelism had in terms of voting, but because of the way in which Fujimori claims to renounce traditional politics. Despite the alleged retreat of ideology, the battle that has been waged at the community level between the *comedores* movement and PRONAA is steeped in political discourse. Indeed, as Mallon says, attempts to foster particular "hegemonic outcomes", such as neoliberalism, are necessarily developed in the context of political/ideological struggles:

> If the concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony are always interlaced, each hegemonic impulse involves a counter-hegemonic impulse. Hegemony cannot exist or be reproduced without the constant, though partial, incorporation of counter-hegemony (1994: 71).

Belaúnde's Family Kitchens, García's *Comedores del Pueblo* and PRONAA were all developed as attempts to incorporate and diffuse the counter-hegemonic possibilities embodied in the *comedores* movement. And these programs directly reflect, in each case, the anti-democratic political trends of the era in which they were developed. In the current era, the advance of neoliberal ideology, strengthened by the re-election of Alberto Fujimori, is reflected quite clearly in the activities of PRONAA.

Since the late 1980s, the *comedores* movement has represented a real, if latent, challenge to the logic of capitalist competition and individualism. As Rosa Espinal has

asserted, "Individualism is growing stronger. The *comedores* are a way of maintaining solidarity"[135] (personal interview, 1996). The *comedores* not only embody the spirit of cooperation that has existed in Lima's low-income communities for decades, they also represent a vibrant form of political organization that moves away from the bankrupt partyocracy maligned by Fujimori. In fact, unlike their former allies in the United Left party, the *comedores* movement has expanded and flourished in the fractious Fujimori era. As such, according to Stokes, the *comedores*, and the umbrella organizations which represent them, constitute new socio-political formations that suggest models for the democratization of society, broadly speaking (1995: 98).

The lack of political will and 'creative thinking' in social policy planning in the Peruvian case is symptomatic of a process of political disarticulation (discussed in Chapter IV) which has been used to justify neglect of state responsibilities in the social arena. Though doubtful that any turnaround is on the horizon, *comedores* leaders continue to press for fundamental changes in the way the state relates to low-income communities and to Peruvian society as a whole.

But, as the traditional political system unravels, and as economic insecurity endures, the women who work in the *comedores* movement find themselves fighting for the survival of their organizations, and their broader social and political goals seem far off indeed. As Ballón suggests, the current processes of political entropy have, despite the amplitude and coherence of the *comedores* movement, made it difficult for many Peruvians to respond proactively to the current changes:

> In some ways this transition comes from society, and there is the possibility of articulating these interests, the possibility of developing a national mission. It is a slow process because this is a rather authoritarian society, rather corporatist. It is a society that is

[135] "*El individualismo está creciendo. Los comeodres son una manera de mantener la solidaridad*".

> 'conquering' citizenship. In this sense, this process of transition has positive elements, but right now it is difficult to see them because we can't see the end of the road[136] (personal interview, 1995).

If, as Castillo wrote in the weeks prior to April, 1995, the electoral results would be "an expression of [Peruvian] national political culture"[137] (10), then Fujimori's re-election may presage an extended period of neo-authoritarian rule.

Social Policy, Social Rights

Conventional notions of "social rights" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 163) associated with the Keynsian welfare state have never applied to the Peruvian case. The conquest of citizenship in Peru, especially since the invasion of the capital region by so many low-income *serranos* (people from the Andean highlands), has been incremental. In this context, the failure of Peru's formal democratic institutions to articulate and validate "social rights" through social policies has been a significant dilemma. Due to this failure, the conquest of citizenship in Peru has been set back. For the time being, social improvements cannot depend upon, and will not necessarily be associated with, the state and its capacity to facilitate democratic development. Rather, as *comedores* movement leaders have suggested - both directly and by example - the democratization of Peru may depend upon the construction of alternative, co-operative networks of production, distribution and consumption.

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[136] "*Esta transición tiene sentidos de ir así adelante desde la sociedad con la posibilidad de la articulación de estos íntereses, la posibilidad de desarrollar una misión nacional. Es un proceso lento porque es una sociedad bastante autoritaria, bastante corporativa. Es una sociedad que está conquistando la ciudadanía. En este sentido, este proceso de transición tiene elementos positivos, pero ahora es muy difícil de verlos porque no se puede ver el fin del camino*".

[137] "*La opción que se elige será el mejor examen de lo que somos como expresión de nuestra cultura política nacional*".

The egalitarian imaginary represented - if not always embodied[138] - by the *comedores populares* movement has been shaped and delineated, in large part, by the movement's relationship to the Peruvian state. As Stokes, Andreas and others have pointed out, the ownership of the means of production does not strictly define the new political consciousness of Lima's vast, largely underemployed population. As such, the *comedores* movement's goals have been defined, above all else, by its relationship to an authoritarian, central state. Gaining land title, basic social services and other "rights" from the state have long been the driving forces of political organizing in the *pueblos jóvenes*.

The failed promises of formal democracy in Peru, which have precipitated a massive crisis of confidence in politics, have reinforced traditional, seemingly anachronistic, ties between the state and low-income Peruvians. The development of clientelistic social programs such as PRONAA has, in turn, institutionalized these ties. Being fundamentally reactive, state intervention in public life is, as Laclau and Mouffe comment, typically used for the purposes of vigilance, regulation and demarcation:

> Given the bureaucratic character of state intervention, this creation of 'public spaces' is carried out not in the form of a true democratization, but through the imposition of new forms of subordination (1985: 162-163).

As Escobar comments, in the current era, the poor have been subject to "new meachanisms of control" geared towards the "management" of poverty, rather than its elimination or erosion (1995: 22). That these new mechanisms recall traditional clientelistic dynamics is a reminder that the Fujimori regime's neoliberal revolution has helped to reverse the modest democratic gains made in Peru since 1980.

As a consequence of recent changes in state-sponsored "social management" (*Ibid*), the means by which many politically organized low-income Peruvians, such as those in the *comedores* movement, seek to transform society have indeed been decentered.

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[138] This critical theme, introduced in Chapter III, is revisited in Chapter VI.

The fall of traditional political parties is particularly significant in this regard because the initial growth of the *comedores* movement paralleled the rise of pluralist debate in Peruvian politics and the transition to formal democracy. *Comedores* movement leaders now find themselves focusing on specific local political battles and campaigns, such as pressuring the government to fulfil the terms of the *Comedores* Law. Nonetheless, their struggles with the Fujimori regime, and PRONAA specifically, reflect the broader hegemonic processes identified by Laclau, Mouffe and Escobar.

Chapter VI: Economic Malaise and Prescriptions

"A malaise is abroad in Latin America," (15) begins a recent *Economist* editorial (November 30, 1996). Another article in the same issue claims: "In recent months, the golden boys of economic reform--Messrs Menem [of Argentina] and Fujimori--have seen their popularity plummet" (*Ibid*: 20). The authors go on to cite a *Latinobarómetro* poll that found fewer than 30 per cent of Latin Americans "satisfied with the functioning of democracy" in the continent (*Ibid*). In a recent interview in *La República* newpaper in Peru (January 5, 1997), economist Oscar Ugarteche declares: "Neoliberal enthusiasm in Latin America has passed"[139] (Rojas, 1997: E1). Citing the December, 1996 seizure of the Japanese ambassador's residence in San Isidro, Lima, by Tupac Amaru (MRTA) guerrillas, Ugarteche warns of the dangers of ignoring Peru's substantial underclass: "Because it is obvious that you cannot have economic recovery on the basis of excluding the mass of society"[140] (*Ibid*).

As observers watch neoliberal Latin America - within which Fujimori's Peru is identified as a trend-setter - start to come unglued, they are calling out for tenacity and conservative reform. The *Economist* editors' prescription for curing what they refer to as a growing "backlash" against neoliberal economic restructuring is exactly the same as that proffered by the World Bank and IDB (discussed in Chapter III):

> A populist reversal of Latin America's course is far from imminent, but the malaise is real. It should put governments and politicians under notice: they must complete their macroeconomic revolution, and complement it with speedy microeconomic and institutional reform, or risk seeing their hard-won gains eroded by cynicism and discontent (*Economist* November 30, 1996: 16).

The demand for a "microeconomic and institutional" (*Ibid*) quick fix may lead to greater short-term investment in social programs. However, if these programs are designed using

[139] "*Pasado el entusiasmo neoliberal en América Latina*".

[140] "*Porque es evidente que no se puede tener una recuperación económica sobre la base de excluir al grueso de la sociedad*".

the same narrow optic that the neoliberal architects of PRONAA used, they will not have lasting positive effects. On the contrary, the obfuscation of structural inequalities through marginal social programs will only serve to prolong popular "cynicism and discontent" (*Ibid*) indefinitely.

The explosion that first alerted the world to the pitfalls of neoliberal economics in Latin America was the currency crisis that rocked Mexico on December 20, 1994 (Burki, 1995: 25). The warning did not go unoticed in Peru, where, on the eve of the 1995 elections, journalists and opposition politicians (Reyes, 1995: 32; Pásara, 1994: 36) voiced cautious concern that Fujimori's economic policies might produce a similar crisis. "If we continue along this road...I can assure you that in two years we will have *tequila* transformed into *pisco*,"[141] warned Guido Pennano, then vice-presidential candidate for Pérez de Cuellar's *Unión por el Perú* (Union for Peru) (Reyes, 1995: 34). Coming from a pro-neoliberal politician, this warning reveals a degree of disquiet amongst Peruvian leaders that has yet to translate into changes in economic or social policy. And while the "*pisco* effect" has not yet struck, the MRTA hostage crisis does serve as a sobering reminder of the problems which may lie ahead.

In the Mexican case, a clear warning whistle had actually been blown twelve months prior to the devaluation of the *peso*, when, during the small hours of New Year's Day, 1994, the *Zapatista* National Liberation Army (EZLN) claimed possession of a handful of municipalities in Chiapas (Barry, 1995: 3). The *Zapatistas* identified the Mexican government's failure to redress socio-economic problems in Chiapas that were being exacerbated by new, orthodox neoliberal policies, as the reason behind their rebellion. They pointed out, in particular, that by dismantling *ejido* land reforms through a change in the Mexican constitution in 1992, the PRI government had reversed an

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[141] "*Si continuamos en esta ruta... yo le aseguro que en dos años tenemos el tequila convertido en pisco*".

important victory of the 1910-20 revolutionary period, and, in so doing, had upset the relative peace that had prevailed ever since (*Ibid*: 12).

The neglect and betrayal of low-income populations in the name of neoliberal reform, and the recourse to various forms of traditional paternalistic politics, is not a phenomenon isolated to Mexico, Peru, or Latin America for that matter. As Laclau and Mouffe, and others, point out, with the rise of neoliberalism, we are witnessing a *global* drift away from social democratic principles, and a return to conservative political and cultural forms:

> We are thus witnessing the emergence of a new hegemonic project, that of liberal-conservative discourse, which seeks to articulate the neo-liberal defense of the free market economy with the profoundly anti-egalitarian cultural and social traditionalism of conservativism (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 175).

Conservativism in Peru has long been associated with coercion, including overt military rule. Coercion has, however, rarely led to lasting order in Peru. For this reason, military and other authoritarian formulae are invariably complemented by clientelistic strategies. One would have to say that clientelism and authoritarianism are in fact two sides of the same coin. The Peruvian case thus exhibits, in high relief, the conservative cultural and political features of the "new hegemonic project" (*Ibid*) frequently referred to as neoliberalism.

The conservativism of the Peruvian government must be distinguished, but not divorced, from the apparent conservativism of Peruvian voters. Conservative political strategies - including clientelism - have been used by every Peruvian government this century, without exception. Even ostensibly socialist and social-democratic regimes, such as those led by Velasco and García, respectively, have employed clientelistic strategies. However, conservative political trends in Peruvian society have never been articulated hegemonically. Not even the re-election of Fujimori, a known *caudillo*, should be

interpreted as such. As I have demonstrated, anti-democratic and authoritarian trends in Peru have invariably existed alongside strains of audacity and rebelliousness, such as those exhibited by the *comedores* movement. In this light, clientelism, understood as a political strategy, is one way in which the Peruvian government has attempted to exploit the conservativism that has surfaced in response to the insecurities of the current hegemonic crisis, and to thwart oppositional alternatives.

As political scientist and social policy observer Juan Robles comments, clientelism in neoliberal Peru has been expressed through social programs (such as PRONAA) which simultaneously challenge and scorn community-based organizations that may be seen as fonts of oppositional politics: "[The government] is confronted by and distanced from popular organizing"[142] (1994: 25). By opting to support a handful of poorly organized, uncoordinated programs (including FONCODES and PRONAA) which favour asymmetrical decision-making and the uneven, sporadic allocation of funds for specific purposes, the Fujimori government has chosen clientelism (*Ibid*). And as Robles points out, this choice is by no means arbitrary: on the contrary, it reflects the orthodox neoliberal philosophy that the Fujimori regime so forcefully embraced during its first term in power. And if spending on social programs has increased since Fujimori's *auto-golpe* and subsequent referendum, it is largely strategic: "They have recently expanded social programs, three years late, on the eve of the elections"[143] (*Ibid*).

PRONAA is a prototypically clientelistic institution, and an important tool in the struggle for the hearts and minds of low-income urban Peruvians. In form and purpose, PRONAA most closely resembles the kinds of clientelistic social programs that have been implemented since the late 1940s, when urban socio-political movements began putting

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[142] "*Está enfrentado y distanciado de la organización popular*".

[143] "*Recién aumentan los programas sociales tres años después, en vísperas de las elecciones*".

demands on the central government. As British scholar Joe Foweraker acknowledges, the shift to an urban-focused politics in Peru, as elsewhere in Latin America, has transformed the political environment irrevocably: "The major *lifeworld* shift from rural to urban and industrial society... placed the majority of Latin Americans in a completely different social and political environment" (1995: 5). The new environment has become a breeding ground for social and political movements, the largest and best known among them being the *comedores* movement. It is for these reasons that I focus on *comedores*-state relations as the locus of a political struggle between the proponents of social rights and democracy, and the champions of neoliberalism.

The current political struggle between the Peruvian state and the *comedores* movement has taken shape in the context of a major hegemonic crisis, the disarticulation of ideological debate, the decline of traditional political parties, and the ensuing re-election of a neoliberal, authoritarian president. The first signs of such major political changes in Peru actually appeared in 1989, when radio personality Ricardo Belmont was elected mayor of Lima as an independent candidate (Poole and Renique, 1992: 136). Following his tenure as mayor, Belmont was one of four major candidates who ran against Fujimori in 1995, only one of whom (Mercedes Cabanillas of the APRA) was supported by a recognized political party.

At the municipal level of government, as at the national level, the process of political disarticulation has continued. In October of 1996, six months after Fujimori's victory, another independent candidate, Alberto Andrade, was elected mayor of Lima. Andrade's victory over Jaime Yoshiyama, Fujimori's hand-picked mayoral candidate for *Cambio 90/Nueva Mayoría*, did represent a symbolic protest against Fujimori's authoritarian tendencies. However, Andrade is an unrepentant free-market advocate and law-and-order man, whose views are very much in step with those of Fujimori. Additionally, Fujimori responded to the electoral rebuke by appointing Yoshiyama to head the Ministry of the Presidency, prompting Lima-based researcher Martin Beaumont to

quip: "Now Yoshiyama has more money than all of the mayors in Peru put together" (personal interview, 1995). Thus, while it is true, as *El Comercio* editor Francisco Miró Quesada writes, that the people of Lima elected Andrade as a message to Fujimori that "power must be shared, not concentrated"[144] (November 13, 1995: A2), the strength of that message was muted by Andrade's all-too familiar pro-neoliberal, neo-authoritarian stance, and by Fujimori's rebuttal.

Fujimori's recent decision to seek a third term in office underscores his willingness to manipulate democratic formal procedures to retain political power (Cameron, 1995: 2). As Peruvian political scientist Javier Iguiñiz said at a forum of popular movement activists a few days prior to the 1995 elections, social spending in Peru is perceived by the government to be a political means to an end, and is not based on a conception of social rights: "people are perceived to be instruments of development, but not valuable in and of themselves"[145] (1995: 6). Iguiñiz insists a government that sees its social role as analogous to that of a firefighter simply cannot facilitate democratic development (*Ibid*). To illustrate this point, Iguiñiz says that contemporary Peruvian social and economic policies are based largely on the Chilean model, which was conceived by a neoliberal military regime. In both cases, he says, clientelistic institutions emphasizing direct ties between government officials and targeted beneficiaries were developed to "win over the poorest of the poor and isolate organized peoples [from the general population]"[146] (*Ibid*: 9).

According to Iguiñiz and others, Fujimori projects the image of himself as the embodiment of the state:

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[144] "*El poder debe repartirse y no puede concentrarse*".

[145] "*...las personas son vistas como instrumentos del desarrollo, pero no como valiosas en sí mismas*".

[146] "*...ganarse a los más pobres para aislar a los organizados*".

> I believe that unfortunately when we think of the state we think of Alan García or of Fujimori, and this makes me think of what one very important French king once said: 'I am the state'[147] (*Ibid*: 27).

Instead of believing themselves to be part of the state, many Peruvians do feel marginalized, even excluded, and subject to the whims of the government in power. Fujimori's arbitrary abuses of the system (such as ruling by decree) and attempts to circumvent existing procedures (such as thwarting oppositional political initiatives) strongly reinforce this perception. From 1990 to 1995, the virtual absence of a political and economic alternative to Fujimori's neoliberal neo-authoritarian regime, either in the Congress or in other traditional political fora, has created a permissive atmosphere in Peru. Yet while the failures and the trespasses of the Fujimori regime may have been forgiven by those who have sought some measure of order and economic security, it is becoming clearer that even these relatively modest gains may be temporary.

The failing promises of Fujimori's neoliberal, technocratic revolution have been forcefully and astutely critiqued by the leaders of the *comedores populares* movement throughout the Fujimori era. When asked what she would demand of the Peruvian government, Rosa Landavery responded:

> I would demand... that the budget of the [*Comedores*] Law be put into effect... and that the popular sectors not only apply to receive, but also to enter into a position of management, administration and budgeting of all of resources that come, that they give out, that they receive, that they allocate at the level of different sectors[148] (Miloslavich, 1995: 28).

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[147] "*Creo que desgraciadamente cuando pensamos en el Estado pensamos en Alan García y en Fujimori, me hace acordar un poco a lo que un rey francés muy importante decía: 'el Estado soy yo'*".

[148] "*Demandaría... que el presupuesto de la Ley realmente entre en vigencia... y que los sectores populares no solamente son instancia de recibir, sino también deben entrar desde la instancia de gestión, administración y fiscalización de todos los recursos que vengan, que se den, que se reciban, que se compartan a nivel de los diferentes sectores*".

Given the renewed interest in social programs and policies that representatives of mainstream institutions such as the World Bank, the Inter American Development Bank and the *Economist* are expressing, the leaders of the *comedores* movement and their various allies are in a relatively strong position to help clarify the current crisis, and to suggest some radical strategies for combatting the negative effects of neoliberalism, as well as Fujimori's personalist style of rule.

Building Strategies, Building Alliances

The women who originally helped to bring *comedores* together in large associations - in the late 1980s - were, as I discussed in Chapter III, aided in their project by feminists working in non-governmental activist groups. The relationship between feminist and other organizations - such as *Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán* (Flora Tristan Peruvian Women's Centre), *Alternativa* and the *Federación Popular de Mujeres de Villa el Salvador* (the Popular Women's Federation of Villa El Salvador) (FEPOMUVES) - and the *comedores* remains close to this day. As Andreas points out, the organizational support provided to the *comedores* by women's groups helped see the *comedores* through their "initial political crises" and encouraged them to move on to new levels of organized political engagement (18).

Groups such as FEPOMUVES worked particularly closely with *comedores* leaders in Villa El Salvador. María Elena Moyano, who served one term as FEPOMUVES secretary and two as its president (in 1980, '86 and '88 respectively), was unquestionably the highest profile *comedor* leader in the country when she was assassinated by *Sendero*

Luminoso militants in 1992. Recognizing that the *comedores* in her district - the first of which had been established in 1984 - were created primarily to help combat the immediate subsistence needs of the community, she, nevertheless, warned: "We cannot get out of this crisis by *solely* filling the stomachs of our children"[149] (Moyano, 1993: 34). Moyano's attempt to directly link-up the work that women did in the *comedores* to a broader political project resonated for many citizens of Villa El Salvador, where she was elected vice-mayor in 1989.

The leaders of many *comedores populares* in Lima have been keen interlocutors with the Fujimori regime for some ten years now, and some have even gained national (and international) prominence as outspoken opposition leaders in Peru's troubled democracy.[150] Thus, according to Stokes, the *comedores* (and the umbrella organizations which represent them) constitute important new social formations that suggest models for the democratization of Peruvian society, broadly speaking. The hope for a more democratic, more egalitarian society may indeed be embodied within co-operative institutions like the *comedores*. However, it would be wrong - as Stokes cautions (1991a: 273), and as the 1995 election results illustrate - to assume that any one vision of a new society is held in common by all *comedores* volunteers, let alone by all inhabitants of Lima's *pueblos jóvenes*.

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[149] "*Con sólo llenar el estómago de nuestras hijos no vamos a poder salir de esta crisis*" (*emphasis added*).

[150] Moyano gained international attention during her crusade against the Fujishock in the early 1990s, and received posthumous praise from journalists and political observers from a round the world (Moyano, 1993: 15).

If, as Stokes observed, equally strong strains of "resistance and acquiesence" (*Ibid*: 270) can exist side-by-side within low-income communties, then similar juxtapositions may also exist within individual *comedores populares*. In *comedores* where deference to directors and outside non-governmental and community leaders are especially pronounced, it is necessarily more difficult to build a cooperative political vision and basis for action. As Avensur comments, the persistance of passivity amongst *comedores socias* is one of the movement's greatest challenges:

> In the group and inside each person there may be manifest tendencies opposed to change, attitudes and fears of change that generate anxiety and which give way to facts which appear like representations of the past: *dirigentas* that assume authoritarian attitudes, women who prefer to submit to a new type of conformity and not to recognize their rights and at the same time their responsibilities to contribute to their organization[151] (1993: 17).

Comedores populares, as Avensur, Andreas, Stokes and others describe, were conceived as organizations which empower low-income women through collective work and, in so doing, overcome the politics of authoritarianism and deference: "The organizations should not be seen soley as the engine of demands and claims, but also as the promoter of a new order"[152] (*Ibid*: 41). The possibility that an alternative vision of Peruvian politics and

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[151] "*En el grupo y al interior de cada persona se ponen de manifiesto tendencias opuestas al cambio, actitudes y temores frente a lo nuevo que genera ansiedad y que dan lugar a hechos que aparecen como representantes de lo viejo: dirigentas que asumen actitudes autoritarias, señoras que pueden sumirse...en un nuevo tipo de conformismo al no reconocer su derecho y al mismo tiempo su responsabilidad de aportar en su organización*".

[152] "*...las organizaciones no deben ser vistas sólo como vehiculizadores de reclamos y reivíndicaciones, sino como gestoras de un nuevo orden*".

society may gestate within the *comedores* movement is, however, also mitigated by the endurance of clientelistism and the entrenchment of neoliberalism.

In the current context of political disarticulation and the decline of pluralistic party politics, the efforts of *comedores* movement organizers to build sustainable alternatives has become more difficult.[153] As Stokes writes, the persistence of clientelism, in particular, is discouraging:

> A strategy for dominant groups to maintain their position of superiority... [clientelism] stresses face-to-face ties with government officials... characterized by strains of deference and fatalism (1995: 14).

While deference and fatalism have been constant features of Peruvian politics, they have never been truly hegemonic. In the current conjuncture, their persistence does not necessarily reflect the dominance of a particular paradigm. Rather, many of Peru's direst social and economic problems have reinforced both strains of passivity and, in the case of the more militant activists within the *comedores* movement, strains of defiance. As the *Economist* editors concede: "Discontent springs from huge social needs" (1996: 15). The *comedores* movement will surely play an important role in determining whether popular discontent can be translated into renewed political activism.

The *comedores* movement has been very active in the promotion of different ways of understanding, transforming and subverting the current crisis. Perhaps most significantly, *comedores* movement leaders have developed ties between small-scale rural agricultural producers and urban-based *comedores* activists (Miloslavich, 1995: 26). As

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[153] Though very critical of the IU, María Elena Moyano ran fro public office as an IU candidate.

such, according to Landavery, the *comedores* movement is seeking to become self-sufficient, and to throw the yoke of government programs off its shoulders. Already there are *comedores*-affiliated wholesale warehouses (*centros de acopio*) in various low-income districts in Lima, from which produce and other supplies are sold and distributed to individual *comedores*. By expanding upon this concept to include the active participation of farmers from neighbouring agricultural regions, the leaders of the *comedores* movement hope to strengthen their collective position. This strategy recognizes the inherent constraints of the traditional marketplace, the limitations of lobbying government, and the extraordinary potential of a network that involves more than 100,000 women.

The vitality of the *comedores* movement will be, I believe, an important barometer of the health of Peruvian democracy. In this sense, I define democracy not just as that articulated by official political and state institutions, but also as that embodied in social movements and civil organizations. Ironically, PRONAA may not be a direct threat to the integrity of the *comedores* movement precisely because its clientelistic *modus operandi* are so transparent. PRONAA is, however, indicative of the very serious threat posed by neoliberalism. The primary economic benefits of the neoliberal policies being enforced in Peru have been the end of hyperinflation and a remarkably high rate of economic growth. Simultaneously, Peruvian society has been polarized, the rate of underemployment has increased dramatically, and Fujimori has consistently undermined Peru's democratic institutions to silence his critics (Cameron, 1996: 10). In so far as the *comedores* must contend with the impact of neoliberal and authoritarian policies, their future continues to be shaped by them.

Fujimori's use of authoritarian policies is neither unique in Peruvian history, nor in the history of modern democratic governance. As Arrighi argues:

> Governments are power-oriented organizations which use war, the police force, and judicial procedures, supplemented by appeals to moral sentiments, as characteristic means of attaining their objectives (1994: 85).

The "moral sentiments" described by Arrighi are justice and fairness, neither of which has been satisfied by Fujimori's clientelistic demonstrations of government charity. The failure of the Fujimori regime to appear legitimate will undoubtedly become more significant over the next few years. As the next presidential elections approach, corruption (especially that associated with the drug trade)[154] and economic mismanagement (at various levels) will undoubtedly be prominent themes. They both merit serious consideration for further research, not merely because they are important political issues, but because they may fester, and eventually betray the contradictions at the heart of the Fujimori regime. As Arrighi comments: "A situation in which the claim of the dominant group to represent the general interest is purely fraudulent will be defined as a situation not of hegemony but of failed hegemony" (1994: 29).

Clientelism remains a strong current in Peruvian politics, yet does not necessarily reflect the ideological domination of the state over the poor. Rather, clientelistic norms - such as those upheld by PRONAA officials and *comedores* members - reflect the considerable power imbalance that exists between low-income Peruvians and the state.

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[154] As Cameron comments, Fujimori's close relationship to Montesinos is a sign that he may indeed be involved in some nefarious activity: "It is my view that Montesinos remains in power because he knows things about this government--and this president--that must not be disclosed" (1996: 2).

This imbalance, which serves the interests of foreign and domestic capitalist investors, is *so* pronounced in the Peruvian case that it has been a source of nearly constant friction. With the fall of traditional political parties, and the growth of a vast and disparate informal economy, the way in which political and economic power are contested in Peru has indeed been transformed. Yet because key apects of the displaced system remain - namely authoritarian government and vast disparities in wealth - the prospects for long term stability are slim. While the Fujimori regime may successfully engage low-income Peruvians in clientelistic patterns, its antidemocratic political and economic policies are likely to prevent the consolidation of a hegemonic outcome in the foreseable future. As Peru's preeminent socialist theorist, José Carlos Mariátegui, once wrote: "I am inclined to think that conflict, that antagonism, is and will be for many years the decisive factor, sociologically and politically, in Peruvian life" (1993: 201).

APPENDIX I

ABBREVIATIONS and ACRONYMS

AID.....American International Development Agency
APRA.....*Alianza Popular Revolucionara Americana*
(American Popular Revolutionary Alliance)
AP.....*Acción Popular* (Popular Action)
CGTP.....*Confederación General de Trabajadores del Perú*
(General Confederation of Peruvian Workers)
CIA.....Central Intelligence Agency
COPRODOES.....*Comité de Promoción del Desarrollo*
(Committee to Promote Development)
EZLN.....*Ejército Nacional de Liberación Nacional*
(Zapatista National Liberation Army)
FEPOMUVES.....*Federación Popular de Mujeres de Villa El Salvador*
(Popular Women's Federation of Villa El Salvador)
FONCODES.....*Fondo de Compensación y Desarrollo Social*
(Social Development and Compensation Fund)
FOVIDA.....*Fomento de la Vida* (Promotion of Life)
FREDEMO.....*Frente Democrático* (Democratic Front)
IDB.....Inter American Development Bank
ILD.....*Instituto Libertad y Democracia*
(Liberty and Democracy Institute)
IMF.....International Monetary Fund
IS.....*Izquierda Socialista* (Socialist Left)
IU.....*Izquierda Unida* (United Left)
MIPRE.....*Ministerio de la Presidencia*
(Ministry of the Presidency)
MRTA.....*Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru*
(Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement)
ONAA.....*Oficina Nacional de Asistencia Alimentaria*
(National Office for Food Assistance)
PAD.....*Programa de Asistencia Directa*
(Direct Assistance Program)
PAIT.....*Programa de Apoyo de Ingreso Temporal*
(Temporary Income Support Program)
PES.....*Programa de Emergencia Social*
(Social Emergency Program)
PRONAA.....*Programa Nacional de Asistencia Alimentaria*
(National Food Assistance Program)
SINAMOS.....*Sistema Nacional de Movilización Social*
(National System of Social Mobilization)
UN.....United Nations

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEWS

Abugattas, Javier. Senior Social Policy Advisor, Ministry of Economics and Finance, Lima (Lima, Peru: July 10 and 14, 1995).

Ballón, Eduardo. Senior Research Associate, *Centro de Estudios y Promoción del Desarrollo*,[155] DESCO, Lima (Lima, Peru: April 4, 1995).

Beaumont, Martín. Research Associate, *Centro de Estudios y Promoción del Desarrollo*, DESCO, Lima (via email: November 19-22, 1996).

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[155] Centre for the Study and Promotion of Development.

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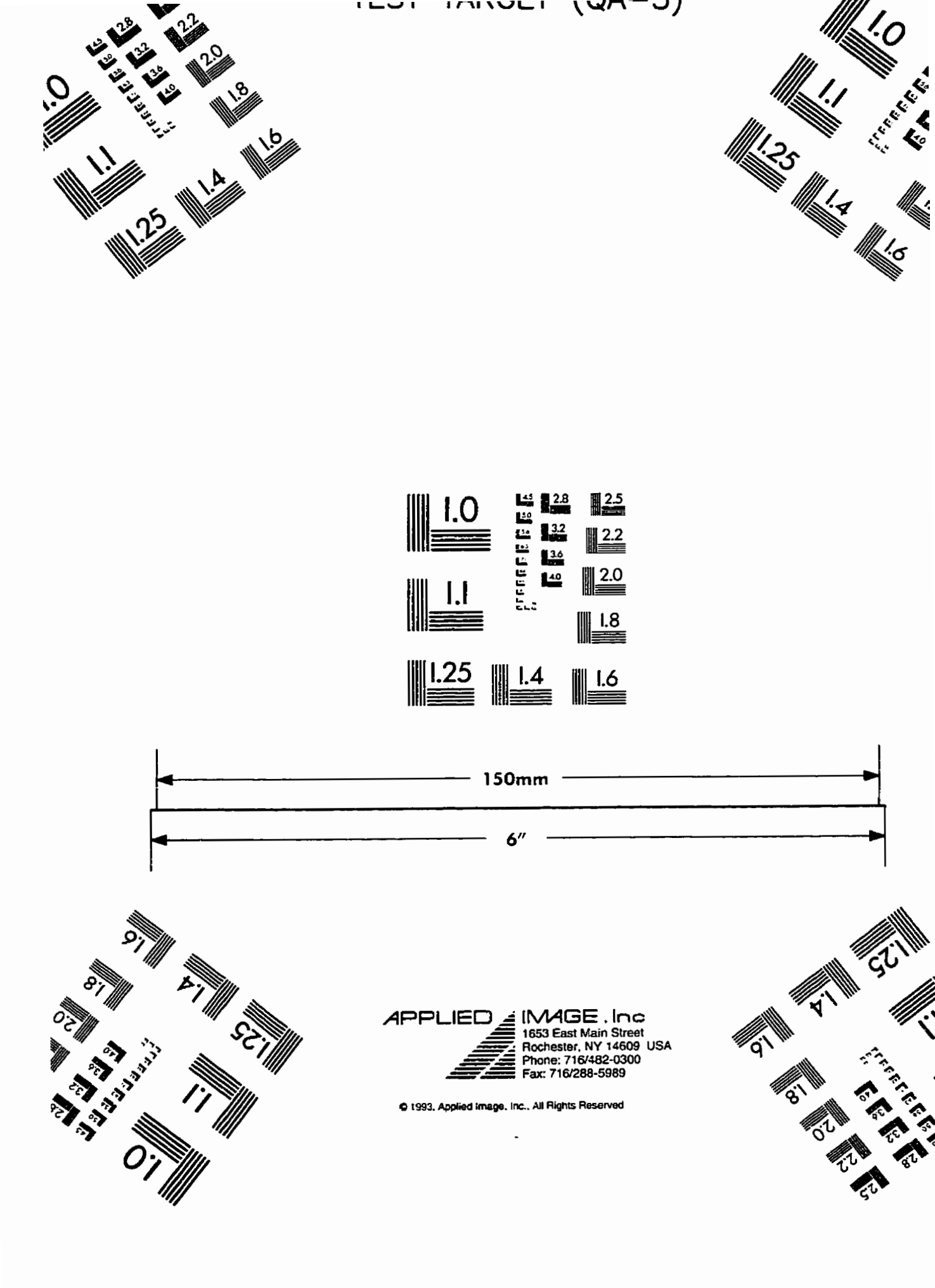
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