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Dissertation

**MANIFESTING THE PEOPLE'S WILL:  
INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AND PROTESTS IN COLOMBIA (1958-2002)**

by

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(Order No.                    )

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**ABSTRACT**

The study of contentious politics is an emerging area of research in political science that explores informal politics (i.e. strikes and protests) as opposed to formal politics (i.e. voting or lobbying) in order to understand the complex relationships between states and societies. This dissertation examines why social contention (work stoppages, protests and takeovers led by workers, urban residents, peasants and students) continued unabated after the 1991 constitutional reform aimed at liberalizing politics in Colombia. I use qualitative and quantitative methods to test the following four hypotheses over the time period from 1964 to 2000: 1) as citizen and state capacities decline over time, social contention increases; 2) as time passes, social contention increases; 3) the 1991 Constitution had no effect on contentious politics; and 4) regimes that increase political participation will decrease contention.

State capacity is the level of control exercised by state agents over people, activities, and resources within the government’s territorial jurisdiction, and in the international arena. Citizen capacity is defined as the polity members’ capacity to access economic and political resources and shape public policy. Factor analysis was used to

create these indices. The dissertation uses multi-variate time series regression analysis to test the hypotheses by analyzing the relationship from 1964 to 2000 between social contention and trends in citizen and state capacity, the 1991 Constitution, and the influence of different political regimes. The dissertation also uses historical data to discuss the relationship between state and citizen capacities from 1958 until 2000.

Hypothesis 1 is validated, although the state capacity variables have a stronger relationship with social contention than does citizen capacity. Hypothesis 2 is not validated—there is no significant relationship between the passage of time and social contention, but including time in the equation reveals the strength of the citizen capacity variable in one equation. Hypothesis 3—that there is no relationship between the 1991 Constitution and social contention—is validated by this research. Finally, hypothesis 4 is not validated at all—in fact regimes that increase political participation also increase social contention.

## PREFACE

February 23 to 27, 1998. Buenaventura, department<sup>1</sup> of Valle del Cauca (Southwestern Colombia). Twelve hundred municipal workers, 400 teachers, and 45 community organizations and labor unions have joined in a civic strike that has paralyzed for five days all social and economic activities in Colombia's most important port in the Pacific ocean. They have been joined by local residents and retailers. Residents of the rural outskirts of Buenaventura have also blockaded the road that connects the city with the rest of the country. As a result more than 1000 trucks (according to the centrist newspaper *El Tiempo*) or 10,000 trucks (according to the Communist Party's *Voz*) have been immobilized, all schools are closed and all commercial activities have been blocked. Local authorities estimate that the civic strike has stopped the flow of roughly 2 million dollars in commercial activities. The labor unions, community leaders and neighborhood groups are protesting to get the national government's attention focused on the chaotic municipal finances (with a fiscal deficit of 40,000 million pesos or roughly 31 million dollars). They are also demanding that back wages be paid, that the 60% unemployment rate be lowered, and that crumbling social and utility services be improved. Buenaventura is a city of 300,000 people, mostly Afro-Colombians who live in absolute poverty. However, the city is the richest port in Colombia where more than 6 million tons of merchandize is traded.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Departments are the main administrative divisions of the Colombian state.

<sup>2</sup> "Ancladas en la mesa," *Voz*, March 11, 1998, 10. "Paro cívico deja sin vía al comercio exterior," *El Tiempo*, February 25, 1998, 7B.

The mayor of Buenaventura, Freddy Salas, has decreed a state of siege, a dry law (alcohol cannot be sold) and a sanitary emergency to avoid the spread of malaria and cholera, the result of the city's obsolete sanitary, aqueduct and health services. Mr. Salas and his cabinet have met with the protesters and agreed that their demands are just, and promises that his cabinet is working on restructuring the city government. The governor of the department of Valle, Gustavo Álvarez Gardeazábal, also says that the protest is just and blames the central government for Buenaventura's fiscal deficit, alleging it is the result of a central government obligation to the city. President Ernesto Samper sends two delegates to meet with the protesters and with local authorities, Carlos Rangel (Head of Public Order in the Ministry of the Interior) and Armando Garrido (Presidential Counselor for the department of Valle). Mr. Rangel and Mr. Garrido are trying to negotiate with representatives from the protesters—who refuse to include local authorities in their committee. Protesters present a list of 40 demands which could be met if the national government were to invest in the city. But the central government's representatives say there are no resources. *El Tiempo's* reporter claims that the solution to the civic strike is far away, but that the whole of Buenaventura—neighborhood residents, businessmen, teachers, academics, workers, and even the mayor and the governor—is united in agreeing that the protesters have reasonable demands.<sup>3</sup>

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As the above episode of contention demonstrates, citizens mobilize to challenge governments that they believe are not representing their interests. The events in

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<sup>3</sup> "Ley seca en Buenaventura," *El Tiempo*, February 26, 1998, 6A.

Buenaventura have been repeated countless times in the 1990s, as myriad social actors have mobilized to protest austerity measures, bad policymaking, and out-of-control violence. Local residents have led the struggle for their local economies, while labor has fronted nationalist efforts against foreign intervention in the country's political economy and to defend what is left of the state's social role. Peasants, on the other hand, have been largely defeated by extreme poverty and violence against them, but they continue to protest alongside associations of producers in defense of agrarian economies. Finally, a number of new actors have played a decisive role in criticizing specific political and economic reforms that have reduced their welfare.

My thesis tests the argument that contention in Colombia increases when state capacities—to control people and resources, bargain for the nation's interests in the international arena, and respond to the policy needs of citizens—deteriorate. Protests also increase when citizen capacities—to gain access to economic and political resources and to shape public policy—decline. The nuances of the relationship between protest and institutional changes that affect state and citizen capacities is the focus of this dissertation.

My argument is organized in five parts: the first chapter presents the theory of contentious politics that places protests in the processes of state-building and democratization, and delimits the study of contention for Colombia's special circumstances. This chapter also introduces the hypotheses of this study. The second chapter describes the data and lists the sources used to test the relationship between contention and state and citizen capacities. The third chapter provides a historical



background that describes how institutional dynamics and contention relate. The next chapter describes the contentious actions of labor, peasants, urban residents, and students. Finally, chapter 5 presents the results of the statistical analysis that tested the dissertation's hypothesis that low state and citizen capacities increase social contention.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANAPO:	National Popular Alliance (Political Party)
ANUSIF:	National Association of Financial System Users
ANUC:	National Peasant Association of Colombia
CGTD:	General Confederation of Democratic Workers
CNT:	National Confederation of Workers
CRIC:	Cauca Regional Indigenous Council
CSTC :	Confederation of Colombian Worker Unions
CTC :	Confederation of Colombian Workers
CUT:	Centralized Worker's Union
DANE:	National Administrative Department for Statistics
DIAN:	National Direction of Taxes and Customs
DNP:	National Department for Planning
ELN:	Army of National Liberation (Guerrilla Group)
EPL:	Popular Army of Liberation (Guerrilla Group)
FARC:	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Guerrilla Group)
FECODE:	Colombian Federation of Educators
FEDECAFE:	National Federation of Colombian Coffee Growers
INCORA:	Colombian Institute for Agrarian Reform
M-19:	Movement of April 19 (Guerrilla Group)
ONIC:	National Indigenous Organization of Colombia

PCC:	Colombian Communist Party
UCN:	National Coffee Grower's Union
UPAC:	Constant Unit of Acquisitive Capacity
UTC:	Colombian Worker's Union

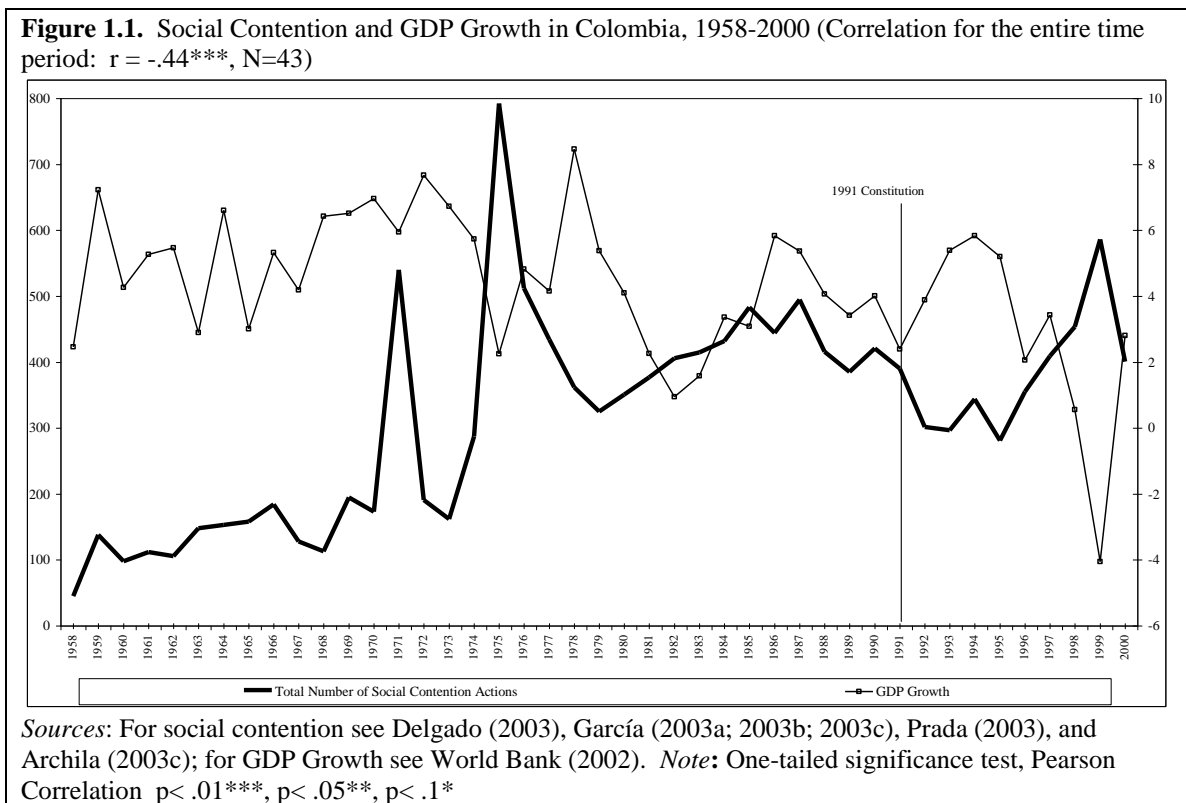


## **CHAPTER 1. THE STUDY OF CONTENTIOUS POLITICS IN COLOMBIA**

In 1991, Colombians saw the introduction of a liberal constitution purportedly designed to address the negative effects that centralization and economic distortions had on growth and democracy. The constitution also responded to the wave of massive sociopolitical upheaval of the 1980s by increasing formal mechanisms of political representation and participation in the policy-making process such as the plebiscite, referendum, citizen legislative initiatives, town meetings, and a number of judicial institutions so citizens could use the courts to protect their constitutional rights. These mechanisms were designed to prevent social protest as well as the use of violence in politics. Yet social contention (or work stoppages, protests and takeovers headed by workers, urban residents, peasants and students) continued unabated after this major institutional reform, which is particularly remarkable considering the high socioeconomic and political costs of protesting in Colombia. All this suggests that efforts to democratize political institutions by themselves are not sufficient to address social demands and to discourage contentious political action. We need, therefore, further analysis of additional factors that might explain contention in Colombia.

This dissertation argues that existing explanations of contentious politics in Colombia (which include a range of national and international, as well as sociopolitical and economic causes) don't offer a full political account of the phenomenon. Colombia's prevalent socioeconomic conditions of poverty and lack of economic growth, as well as its political setting marked by international dependency and incomplete democracy, are not

sufficient explanations on their own. To illustrate this, Figure 1.1 below plots the fluctuations of the Gross Domestic Product growth—which is a good indicator of economic development and political performance—and the total number of social protests during the years 1958 through 2000.



Although the Pearson Correlation for the entire time period shows that there is a negative relationship between growth and contention, Figure 1.1 nevertheless presents an unclear relationship between the two variables. There are small peaks of contention in 1959, 1966 and 1969 that concur with GDP growth, and a small reduction in protests in 1968 that matches a decline in GDP. The dramatic 1971 increase in contention seems unrelated to GDP fluctuations, as growth between the years 1968 and 1973 was fairly stable. And a sharp reduction in protests in 1979 coincides with an increase in growth. Yet

between the years 1982 and 1991 social protests again decrease as GDP growth decelerates. Between 1991 and 1993, however, contention slows down, apparently in response to an ascending GDP. After that, there is a slight peak of contention in 1994 as the GDP reaches its highest rate of growth in the 1990s, and finally, there is a dramatic upturn of social protests in 1999, when growth drops to a negative level. In short, Figure 1.1 shows that there are both positive and negative relationships between contention and GDP growth. Therefore, other phenomena not necessarily related to the economic cycle are inducing contention in Colombia.

Bearing the above in mind, this dissertation seeks to develop an alternative explanation for the evolution of acts of social contention—one that emphasizes the processes of state-building and the development of citizen capacities. To make clear how contention relates to state and citizen capacity, the next section will present a brief discussion of some social movement studies that explain social conflict using political variables derived from social movements theory. It then points out that some of these studies—especially those that examine the phenomenon in Latin America—present problems of conceptual ambiguity. The theory of contentious politics addresses this problem and works out a different methodological approach to the study of social conflict. Finally, the definition of contentious politics is adapted to the case study at hand.

### **Social Movements and the Theory of Contentious Politics**

Students of social movements in advanced democracies and democratizing states link the political structure (i.e., regime type, levels of repression, opportunities to participate) to the occurrence of protests. For example, they point out that citizens in

democratic countries use contentious and formal mechanisms in tandem to make their claims on government.<sup>4</sup> And democratic governments accept significant levels of individual and collective dissent at the same time that they liberate institutional channels of representation designed to obviate the need for such forms of pressure. For example, Ekiert and Kubik (1998), Greskovits, (1998), Kim (1996), Kriesi (1995), Markoff (1996), and Misztal and Jenkins (1995) find a reciprocal relationship between the opening of political opportunities in less democratic states (e.g., a reduction of state repression and more liberties) and increases in contention. Thus, contention can bring on a transition to democracy as much as democracy can increase contentious actions.

Studies of Western European and American social movements find that these have an important impact on public policies in favor of specific demands (e.g., civil rights, women's rights, peace or environmental issues), and even on the nature of the democratic state.<sup>5</sup> By disregarding political institutions, social movements may not achieve policy changes, but they can attain benefits such as the media's attention, a change in public opinion in favor of the group, or the mobilization of more people (Tarrow 1992). Through the use of contentious politics, then, transgressive or excluded social actors in democratic settings transform social identities and political culture (Escobar et al. 2001; Guidry 2000), or at the very least, offer alternative explanations of public affairs that can influence policymakers or persuade voters to support a particular platform or candidate.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, Márquez and Jennings (2000) point out that Latinos mix formal and contentious mechanisms to find representation in the US government, from which they are largely excluded.

<sup>5</sup> Some of the studies that establish such connections include Kitschelt (1986), Banaszak (2002), Burstein (1999), Burstein and Einwohner (1995), Dalton (1995), Della Porta (1999), Della Porta and Rucht (1995), Koopmans (1995), Koopmans and Statham (1999), Kriesi and Wisler (1999), Maguire (1995), McAdam and Su (2002), Meyer (1999), Moore (1999), Nollert 1995, Rucht (1999), and Tilly (1999).

In the case of Latin America it has been argued that contention have unleashed processes of democratic transitions (Garretón 1989; 1997; 2003) and consolidation (Cardoso 1989; Roberts 1998). Citizen mobilizations have brought on processes of democratization by demanding that citizenship rights be meaningful (Taylor 1998; Foweraker and Landman 1997). In addition, Latin Americans have resisted austerity measures (Williams 2001; López 1999), even if they were patient at the outset of the reforms that decreased their salaries and subsidies (Navarro 1995). People mobilized in this region to increase citizen or human rights (Foweraker 1993; Gomes da Cunha 2001; Guidry 2000; Schild 2001), and to achieve incremental policy change (Álvarez 2001; Uribe 2002) and even wider social change (Veltmeyer and Petras 1999; Stokes 1995; Schönwälder 2002).

However, the literature of social movements, protests, and political conflict in Latin America has been accused of engaging in the sort of “highbrow theorizing” that muddies any clear-headed analysis of reality (Foweraker 1995). And social movement literature in general has been blamed for conceptual vagueness (McAdam et al. 2001), which also obscures a more lucid scrutiny of the actual phenomenon. For example, Tilly (1984) defined social movements as a sustained series of interactions between a challenging group and the state, when a group of collective actors are excluded or marginalized from the political order. Wilkinson (1971) characterized movements as collective endeavors to promote change by any means. According to Garretón (2001), they are collective actions that have some stability in time and some level of organization, and that are oriented to change or conserve society or some sphere of it.

This same author distinguishes between a singular, “historically significant” social movement; and contained, specific, small and plural social movements: the singular movement revolutionizes social structures, while the plural movements respond to specific grievances and achieve incremental modifications of policies or sociopolitical institutions.

Students of contentious politics point out that the above definitions of social movements are ambiguous and can describe all sorts of political actions such as rebellions, armed attacks, terrorism, or disruptive symbolic actions, carried out by collectives of people organized in guerrillas, political parties or labor unions (Tarrow 1998; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001). Furthermore, the boundaries that separate formal from informal politics or even micro from macro social phenomena are not always clear. As an illustration of this, Colombia’s labor movement joins political parties, works with non-governmental organizations, promotes social movements and uses regular channels to pressure government. And the feminist movement in some countries achieved revolutionary institutional and social change without overthrowing the state.

Consequently, McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow (2001) use the term “contentious politics” to label a multiplicity of conflictive sociopolitical phenomena such as protests, large demonstrations, strikes, armed conflicts, civil wars and revolutions. They define contentious politics as “episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants” (2001, 5). Grouping these diverse political events as forms of contentious politics is

justified as they result from different combinations of similar mechanisms, processes and episodes.

McAdam et al. define mechanisms as “delimited sorts of events that change relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations” (McAdam et al. 2001, 25). There are *environmental* mechanisms which are external conditions that influence social life and can affect people’s abilities to participate in contentious politics, *cognitive* mechanisms that alter individual and collective perceptions about the uses of collective action, and *relational* mechanisms that influence the connections among people, groups and networks (McAdam et al. 2001, 25-26). Examples of mechanisms that might explain contention in Colombia include the reduction of human rights, drastic institutional change, resource depletion, international constraints, displacement of peasants from their lands, political polarization, concentration of wealth, and changes in trust networks—or the safeguards and insurances on which people rely to make long-term, risky decisions. Other mechanisms that might lead to contention include proletarianization, identity change, and brokerage.

The “mechanisms” that McAdam and colleagues describe do not work on their own. They link together, change each other, and configure specific processes. Processes are “frequently recurring causal chains, sequences, and combinations of mechanisms” which produce complex transformations of specified sets of elements (McAdam et al. 2001, 27). Although the authors don’t provide detail on what they mean by *elements*, I infer that these are power, capabilities, merit, and resources, which are disproportionately distributed in society (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992; Eckstein 1989). Access to these

elements assures groups and individuals self-determination and freedom from want. Powerlessness, incapability, disadvantage and poverty are correlated with dependency, misery and want. Thus, people who fight for a particular state or for democracy aim to shift power, merit, capabilities and resources in their favor, in order to prevent conditions of necessity and incapability.

Examples of processes include large scale mobilizations or uprisings, revolution, democratization, and nationalism. Thus, similar mechanisms in different combinations lead to contention, and the political outcomes of contentious processes vary according to the specific historical or social setting (McAdam et al. 2001, 77).

Finally, episodes are “continuous streams of contention including collective claims making that bears on other parties’ interests” (McAdam et al. 2001, 24). Prominent examples of episodes of contention include the American Civil Rights Movement, the French, Cuban, Mexican, Chinese, and Russian Revolutions, the 1960s student movement, and the Anti-Apartheid movement, among many.

If we take the framework proposed by McAdam et al., we can hypothesize that in 1990s Colombia, the following mechanisms and processes combined to produce processes of contention: (1) the far-reaching institutional reforms responding to international rules (i.e., some of the market reforms) depleted the resources and reduced the political rights of urban workers, (2) this process polarized workers, and (3) labor unions organized their members and some of their social bases for mobilization. The broader contentious processes underway in Colombia link up to state building and democratization.



### **Explaining Contention in Colombia**

Social protests in Colombia have been interpreted as a failure of the channels of representation within the political system and as the result of centralization of power in the executive branch or the national government (Santana 1983; Leal 1991), a process that leaves citizens no other option than to organize and protest in order to impact politics (Urrutia 1966). For example, Ramírez (2002) uses the case of the coca growers mobilizations in the department of Putumayo to prove that prevalent notions of political culture are redefined from below through the use of protests, and that contention is used to draw the government's attention to the needs of an abandoned region of the country. Santana (1983) finds a relationship between unequal regional development of capitalism in Colombia and the use of regional civic movements in poorer or less developed areas of the country to place demands on government.

Social movements are also motivated by international events such as the Cold War, the Cuban revolution, and other revolutionary movements (Archila 2001), or by dependent economic relations with capitalist economies (Pécaut 1982) that weaken Colombia's economy and inspire nationalist movements. Other international events, such as the student movement of the 1960s in Europe and the United States, or the antiwar movement, have inspired the ideological outlook of some social movements in Colombia. Contentious actors also act in response to widespread material necessities, such as poverty, lack of land or low income, all made worse by class contradictions and concentration of wealth (Gilhodes 1970; Zamosc 1989). Finally, Archila (2003c) leans towards ethical and moral

explanations of social protest and argues that the main cause of protest is the widespread collective belief that something is unjust and immoral.

I do not believe that these explanations can fully account for the history of contention in Colombia. Hence I propose an alternative theoretical framework that builds on the work of McAdam et al. (2001) by emphasizing the role of political variables such as state and citizen capacity. However, contentious politics in Colombia includes guerrilla and paramilitary violence, as well as social protests or labor strikes. Guerrilla activities aim to supplant state power in some regions of the country where state presence is weakest. In reaction to this, paramilitary groups were formed to stop guerrilla abuse and to cover for the state's incapacity to contain subversive actors. Paramilitaries use terror to keep in check entire populations and to reclaim—without any constitutional limitation—parts of the country's territory for the state or for local elites. They can be catalogued as contentious actors because they do not enjoy support from all state elites, they contradict state policies, and their actions are unconstitutional. Although social protests aim to disrupt everyday life, they are symbolic, public, non-clandestine, communal and, for the most part, peaceful. The aim of these actions is to draw the attention of the government, the media and other social groups to a particular issue.

Therefore, guerrilla, paramilitary and social protests are fundamentally dissimilar political phenomena. The basis of this difference is whether or not actors comply with the constitution and justify the use of violence to check the ongoing processes of state- and citizen-capacity building. Consequently, I differentiate between two main types of contentious politics in Colombia: (a) guerrilla and paramilitary contention that is violent

and defies constitutional limits, and (b) the open and peaceful protests of workers, students, peasants, Indians, the urban poor, and women, among many others. The latter I will label social contention to differentiate it from guerrilla and paramilitary contentious politics.

### **State Capacities**

Seeing that the state-building process causes significant contention in Colombia, and that the theory of contentious politics puts explanatory weight on state capacity, this section will briefly turn to the institutionalist literature in order to discuss the state as a variable. State capacity is described as the level of control exercised by state agents over people, activities and resources within the government's territorial jurisdiction (McAdam et al. 2001, 78). In addition, the term state capacity takes into account the implementation of public policies that respond to the demands of people (Huber 1995). Ideally, the state should uphold the rule of law, respect the constitution, and protect polity members from abuses of power and human rights violations.

Capacities are also limited by international pressures on the state. In this sense, Weiss (2003) argues that highly indebted countries in the process of restructuring or building state institutions are more vulnerable to the negative political and economic pressures coming from the international economy. Their relatively weak economies barely compete with inequitable trade practices, such as dumping or protection of agricultural products. And highly indebted states with fiscal deficits and poor economies offer greater political privileges to international investors, and follow policy guidelines from foreign countries or multilateral financial organizations. Thus, in order to respond

to international policy guidelines, the state exercises considerable autonomy from national sociopolitical actors, including some elites (Vilas 1995). Finally, state building in the case of Colombia is not a sovereign process. It is directed by political and economic elites positioned in the executive branch and in strategic sectors of the economy, as well as in foreign governments and multilateral political and economic institutions.

From a different perspective, state building is described by Tilly (1985) as a process of massive pacification and monopolization of violence (led by military, economic, or other elites), checked only by foreign state interference, internal armed dissent and a popular demand for democracy, representation and peace. In order to gain legitimacy and stability, the state assents to some popular demands for representation.

In short, Tilly (1985) sees the development of the state as institutional capacity-building to carry out the prerogatives of political elites. The concentration of power among elites is checked by contention. On this matter, historical institutionalists argue that even if political institutions condition and provide order to political behavior, they can change as a result of conflict (Steinmo and Thelen 1992). Power-distributional accounts observe that “institutions emerge not out of a shared concern with achieving joint gains through cooperation, but rather out of political conflict and strategic bargaining among social actors” (Thelen 2003, 215). The outcome of conflict produces an institutional balance where the “more powerful actors impose their institutional preferences on the less powerful actors” (Thelen 2003, 216). Contentious actors, therefore, must disregard prevailing institutions to have a better chance of impacting

politics by framing their demands outside existing institutional arrangements (Piven and Cloward 1977).

In this sense, Skocpol and Weir (1985) suggest that institutional arrangements can change if structural conditions (e.g., economic crisis) validate the demands of less powerful actors. These actors may gain in strength or government may justify lessening their burden in order to achieve such political ends as stability or legitimacy. Thus, institutional changes occur as a result of conflict, but also as a result of institutional accommodations to the demands of contending actors.

### **Citizen Capacities and Democracy**

Once actors who are not benefiting from the state-building process claim representation and protection, democratization becomes an integral part of state consolidation (Tilly 1985). Democracies, or regimes of protected consultation, have broad polity membership and political equality, and permit binding and effective consultation so that polity members exercise some control over government personnel, policies and resources (McAdam et al. 2001, 78-79). Democracies also protect persons from arbitrary action. However, a relatively affluent and strong state is required to implement democratic policies and protect people's rights.

Furthermore, the strengthening of a state independent from society and, therefore, from the "overall system of inequality" characteristic of market economies is a necessary condition for the expansion and strengthening of democracy (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992, 63). Such differentiation of state institutions from social and economic institutions "gives government and politics certain autonomy from social power and privilege"

(Rueschemeyer et al. 1992, 63). Thus, as a differentiated institution, the state is not always forced to represent any particular interest over another. Consequently, all polity members are able to negotiate equality and protection at the state level (Sartori 1992) and to lessen the burden of unequal access to wealth and privilege in society. To illustrate, people without income to buy services can pressure the state to advance their economic claims, since the market is not solving their problems. But this institutional differentiation does not make structured inequality irrelevant. Consequently, the state's political autonomy is limited by market forces and private interests (both domestic and international) on which the government relies to develop the economy, generate wealth and raise taxes (Bates and Lien 1985; Lindblom 1977; Block 1977).

Because democratic states enjoy limited autonomy from social power and privilege, people appeal to the set of civil, political and social rights promised by the institutions of democracy as a way to solve problems caused by economic, gender, or racial discrimination, among others. And as they contest such rights they also participate in the state-making process altogether, making it more democratic. As a result, the institutions of democracy in general, and of citizenship in particular, frame the demands of contentious actors.

In an analysis of T.H. Marshall's classic essay on the evolution of citizen rights, Bottomore (1998) reasons that these rights were expanded after episodes of class conflict or contention. This adds to T.H. Marshall's evolutionary account in 1950 of the appearance of civil, political and social rights—in that order—using English history as a model, and with special emphasis on the role of social rights in lessening class conflict.

According to Bottomore (1992), public compromise with citizenship was achieved through contentious actions after one social class gained relative strength over another. Thus, the bourgeoisie achieved civil rights in a revolution against monarchic power and brought forth the rights to property, life and liberty. The protests of workers and other subaltern groups begot such political rights as universal suffrage, and freedoms of speech and association for all members of the polity. Finally, organized labor, leftist political parties and other progressive organizations demanded social rights that assured health, education, employment, and retirement or unemployment benefits. This last step correlates with the birth of the welfare state. Thus, business-governing coalitions favor restricting citizenship to civil and political rights; and labor coalitions tend to favor social rights by increasing public spending on social benefits, regulating the market, favoring public ownership of economic assets and including workers in decision-making (Bottomore 1992, 121).

In Latin America, the progression of citizenship has been subjected to authoritarian setbacks. After the transition to democracy, citizenship generally remains at the formal level (i.e., political membership to a particular country), and rights are limited to voting. In recent years, liberal conceptions of citizenship have wielded great influence on the policy agenda and have unleashed a process of state disengagement from delivering social rights. Current policy measures favor individual or private sector provision of most social services, and justify state intervention only to relieve people from conditions of abject poverty. And in the course of spending cutbacks, the poor have become marginal citizens as they have lost the necessary resources to protect their civil and political rights.

Consequently, Latin Americans mobilize to deepen rights but also to prevent the deterioration or abolition of rights secured in previous regimes.

I have proposed, then, that citizenship is a contested institution, and that rights are obtained and upheld through episodes of contention. I have also argued that these rights are only meaningful if protected by a state capable of upholding them. I now draw on Amartya Sen's work to argue that having rights enhances capacities to achieve those things people value doing and being: for example, being educated and being capable of partaking in decisions, or respecting oneself (1999). But to achieve such things, individuals also need resources, since rights in conditions of poverty are not meaningful.

According to Sen (1999), five public, private and mixed mechanisms and institutions combine to encourage people's freedoms and capabilities: (1) *Political liberties* provide the rights inherent to polyarchic institutions; (2) *economic services* offer people opportunities to use their resources to produce, consume and exchange; (3) *social opportunities* such as access to education and health services expand, among other things, literacy and knowledge of public affairs to improve participation and decision-making; (4) *guarantees of transparency* give access to clear and true information, and hinder corruption; and (5) *protective security* endows people with unemployment benefits or other subsidies to alleviate the needs of those affected by deep economic crisis.

In the case of Colombia, six somewhat related processes discourage the consolidation of the institutional mechanisms listed above by Sen, thereby weakening citizen capacities: (1) international pressures to implement market reforms that include privatization, macroeconomic stability, and trade openness; (2) violence; (3) the greater



influence of business/liberal interests on democratic governments; (4) delegative democracy, or the less liberal Latin American system where decision-making is concentrated in the executive branch; (5) poor economic performance; and (6) civil society weakness. In the first process, state reforms were aimed at reducing state intervention in the economy and implementing more liberal policies. Such policies put checks on social spending and had negative effects on job creation, poverty alleviation, and equal distribution of wealth in Colombia. Second, the increase in all levels of social and political violence has polarized society and effectively demobilized organized citizens. Third, a version of Ferguson's (1995) "golden rule" (i.e., where affluent groups in the American political system gain a greater influence on policy by investing in elections) can be observed in this region. Here, the organizations that represent financial interests exercise great power on policy-making not only through the electoral process, but also through lobbying and even bribing.

Fourth, concentrated decision-making in the executive branch weakens representative institutions and turns most Latin American regimes into less liberal, delegative democracies,<sup>6</sup> where government policies bear no resemblance to campaign promises and the leader expects voters to be passive. O'Donnell (1994) explains that in Latin America's delegative democracies, policy-making follows an erratic pattern and unpopular policies are received by society with significant contention. If necessary, popular protests will be violently repressed. Fifth, widespread unemployment and

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<sup>6</sup> Majoritarian and individualistic systems of government that concentrate power in the office of the President.

decreasing wages diminish the resources available to marginalized groups and classes, leading them to mobilize.

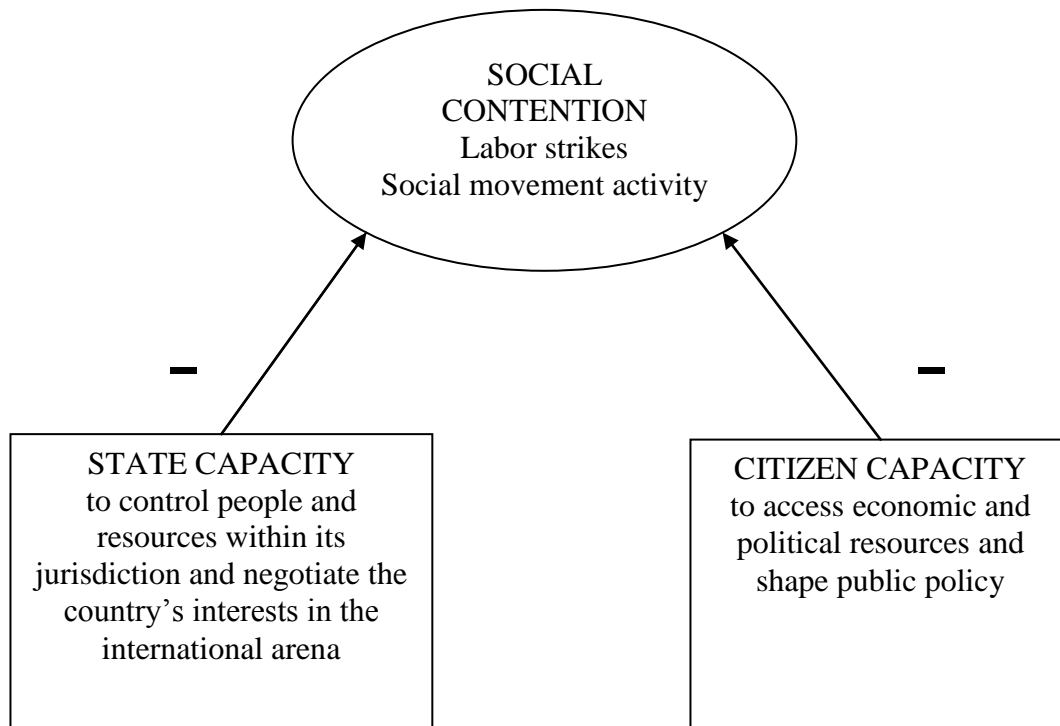
Finally, Colombia's civil society is characterized as weak, and citizens have not organized into independent associations, including political parties. To illustrate, one study shows that almost 88% of the social organizations in Colombia exist to distribute assistance from the state or to complete government or private sector projects, compared to 12% of the organizations that seek to influence the policy process (Álvarez et al. 1998). These same researchers found that in 1997, 82% of the organizations had been created by state initiative and only 17% were created autonomously.

### **Hypotheses**

So far I have explained that social contention responds to state-building and that polity members frame their protests in the institutions of citizenship. This leads me to propose that in Colombia, contention results from the loss of state capacities to contain protests and/or to protect rights, and from a decrease in citizen capacities to access economic and political resources to further their demands. Social contention refers to the labor rights movement organized into trade or workers' unions, peasant and indigenous struggles for land, the protests of the urban poor or urban residents, and the student movement. All these actors have in common that they demand, in one form or another, the expansion of citizenship or of political, social and economic rights. As noted before, the term state capacity refers to the government's level of control over people, activities and resources in its jurisdiction as well as its ability to comply with or respond to policy

demands, and to bargain for the country's interests in the international arena. Citizen capacity is the population's ability to pursue rights and well-being.

**Diagram 1.1.** Factors in the Model



The model presented in Diagram 1.1 proposes that social contention increases as citizen and state capacities decrease. Since the development of capacities is a historical process, I expect that this relationship can only be established through time and with the use of time series data. From a cross-sectional perspective, however, social contention is higher in those departments<sup>7</sup> where the state, as well as the citizens, has more capacities. The cross-sectional proposition also assumes that social contention increases when legal mechanisms and available resources to mobilize citizen claims are ineffective. However,

<sup>7</sup> The main political divisions of Colombia

citizens will more likely stage their protests in places where authorities will take notice of their claims (e.g., in the country's capital and in the more politically and economically developed cities). All this leads me to propose the following five hypotheses:

1. *Contention increases as state and citizen capacities decrease.* The loss of state capacities through time translates into socioeconomic and political insecurity for polity members. And resource-poor and disenfranchised citizens will more likely use contention to place demands if legal mechanisms and available resources to mobilize their claims are ineffective.
2. *In the context of state- and citizen-capacity failures, the passing of time heightens social contention.* As time passes, the use of contentious mechanisms may become habitual or institutionalized if the state continues to be weak and citizen capacities fail.
3. *In the context of failing state and citizen capacities, the 1991 Constitution had no effect on contentious politics.* Constitutional changes may take a long time to alter political behaviors that are ingrained in or more sensitive to profound or large scale processes, such as state-building and/or democratization. These macro-societal processes are embedded in complex national and international dynamics that may drown the effects of a positive institutional change or distort institutional functions.
4. *Regimes that increase political participation should reduce the use of contentious politics.* Specific regimes reflect national and international political realignments, empowerment of new actors (such as neoliberals), or disempowerment of older actors

(peasants or traditional political parties). Thus, Colombian regimes that democratize politics should reduce contention.

5. *Social contention is higher in departments where state and citizen capacities are comparatively stronger.* Contentious claim-making is all about raising the government's attention to a particular issue. In addition, contentious politics is a developing, recurring and ongoing political relationship between states and societies. Therefore, people who live in jurisdictions where authorities are more concentrated, the state is comparatively stronger and/or citizens are more organized will more likely protest when state and citizen capacities fail.

Hypotheses 1 through 4 will be tested with time-series multivariate regressions corrected for serial dependency using Colombia as the unit of analysis. Since a wide variety of indicators can be used to operationalize the concepts of state and citizen capacities, factor analysis is used to reduce this large number of components and produce index scores for these concepts (this procedure is discussed in Chapter 2). Then these indices, along with time, the 1991 Constitution, and the political regime are used to test the first four hypotheses. Hypothesis 5 will be tested with cross-sectional data using Ordinary Least Square regressions for the year 1998 when complete data is available for both dependent and independent variables. The next chapter presents the indicators used to test these hypotheses.

## **CHAPTER 2. MEASURING CONTENTION, AND STATE AND CITIZEN CAPACITIES**

In the previous chapter I laid out a model for explaining social contention in Colombia. In order to test the model, I engaged in a significant amount of data collection. I collected from ten Colombian newspapers information on 2,443 individual acts of social contention that occurred throughout Colombian departments, towns and neighborhoods, between the years 1991 and 2002. Along with this self-collected, disaggregated data on social contention, I also analyze data from Archila et al. (2003), Archila (2003c), Delgado (2003), Prada (2003), and García (2003a; 2003b; 2003c) which provide yearly observations on social contention for Colombia for a period of 43 years, beginning in 1958. In addition to these two sets of data on social contention, I collected from government sources yearly national statistics from 1964 until 2000 on state and citizen capacities. But, since my own data only covers 12 years of social contention (1991-2002), I combine the 37 years of data on the independent variables (1964-2000) that I collected from government sources with CINEP's 43 years of data on social contention in order to test the four time-series hypotheses.

My own data on social contention will be used to test hypothesis 5 at the departmental level. I combine it with the state and participation indices constructed by Sandoval and Téllez (1998) and Álvarez and colleagues (1998) for measures of state and citizen capacities at the department level. I only analyze this for 1998 because statistics on state and citizen capacities for each of the departments are not available for other

years. However, good measures are available for 1998. Sandoval and Téllez's (1998) State Index measures the physical and financial presence of the state by quantifying the number of civil servants, law enforcement officials, public buildings, spending per capita and by economic sectors, and tax collection in all 32 departments and the city of Bogotá for the year 1998. Álvarez, Castillo and Villar's (1998) Participation Index considers the number and diversity of citizen organizations, electoral participation and the capacity of citizens to convoke social mobilizations in each of the departments. Therefore, the participation index measures organizational density and civil society strength for the year 1998 in 32 departments and the city of Bogotá.

This chapter discusses in greater detail the data used to measure social contention, and the indicators that measure the independent variables—state and citizen capacities—in the model. In addition, I explain how I constructed state and citizen capacity indices with factor analysis in order to test hypotheses 1 through 4 listed at the end of Chapter 1.

### **Measuring Social Contention**

Social contention, the dependent variable in this study, occurs when actors identified by the press, the government or themselves as citizens, peasants, workers or members of discriminated groups (women, Indians, black Colombians), participate in labor strikes, demonstrations, protests, blockades or takeovers. Social contention will be measured by the number of times these actors participated in such acts in any given year, between 1958 and 2000 with the CINEP data, and between 1991 and 2002 with the Velasco data.

One source for data on contentious actions in Colombia is provided by researchers at the Center for Research and Popular Education (CINEP), who check ten national newspapers and periodically gather information on social movement activity.<sup>8</sup> This is the data base referred to above, which is organized by Archila and colleagues. These researchers also get information on contention from other media sources (radio or television) as well as from local informants. This information includes descriptions of the actors involved in labor, rural and urban conflicts, their demands, the types of actions and where the actions took place. Over the past fifteen years, CINEP has published parts of this information in various documents.<sup>9</sup> And between 1994 and 1998, the magazine *Cien Días Vistos por CINEP* printed information on social protests in the form of news summaries of events covered by the media, and sometimes as statistical data. While *Cien Días* (as well as other CINEP publications) did not provide consistent information on social movements, and left some months and even entire years unaccounted for in their statistical or news summaries, CINEP published a book in 2003 wherein much of the quantitative data of social movement activity between 1975 and 2000 was made available in time series (Archila et al. 2003). Archila (2003c) published another book that contained the data on contention for the years 1958-1975. These two sources then provide complete yearly time series data on contention from 1958 until the year 2000 at the national level.

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<sup>8</sup> The 10 newspapers monitored include: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, *El País*, *El Heraldo*, *Vanguardia Liberal*, *Voz*, *El Mundo*, *El Colombiano*, *Nuevo Siglo* and *La República*.

<sup>9</sup> Data on labor strikes from 1950-1990 was published by Archila and Delgado (1995) and by Delgado (1991; 1996). García (1990) provided data on urban and territorial protests during the Barco government (1986-1990), and Salgado and Prada (2000) published data on peasant struggles from 1980-1995.



When research for this dissertation began in the summer of 2002, CINEP's social researchers were reorganizing their data on social movements, and it was not certain when the information would be fully available to the public. Since I was initially interested in observing contentious actions in the decade of the 1990s, I constructed a separate data set based on my own reading of newspaper coverage of protests, and identified the actors, motives and types of actions involved in any particular incident.

Thus, this dissertation uses two different data files for the dependent variable which have been given different names in order to distinguish them: the first file I will now call the CINEP Data File and it comes from the reports of Archila and others. It provides national yearly data for social contention in Colombia between 1958 and 2000. The CINEP data file is used for all time series analyses. The second file is identified as the Velasco Data File and it provides information on 2,443 incidents of social contention that occurred in hundreds of Colombian towns and in the 32 departments between the years 1991 and 2002. It is aggregated to the department as well as to the national level on a yearly basis. The Velasco data file is used for the 1998 cross-sectional analysis.

#### *The CINEP Data File*

The "CINEP Data File" provides yearly totals aggregated to the nation of contentious politics broken down by actors including workers, urban residents, students, peasants, and "others" in Colombia between 1958 and 2000. The source of the data for 1958-1974 is Archila (2003c), who published statistics on protests by workers, the urban poor, students, peasants, and others. The years 1975-2000 come from Delgado (2003) for workers, Prada (2003) for peasants, and García (2003a; 2003b; 2003c) for urban

residents, students and other actors. This data file also has information on the number of workers who went on strike every year between 1975 and 2000 (Delgado 2003). The CINEP countrywide data lets me evaluate the variation in the dependent variable over a time span that covers major institutional reforms, regime changes, and fluctuations in economic developments. This data will be examined in simple descriptive graphs in which several trend lines are on the same graph to illustrate covariation and trends over time, as well as in multi-variate time series analysis.

The CINEP Data File is organized in 43 rows and 7 columns. Cases are ordered in rows, and each row represents one year from 1958 until 2000. Variables are organized in columns, and each column provides a measure of the dependent variable for that year. There is one column each for the number of protests staged by (1) workers, (2) urban residents, (3) peasants, (4) students, and (5) others. A sixth column sums all contentious actions (workers + residents + students + peasants + others = all contentious actions in one year), and the last column supplies information on the number of workers who went on strike every year from 1975-2000. Chapter 4 analyzes the CINEP Data File descriptively and in political context. Chapter 5 tests the hypothesis that low state and citizen capacities explain contention by combining the CINEP data on social contention with the data I collected from government sources on the independent variables in a multivariate time series analysis of the impact of time, regime and other institutional changes on contention.

*The Velasco Data File*

This data file offers information on 2,443 individual episodes of social contention that occurred between the years 1991 and 2002, in all 32 Colombian departments, and in different neighborhoods, towns and cities. The original data file is organized into 2,443 rows and 33 columns. Each row equals one case or episode of social contention (e.g., the Buenaventura episode described in the Preface of the dissertation is one of 2,443 cases). The columns represent variables and have information on the date, locality (city, neighborhood, department), actions (i.e., protest, takeover), actors involved (i.e., urban residents, students, and peasants), motives evoked, and government responses. However, this data file lacks complete information on traditional labor conflict because information on labor strikes is not easily gathered from reading newspapers. However, the Velasco File provides information on workers when they joined or supported the protests of other social actors, particularly urban residents. The 2,443 observations can be aggregated into yearly totals by departments, and into yearly observations for Colombia from 1991 until 2002.

The data in the Velasco Data File is based on my review of García (1990), the news synopses published in *Cien Días*, and my own newspaper readings. The same ten newspapers listed in footnote 12 were read for the years when data was missing or incomplete (1991, 1994, 1998-2002). Appendix 1 at the end of the dissertation presents the protocol that served as an instrument to collect newspaper data for the Velasco Data File. This protocol was inspired by García's (1990) publication of four years of civil strikes, wherein she organized quantitative information on the actors, motives, place,

date, entity to which demand was directed, and initial government reaction to the mobilizations. After reading a few years of newspaper clippings, I also found that those are the most common variables covered by media reports of contentious acts, though frequently no particulars on government reaction are given.

Tarrow (1989) provided additional orientation for the design of a protocol to collect and organize newspaper data.<sup>10</sup> In his study of Italian protests, Tarrow discusses the practical and theoretical limitations of using quantitative data to study protests. Among the shortcomings of adding up protest events quantitatively, Tarrow lists the inability to grasp the ideological commitment and “deeply felt goals” of the actors, to measure actions that occur in the private sphere or out of the media’s sight, and to track the networks, the strategic calculations and inside processes followed by social movement organizations (Tarrow 1989, 28). What is observed in quantitative measurements of social movement activity based on newspaper analysis is what the press chooses to cover. This brings on another set of concerns, the most worrisome of which is

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<sup>10</sup> Tarrow presents a useful “Protest Event Protocol” (1989, 349-356) to codify variables in order to make the reading and analysis of newspaper data more efficient for a quantitative study. Although useful, I found his protocol too extensive. For the Italian study Tarrow had various research assistants who could codify and look for many more variables in the newspaper *Corriere della Sera* (ideological character of the actors, object of protest, cognate protests, property damage, police presence, sanctions, number of wounded and killed, statements, and policy responses). In addition, Tarrow (1989, 357) cites the following works as important references for developing proper tools for newspaper analysis: Roberto Franzosi, “From Words to Numbers: A Generalized and Linguistics-based Coding Procedure for Collecting Event-data from Newspapers” (Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin. Unpublished, 1987a) and “The Press as a Source of Socio-historical Data: Issues in the Methodology of Data Collection from Newspapers” (*Historical Methods* 20: 5-16, 1987b); Robert Schweitzer and Steven Simmons, “Interactive, Direct-Entry Approaches to Gathering Contentious Events Files” (*Social Science History*, 5: 317-42, 1981); and Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1978); “GBS + GCL = ?” (*Connections* 10: 94-105, 1987a) and “Twenty Years of British Contention” (Center for Studies of Social Change, New School for Social Research Working Paper No. 52, 1987b).

the likelihood of biased coverage of events in favor of the political views of the newspaper's editors or what the paper perceives as newsworthy for its market of readers.

However, I found that newspaper coverage of social contention in Colombia is fairly descriptive, with information on what happened, who participated and why, and what their demands were. Little analysis was provided of the political-economic context that frames politics (i.e., whose interests prevail in government policy and the significance of this). In addition, journalists very often left out substantial information on the organizations, negotiations, political importance, discourse or ideologies of the protesters. Longer journalistic reports included direct quotes from leaders or participants that provided clues as to discourse and ideology.

Labor contention in Colombia, however, is more likely to receive biased coverage. Center-right newspapers use the opportunity to blame labor for preventing necessary economic reforms or for constituting a privileged political group that uses its power to redistribute scarce resources in its favor, thus distorting the economy. In addition, journalists or press bureaus may decide not to cover small or "unimportant" events. This problem was addressed by analyzing newspapers across the political spectrum. These are:

(1) National newspapers: *El Tiempo* (center/center-right, "pro-government"), *El Espectador* (politically progressive or "center-left"), *Voz*, the Communist Party's newspaper (left), *El Nuevo Siglo* (right), and *La República* (business newspaper, roughly center-right); (2) regional newspapers which are mostly centrist or center-right: *El País* (published in Cali, covers the southwest), *El Mundo* (published in Medellín, covers the northwest), *El Colombiano* (published in Medellín), *Vanguardia Liberal* (published in Bucaramanga, covers the east), and *El Heraldo* (published in Barranquilla, covers the Caribbean coast).

*El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and the five regional newspapers provided the majority of coverage. I found little coverage in *El Nuevo Siglo* and *La República*. The Communist Party's paper (*Voz*) supplied a leftist analysis of important social movements and covered a few events that other newspapers did not cover. Regardless of the limitations of media analysis, the newspaper study has yielded a rich set of data.

The newspaper coverage of contention registered a wide set of actors, the most important of which are listed and described in Appendix 2. Although only three categories (urban residents, peasants, and students) constitute more than 70% of the cases, a significant number of additional actors at one point or another have been contentious. The chief set of circumstances that led people to identify as one type of group or social actor seems to include conditions that diminished their dignity and capacities as human beings, citizens, workers or consumers of a service (i.e., victims of violence, users of utility services, debtors, homeless people); place of origin or institutional linkage (i.e., students, residents of a community, government officials, prisoners, religious actors); labor conditions and relations to the means of production, including land (i.e., formal, rural, white-collar workers, peasants, owners of transportation vehicles); and ascribed characteristics that predispose some people to be excluded from access to social and economic goods (i.e., women, Afro-Colombians, Indians).

Appendix 3 describes the set of demands placed contentiously by social actors. For the most part, social actors protested because of conditions that reduced their material and political welfare, and roughly 42% of their motivations can be simply described as

demands for a better quality of life. Protesters generally requested governmental intervention to prevent poverty, guarantee housing, improve social and utility services, or alleviate the effects of deteriorating environmental and public safety conditions. They also demanded governmental protection of their rights to life, liberty, property (e.g., titles to land or real state), personal security, and freedom of association (19%). An important number of protests (18.4%) were against government policies aimed at evicting informal vendors from public areas or reducing coca cultivations. Topping the list of complaints against the government were protests against corruption, abuse of power, neglect, and the violation of pacts between the government and any set of social actors (16.8%), as well as against the privatization of state-owned companies, budget cuts, and tax increases (15.7%).

Appendix 4 lists the main types of contentious actions (or repertoires of contention) observed in the Velasco File. Most of these actions were categorized as mobilizations, or peaceful and very symbolic actions such as marches, demonstrations or rallies, and protests, or the more violent events that include clashes with the police, revolts or riots. Appendix 5 offers summary statistics of the entities that were the targets of contentious action and their response. The national government received most of the claims, followed by municipal and departmental governments. The most frequent government response was to negotiate with contentious actors, followed by accepting some of the demands (usually after some negotiation). Finally, Appendix 6 lists the number of contentious events in each of Colombia's 32 departments, and the Capital City of Bogotá between 1991 and 2002.

### **Independent Variables: State and Citizen Capacity**

This section describes the variables used to construct state and citizen capacity indices, which were taken from government sources such as the Bank of the Republic, the National Department for Planning (DNP), the National Administrative Department for Statistics (DANE), and from the World Bank's data files. However, some of the indicators of state and citizen capacities only go back to 1964 (and others only to 1976), which limits my independent variables to 37 years (the CINEP file provides 43 years of observations for social contention).

#### *The State and Citizen Capacity Variables*

Before describing how state and citizen capacities were measured, a short discussion on how these variables relate to each other is warranted. For one, the use of “state” and “citizen” categories assumes that both can be studied as independent sociopolitical phenomena. Secondly, since citizenship is defined as both membership in a political community and a set of rights given by states to persons within their jurisdictions, it cannot be conceived without reference to the state. Nevertheless, separating citizenship from the state is done to appraise the socioeconomic and political conditions that constrain rights-bearing polity members when they engage in political action.

This dissertation draws on measures of years of schooling, GDP per capita, literacy or political freedoms to gauge the structural and political conditions that have an effect on the exercise of citizenship. And, it uses macroeconomic indicators as factors that limit state capacity (e.g. international constraints) or as measures of a state's capacity



to carry out its prerogatives (e.g., provide security or contribute to economic development). The following criteria guided the selection of variables for gauging the concepts of state and citizen capacities: statistics that assess the political freedoms and socioeconomic well-being of persons (e.g., life expectancy, education, wages) are used to measure citizen capacity. State capacity, on the other hand, is measured with internal and external macro-economic statistics, and with indicators that gauge the state's control of people and resources within its territory.

#### The State Capacity Indicators for Colombia

State capacities are differentiated by whether they allow states to pursue their goals at the national or international level. These capacities are divided into three dimensions: (a) control of people and resources within the state's jurisdiction, (b) economic or policy capacities, and (c) "international restrictions" (McAdam et al. 2001, 78). Control of jurisdiction and policy capacities gauges how well the state controls and commands its society, but also how much protection it offers to citizens and their properties. International restrictions estimate the impact that foreign states and other international sociopolitical actors have on the Colombian state.

*Control of People, Activities and Resources.* This dimension measures the degree to which the state finances its spending requirements by taxing commercial activities and private assets,<sup>11</sup> administers its budget (i.e., controls its fiscal deficit), and limits inflationary pressures on internal market activities. The percent of the budget derived from taxes measures the government's efforts to finance itself by increasing taxes on

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<sup>11</sup> Sales of goods and services; taxes on cigarettes, gasoline and alcohol; and property and income taxes, among others.

internal activities. It also serves as a measure of the government's capacity to control internal resources by commanding the payment of these taxes. The variable used to measure this dimension is the percent of the budget that comes from taxing internal activities from 1958 until 2000 (Source: National Department of Planning statistics or DNP 1998; 2002).

Fiscal policy should be aimed at providing public goods, redistributing income, maintaining macroeconomic stability, and/or prioritizing job creation (Bonilla and González 2003). However Colombia's fiscal policy priorities are not set internally and are highly dependent on International Monetary Fund rules. Since Colombia's fiscal deficits have been largely financed with external debt, the IMF prescribes policies that promote social austerity and privatization to free up resources to make debt payments. Seeing that debt interests are taking up increasing percentages of the budget (in recent years more than 36%), the government's obligations to its international creditors have further compromised economic growth and development in the decade of the 1980s and 1990s (Bonilla and González 2003). The fiscal deficit as a percent of the GDP from 1958-2000 will be used to measure fiscal policy (DNP 1998; 2002). In this dissertation, then, a high fiscal deficit will stand for lowered state capacities.

The rate of inflation measures whether the government is applying expansionary or restrictive monetary policies. Expansive monetary policies are positive if they redistribute income to generate employment and salary increases that benefit the poor. But uncontrolled expansive policies that increase the rate of inflation have negative effects on economic growth and poverty reduction if confidence in financial markets

deteriorates, reducing investment and capital formation. Another negative effect is that the purchasing power of salaries is reduced. Compared to other Latin American countries, Colombia has maintained relatively moderate inflation rates that don't go beyond 35%. In the 1990s inflation rates have been reduced to one-digit numbers. The inflation rate from 1958 until 2000 will be taken to assess monetary capacities (DNP 1998; 2002). A high inflation rate will be a measure of lowered state capacities.

The control of people and activities dimension also assesses the state's ability to protect the properties and liberties of polity members. This aspect is measured with the kidnappings series, a phenomenon that overwhelmingly affects wealthier people, as well as politicians and members of the state's armed forces whose abduction is used by guerrillas to pressure the state politically. Kidnappings are also related to the escalation of the armed conflict. An increasing number of kidnappings (and other crimes such as homicides and random assaults) creates a sense of general insecurity that affects the economy by discouraging investment or increasing capital flight. If providing protection is one of the state's principal functions,<sup>12</sup> then uncontrolled armed groups diminish state capacities. The number of kidnappings from 1964 until the year 2000 will gauge state protection (DNP 1998; 2002). A high number of kidnappings will suggest lowered capacity.

*Economic or Policy Capacities.* The Colombian population's most important public policy demands include socioeconomic development and the end of the armed conflict. Therefore, this dimension of capacity for the Colombian state will assess the

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<sup>12</sup> See Tilly (1985), who argues that states consolidate themselves by providing protection to their internal "clients," or those who pay by way of taxes for protection from their internal enemies.

extent to which the state responds to these two demands by promoting economic growth; allocating more of its spending to education, sanitation, infrastructure, housing, and social security; and increasing expenditure on justice and security (as in military and police). Economic and policy capacities are measured with the annual gross domestic product growth for the years 1958-2000 (World Bank 2002), social spending as percent of total government revenue for the years 1958-2000, spending on justice and security as percent of total government revenue for the years 1958-2000, and spending on infrastructure as a percent of total revenue for the years 1958-2000. All the spending statistics were taken from DNP (1998; 2002). Higher measures of GDP growth and the spending indicators indicate higher capacities.

*International Constraints.* Colombia's development relies on the availability of external resources like capital and markets for primary goods. However, the country's main exports are primary products, which are vulnerable to international fluctuations in the terms of trade. Furthermore, foreign debt is growing, and the government has to comply with agreements signed between it and multilateral organizations. Such agreements become national policies that are not always compatible with the country's development priorities, or the population's policy demands. The government often cuts spending on key development issues such as education, health or investment in economic growth in order to free resources to pay debt interests. Finally, the external balance on goods and services or the balance of trade can increase indebtedness when the country imports more than it exports. If internal production is reduced (as is the case when

internally produced foodstuffs are imported), jobs are lost, and a negative external balance of trade results in economic decline.

International constraints were measured with the foreign debt from 1958 until 2000 (DNP 1998; 2002), foreign aid as a percent of Gross National Income from 1960 until 2000,<sup>13</sup> and the external balance of goods and services from 1958 until 2000 (World Bank 2002). A high external debt and foreign aid indicates lower state capacities, and a positive external balance indicates increased capacities.

#### The Citizen Capacity Indicators

Citizen capacities are here conceived as access to rights but also to wealth and income to make these rights meaningful. Thus, capacity is conceptualized in terms of (1) socioeconomic welfare and (2) protected consultation. Socioeconomic welfare improves when people have access to sufficient income, education, health or employment to meet their material necessities. Protected consultation improves when the state promotes the fundamental rights of its citizens. The dimensions of this independent variable are assessed with different indicators at the country level, as described below.

*Socioeconomic Welfare.* This dimension of citizen capacity evaluates changes that result from the socioeconomic development process, and that have an effect on the population's welfare. As societies develop or become more affluent, scarcity should lessen and the population's access to better living conditions should improve. Even in a poor developing country such as Colombia, some of these improvements can be

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<sup>13</sup> These statistics record international transfer by donors of financial resources or of goods or services to a developing country.

observed. For example, life expectancy at birth has improved and records a major positive change in the population's welfare.

Economic and material deprivations are defined in terms of unemployment, wages and concentration of wealth. The percent of the working-age population that is unemployed and looking for work measures deprivation, as jobless people have a higher probability of falling into poverty or losing economic security. The average urban minimum wage monitors salary fluctuations and whether or not these have improved over time. The indicators that measure the socioeconomic welfare and lifestyle changes dimensions of citizen capacities at the national level include (a) the rate of unemployment<sup>14</sup> from 1963-2000 (DNP 1998; 2002); (b) the minimum urban wage<sup>15</sup> from 1958 until 2000 (DNP 1998; 2002); and (c) life expectancy at birth for the years 1958-2000 (World Bank 2002). High unemployment suggests lower citizen capacities, while higher wages and life expectancy at birth indicate increasing capacities for citizens.

*Protected Consultation.* This component of citizen capacity takes into account rights (provided and protected by the government), as well as the political and economic conditions that encourage independent citizen associations and the strengthening of contentious actors. The rights dimension is measured using indicators that assess the expansion of liberties. Political liberalization can be tested using dummies for the reforms that were designed to improve the relationship between government and citizens.

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<sup>14</sup> The series uses the September unemployment rate for Colombia's seven largest cities. Since unemployment rates are measured monthly, I used the September indicator because that is the month chosen by the International Labor Organization and the Economic Council on Latin America and the Caribbean to observe unemployment in Colombia.

<sup>15</sup> This statistic was computed by dividing each year's nominal wage (which is not corrected for inflation) by that year's Consumer Price Index and then multiplied by 100. The CPI is used to standardize nominal wages and prices for inflation so that their real fluctuations can be compared over time.

The conditions that affect citizen possibilities to associate include years of schooling and violence. Years of schooling provides a rough idea of how long, on average, people have been exposed to the educational system, wherein they learn to read and write, and receive general information about political institutions, such as voting and citizen rights, and some basic information about history and civics. Schools also serve as centers where community affairs are socialized, and where people are trained to participate in the democratic process. Thus, growing exposure to formal schooling can support the formation of independent organizations or give people more tools to pressure the government. The homicide rate includes murders attributable to street crime, drug trafficking and sociopolitical violence. It is widely used as an indicator of violence in its economic, social and political forms.

The first local election of mayors in 1987 and the *tutela* mechanism (the legal resource made available to citizens to use the courts to protect basic rights) of 1994 are measured as two dichotomous variables (0=years when reform was not in place, and 1=years after implementation). Thus, the first local election of mayors variable has a 0 from 1964 until 1986, and a 1 from 1987 until 2000. The *tutela* mechanism has a 0 from 1964 until 1993, and a 1 from 1994 until 2000. Other indicators include (a) the homicide rate per 100,000 people from 1964-2000 (DNP 1998; 2002); and (b) the average number of years of school attendance 1958-2000 (DNP 1998; 2000). A measure of 1 for local elections and 1 for the *tutela* mechanism suggests higher citizen capacities, a high homicide rate points to lowered capacities, and a high number for years of schooling points to increased capacities.

### **Constructing State and Citizen Capacity Indices with Factor Analysis**

Since concepts such as state and citizen capacities can be gauged with an array of empirical indicators—as shown in the previous sections—grouping the indicators associated with each concept into smaller, but highly correlated sets or groups, facilitates their utility in statistical testing. Factor analysis is a procedure that identifies the correlation between a large number of related indicators and separates them into a few factors. With the SPSS factor analysis function, indices were created to measure the concepts of “citizen” and “state” capacities. Using principle component as the extraction method, SPSS computes a score that is a linear combination of the indicators associated empirically with each of the factors linked to the concept of state and citizen capacities weighted by their importance. This produces factor scores—or values for each case—which constitute a smaller, more manageable set of measures for these concepts. The scores can then be used to show trends over time or carry on more complex statistical analyses. Principal Factoring with Iterations Solution was run on eleven variables for state capacity (Table 2.1 lists the variables) and on seven variables for citizen capacity (see Table 2.2). A varimax rotation generated the maximum distinction between the factors by isolating the independent dimensions between variables.

To simplify the analysis, a number of variables were recoded to change their directionality, so that a higher value always points to higher state or citizen capacities (Appendix 8 explains how this was done with each indicator). Recoded variables have been labeled “reversed measures” of the original indicator. To change their directionality, I subtracted each yearly case from the time-series highest indicator. For



example, in the kidnapping series the year 1999 registered the highest number of people kidnapped, which was 3,706. Since I assume that a high number of kidnappings points to low state capacity, the directionality of this indicator had to be changed. To produce a “reversed measure” I subtracted the “kidnappings” series from that series’ highest indicator ( $3706 - \text{kidnappings series} = \text{reversed measure}$ ). This turned 3,706 into 0, the lowest point for state capacity in the “reversed kidnappings” series. In turn, the lowest indicator (44 kidnappings in 1979) became 3,662, the highest point for state capacity in the “reversed kidnappings” series. Further information on why other variables were reversed will be offered below, when all the citizen and state capacity factors are discussed.

### *The State Capacity Factors*

**Table 2.1.** Loadings of State Capacity Variables on Two Factors (Colombia 1964-2000). Rotated Component Matrix.\*

Variables	<u>Component 1</u> Fiscal and Jurisdictional State Capacity Index (Fiscal Index for short)	<u>Component 2</u> Monetary and Policy State Capacity Index (Policy Index for short)
Reversed Measure of External Debt	0.91	
Reversed Measure of Number of Kidnappings	0.91	
Central Government Deficit	0.82	-0.26
GDP Growth	0.75	
Reversed Measure of Aid as % of Gross National Income	-0.63	-0.58
% Government Budget from Taxes	0.52	-0.36
Reversed Measure of Inflation Rate		0.90
% Spending on Infrastructure		0.81
% Government Spending on Justice and Security	-0.41	0.79
% Social Spending as of total revenue		-0.76
External Balance on Goods and Services as % of GDP		-0.59
Total Variance Explained	34.50	32.40

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

\*Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

This exercise produced two factors for state capacity. Six variables had high loadings in the first component of which two measure international constraints on fiscal capacities (debt and aid), three measure control of resources and activities in the government's jurisdiction (deficit, taxes and kidnappings) and one gauges GDP growth, which is an indicator of policy capacity. The first component was labeled the Fiscal and Jurisdictional State Capacity Index (or Fiscal Index for short). Given that a growing external debt, increasing number of kidnappings, and dependence on foreign aid point to lessened state capacities, these indicators were reversed so that a higher number in each of the series corresponds to a comparatively higher point for state capacity.

Five indicators loaded into the second component, of which three measure government spending priorities and one measures the external balance. This component was labeled the Monetary and Policy State Capacity Index (or the Policy Index for short). Finally, since a growing rate of inflation means decreased government capacities (to control the monetary system), this indicator was reversed so that a higher number means a relatively higher point for state capacity. The two state capacity indices are plotted in Figure 3.1 and discussed in Chapter 3.

#### *The Citizen Capacity Factors.*

Principal Factoring with Iterations Solution was also run on seven citizen capacity variables (see Table 2.2). Two variables were also recoded to change their directionality so that a higher value always indicates higher citizen capacities. Recoded variables have also been labeled "reversed measures." A high number of homicides and a growing rate of unemployment indicate lowered citizen political and economic capacities in the

original series. Therefore, these two indicators were recoded so that the higher numbers stand for fewer homicides and better employment conditions.

**Table 2.2.** Loadings of Citizen Capacity Variables on Two Factors (Colombia 1964-2000). Rotated Component Matrix.\*

Variables	<u>Component 1</u>	<u>Component 2</u>
	Citizen Capacity Index	
Reversed Measure of Homicide Rate	-0.96	
Local Elections of Mayors	0.93	
Years of Schooling (National Average)	0.92	
Life Expectancy at Birth	0.91	
Implementation of <i>Tutela</i>	0.81	-0.24
Minimum Urban Wage	-0.77	
Reversed Measure of Unemployment Rate		0.99
Total Variance Explained	67.79	14.79

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

\*Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

This chapter has presented the quantitative data with which contentious politics will be studied in Colombia. It describes the two sets of data organized for the study of social contention, and lays out the indicators used to test the dissertation's hypotheses using each of the data files.

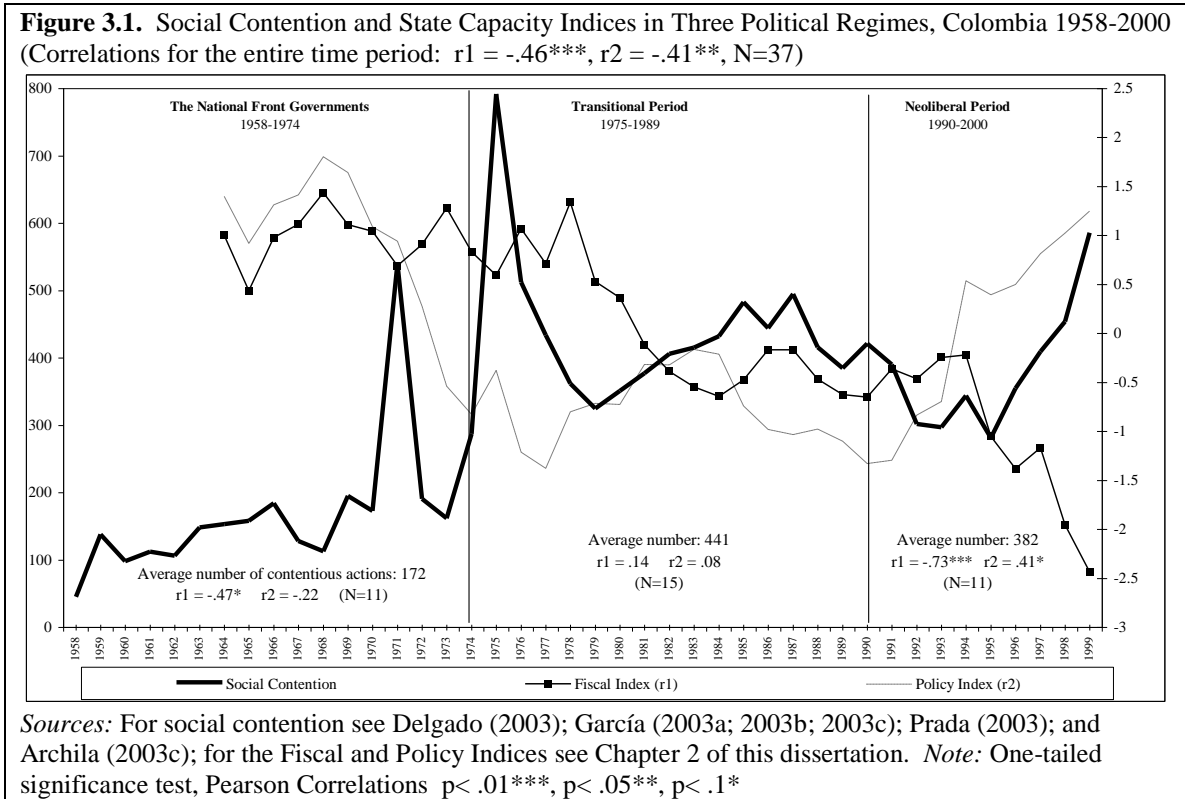
## **CHAPTER 3. STATE AND CITIZEN CAPACITIES IN THREE POLITICAL REGIMES**

Before undertaking the statistical analysis of the relationship between social contention and the indices constructed in Chapter 2, this chapter offers the reader a brief description of Colombia's distinctive political and economic development during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After this, Chapter 5 will present an analysis of labor, peasant, urban resident, and student contention. The present chapter considers as well the main developments in Colombian politics between 1958 and 2000, and divides these developments into three political regimes: The National Front (1958-1974), the Transitional Period (1975-1989) and the Neoliberal Period (1990-2000). As Chapter 5 will show, this political history has a great deal of relevance in analyzing the determinants of social contention in Colombia.

### **Social Contention, and State and Citizen Capacities in Three Political Regimes**

This section offers a description of how the three key variables in my study evolved over time. The contention series aggregates labor, peasant, urban, student, and "other actor" protests, and is set against three different political regimes. A brief look at Figures 3.1 and 3.2, which cross the social contention data (the dependent variable) with state and citizen capacity indices (the independent variables), suggests that contentious actions have followed an increasing tendency over time. During the National Front's less democratic rule, contentious actions averaged 150 per year, with the exception of 1971, when more than 500 events were recorded as a result of widespread land invasions carried on by peasants. At the end of the 1960s and early seventies, the number of

protests increased to an average of 400 events per year, as social discontent with Colombia's restricted democracy spread.



Contention grew during the Transitional Period because of deteriorating economic conditions and enduring dissatisfaction with the lack of opportunities to participate in the policy process. During this period there were on average 440 protests every year, except for the 1975 historical peak when more than 750 events were observed. The 1975 crest coincides with the end of the National Front and the beginning of a new administration that raised popular expectations for increased political participation and socioeconomic reforms, but failed to comply. Contention was reduced between the years 1977 and 1981 as a result of government repression. After 1982, social contention rose, as governments

lessened repression but failed to deliver reforms that would both ease the population's economic predicaments and open meaningful channels of political participation.

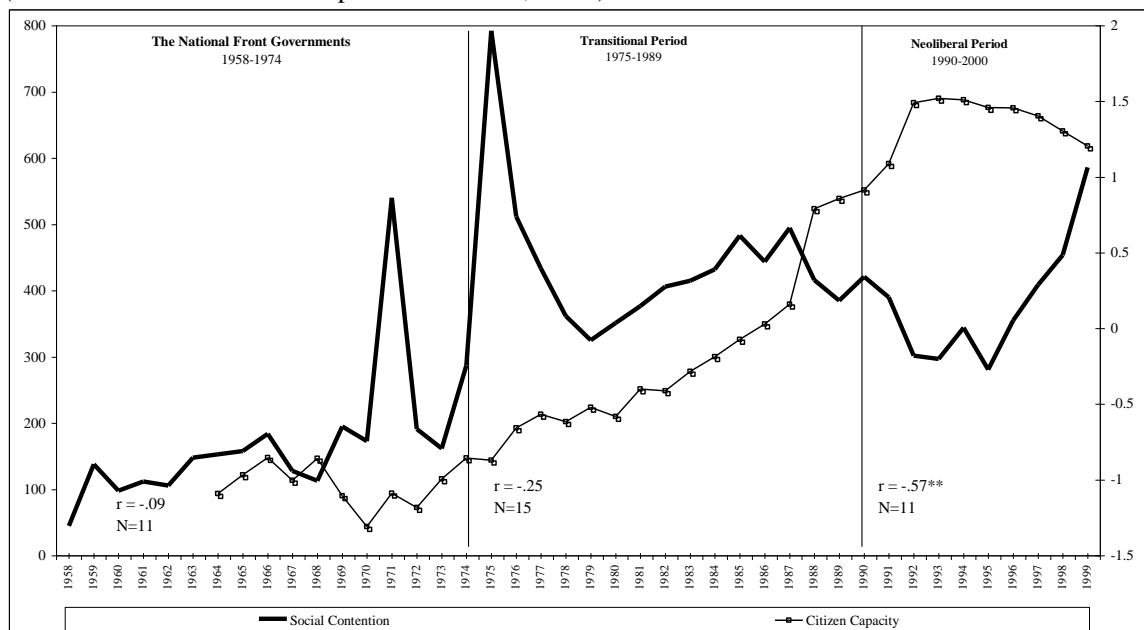
Contentious actions went down for a while during the Neoliberal Period when democratic institutions adjusted to increased economic liberalization and more democratic channels of participation. The average number of contentious events during these governments fell to 380, although in 1999 more than 500 protests were recorded as a result of economic crisis. Finally, contention increased at the end of the 1990s, in response to the austerity and privatization measures produced by the market reforms that reduced government spending. And as violence increased, peasants, students and members of the middle class mobilized for the respect of life and human rights.

Figure 3.1 also plots the State indices. The Fiscal Index shows that Colombian state capacities declined dramatically. For most of the National Front period the government on average had a low fiscal deficit of less than 1% of the GDP. After 1979, governments have produced average deficits of 2.4%, largely financed by foreign debt. Increasing debt obligations result in fiscal policy restrictions following IMF austerity recommendations. The decades of the 1960s and 1970s also had higher, and more robust, growth rates (averaging 5%) than did most of the eighties and nineties. The Fiscal Index begins to drop after 1979 as debt increases, the armed conflict becomes overt, and growth declines.

The Policy Index shows that state capacities were relatively high from 1964 through 1971, and low between 1974 and 1993, after which they begin to improve. In comparison with other governments, the National Front spent more of its budget on

modernizing the country's infrastructure. They also increased spending on security to contain the remnants of previous violence. These governments kept relatively low inflation rates, but they allotted a comparatively higher percent of their budgets to social spending (e.g., an average of 40%) than subsequent governments did. The neoliberal governments began to reduce the inflation rate, and allocated more of their resources to infrastructure and spending on justice and security in order to attract foreign investors and offset the illegally armed groups and drug traffickers.

**Figure 3.2.** Social Contention and Citizen Capacity in Three Political Regimes, Colombia 1958-2000 (Correlation for the entire time period:  $r = .29^{**}$ ,  $N=37$ )



Sources: For social contention, Delgado (2003); García (2003a; 2003b; 2003c); Prada (2003); and Archila (2003c); for Citizen Capacity see Chapter 2 of this dissertation. Note: One-tailed significance test, Pearson Correlations  $p < .01^{***}$ ,  $p < .05^{**}$ ,  $p < .1^*$

In Figure 3.2 the Citizen Capacities Index increases steadily from 1970 until 1990 as a result of socioeconomic advances that improved life expectancy and levels of education, and of political reforms that expanded government-citizen relationships. Notwithstanding these advances, Colombians have only an elementary school level of

education and are affected by high rates of poverty and unemployment. Deteriorating wages, increasing unemployment and a higher murder rate explain why the index is dropping after 1995.

The simple bivariate line charts do not show a consistent and clear relationship between social contention, the regimes and state and citizen capacities. Notwithstanding, between 1964 and 2000, the Pearson Correlations reveal a negative and statistically significant link between social contention and state capacities, and a significant and positive correlation between contention and citizen capacities. However, if we look at the correlations within regimes we obtain a more puzzled image.

For example, there is a significant and negative correlation between the Fiscal Index and social contention during the National Front and Neoliberal periods. But there is also a positive and significant correlation between the Policy Index and social contention, and a negative and significant link between contention and Citizen Capacities during the Neoliberal period. Thus, further statistical analysis will be needed to evaluate the validity of the general proposition that state and citizen capacity failures together explain social contention. This analysis will be done in Chapter 5.

The following section offers a qualitative account of the relationship between social contention and state and citizen capacities. It will first describe Colombia's political system, followed by a brief history the 1930s and 1940s. The section concludes with an analysis of the last fifty years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by dividing the governments of this period into three distinctive political regimes—the National Front, Transitional and



Neoliberal Governments—that had significant effects on social contention, as well as on the development of state and citizen capacities.

### **The Colombian Political System and its Origins**

The Republic of Colombia's system of government is presidential. It has a bicameral legislative branch with 102 members in the Senate and 166 in the House of Representatives. Members of Congress are elected by popular vote through a system of proportional representation to serve four-year terms. There are four roughly equal, supreme judicial organs: the Supreme Court of Justice is the highest court of criminal law; the Council of State is the highest court of administrative law; the Constitutional Court rules on the constitutionality of laws, amendments to the constitution, and international treaties; and the Superior Judicial Council oversees the civilian judiciary, and settles jurisdictional conflicts arising between other courts. Colombia's judicial system is undergoing a process of transition from an inquisitorial system based on Spanish Law to an adversary system present in Common Law countries. Colombia's administrative division consists of 32 departments, the capital district of Bogotá, and 1,050 municipalities. Since the 1986 electoral reforms, governors, mayors and members of departmental and municipal assemblies have been elected by popular vote. Prior to that they were chosen by the President.

Until 1991, when a new constitution was implemented, democratic rule in Colombia was often restricted by presidential decrees that declared states of siege or “states of exception” that allowed the president to suspend basic constitutional guarantees (e.g., habeas corpus, search warrants, as well as the rights of free association, and

expression) in order to contain threats to public order (Gallón 1979). The new constitution, nonetheless, grants the executive branch ample powers to decree sweeping macroeconomic and political adjustments during periods of economic emergency. With these powers, the executive is able to pass unpopular policies (e.g., the privatization of state companies), thus avoiding congressional approval and popular pressures. In essence, then, hyper-presidentialism qualifies Colombia as a delegative democracy (O'Donnell 1994) where at best, only the weak foundations of polyarchy have been laid.

### **Historical Background up to 1958**

Colombia's Liberal and Conservative political parties are blamed for preventing the formation of relatively autonomous state institutions capable of subduing conflict (Sánchez 1991). The Liberal and Conservative parties were consolidated around the middle of the nineteenth century as multi-class organizations based more on territorial and family allegiances than on clear-cut political or ideological differences. More often than not, party identity was passed on through generations of a family or attributed to anyone who lived in a region where one of the parties had a majority of followers. Even if the traditional parties endorsed private property rights and free trade, on social and political matters the Conservative party adhered less closely to liberal values (e.g., separation of church and state, political decentralization, religious and political freedoms) and the Liberals less to Catholic religious values (Colmenares 1997).

Although the political parties used electoral mechanisms to compete for control of government, differences over the balance of regional power often led them to armed confrontations (Sánchez 1991). Despite their discrepancies, for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and well

into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, party elites accorded semi-stable bipartisan ruling pacts to pacify the country, resolve their disagreements, control “third-party” political rivals or suppress popular organizations (Guillén 1986).

**Table 3.1.** Colombian Presidents, 1934-2002

Year	President	Political Party Affiliation
1934	Alfonso López Pumarejo	Liberal
1938	Eduardo Santos	Liberal
1942	Alfonso López Pumarejo	Liberal
1946	Mariano Ospina Pérez	Conservative
1950	Laureano Gómez	Conservative
1953	Gustavo Rojas Pinilla	President by military coup
1957	Military Junta	
<u>National Front Governments</u>		
1958	Alberto Lleras Camargo	Liberal
1962	Guillermo León Valencia	Conservative
1966	Carlos Lleras Restrepo	Liberal
1970	Misael Pastrana	Conservative
<u>Transitional Governments</u>		
1974	Alfonso López Milchensen	Liberal
1978	Julio César Turbay Ayala	Liberal
1982	Belisario Betancur	Conservative
1986	Virgilio Barco	Liberal
<u>Neoliberal Governments</u>		
1990	César Gaviria	Liberal
1994	Ernesto Samper	Liberal
1998	Andrés Pastrana	Conservative
2002	Álvaro Uribe Vélez	Independent

Fourteen such agreements resulted in bipartisan government coalitions that shared power equally, the most important of which were the National Front governments of 1958-1974 (Kline 1995). In these bipartisan governments, elites share power exclusively, which explains why Colombia’s state has traditionally sustained gradual social reforms and supported measures to maintain economic and financial stability (Jaramillo et al.

1999; Edwards and Steiner 2000). It also explains why populist or socialist governments with their respective redistributive economic policies did not materialize in Colombia.<sup>16</sup>

The first important efforts to develop the state after independence in 1810 came in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At this time, bipartisan hacienda owners and party leaders were spurred by a developing international market for tropical products, and replaced colonial-era institutions with liberal land, labor and trade institutions in order to export tobacco (König 1994). These liberal reforms, however, recognized neither poor farmers' legal claims to own property, nor the political rights of most Colombians. The federalist governments of the 1860s and 1870s enhanced sub-national state capacities. The centralist governments of the late 1890s designed the 1886 Constitution that ruled the country until 1991, and concentrated power in the national government, particularly in the executive branch (Melo 1989).

The next important period for state development came in the 1920s and 1930s. Again, international factors were an important driving force of change. For instance, Conservative President Pedro Nel Ospina (1922-1926) appointed the 1923 Edwin Kemmerer Commission that built the Bank of the Republic, or the institution entrusted with issuing Colombian legal tender, administering international reserves, acting as banker to the Government and serving as lender of last resort. In addition, foreign and national capitalists who had investments in railroads, telegraphs, ports and agriculture also pressed for institutional reforms to organize a labor market and protect their

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<sup>16</sup> Edwards and Dornbusch (1992, 17) define populism as a development model that privileges growth and redistribution of income, and ignores inflation, deficit spending, external restrictions and the demands of economic agents who favor market reforms.

properties from the sort of sociopolitical instability characteristic of the region's governmental affairs (Colmenares 1989).

*The Liberal Reforms (1934-1945)*

Starting in the 1930s, the political system underwent a series of liberal reforms when the Liberal party initiated an extended period of greater state regulation of the economy and expansion of social rights. The Liberals developed the country's state institutions in order to maintain social stability and promote internal economic development. At this time, Colombia's export sector subsided as a result of the 1929 collapse of capitalist markets that reduced the international demand for agricultural products. In the face of economic recession, labor unrest, and increasing popular demands for social reforms, the liberals sanctioned a small but important labor movement and legitimated the land claims of peasants. This loosened the power over public affairs held by the traditional parties, but especially by the Conservatives (Tirado 1989).

The administration of the Liberal Alfonso López Pumarejo (1934-1938) launched the "Revolution on the March," a political project that included a land reform, and the legalization of labor organization. The institutions designed to increase the economic and social role of the state included the Institute of Municipal Promotion, which funded public works such as aqueducts and sanitation projects; the Institute for Industrial Promotion and the Agrarian Bank, which offered economical credits to entrepreneurs and peasants; and the Territorial Credit Institute (later renamed INURBE<sup>17</sup>), which financed the construction of low-income housing. Efforts were also made to modernize public

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<sup>17</sup> National Institute for Low Income Housing and Urban Reform.

education and create a national public radio. Finally, private sector institutions such as the Federation of Coffee Growers and the National Association of Industrialists date back to these years.

The liberal reforms not only modernized the state and increased its welfare role, but they also improved the institutions of citizenship. The institutional transformations of the 1930s went beyond the 1910 reform that granted suffrage rights to all literate men over 21. For example, in 1931 the Liberals legalized labor union organization by allowing freedom of association and assembly, passed legislation to regulate labor contracts, and organized the Ministry of Labor. In 1936, the government delivered an agrarian reform law to grant land rights to peasants, and eliminated the literacy requirement for voting. President Eduardo Santos (1938-1942) was less of a reformist than his predecessor, but his administration nevertheless passed laws to give workers the rights to paid holidays and to rest on Sundays. He also founded arbitration and conciliation committees to settle disputes between labor and management. The second López administration (1942-1945) created the Institute of Social Security, which provided health and pension benefits.

Melo (2002) notes that for the first time in history urban workers and craftsmen began to identify themselves as rights-bearing political subjects. In contrast, large landowners and local strongmen continued to hold paternalistic or authoritarian control over rural populations, keeping the rights of peasants in check. And modernizing state institutions did little to break this control in the countryside. Even if the benefits obtained by Colombian workers during these years were feeble and did not cover the majority of

Colombians, labor reforms legitimated the state and developed the government's social policy and economic capabilities.<sup>18</sup> Such capacities were improved as state oil, telecommunications, water and electricity companies were created; and financial and monetary practices were standardized between 1940 and 1960.

*The Conservative Counter-Reaction (ca. 1946-1953)*

The Liberal reforms of the 1930s were not entirely supported by all partisan elites. The 1936 Land Reform was especially scorned by landowners and right-wing members of both parties, but especially in the conservative ranks (Bushnell 1993). To make matters worse, partisan violence in the countryside was rapidly escalating. The early 1940s were therefore marked by considerable conservative opposition to the Liberal governments, as well as by internal disputes within the Liberal ranks between moderates and an emerging populist current.

Conservative elites were becoming more contentious, and their leader—the right-wing fascist sympathizer and orthodox Catholic Laureano Gómez—manipulated the overwhelmingly conservative military's discontent with the Liberal governments, and maneuvered a 1944 unsuccessful coup in which López was briefly taken prisoner (Bushnell 1993, 197). During his second term in office, López Pumarejo (1942-1945) responded to elite polarization by revising the agrarian reform laws in order to make it more difficult for peasants to own land. López also passed a new labor law that “broadened the definition of ‘public service’ industries where strikes were prohibited”

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<sup>18</sup> Collier and Collier underscore that Latin American states were built and legitimated as governments adapted or incorporated union movement demands into national politics (2002, 41-42).

(Bushnell 1993: 193). The new labor legislation allowed the government to crush regional labor mobilizations and attempts at unionization.

In 1946 a divided Liberal Party lost the presidential election, and a series of Conservative administrations came into office with presidents Mariano Ospina Pérez (1946-1950) and Laureano Gómez (1950-1953). The Conservatives set limits on the liberties that had been granted to workers and male citizens. The lands distributed to peasants by the 1936 agrarian reform law were entirely re-concentrated. Furthermore, one of Gómez's plans was to negotiate a new constitution that would reorganize the Colombian state in order to increase executive authority and exclude all forms of popular representation. As Bushnell puts it, Gómez wanted to modify "institutions in a way that would curb those excesses of liberal democracy that in his estimation opened the door to Marxist influences among other evils" (1993, 213).

Since the United States government expected Latin America to conform to its Cold War geopolitics, curbing the impact of Marxism on its institutions and especially on lower-class organizations was raised to a matter of national security. While in power, Gómez reacted to the liberal reforms by urging his party's rural social bases to take up arms and eliminate liberal sympathizers. Although violence was first used to eliminate political opponents and increase Conservative influence, it was soon utilized by rural entrepreneurs and big landowners to kill or evict peasants who had arable settlements, in order to expand land for capitalist agriculture (Sánchez 1989).

Many sectors of Colombian society were left without representation in government and, worse, without protection from state-sanctioned attacks on their lives



and properties. This was most severe in the rural regions of the Andean departments of Colombia. Furthermore, all the expectations of social reform and new political opportunities for popular participation briefly opened by the liberal elites were completely closed. For example, the Labor Code<sup>19</sup> that was passed in the 1950s restricted the liberal reforms by reducing labor and unionization rights and repressing protests (Archila 1995). In response, groups of peasants, sectors of a growing urban population, and to some extent, labor unions, began to disengage themselves from the traditional parties and started to consider organizational alternatives to the Catholic Conservative elites and the moderate Liberals.

The most important political alternative for Colombia's poor and disenfranchised came from dissident Liberal party leaders such as Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, murdered in 1948, who mobilized lower classes, defended economic distribution and more far-reaching social reforms, but who nevertheless was a one-man political current who failed to organize people at his base. Gaitán had close ties with the Liberal party, but also a vast following among peasants and the urban poor (Alape 1989). More than any other politician of his time, Gaitán voiced the demands for social justice of Colombia's working classes by publicly denouncing, in front of massive audiences, the wrongdoings of the landed oligarchy and party elites. This leader and his massive, multi-class, bipartisan following made traditional party elites very uncomfortable. His assassination in 1948 ignited a spontaneous popular upheaval known as *el Bogotazo*, after which parts

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<sup>19</sup> Código Sustantivo del Trabajo.

of the capital lay in ruins. It also deepened partisan violence, inciting what is known simply as *la Violencia*.

The Communist Party, which had roots in the labor movement, constituted another alternative to the traditional parties. The labor mobilizations of the 1910s and 1920s had nourished a socialist current that in 1924 led to the consolidation of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. This party actively promoted popular protests, shaped the political identity of the early labor movement and provided an organizational framework to represent lower-class demands. In 1930, the Socialist party renamed itself the Colombian Communist Party (PCC). However, when the Liberal party was divided by the dissident Gaitán, the PCC allied itself with Liberal moderates against Gaitán, whom the Communists wrote off as a fascist leader. At any rate, the influence of socialist ideas in the political culture of the peasant, artisan, labor and even the early Indian movement was evident after the twenties and thirties (Vega 2002d).

*La Violencia* (ca. 1948-1954) was a period of violent counter-reform wherein landowners recovered the lands distributed in the late thirties, and enlarged their holdings by violently evicting small landholders. In response to this violence, Liberal rebels in the eastern *llanos* (tropical savannahs) and in the department of Tolima formed armed groups to protect lives and properties from the violent advance of local party bosses. Furthermore, bandits, local strongmen, and common criminals also organized outside the control of the political parties (Sánchez 1989; Meertens and Sánchez 1998). Some of these rebels began to adopt socialist worldviews and matured into the guerrilla movements of the 1960s, the most important of which is the Revolutionary Armed Forces

of Colombia (FARC), still active to this day. The FARC's agenda includes the abolition of private property, land reform and the establishment of a revolutionary state. In short, guerrilla groups initially appeared because of unmet peasant claims for land and protection.

As a result of this upheaval, traditional party elites feared that they had lost control of local politics, and decided to support the government of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla (1953-1958), who defeated the Laureano Gómez administration and took on the pacification of the country. He shared government with civilians, mostly from the Conservative Party, but later tried to rid himself of partisan control. The general unveiled plans for social and economic reforms, and began to empower the labor movement with the objective of building up political support around a military-workers alliance (Bushnell 1993). In addition, under Rojas' mandate, full political and civil rights for women, including suffrage and the right to own property and make contracts, were legalized. Furthermore, labor legislation provided employment stability, social benefits, training programs, and the right to have a pension. It also set up a system that imposed penalties for companies that unjustly dismissed workers.

Rojas ultimately failed to pacify the country and end violence in the countryside. His calls for amnesty were heeded by some of the less radical peasant groups, including the 6,500 Liberal guerrillas from the Llanos who demobilized under the 1953 armistice. Many of the Liberal guerrillas, including their leader, Guadalupe Salcedo, were assassinated soon after. However, Communist groups holding out in the Upper Magdalena River Region, in the department of Tolima, and in the region of Sumapaz

(south of Bogotá), and groups of bandits and common criminals in the Andean departments would not negotiate with Rojas. Rojas soon lost political credibility and the support of the traditional parties when violence in the countryside, led by peasant guerrillas and common bandits, increased. His failure led to the negotiation of the National Front governments, the first regime covered by the data on social contention

### **The National Front Period (1958-1974)**

The National Front governments were the product of a political alliance negotiated by Liberal and Conservative elites to reconcile the differences that had led them to violent partisan strife in the 1950s. Party elites agreed to create the Front to overthrow Rojas and to disband and de-politicize sectors of the lower classes that had associated independently. Thus, the parties came to govern during a period of eroding party loyalties and popular dissatisfaction (Collier and Collier 2002). Notwithstanding, the National Front's institutions were negotiated in a 1957 plebiscite in which more than 4.4 million participated, and only 4.7% voted against the Front.<sup>20</sup> And the Front is credited for ending a long history of partisan conflict, excluding the military from politics, maintaining macroeconomic stability, and sponsoring economic development (Edwards and Steiner 2000).

The bipartisan Front governments represented a coalition of coffee growers, major industrialists and a landed oligarchy. Coffee, industrial and oligarchic organizations steered economic policy to favor their sector's interests and exclude labor and peasants from economic policy-making (Palacios 2001, 14). This coalition also

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<sup>20</sup> Eduardo Pizarro. "Comienza el Frente Nacional," *Semana*, June 27, 2005.

prevented populist, nationalist or state-enlargement ventures. Nevertheless, the Front governments tried to mitigate some of the effects of poverty on living conditions, in part to restrain an increasing Communist infiltration of some sectors of the lower classes.

Under the political guidance of the Alliance for Progress—the US government’s plan for the social and political development of Latin America— policies such as a land reform, and investments in technology, housing, health, education, community services, among others, were implemented (Silva 1989a; 1989b). The Front governments also began to compensate for the lack of internal sources of capital to finance development by seeking credits in the international financial system. These credits were first used to construct infrastructure, enhance state-building activities or modernize key areas of the economy.

The government of the Liberal Carlos Lleras Restrepo (1966-1970) stands out for consolidating the state’s control of the economy. In 1968 Lleras Restrepo reformed the constitution to strengthen the executive branch and expand presidential powers to legislate by decree (Silva 1989). These reforms expanded the public sector and created state institutions for most economic, social, cultural and recreational activities (López 1992). Lleras also placed budget and monetary decisions in the hands of technocrats, rather than traditional politicians. To this day, technocrats come together in the National Planning Department, Ministry of Finance and Central Bank, which are the institutions that decide on matters related to public spending, monetary instruments, and financial and trade policies. Although these institutions enjoy independence from the executive,

legislative and judicial branches, they are not independent from multilateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

Lleras Restrepo stimulated industrialization by following the import-substitution industrialization (ISI) strategies prescribed by Colombian governments since 1945. In the ISI model, national industries produced previously imported basic commodities for an internal market, and the government provided credits and invested directly in industrial development. Nonetheless, transnational corporations invested in technology or capital and participated in joint ventures with Colombian firms in return for doing business in this market. In 1970, an average 60% of all shares in Colombia's industries belonged to international corporations.<sup>21</sup> To produce basic commodities, intermediate and capital goods had to be imported, and local industries were protected.

To support industrialization Lleras Restrepo increased spending, the immediate result of which was a fiscal deficit and higher rates of inflation. The IMF and USAID criticized such macroeconomic imbalances and pressured the government to keep fiscal austerity. The Colombian state then cut back on spending. However, Ocampo (1988) credits the short expansionary cycle of 1966-67, which was complemented with protectionist measures, for increasing exports of some minor industrial goods, producing robust growth and generating employment in the 1970s. The ISI model's dynamism was affected by two main structural restrictions: (1) the country's exports (mainly coffee) did not provide enough foreign currency to import intermediary and capital goods (Ocampo

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<sup>21</sup> Twenty two percent of food, 62% of textiles, 67% of chemical, 80% of transport equipment, 67% of electrical machinery, and 43% of paper manufacturing industry-shares belonged to transnational corporations (Jenkins 1984, cited by Franko 2003, 63).

1988), and (2) with a majority of the population living in poverty, the internal demand for manufactured goods was limited. These restrictions held up industrial expansion into the production of intermediary or capital goods, produced a negative balance of trade, and increased the country's foreign debt in order to finance industrial or infrastructural development.<sup>22</sup>

By 1975, the ISI model in Colombia was brought to an end, and trade liberalization measures allowed the importation of manufactured goods previously produced by local firms (Sarmiento 1992). Nevertheless, the government's efforts to industrialize had significant effects on the structure of economic production, and development. Between 1946 and 1975 the size of the agricultural sector's contribution to the GDP changed from roughly 46 to 24%, and the relative size of the manufacturing sector increased from 14 to 23% (DNP 2002). Further, the industrial workforce grew, increasing the number of unionized workers.

Between 1961 and 1967 a set of mild agrarian reform laws were passed that combined distribution of land and credit with technical assistance. The government of Carlos Lleras Restrepo passed the Agrarian Reform Law of 1966, and organized peasants in the National Peasant Association of Colombia (ANUC) in order to provide services to peasant communities. The Colombian Institute for Agrarian Reform (INCORA), in charge of distributing land and legalizing titles, was created to mediate the land conflict. Peasants grabbed the political opportunities opened by the executive branch, and increasingly mobilized and organized on their own without state support (Silva 1989;

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<sup>22</sup> See Franko (2003) for a discussion of why the ISI model failed in Latin America.

Zamosc 1989; Corredor 1990). The reforms were supported by industrial leaders interested in developing a bigger internal market for industrial consumer goods. They expected that land redistribution would increase rural family incomes, and that wealthier peasants would start consuming industrial goods. The agrarian reform, however, led to a political fallout between the Lleras government and big landowners (Silva 1989). To compensate them and lessen political conflict, the government paid high prices for the properties surrendered by landowners to peasants.

When the Conservative Misael Pastrana (1970-1974) campaigned on limiting the agrarian reform, big landowners seized the opportunity to condemn the work of the Agrarian Reform Institute (INCORA) and raised legal obstacles to stop the distribution of land. President Pastrana struck a deal with large landowners in what was called the Chicoral Pact of 1972, and actively reversed the agrarian reform process of the sixties. The Pact reduced the impact of the INCORA and made it very difficult to expropriate land in favor of peasants.

The Front used states of siege to subdue any defiance that came from below, thus limiting citizenship rights and dissuading the independent formation of civil society organizations (Archila 2003c). These governments discouraged political bargaining and persuaded negotiations between workers and employers under favorable conditions for the latter (Archila 1995). After 1968, Lleras Restrepo banned strikes in those sectors of the economy classified as strategic areas of production and services, such as communications, security, and oil industries (Londoño 1987, 165). But the distinction between strategic and non-strategic sectors was imprecise, and subsequent governments



enlarged the list of economic activities considered strategic in order to further limit striking.

However, some tripartite institutions representing workers, government and employers were created to manage labor relations.<sup>23</sup> For example, the National Salary Council was founded in 1959 (by Law 187), uniting representatives from the Ministers of Labor, Finance and Agriculture, and delegates from worker and employer organizations to discuss the minimum wage. The National Work Council (decree 2210 of 1968) was created by recommendation of the International Labor Organization. The tripartite Work Council advised and observed the negotiation of legislation, and checked the decisions of the National Salary Council (Perry 1986). Nevertheless, both Councils functioned erratically; they did not always reach consensual agreements, and the position of labor within them was weak.

In spite of the above, under the Front's protection, labor union membership more than doubled from about 6% of the working force in 1959 to 13.4% in 1965 (Bushnell 1991, 243). Formal economy workers kept important benefits. For example, labor contracts could not last less than one year, and lay-off costs were high, especially if an employee had worked for the same firm for more than ten years. Employers were responsible for making very high severance payments if a worker was fired without a "reasonable justification," in which case the employer had to pay the worker all the wages owed until the end of the contract (Edwards and Steiner 2001, 19). In the case of employers who had been working for more than ten years, the employer had to rehire the

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<sup>23</sup> See Oficina Internacional del Trabajo (1999).

worker, in addition to paying severance costs. Bronstein (1998) maintains that this provision induced employers to dismiss workers before their ten-year anniversary.

The Front governments also organized urban residents from above as a strategy to control lower classes. Community Action Groups (JAC) were created in the late 1960s to organize neighborhoods around the development of infrastructure projects (e.g., streets, sewers, schools), lower the costs of social programs, establish a direct link between the government and urban dwellers, and prevent violence (Borrero 1989). The JAC also participated in education, housing, agricultural production, and sanitation programs.

In the four years after its creation, the peasants' ANUC recruited one million people (Collier and Collier 2002, 684). After losing government support in the 1970s, the ANUC became a contentious organization that called on peasants to invade lands. The result of the land invasions was a violent reprisal by government forces and large landholders. Thus, peasants who had mobilized with government protection in the late 1960s were now being persecuted by the government itself. And landowners, with implicit government consent, assassinated peasant leaders. Landlessness, lack of representation in the government, a failed agrarian reform, and repression all radicalized peasants. Some peasant groups (as well as some leftist leaders and organizations) began to see guerrillas as legitimate representatives of their interests who could also offer protection (Corredor 1990; Romero 1998).

During the National Front governments, new guerrilla movements emerged. The Army for National Liberation (ELN), the M-19 movement, and the Army for Popular Liberation (EPL) made similar claims to social justice as the FARC guerrillas, but

enjoyed less support from peasants. The origin of these guerrillas is partly explained by the closing of the political system. Most importantly, though, guerrillas received ideological and financial encouragement from foreign actors, in the context of the Cold War. Thus, the Communist block governments, ruled by peasant or worker vanguard parties, represented a political and ideological alternative that resolved the social contradictions produced by economic backwardness and neo-colonialism. Guerrilla leaders assumed that a people's army would free peasants from the control of a landed capitalist class. Finally, the Cuban Revolution demonstrated that Latin American guerrillas could unite the opposition against elitist governments and bring power to the people. On the other hand, the U.S. Cold War policies for Latin America, and for Colombia, contemplated national security policies to preserve political stability. Counterinsurgency policies followed, and government repression radicalized some oppositional groups even more.

Most importantly, however, by the end of the 1960s a number of emerging "independent" (from foreign governments, guerrillas and traditional political parties) and revolutionary groups did not support violence as an acceptable form of political change, but nevertheless wanted to achieve radical social change. They included labor unions, a few leftist political parties, the indigenous movement organized by the Cauca Regional Indigenous Council (CRIC), and the 1971 student movement.

Protest voting against the traditional parties unveiled another phase in the country's politics, in which an assortment of contentious actors were rising in opposition to the Front. General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla constituted a "third" political party that

participated in the 1970 presidential election with the Conservative Party's endorsement. The General's National Popular Alliance (ANAPO) mobilized urban lower and middle classes against the traditional parties. When Rojas lost the election by less than 1% , many of his supporters alleged electoral fraud. Although such allegations were not investigated at the time, ANAPO followers, who were counting on Rojas to establish a more representative government, actively protested the electoral results. At any rate, guerrilla activity, increasing popular opposition, and the Front's weak reforms that failed to address the country's socioeconomic development needs, exhausted the sixteen-year bipartisan ruling pact. Arguably, the government responded to popular mobilization and began a slow transition to more competitive politics.

### **The Transitional Governments (1974-1990)**

Although by 1975 the National Front had officially ended, the Liberal and Conservative parties which had been part of the coalition continued to control government. And some of the Front's institutional arrangements, such as sharing executive cabinet positions with members of the losing party, were maintained. For instance, the Liberal president Julio César Turbay (1978-1982) reserved 40% of executive-branch positions—the rough equivalent of elected seats won by Conservatives in Congress—for the opposition party (Bushnell 1991, 250). Thus, it was not until 1986 that the first non-consociational executive was elected and a transition to competitive party politics achieved (Kline 1996). In 1986, the liberal Virgilio Barco (1986-1990) did not allocate seats in his cabinet to the Conservatives. In short, the Transitional period

(1974-1990) can be generally characterized as repressive, notwithstanding the fact that some political opportunities were opened for previously excluded social actors.

The Liberal Alfonso López Milchensen (1974-1978) promised to implement progressive reforms, and in fact governed the first year without the use of the state of siege, but focused on liberalizing the economy and maintaining the predominance of the two traditional parties. However, López's social reforms—such as the Integrated Rural Development (DRI) program and the labor reforms of 1976—were too few and too feeble to alleviate the material demands in rural areas or improve labor conditions. This combination of undelivered political promises and deteriorating economic conditions explains why his administration faced a high number of social protests, such as the 1975 peak shown in Figure 3.1.

The most critical event, though, was the massive 1977 national civic strike that united most worker unions, leftist parties and wide sectors of the urban and rural population, including students, around demands for better salaries and lower consumer prices for urban dwellers. In response to the strike, López allowed the military more leeway to detain protesters and search without warrants the homes of opponents. Also during his presidency, members of the secret police, intelligence units, and military forces began to use extrajudicial tactics to terrorize and persecute suspected guerrillas and other popular leaders. Although state terror tactics in Colombia cannot be compared to the massive state-sponsored human rights violations occurring in the countries of the southern cone at the same time, a significant number of people were tortured, detained, or killed with the consent of middle-level government functionaries.

The government of the Liberal Julio César Turbay (1978-1982) stands out for passing by executive order the Security Statute of 1978—a decree that toughened up measures to detain, interrogate, and judge civilians suspected of subversion or drug trafficking (Archila 2003). The Security Statute provisions were frequently used to persecute leaders and militants of popular organizations not necessarily linked to the guerrillas. During this administration, measures were also approved to criminalize the production, marketing and trafficking of narcotics. Finally, at the end of Turbay's administration falling coffee prices and the 1982 Latin American debt crisis that closed financial flows to Latin America produced an economic recession in the country.

The debt problem began with the oil crisis of the early seventies, when the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) reduced oil production and shipment, increasing prices and windfall profits for the OPEC (Smith 1996, 235). OPEC countries deposited millions of dollars into European and American banks, on which these banks paid interest. “Since industrial countries were facing recession, the most logical targets for lending were relatively unsophisticated borrowers in the developing world who were willing to accept higher rates of interest than their industrial country counterparts” (Smith 1996, 235). Latin American countries fell into this debt trap to finance development projects. Between 1976 and 1981, lending to Third World borrowers increased at an average yearly rate of 23%. When the U.S. Federal Reserve increased interest rates in the early eighties, the interest rate on Latin American loans that had been contracted with variable interest rates similarly increased (Smith 1996, 236).

Banks now feared that they would not be able to collect the credits owed. Therefore, they stopped lending and focused on repayment.

Thus, even if Colombia did not have a debt problem in 1982, it was nevertheless affected as interest on its obligations increased. Garay (1998) points out that the external public debt contracted at flexible rates increased from 12.5% in the period 1973-78 to more than 68% between the years 1978 and 1982. This resulted in a rise in credit costs. This crisis was accentuated by declining export commodity prices that further limited the availability of funds to finance the foreign debt. Colombia's debt increased from \$3,760 million in 1976 to \$15,362 million in 1986, a 408% change. By the year 2000, the debt went up another 45% to \$34,080 million, and more than 36% of the government's budget was destined to pay debt interests. As first-world country banks began to focus on repayment, the external economic shocks produced by increasing debt interests and obligations constrained national policy even more. Following IMF guidelines, debtor countries began to privatize state assets, raise taxes and cut spending to obtain resources to pay their debts.

Furthermore, the beginning of Ronald Reagan's administration in 1980 marked an important shift in U.S.-Latin America relations that veered from Jimmy Carter's emphasis on human rights, and focused on restraining socialism in Central America, implementing a more aggressive anti-drug policy in the Andean countries, and pushing for market reforms in the region. By the middle 1980s the drug trafficking business that began with the marijuana trade of the 1970s was enriching cartel leaders and middlemen, who invested large sums in urban and rural properties, and in legitimate businesses. This

new capitalist elite was wealthier than much of Colombia's traditional upper and upper-middle class, and in many cases they were accepted—or made their way—into high-class social circles such as clubs, neighborhoods, and prestigious schools. These economic elites also sought political power by forging alliances with civil servants, state functionaries or local and national politicians. The notorious Medellín drug entrepreneur Pablo Escobar, for instance, was once elected senator, and the Rodríguez clan who formed the Cali Cartel used drug funds to become legitimate businessmen.

Therefore, as the U.S. government toughened its stance on the narcotics trade, the Colombian government imposed stricter policies to control illegal substances, capture drug lords, and fumigate crops. This turned drug cartels into contentious elites whose wealth and capacity for violence were used to threaten the very existence of the Colombian state. When the Colombian government penalized a wider set of economic activities (such as money laundering by means of financial, industrial and real estate investments), drug-cartel violence, which had been limited to intra-mafia clashes, developed into an all-out terrorist war against Colombian society and its government. A particularly touchy issue for cartel leaders was the extradition laws urged on the government by the United States so that Colombian nationals could be tried in U.S. courts of law. In the late eighties, the cartels threatened Congress, assassinated important politicians, judges, and other civil servants, and started a wave of urban terrorism that included bombing the Police Intelligence headquarters, various shopping centers, and an airplane carrying more than 100 passengers.



This environment of political instability was convoluted by escalating guerrilla conflict, which included actions of spectacular proportions such as the murders of important political figures (e.g., the former minister of Agriculture in 1978), and the takeovers of the Dominican Embassy (1982) and of the Supreme Court (1985). In the 1980s four guerrilla groups— the FARC, the Army of National Liberation (ELN), the Popular Army of Liberation (EPL) and the Movement of April 19 (M-19)— were active. In addition, an Indian self-defense guerrilla group—the Quintín Lame—operated in the department of Cauca, defending Indian communities from landowner and guerrilla attacks. Around the negotiation of the 1991 constitution, both the M-19 and the Quintín Lame demobilized after peace talks and became political parties. The EPL was defeated in the early 1990s by both government and paramilitary attacks, and currently only the FARC and ELN remain active.<sup>24</sup> The FARC boasts today an army of 20,000 men, divided into 70 fronts (their main army subdivisions) which are active in up to 60% of the national territory.<sup>25</sup> The ELN has about 3,500 men.

Though paramilitary groups have existed in one form or another since the nineteenth century (Archila 2003c, 343), in the 1980s they transformed themselves into anti-subversive groups, sponsored by large landowners (typically cattle ranchers), drug traffickers, and some members of the military forces, although from 1968 until 1989 the creation of private armed groups was lawful.<sup>26</sup> However, the paramilitary phenomenon that took hold in the middle of the 1980s responded to increasing guerrilla violence.

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<sup>24</sup> For further information on guerrilla and paramilitary groups, and their history and political agendas, see Bergquist et al. (2001) and Richani (2002).

<sup>25</sup> According to the Center for International Policy's Colombia Program. "Information about the Combatants" (<http://ciponline.org/colombia/infocombat.htm>) accessed on September 9, 2004.

<sup>26</sup> Law 48 of 1968 allowed the formation of self-defense groups.

Since the 1980s, paramilitaries have formed deep roots in areas where the state and the justice system are absent and where there is large-scale commercial agriculture. Guerrilla groups also exact resources from the wealthy (Escobedo 1998). Paramilitaries have grown into an army of 8,000 soldiers, organized as a semi-centralized national militia and composed of military blocs that operate in various regions of Colombia.<sup>27</sup>

The objective of the paramilitary armies is to contain guerrilla groups where state forces have not. In the process of doing so, paramilitaries have assailed the civilian population and committed gross human rights violations such as massacres, torture and disappearances. To paramilitary leaders, civilians in guerrilla strongholds provide subversive groups with shelter, food and active militants. Therefore, guerrillas and paramilitaries are engaged in a war over territory, resources and people. Both groups seek the control of geographically strategic corridors for the arms and drug trade, which constitute important sources for financing their armies. Paramilitaries have taken certain territories of the country away from guerrilla control, often forcing the evacuation of entire communities. Conversely, FARC guerrillas massacre or displace the civilian population in areas claimed by paramilitary groups.<sup>28</sup> This civilian population is overwhelmingly rural.

Even though state forces have tried to contain the paramilitary, connections between members of the government's armed forces and paramilitaries have been

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<sup>27</sup> Center for International Policy's Colombia Program. "Information about the Combatants" (<http://ciponline.org/colombia/infocombat.htm>) accessed on September 9, 2004.

<sup>28</sup> For further details on the political economy of violence in Colombia, the history of each of these groups and how they interact with each other, see Richani (2002).

established.<sup>29</sup> Some NGOs claim that state forces tolerate or even support paramilitary violence in those territories where guerrillas operate.<sup>30</sup>

By the end of the 1980s, left-wing guerrillas, right-wing paramilitary groups, and—to top it off—a diverse set of death squads and armed drug-traffickers were responsible for increasing the murder rate. Colombian society stood in the middle of this centrifugal violence as armed actors appeared to be waging an all-out war against each other, the state, and innocent civilians. As a result, political assassinations increased, as well as common violence and aggressions against “undesirable” persons (e.g., prostitutes, homosexuals and street children). Government institutions seemed incapable of containing violence, addressing its social impact or offering protection to polity members.

In essence, then, low state capacities and the drug boom explain the FARC’s (and other smaller guerrilla groups’) continued existence, more than their political relevance or popular support. Low state capacities also explain the paramilitary phenomenon. Urban—if not most—Colombians feel besieged by an unyielding guerrilla army that is at war with the state and with society. These groups have never enjoyed widespread popular approval, since rapid urbanization, a moderately liberal political culture, and the development of a democratic regime are all processes that reduce support for the guerrilla cause and paramilitary tactics. In addition, most Colombians have a liberal outlook that

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<sup>29</sup> For example, the administrative Tribunal of Cundinamarca accused the state of the 1999 massacre of 27 peasants in the region of La Gabarra, Norte de Santander. The Tribunal found that police and military forces allowed the paramilitary group, United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), to camp near military installations (*El Tiempo*, August 27, 2004). Also, the Inter-American Court argues that paramilitaries and state agents planned the murder of 19 merchants in 1987 (Krsticevic, *El Tiempo*, September 3, 2004).

<sup>30</sup> See for example, *Noche y Niebla*, 20 (April-June), 2001.

supports the right to some form of private property. Peasants, for example, have historically claimed title to their lands. Furthermore, although the Colombian democratic regime excludes and represses political challengers, its representative institutions are legitimate enough and offer some possibilities to modify policies and pressure for change through peaceful means.

For example, the administration of the Conservative Belisario Betancur (1982-1986) addressed for the first time the “excessive foreclosing of political opportunities for new actors” and implemented the popular election of mayors and governors in 1986 (Collier and Collier 2002, 679). Before the 1986 amendment to the constitution, mayors and governors were appointed by the central government. This new political opportunity activated a wide number of smaller political parties and organizations calling themselves “social movements” for the 1986 local elections. Sixty-seven percent of voters participated in the local elections of 1987, a very high number compared to the average 35% turnout in presidential elections (Álvarez, Castillo and Villar 1998, 133). And between 1990-1992, 424 mayors (out of 1050 municipalities) representing interests “other than those of the traditional parties” were elected (Álvarez et al. 1998, 135). In this way, the government was able to channel social contention by decentralizing political decision-making.

Betancur also tried to revamp the Community Action Groups (JAC). Since their establishment in the late 1960s, every time a new neighborhood is built, part of its consolidation process includes the institutionalization of a JAC. During the Betancur administration, the number of JACs increased by about 32%, from 28,000 in 1982 to

37,000 in 1989 (Borrero 1989, 71-72). By 1992 there were 43,000 JACs. These state-formed organizations serve to control social unrest, and to link the state with local communities. Although the JACs are supposed to follow state directives as recipients of state aid, they have organized acts of contention when community welfare is at risk or the government has violated political agreements.

Betancur's strategy to open political opportunities was also intended to induce guerrilla groups (FARC, ELN and M-19) to use the electoral system, and engage with the government in peace talks (Collier and Collier 2002, 679). But peace negotiations failed as the M-19 and ELN walked out of the talks, and the FARC tried to use electoral institutions without surrendering their arms. The FARC formed the Unión Patriótica (UP), a party intended to unite the left with the Communist Party and with ex-guerrillas. In the 1986 presidential election, the UP's candidate received 4.5% of the vote (Bushnell 1993, 258), and by the early 1990s about 1,000 UP militants, mayors or leaders, had been killed by right-wing death squads. However, Álvarez, Castillo and Villar (1998) contend that electoral politics in those municipalities dominated by guerrilla or paramilitary forces are manipulated by these groups. They select candidates to run in local elections, allow (or obstruct) popular voting, and make elected officials accountable to the armed group's agenda. In this way they have access to local budget decisions and legislative actions.

The Liberal Virgilio Barco's administration (1986-1990) is remembered for institutionalizing peace negotiation mechanisms by replacing a diverse set of peace committees that were engaging violent actors in political dialogues, and naming a High Commissioner for Peace (Archila 2003c, 120). However, Barco was more involved in

launching the initial neoliberal reforms that changed Colombian institutions in the 1990s. In 1985, the World Bank's Chenery Mission—led by Harvard economist Hollis B. Chenery—advised Colombian authorities to address the problems of slow growth and unemployment by lessening protectionism, reducing tariffs and diversifying exports, for which a range of institutional reforms was a prerequisite. Until the 1980s external agents—such as the IMF, the World Bank and the United States government—were more likely to endorse greater state intervention in social and economic matters. But following the drug and debt crises of the 1980s, such agents have promoted market reforms and privatization, as well as aggressive security policies.

The Chenery mission concluded that sluggish growth during the 1980s was the result of institutional distortions that produced financial, trade, and, especially, labor inefficiencies. No mention of the conditions under which the government contracted its external debt was made. Paradoxically, Colombia's economic performance in the 1980s was satisfactory by Latin American standards (as it did not experience hyperinflation or a debt crisis, and had average growth rates of 3%). But by 1990 it was clear that economic growth had to improve in order to meet the country's development needs. Following the Chenery mission's recommendations, in 1986 the first trade reforms were implemented. Import duties were reduced from an average 20% in 1986 to 8% in the 1990s, and the percent of the internal market supplied with imported goods increased from 16% in 1986 to an average of 30% in the 1990s (DNP 2002). These trade reforms had a negative impact on national production and employment, as will be discussed in the next section.

In all, the government's capacities to design social policy were limited by violence and poor economic performance. But they were also limited by external constraints, such as a growing foreign debt and U.S. guidelines for ending the drug trade which had to be incorporated into security, justice and economic policymaking. Conservative and Liberal parties lost part of their legitimacy to other forms of political representation, including social movements, labor unions, guerrillas and alternative parties. A more politicized and mobilized citizenry incited processes of change from below and obliged the government to open political opportunities for popular participation, the local elections of 1987 being an example of this. However, citizen mobilization was extremely limited by increasing violence against community, labor union and peasant leaders by right-wing self defense groups and death squads.

In the end, it was a group of technocratic liberals, many of them with degrees in economics from prestigious national and U.S. universities, who would slowly substitute the power of the traditional parties and bring on a full transition to market reforms in the 1990s (Ahumada 1996). Neoliberal technocrats campaign and win elections by portraying themselves as apolitical administrators who can efficiently manage the resources of the state. But contrary to this portrayal, they engage in corrupt practices and abuse of power by lowering the real value of state companies to favor particular buyers, or accepting payoffs from foreign companies interested in purchasing a public firm.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Financial reforms and privatizations offered technocrats close to the executive branch ample opportunities for corruption. See Ahumada (2002) for a detailed description of some of the biggest cases of corruption in the 1990s.

This neoliberal elite, as it is known in Colombia, began to wage a political war with organized labor as its main opponent. Edwards and Steiner (2001, 16) place special attention on a group of technocrats associated with the “modernizing” sector of the Liberal party because this group was directly involved in unleashing an ideological crusade to restructure Colombian institutions. This group, known as “el Club Suizo,” held frequent meetings to discuss economic policy during the late 1980s, and was soon associated with would-be-president César Gaviria. The group’s leader, Rudolf Hommes, published an influential article (Hommes 1990) wherein Gaviria’s economic liberalization plans were laid out. In all, the group agreed with the Chenery Mission’s conclusions, blaming protectionism, high labor costs, rigid labor laws, state-controlled banks and noncompetitive credit rates, and excessive controls on foreign investments for Colombia’s mediocre economic performance. During the Gaviria presidency, a handful of the group’s members served in cabinet positions.

### **The Neoliberal Period (1990-2000)**

The main highlights of this decade of neoliberalism are the escalation of violence on account of guerilla, drug trafficker and paramilitary actions that brought attention to the state’s internal weakness; the negotiation and implementation of the 1991 Constitution that opened political opportunities for citizen participation; the application of pro-market reforms; and the increased role of the U.S. government in internal politics to control drug trafficking.

The dramatic escalation of violence cast doubt on the Colombian state’s ability to control activities and monopolize the use of force in its territory. It also brought on a



severe humanitarian crisis where “scorched-earth” tactics were used by paramilitary groups against civilians accused of being guerrilla collaborators. Such tactics increased massacres and displaced more than 2 million people from their communities in the 1990s. The lands abandoned by the internal refugees were taken over by leaders of paramilitary groups or by drug-traffickers, thus concentrating land even more than in previous decades. This kind of violence produced unacceptable conditions for the exercise of political and civil rights among rural polity members. It also created a generalized atmosphere of terror that contributed to the weakening of the institutions of citizenship, as ordinary citizens feared that if they participated in political actions, they would expose themselves to violent attacks by right or left wing armed groups. All these elements reduced citizen capacities for collective action.

The following indicators gauge the cost in human lives of the state’s defense of its jurisdiction, as well as the degree to which the state is unable to offer security and control parts of its territory. The Colombian National Police keeps statistics of what they call “land piracy,” or ambushes that occur on main roads wherein common criminals rob truck shipments, or busses and individual automobiles. “Land piracy” went up from an average of 205 yearly cases in 1974-1990 to 1,963 yearly cases in the 1990s. The number of kidnappings went up from a yearly average of 762 in the “transitional period,” to 2,264 in the 1990s. And the number of “police casualties in the fight against guerrillas” went from a yearly average of 114 in the “transitional period” to 405 policemen wounded or killed during the neoliberal 1990s. Finally, between 1990 and 2000, the yearly homicide

rate went up to 67 per 100,000 people, compared to 37 per 100,000 in 1974-1990, or the “transitional period” (DNP 1998; 2002).

Such levels of violence brought attention to the fact that the traditionally small Colombian state had instituted jurisdiction only over major cities and their metro areas, and had neglected to penetrate and establish direct control over large, mostly unoccupied, areas of the country. These large areas of the country (eastern tropical grasslands, southeastern Amazon rainforest areas, and parts of the Pacific rim) had been slowly populated by peasants evicted from their lands beginning in the 1950s, searching for land and economic opportunities in the frontiers of the country. In the eighties, the illegal drug boom lured traffickers to these lands, and provided peasants with an unusual economic opportunity in the growth of coca.

The state’s precarious presence in these newly settled areas was supplanted by FARC guerrillas, who discovered a population to dominate, an economic prospect (in the drug trade) to finance their cause, and a safe haven to strengthen themselves militarily. In practice, then, large parts of the country were dominated by de facto authorities, including paramilitary and guerrilla forces, out of the reach of the state and its democratic constitution. All this inevitably brought attention to the fact that Colombia was becoming a fragmented country with a “paramilitary” north and a “guerrilla” southeast (González et al. 2002).

This situation of violence and fragmentation was partly blamed on the country’s institutional framework that concentrated power in Bogotá and excluded other social actors from the political system (Uprimny 2001). The 1991 Constitution, negotiated

between 1989 and 1991, was purportedly designed to correct institutional malfunctions in order to address political crisis and violence. At this time, the 1886 Constitution, a centralist, illiberal and authoritarian document, was replaced by a new constitution.<sup>32</sup> The new Constitution was negotiated with the participation of a diverse set of political and social groups, such as a small but influential student movement, the national Indian movement, and women's organizations, among others. It also included the traditional parties and the M-19 ex-guerrillas, who after peace negotiations had reorganized into a political party. According to these groups, even if the 1886 Constitution had been modified a number of times to reflect sociopolitical changes, more fundamental transformations were required to deepen democracy and improve government-society relations.

The opposition groups called for a wider set of participation mechanisms, the institutionalization of political, civil and social rights, and an end to the use of states of siege (Uribe 2001). However, neoliberals—or politicians who support state reduction and privatization—organized in the traditional political parties, and took advantage of the constitutional process to change state-economic relations and modify the social role of the state. These two countervailing factions—a neoliberal pro-market group and a group that defended what they called a “constitutional social state”<sup>33</sup> to uphold the rule of law and increase social welfare—produced a constitution that guarantees all kinds of political, social, and economic rights within a liberal economic setting. Thus, the constitution redistributed power, but also supplied the President with ample powers to

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<sup>32</sup> For a review of the 1886 Constitution see Melo (1989).

<sup>33</sup> Estado Social de Derecho.

restructure the state and the economy (Ahumada 1996). These powers have been used to pass unpopular reforms that affect redistribution without democratic checks from the legislative or judicial branches.

Notwithstanding, the new constitution created new formal channels of political participation that would obviate the need for contentious action. These mechanisms would complement the electoral process by offering new opportunities for citizens to play a part in the decision-making process. Direct democracy mechanisms included (1) the plebiscite (to determine public opinion on a particular issue), (2) the referendum (passing legislation by popular vote), (3) citizen legislative initiatives (citizens collect the signatures of 10% of the electorate in order to introduce a law into congress), (4) the town meetings or open city councils, (5) the recall of elected officials (10% of signatures needed to hold a recall election), and (6) the so-called popular actions and the *tutela* (both described below), which are important judicial instruments to protect human rights.

The *tutela* is a judicial resource that entitles citizens to use the lower courts to settle individual complaints related to the violation of their constitutional rights by government omission or direct action. This constitutional provision has been widely used by individuals to ask for protection of their political, civil and even social rights (e.g., work, education, or health care). Judges must settle *tutelas* expeditiously, and oblige compliance with a law or administrative order. Finally, the constitutional court may review some of these cases and pass judgment on the constitutionality of the lower courts' rulings. The "popular actions" (roughly, citizens' actions or petitions) allow groups of citizens to seek the protection of collective interests and rights related to public

services, utilities, use of public space, and environmental issues, among others.

Nevertheless, using these mechanisms requires a good level of coordination and resource mobilization on the part of citizens. And statutory law 134 of 1994 introduced a series of legal limitations to formal participation (Bejarano 2001, 67). For example, citizens have to collect a large number of signatures for legislative initiatives and the recall of elected officials. As a result, many of these participatory devices have been little used, for they require too much organization on the part of citizens (Bejarano 2001).

After the 1991 constitution was negotiated and implemented, the administration of the Liberal César Gaviria (1990-1994) adapted the development policies endorsed by international organizations, and began a process of economic deregulation, state reduction and trade liberalization. In addition, a process of privatizing the pensions and health systems was begun, and the labor legislation was overhauled to reduce hiring and dismissal costs for employers. Although the spirit of some of these market reforms was to cut spending, the state nevertheless increased it to wage a war on drug traffickers and guerrillas.

The economic reforms that cut subsidies, privatized state companies, liberalized financial markets, and reduced tariffs were allegedly implemented to improve economic competitiveness, create employment, attract foreign investment, and overall, bring Colombia's economy in line with international standards. But because the reforms failed to generate growth, create jobs and maintain investment in social services, three decades (ca. 1960-1990) of important development achievements were reversed in the late 1990s. For instance, from 1973 to 1992 the national poverty rate dropped from 60% to 49%

(Ocampo 1994, 410), but it increased to 55% in the year 2000 (CEPAL 2002). By 2004 the poverty rate stood at 60%. The modest growth rates between 1992 and 1995 were neither robust nor durable, as they resulted from financial speculation rather than from increased production (Arcos et al. 2002).

Further, by 1999 GDP growth shrank 5.5%, manufacturing and commerce decreased by 14.6% and 7.3% respectively, internal demand was reduced by 11.4%, and total consumption decreased by 4.9% (Ahumada 2000, 35). From 1976-1997, the unemployment rate averaged 10%, but from 1998-2000 it reached rates of 20%. Finally, the concentration of wealth increased. In 1976 the GINI coefficient was 0.51. It decreased to 0.46 in 1987, but increased to 0.55 in 2000 (DNP 2002).

Proponents of the neoliberal reforms argued that these were not properly implemented as a result of insufficient political commitment (Huber and Solt 2004, 152). Thus, governments had been overly cautious as they were intimidated by political opposition to the reforms—from the ranks of labor unions, political parties, and some organized business interests—and as they implemented only partially the reforms aimed at achieving fiscal and monetary prudence, economic integration, and greater reliance on the market. Furthermore, proponents argued, economic downturn in Colombia is as much a result of violence, corruption and rent-seeking as of badly designed neoliberal reforms. Therefore, the full-blown and beneficial effects of the neoliberal reforms will come only when the country ends its history of violence and the government fully commits to greater market-orientation.

Critics of the neoliberal proponents, on the other hand, argued that neoliberals overestimated the policy capacities of the historically weak Colombian state (Corredor 1995), and failed to consider prevailing international terms of trade that offer few economic advantages to Third World agricultural producers when reducing food tariffs (Sarmiento 1992). To further complicate matters, Colombia has become more exposed than ever to the demands of major international financial institutions and the United States. For example, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has intervened in Colombia's nation-building process since the 1960s. Moreover, beginning in the early 1990s, the Agency increased its coordinating activities in an "effort literally to reconstruct the country of Colombia" (Walker 2001, 23). During the Gaviria administration, for example, USAID encouraged a judicial system reform to foster a more democratic and inclusive political culture. However, the reform included the controversial "justice without a face" system to protect judges and witnesses involved in prosecuting drug traffickers. In these trials, the accused could not see the faces or hear the real voices of the judges and witnesses accusing them. This was intended to protect the lives of judicial civil servants and witnesses who were threatened or killed by drug traffickers during a trial. However, a number of union or civic leaders who opposed the government or who participated in strikes and protests were also tried and found guilty using this system (Ahumada 1996).

U.S. demands to control the traffic of drugs have become more onerous than in previous decades. An example of the drug burden is the certification process, a policy tool used by the U.S. government to determine if countries that are producers, processors,

or trans-shipment facilitators of narcotics have complied with the fight against drugs. If the U.S. determines that they have not complied, such countries are decertified. “The effect of de-certification is the immediate loss of U.S. economic and military aid, an automatic ‘no’ vote from the U.S. on economic assistance and severe trade restrictions. Once identified as a pariah state, the economic, political, and social blow to a nation is significant” (Cristy 1999). The decertification process was used against Colombia during Ernesto Samper’s term of office (1994-1998). Colombia was “decertified” by the U.S. in 1996 and significant economic sanctions followed. Samper then yielded to U.S. demands to extensively fumigate areas where crops were being grown for drug production, extradite Colombian nationals suspected or convicted of drug trafficking, expropriate the properties of suspected drug traffickers, and increase jail times for drug crimes.

Plan Colombia, a military aid package approved during the administration of the Conservative Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002), deepened even more Colombia’s dependency on U.S. funding and guidance in the war against drugs. Plan Colombia was designed during Bill Clinton’s second administration by a group of U.S. advisors and congressmen (Molano 2000, 114) to reduce drug production in the Andean countries of South America, but more specifically in Colombia. It is also aimed at combating subversive groups, namely the FARC guerrillas. Plan Colombia is a strategy divided into different phases and tactics, which involve militarization and crop fumigation of the southern departments, to be expanded to other areas of the country. There are more than six hundred U.S. military advisors, and an undetermined number of private contractors involved in the training and reorganization of Colombia’s military to aid in the drug wars.



Plan Colombia was introduced in the U.S. Congress in 1999 and approved in 2000, then translated into Spanish and approved by the Colombian Congress. The strategy cost \$7.5 billion, out of which the U.S. Congress earmarked \$1.3 billion in aid, while the Colombian government had to raise the remaining funds among its taxpayers or through international credit. Plan Colombia outlined ten strategies to combat drug production and bring stability and economic recovery. The economic strategies included market reforms, such as a “fiscal and financial strategy based on severe austerity and adjustment measures in order to stimulate economic activity and recover the traditional prestige of Colombia in the international financial markets” (*Plan Colombia 2001*, 234).

The first strategy calls for the modernization of the state, the expansion of free-trade agreements, and the encouragement of foreign and domestic private capital investments. The remaining strategies concern the eradication of drug production and the substitution of illegal crops for “alternative” products. Other strategies include the promotion of human development, human rights and “ending the culture of violence.” Plan Colombia was incorporated into the so-called Andean Regional Initiative. Some analysts identify the Initiative, along with the Free Trade Agreement currently under negotiation with the Andean countries, as the U.S. foreign policy instrument to control this area of Latin America and to counteract the influence of Venezuela under the Chávez administration (Ahumada 2003).

Finally, a growing external debt pressured the government to sign stand-by agreements<sup>34</sup> with the International Monetary Fund. The first three-year stand-by agreement was signed in 1999. At this point the Colombian government agreed to lower inflation by 6%, reduce the fiscal deficit to 1.5% of the GDP, and promote a level of economic growth of 4.8%. It failed to achieve the last two, but reached the inflation target because Colombian households have reduced their consumption. The government assented to the privatization of ISA, Carbocol, Isagen and other state-owned energy companies, as well as the remaining public banks. The government has to overhaul health reform, put into effect a tax reform, pass a constitutional reform to reduce financial transfers to municipalities, and pass a tax reform.<sup>35</sup> In exchange Colombia gets a loan for \$2.7 billion and keeps its international creditworthiness. The second accord with the IMF was signed in 2003 for a loan of \$2.2 billion. Colombia also agreed to a tax increase and reduction in the size of the state.

Since signing the agreements, the IMF has been sending technical missions to evaluate how the government is holding up its part of the deal.<sup>36</sup> Álvaro Uribe's government (2002-2006) signed a third agreement for 18 months in April of 2005 and had to pass a very unpopular pension reform in order to obtain a \$613 million loan.<sup>37</sup> The government has also agreed to stop subsidizing banana and flower exports and

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<sup>34</sup> Stand-By Arrangements typically cover a period of one to two years (although they can extend up to three years). Repayments are to be made over a period of 3¼ to 5 years (see OECD. "Glossary of Statistical Terms." <http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=6016>).

<sup>35</sup> "Comienza tercera negociación con el FMI. ¿Será la última?" *El Tiempo*, February 4, 2005.

<sup>36</sup> "FMI espera que avancen reformas," *El Tiempo*, April 23, 2004.

<sup>37</sup> "Tercer y último acuerdo con FMI, sin impuestos," *El Tiempo*, April 30, 2005.

gasoline prices, to privatize the gas company and a few remaining regional electricity companies, and to expand Value Added Taxes.<sup>38</sup>

This chapter has highlighted the main changes experienced by Colombia's political system and institutions and examined social contention in general. The next chapter will look into trends and variations of social contention once disaggregated into the different actor categories (i.e., workers, peasant, urban residents and students). This chapter will also discuss in more detail the political reforms of the 1990s that caused social contention.

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<sup>38</sup> "El gobierno se compromete ante el FMI a no conceder más subsidios a las exportaciones," *Portafolio*, May 2, 2005.

## **CHAPTER 4. LABOR, PEASANT, URBAN, AND STUDENT CONTENTION**

Of the more than 13,500 contentious actions in the CINEP data file, 33% were led by workers, 26% by urban actors, 18% by rural actors, 16% by students, and 7% by other actors such as women, prisoners and the self-employed. In the Velasco file from 1991-2002, urban actors participated in 41.5% of the 2,443 contentious actions, rural actors were involved in 26.6% of the events, and students in 11.3% of the cases. This chapter offers a qualitative description of the four main contentious social actors—workers, peasants, urban residents, and students—since there is significant variation among them. It will describe their motives and main types of actions, and whether or not these actors became less contentious after the 1991 Constitution was implemented.

### **Labor Contention in Colombia**

Workers are blue- or white-collar wage earners, who normally (but not necessarily) belong to a union, and who labor in agriculture, mining, government, services, and industries. In the CINEP data file, 24.4% of the workers who participated in contentious actions between 1975 and 2000 were public school teachers; 20% worked in public hospitals; 17.3% in manufacturing; 13.6% in other state services; 8.5% in transportation; 4.9% in agriculture; 3.9% in the financial sector; 3% in the government's judicial branch; 2.3% in construction; and 2.1% in mining (Delgado 2003, 55). According to this data, then, 61% of contentious wage earners work in the public sector, and 73.4% are employed in the service economy. In the Velasco file 57.1% of workers were transportation employees, 15.6% were unionized public school teachers; 15.1%

belonged to other unions; 10% were other service workers; and 2.2% were miners and rural workers.

Labor's ability to organize, convoke more mobilizations, and broker alliances between workers, government and other social actors (especially the urban poor and middle class) makes them the most influential of all the contentious social actors studied in this dissertation. This movement is linked to the formal economy, defined as those areas of production where the government regulates labor relations, workers have contracts, and disputes between management and workers can be mediated by the state (Ocampo et al. 1988). Oil, transportation, communications, finance, education, and manufacturing industries are examples of formal economy sectors, and are strategic areas to economic development. Additional formal economy jobs include construction work, labor in agro-industrial sectors, and government posts in the justice system, public banks and schools, and other bureaucracies.

Formal economy workers are nevertheless a numeric minority if we consider that anywhere between 52% (in 1992) and 60% (in 2000) of the economically active population work in the informal economy (DNP 2004). The informal economy is the result of state incapacity to oversee and regulate all activities, and of economic development policies that fail to absorb a rapidly growing economically active population. Informal economy activities do not pay taxes, are not regulated by government, and do not provide employees with adequate work environments, contracts or benefits. The informal sector rarely generates extra income to save or invest in capital goods, business expansions, technology, or better forms of production. Most people in

this sector work to buy a day's food supply or to pay a weekly rent. As such, they constitute the working poor (Ocampo et al. 1988, 248). This large number of informal workers, many of them unskilled, force down industrial and service economy salaries. To counteract this, formal sector workers have organized to seek legislative protection.

Labor conflict in the public sector normally pits workers against the executive branch and/or the bureaucracy's director, while in the private sector workers and management are set in opposition. Delgado (2003) explains that until the 1980s, workers in the private sector and in manufacturing jobs led labor contention. After the 1980s, labor protests were headed by public and service economy workers. State and service-economy workers have dominated protests for most of the 1990s because of a decline in manufacturing jobs (Archila 2003c, 386).

#### *Labor Movement Organization*

Labor union organization, therefore, is the motor that drives labor contention. But labor organization in Colombia is weak, and collective action is discouraged by factors such as state repression or cooptation by the traditional parties (Pécaut 1973; Moncayo and Rojas 1978). In addition to the government's political campaign to debilitate worker unions, workers are also persecuted by extreme-right armed groups. According to the Ministry of Labor, between 1991 and 1999, 132 labor leaders and 593 activists were assassinated. The *Escuela Nacional Sindical*, something of an independent "think tank" created in 1982 by a group of union leaders and other professionals to study matters

affecting Colombia's workers, recorded the murder of 266 leaders and 1070 activists between 1991 and 1999.<sup>39</sup>

The labor movement was also weakened by economic sector divisions that created various classes of workers (e.g., agrarian or industrial, skilled or unskilled) whose divergent economic interests and political alliances slowed down the institutionalization of unified labor associations. Archila (2003c) also finds that class differences within the economically active population make it difficult to speak of a unified Colombian working class. Thus, manufacturing, service, state and agricultural workers have different levels of control over the production process, have different skills, earn dissimilar wages, live in different parts of the cities, and are gender and racially diverse (Archila 2003c, 386).

The 1990 liberal reforms also debilitated the workers' movement. Trade tariff reductions in the 1990s bankrupted at least 25,000 factories that were unable to compete with cheaper imports (Valderrama 1998). This accelerated a decline in the industrial labor force and reduced labor union membership. Consequently, Colombia's historically low rate of unionization has been declining. In 1980, for instance, 16% of the economically active population belonged to a union, and by 1986 the number was reduced to 10% (Gómez 1986). Between 1990 and 1996, the number of unionized workers fluctuated between 9 and 10% (*Oficina Internacional del Trabajo* 1999), but by the year 2000, only 5% of the economically active population belonged to a union.<sup>40</sup>

The first important contentious actions planned by organized labor date back to the 1920s, when socialist party militants formed the first labor unions in foreign-owned

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<sup>39</sup> Organización Internacional del Trabajo (2000).

<sup>40</sup> "Tiene futuro el sindicalismo colombiano?" (<http://www.fescol.org.co/Doc%20PDF/Sindicalismo.pdf>).

production sectors (Collier and Collier 2002, 87). However, some worker associations date back to 1917, but were mostly mutual benefit societies founded by the church. Paradoxically, labor union organization did not begin in the country's dynamic coffee economy, where the largest number of workers was employed. Coffee workers were less likely to form contentious labor unions because coffee has been historically produced by many small landowners. This rural proletariat positioned its political platform somewhere in between achieving individual rights as small landowners and advancing progressive collective democratic rights (Bergquist 1988, 370), because becoming an owner seemed possible in this sector. Finally, the coffee business has traditionally been owned by Colombian nationals; thus, there was no motivation for a nationalist workers' movement in this sector.

It was the less numerous workers of the economic enclaves who established the first confrontational labor organizations in the 1920s. By definition, enclaves are foreign-owned extractive companies that limit their participation in the economy to providing low-paying jobs and building ports and railroads to export their products. Although this is probably more than what local capitalists could do at that time, these foreign companies nevertheless denationalized local profits and did not reinvest them in other areas of development. As a result, the workers of the foreign-owned ports, Tropical Oil and Standard Oil companies, and the United Fruit Company, sought collective rights, and upheld nationalist and socialist platforms.

After the liberal reforms of the 1930s (described in Chapter 3), workers began to create a complex organizational structure by forming company or trade unions, some of



which joined centralized national confederations. Those organizations that remained independent from the centralized confederations are normally referred to as the non-confederated unions. The first important national labor confederation was the Colombian Worker's Confederation (CTC), created in 1936 by an alliance between the Liberal and Communist Parties. The CTC was weakened—practically disappearing—in the late 1940s by the Conservative governments, who in turn founded their own confederation in 1946—the Colombian Worker's Union (UTC)—in association with the Catholic Church. The liberal CTC favored political bargaining with the state as its strategy to create and uphold the rights of workers, while the conservative UTC supported “bread and butter” issues and direct negotiations between workers and managers at the company level (Urrutia 1966). Although other centralized labor confederations such as the National Confederation of Workers (CNT) were formed, they were short-lived or less relevant than the CTC and UTC.

Beginning in the sixties, organized labor attempted to organize independently from the political parties in order to confront state policies. In 1964, the Communists left the Liberal party's CTC and founded the Confederation of Colombian Worker Unions (CSTC),<sup>41</sup> the first independent labor confederation. After this, the September 14, 1977, national civic strike provided another opportunity for labor to increase its capacities to confront the state. In this event, the majority of Colombia's unions (supported by city residents, civic organizations, and peasants) paralyzed most social and economic activities in the whole country and faced the government in one day of confrontations to

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<sup>41</sup> Confederación Sindical de Trabajadores de Colombia

demand higher wages and price controls. However, various labor unions engaged in bitter and divisive political negotiations before the September strike, and some unions strongly opposed it (Toro 1991, 99). But the 1977 events produced the National Union Council,<sup>42</sup> a coordinating body that strengthened the independent union movement that would later confront the government politically.

The Centralized Worker's Union (CUT) was created in 1985 when Conservative president Betancur (1982-1986) created some political opportunities for participation and dialogue. The CUT was formed by an alliance of the independent CSTC, some members of the Conservative UTC, and a majority of the non-confederated unions. The CUT, however, was ideologically fragmented, and a sector of its leadership was aligned with the government. For a group of labor unions, the CUT's unification project was not acceptable and could turn into a strategic dilemma when challenging the forthcoming neoliberal government reforms, which were begun by Barco (1986-1990) and continued by Gaviria (1990-1994). Thus, the General Confederation of Democratic Workers (CGTD) was founded between 1988 and 1992, during which time it changed names twice and joined another union. The CGTD contested and prevented the first government measures to privatize the state's telecommunications company in 1992.

The organizational complexity described above has weakened labor's collective capacity. Such complexity is also the result of the labor movement's dependence on the traditional parties from the 1930s until the 1970s. To a large extent, union leadership has focused much of its energies on competing against or striking alliances with rival worker

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<sup>42</sup> Consejo Nacional Sindical

organizations (Toro 1991). The state also manipulated unions that were closer to it politically, thus delaying unification. As a result, presenting a unified labor position to government has been extremely challenging for the organized labor movement.

Notwithstanding, a variety of independent unions were finally formed. These unions—CSTC (1964), CUT (1986) and CGTD (1992)—are more inclined to use contentious mechanisms to pressure governments. Table 4.1 demonstrates this point by listing the main labor unions, the percentage of strikes they led and the percentage of strikers that they mobilized between 1975 and 2000. The CUT alone initiated 44% of the labor strikes and mobilized 46% of the strikers. The group of independent unions (CUT, CSTC, CGTD, and the non-confederated groups) organized 82.2% of the strikes in the same period, and mobilized 66.7% of workers (Delgado 2003, 65).

**Table 4.1.** Organizations Leading Labor Strikes, Colombia 1975-2000

<b>Organization</b>	<b>% Strikes</b>	<b>% Strikers</b>
CUT	44.0	46.0
Non-confederated	26.5	19.4
CSTC	9.5	1.0
Coalitions	3.9	29.9
UTC	3.4	0.3
CTC	2.9	0.8
CGTD (includes CGT)	2.2	0.3

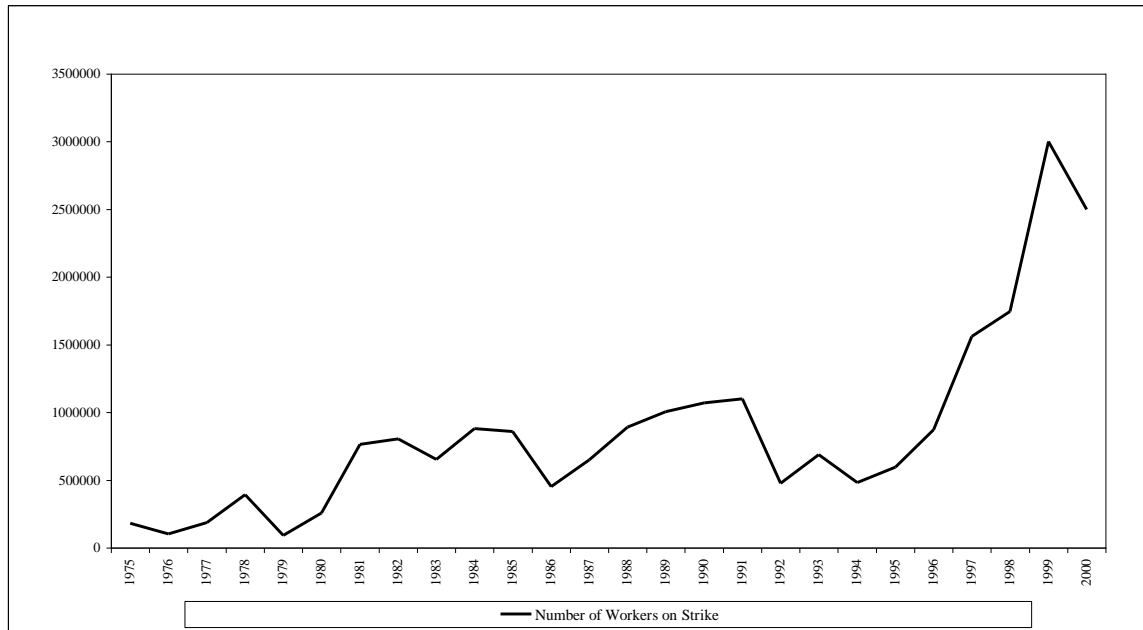
Source: Delgado (2003, 66).

In comparison, the Liberal party's CTC and the Conservative UTC were responsible for organizing 6.3% of the labor strikes and mobilizing just 1.1% of the strikers.

Figure 4.1 plots the number of workers who mobilized in contentious events, and shows the extent to which the organized labor movement rejected the effects of market reforms as the number of workers participating in acts of contention increased

dramatically after 1996. It also seems to confirm that the consolidation of the independent labor confederations—which came about in the late 1980s—coincides with a greater number of workers participating in contentious actions than ever before.

**Figure 4.1.** Number of Workers on Strike, Colombia 1975-2002



Source: Delgado (2003).

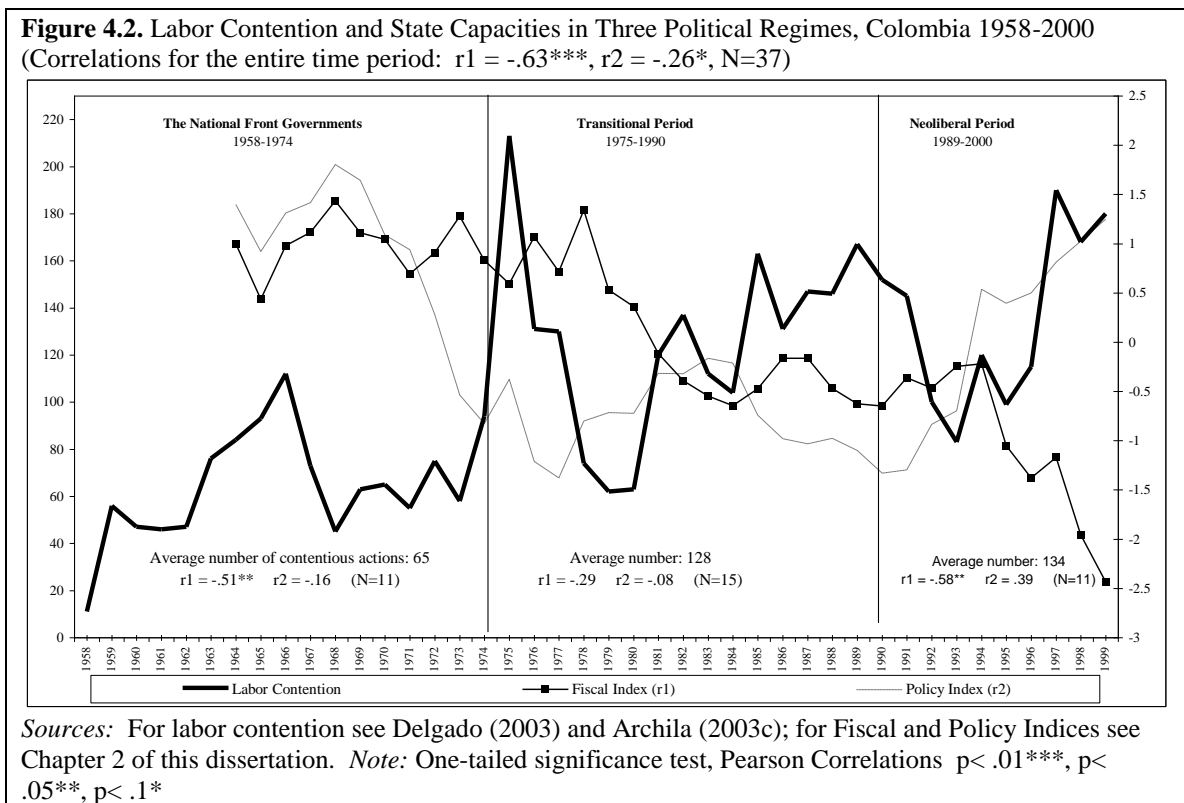
### *Labor Protests and State and Citizen Capacities*

Figure 4.2 plots from 1958 until 2000 the annual number of labor actions against state capacities. The average number of actions that occurred in each political regime indicates that labor contention doubled (from 65 to 128 events) between the National Front governments, and increased slightly between the transitional and neoliberal periods (128 to 134). Thus, labor contention rose as regimes adopted more competitive politics and opened opportunities for participation.

The first important wave of strikes occurs in the years 1964 through 1967.

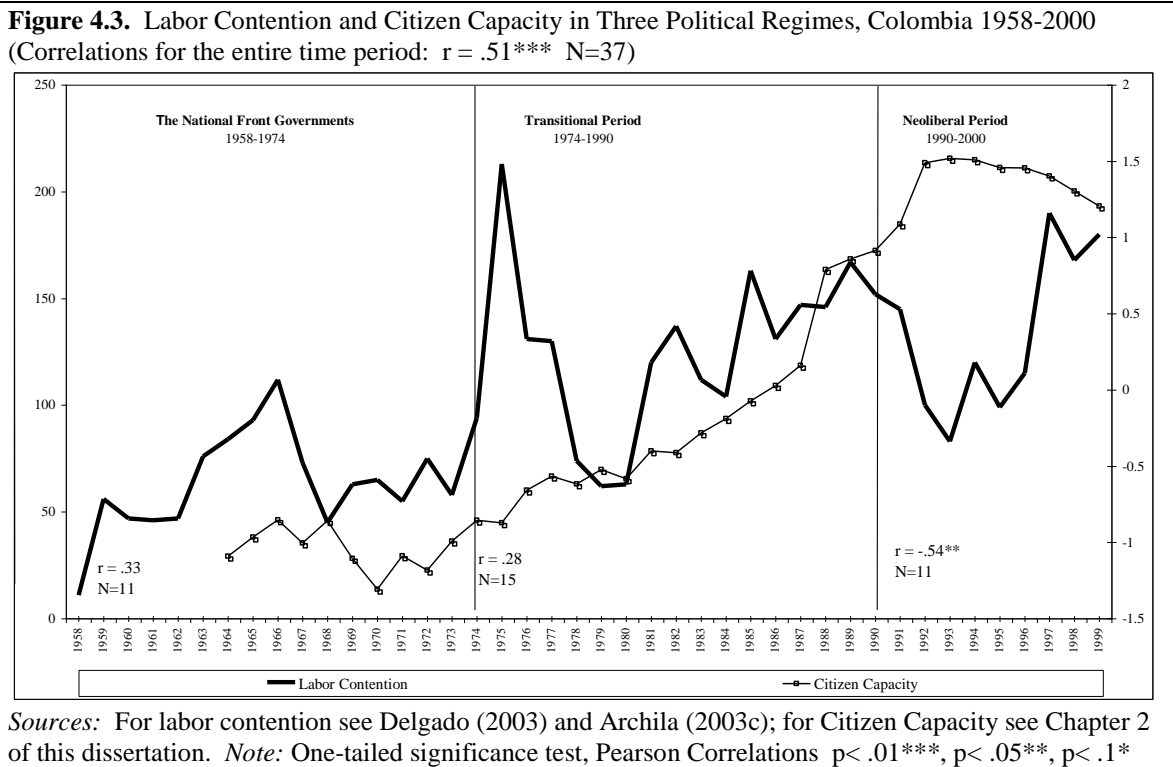
Londoño (1989) explains that worker contention increased at this time as a result of low

salaries and growing costs of living, especially of utility services. Worker discontent also escalated when unionization grew from 6% of the workforce in 1959 to 13% in 1965. Meanwhile, the government began to restrict the rights of free association and to repress strikes, two measures that provoked even more labor contention.



The next important wave of strikes occurs between 1974 and 1977, again as a result of wage and cost of living discontent, but also because of government incapacity to put a stop to labor code violations (Londoño 1989, 302). Strikes declined in 1978-1981 as an effect of government repression during the Turbay administration (Delgado 2003), and labor protests increased after 1981 and remained high through the 1980s, when the independent unions were strengthened and governments were opening political opportunities. After 1990, protests decreased—most likely as an effect of the new

Constitution—but after 1996, workers increased their protests to criticize economic recession and the implementation of neoliberal reforms.



At first glance, Figures 4.2 and 4.3 do not present a logical relationship between drops in state and citizen capacities and increases in labor movement contention. The Pearson Correlations show, however, that there is a negative and significant association between labor contention and state capacities, and a positive link between labor contention and citizen capacities over time. This is a similar finding to that previously reported for social contention in Chapter 3, where a negative relationship was established between state capacities and contention, and a positive one between contention and citizen capacity.

However, once the correlations are divided by regimes, the results become muddled. There is only a negative and statistically significant relationship between the

Fiscal Index and contention during the National Front and Neoliberal periods, and a negative and significant relationship between labor protests and citizen capacities during the Neoliberal years.

### *Labor Motives*

According to CINEP data, in the years between 1975 and 2000, 42.1% of all strikes (involving 25% of the total number of strikers) responded to employer violations of labor contracts or legislation. Thirty-nine percent of strikes were in demand of better wages and safety conditions (29% of all strikers); 10.3% of work stoppages (14.9% of striking workers) were against the violation of human rights, such as persecutions and assassinations; and 2.7% of all labor actions (involving 28% of all strikers) were directed against executive and legislative policies (Delgado 2003, 64-67). We can deduce from these numbers that labor overwhelmingly mobilizes to maintain legal rights or improve working conditions. Notwithstanding, labor contestation has varied in response to historical changes in state and citizen capacities, as was shown in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, but also in response to labor's own organization process.

To recap: first, in the early part of the twentieth century, workers organized to seek inclusion into the political system. Second, during the period of the conservative reaction and the Rojas Pinilla dictatorship (ca. 1940s-1950s), the labor movement was subdued, and governments tried to form a conservative and quiescent workers' movement. Third, as the traditional political parties were losing legitimacy and new actors were emerging between the 1960s and 1980s, labor pressured for organizational independence. At this point, labor focused on making political demands on government

and contested specific industrial, financial, commercial and fiscal policies. They also demanded the creation of regulatory institutions to protect labor rights (Perry 1986). In addition, as human rights violations increased, labor was forced to demand the respect of workers' political rights and freedoms of association. Fourth, as state international capacities were reduced in the 1990s and policy-making began to center on the implementation of market reforms, labor began to contest those reforms that reduced the social role of the state. Furthermore, labor has criticized foreign involvement in national affairs (e.g., free trade agreements and U.S. intervention in Colombian politics).

#### *Contesting the Political Economy during the Neoliberal Years*

Figures 4.1 through 4.3 demonstrate that labor contention increased in the 1990s, both in the average number of actions, but especially in the total number of mobilized workers. In the 1990s, labor and government manifested profound disagreements not just around issues related to labor costs and productivity, but also about what ought to be the nation's priorities surrounding matters of political economy. Nevertheless, the heart of the discussion seems to center on whether or not Colombia's vulnerable international situation is included as an explanatory variable to understand the country's problems and design appropriate policies. This section discusses the opposing views on these matters held by government and labor in order to understand, from a qualitative perspective, the nature of the contentious relationship that exists between the government and organized labor. The section will also analyze the government's actions to quiet or discredit the labor movement's anti-neoliberal position, actions aimed at reducing labor's organizational capacities and credibility as a political actor.



As already discussed, neoliberal governments have generally argued that Colombia is falling behind because the economy is over-protected and its labor costs are high. They also emphasize that violence, judicial insecurity, and excessive government intervention lowers the confidence levels of external actors interested in investing in Colombia's economy (Kalmanovitz 2001; Edwards and Steiner 2001). Thus, neoliberals support the view that employers, as well as foreign investors, will reduce their hiring as labor costs go up because of legislation that protects workers and increases the cost of contracts (Bronstein 1998).<sup>43</sup> Also, foreign firms looking to invest and create jobs are not attracted by countries with rigid legislations and/or over-protected workers (Hamermesh 2000). At any rate, neoliberals suppose that a flexible labor force may generate wage- and employment- inequality (as laborers have their rights and wages reduced), but the end result is the creation of more jobs as employers become dynamic. Thus, there is an initial tradeoff between equality and growth. As a result, the labor reforms of the 1990's (e.g., Law 50 of 1993) have been aimed at reducing labor costs for employers in hopes of creating a more attractive labor market for employers.

According to labor unions, the above arguments fail if they don't take into account the state's position in the international political economy. In 2001, the then-president of the CGTD, Roberto Gómez, blamed unemployment and lack of growth not on labor costs, but on indiscriminate trade liberalization.<sup>44</sup> Free trade increased household consumption of foreign agricultural and industrial goods, bankrupting these sectors in the domestic economy, and leaving many people without employment. The

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<sup>43</sup> Legislation that contemplates high compensation costs, and establishes minimum and extra-hour wages.

<sup>44</sup> "Sindicatos piden cambiar modelo económico," *El Tiempo*, August 23, 2001.

unemployed were not absorbed by the commercial activities dedicated to shipping and selling imports, and many found opportunities only in the informal economy. On the other hand, despite unemployment, labor costs went up as a result of currency revaluations that increased the prices of nationally produced goods. For example, between 1990 and 1997 the real exchange rate was revalued by 20%, making Colombian goods at least 20% more expensive in national and international markets (*Oficina Internacional del Trabajo* 1999). In addition, the high interest rates implemented to attract foreign capital investments increased production costs for nationals, as credit rates on loans rose.

Finally, the laws that made labor contracts more flexible simply produced lower wages and more inequality, and failed to generate the kind of wealth needed to develop the country.<sup>45</sup> In fact, the new labor laws coincided with an increase in unemployment, which grew from 10% to 20% between 1990 and 1999. Furthermore, labor leaders argued that in a labor surplus economy, workers only have access to dignified working conditions and living wages if the government protects labor rights.

The Gaviria administration (1990-94) took advantage of the minority position of unionized workers (10% of the labor force) by claiming that the extensive legislation that protected workers' rights simply turned unionized workers into privileged elites. Subsequent governments maintained that the legally protected wage and pension benefits, and the unionized worker's ability to negotiate collective contracts (as opposed to individual contracts that respond to employer's needs), were bankrupting private

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<sup>45</sup> Eduardo Sarmiento. "Ingresos laborales y referendo," *El Espectador*, July 20, 2003.

industries.<sup>46</sup> They further argued that state workers and administrators were responsible for the worst abuses against state-owned company resources, and were sacrificing public finances for generations to come.

The mainstream press quickly picked up on this view, and coined the term “the oligarchy in overalls” in order to criticize labor benefits and de-legitimate labor’s contentious collective actions. In the 1990s, blaming workers, and especially organized labor, for most macroeconomic ills became commonplace. The blame game was heightened whenever the president in office was ready to “liquidate” state-owned companies, many of which were bankrupt as a result of bad company policy or corrupt management, not high wages.

The process of privatizing state-owned companies became the center of contentious relations between government and workers in the 1990s, and state workers quickly organized in opposition to the reforms that denationalized public assets strategic for economic development. During much of the 1990s, Telecom, Ecopetrol, and Caja Agraria workers—employed by big state industries in the communications, oil sector, and the bank for agrarian development—were arguably the government’s main adversaries and the biggest critics of the neoliberal plans to restructure the state. These workers initially blocked the privatization process of their companies. In 1992, for instance, Telecom workers prevented the company’s privatization, and in 1998 state workers

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<sup>46</sup> “La oligarquía del overol,” *Semana*, May 19, 1992.

organized a 21-day strike, the longest in recent history, which ended only when the government acceded to some of the demands.<sup>47</sup>

By 1999, however, the government had signed the first stand-by agreement with the IMF and was obligated to a stricter and faster process of privatization and state reforms. As a result, the government was less likely to negotiate with workers and began to intensify the use of authoritarian mechanisms. For example, the Pastrana administration took state workers by surprise and by decree liquidated the public bank Caja Agraria. The Caja Agraria had provided 70 years of service to Colombian peasants, but was quickly bankrupted in the 1990s as a result of the financial reforms that privileged injecting public capital to save bankrupt private banks. The Caja Agraria's funds had also been used by the government to cover costs in areas other than rural development, often without returning the money to the bank. But the government announced publicly that it was dissolving the Caja Agraria because it was inefficient, corrupt, and debt-ridden due to exorbitant labor costs. Decrees 1064 and 1065 dissolved the old bank overnight, created the private Banco Agrario de Colombia S.A. the next day, and decreed that the private bank would take over the assets, liabilities, contracts, and investments of the public bank (Ahumada 2002). The 7,800 state workers who labored in the public bank had no place to work on the morning of June 26, 1999. Most of the bank's branches were militarized and the new Banco Agrario banner was quickly posted on top of the old Caja Agraria signs. The Decrees established that the liquidation of the

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<sup>47</sup> Triana (1999) lists at least ten points approved, among which are the government's compromise to not privatize the Social Security Institute, and to inject capital into the Caja Agraria, restrict the concession contracts signed with the oil multinationals, create a joint committee with judicial branch workers to discuss the justice system reforms, and increase health and education spending, among others.

Caja Agraria also dissolve all its labor contracts and legal responsibilities to pay salary and work benefits. This measure also struck a death blow to the Caja Agraria's influential union, Sintracreditario. Labor lawyers were able to argue that the Caja Agraria had fired its workers; thus, the Caja Agraria's privatization process had a high cost for government finances as the compensation expenses of firing workers amounted to \$255 million. Furthermore, about 5,700 workers sued the government for violating their economic and labor rights.

The Pastrana and Uribe governments learned their lesson from the Caja Agraria experience. They improved the liquidation, privatization and restructuring processes by avoiding some of its costs, and then applied them to the following state companies between 2000 and 2005: the Banco Central Hipotecario, which was founded in the 1930s to provide housing credits; the Social Security Institute, the Telecommunications company (Telecom); the state oil company (Ecopetrol); and the public television institute (Inravisión). It is expected that sometime after the year 2006 workers in the public school system will also have their contracts restructured in a similar fashion (i.e., by surprise and with a presidential decree). Given the high political and economic costs borne by the government in the process of privatization, labor unions infer that these measures have been fundamentally aimed at debilitating their associations.

Another source of state-worker contention is related to Law 100, which privatized the social security system, and also led to the liquidation of public hospitals all over the country. In 1997 alone, more than 150,000 health workers protested against the effects of this law that changed the government health policies from a system that financed the

supply of health services, to one that subsidizes users by helping them pay health insurance policies. In short, the country's clinics and hospitals stopped receiving public funds to pay for personnel, equipment and supplies, and were transformed into "State Social Enterprises"<sup>48</sup> that sell their services to patients or health companies. Following World Bank guidelines<sup>49</sup> on how to improve efficiency in health services, the government created a health industry with access to public and private financial resources in order to increase health coverage. However, public health workers believed that Law 100 was primarily designed to benefit the country's financial groups by funneling public funds into their capital accounts. Such funds would then be invested by these financial groups in things other than health care.<sup>50</sup>

Once Law 100 was passed, public funds were quickly transferred to private providers without the government having first modernized or developed adequate control and information mechanisms to make sure resources would not be squandered.<sup>51</sup>

Meanwhile, public hospitals nationwide went bankrupt as they stopped receiving government funds but kept serving the uninsured. The widespread perception was that certain financial groups, with the help of the government, were enriching themselves at the cost of people's health. The popular perception was proven true by the discovery in 2004 that a number of private Administrators of the Subsidized Health Regime were

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<sup>48</sup> Empresas Sociales del Estado.

<sup>49</sup> Banco Mundial. *Informe sobre el Desarrollo Mundial 1993: Invertir en Salud (resumen)*. Washington, D.C.: Banco Internacional de Reconstrucción y Fomento/Banco Mundial, 1993.

<sup>50</sup> By 1997, for instance, the private Administrators of the Subsidized Health Regime (ARS) were given enough government resources to insure 8 million people, but they covered only 5 million. In addition, 40% of the resources transferred by the government to the ARS were spent on intermediary fees and services, and not on direct healthcare (Natalia Paredes. 1999. "La salud ni se compra, ni se vende," *Cien Días vistos por Cinep* 10(44): 40-41).

<sup>51</sup> Dr. José Patiño y Comisión de Salud. "Pronunciamento de la Academia frente a la Ley 100 de 1993." <http://www.encolombia.com/medicina/academecina/proacad.htm>

claiming to insure more people than they really were in order to get more government transfers.

An additional source of contention between the government and Colombian health care system users is the fact that private health providers are increasingly refusing to pay for treatments and are rejecting elderly people, or people with expensive diseases. Therefore, an increasing number of Colombians nationwide are resorting to the use of *tutelas* (the judicial mechanism that serves to defend basic rights) in order to have access to health services. Between July 2003 and July 2004 alone, 94,050 *tutelas* were lodged against healthcare and pension funds, 75% of which were regarding health benefits.<sup>52</sup>

As a concluding remark, the labor movement has suffered from the effects of economic recession, government repression and organizational weakness, but labor has nevertheless increased its actions, especially during the neoliberal years. It can be generally agreed that labor responds contentiously to government policies that are counter to workers' interests.

### **Contention in the Countryside**

Although peasant actions are third in importance from a quantitative perspective, they are as fundamental for understanding Colombia's political economy as those of the labor movement. Rural conflict is more likely to occur in areas where: 1) peasants have no legal titles to their holdings, 2) there is land scarcity, 3) the land is of poor quality, 4) social services are insufficient, 5) there is a high concentration of indigenous populations, or 6) frontier lands are being settled (Corredor 1990). This section finds that in contrast

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<sup>52</sup> Adriana Camargo. "‘Efecto Maradona’, otro motivo que dispara tutelas de la salud," *El Tiempo*, September 27, 2005: 1-2.

to the labor movement, rural peasants were largely demobilized and suppressed as organized actors in Colombian politics.

Colombia's rural economy is divided into a large-scale agro-industrial sector, big landholdings for breeding and grazing livestock, and small farms. Rural laborers work for salaries in the agro-industrial sector and in the bigger landholdings, and are more likely to make contentious claims as workers than are peasants. Peasants produce for subsistence or for local markets in their smaller plots of land. Thus, productivity in such small-scale economies depends on the availability of land, technology, credits, and markets.

Included in this category of peasants and other rural actors are subsistence farmers, share-croppers, small-scale producers of agricultural goods for local markets, landless peasants, and indigenous peoples. However, indigenous peoples and non-indigenous peasants are culturally different and make dissimilar claims to government. Non-indigenous peasants claim individual titles to their lands while Indians claim communal, ancestral or collective territories.

In general, peasant contention is a struggle to alleviate poverty. By the 1990s, however, peasants were overwhelmingly making human rights claims and condemning macroeconomic policies that bankrupted rural economic production. Peasants have also been victimized by the government's war on drugs and by an unprecedented process of land re-concentration. The CINEP file provides the motives of peasant contention in the years between 1975 and 2000—52.6% were demands for land, 11.4% criticized agrarian, economic, or institutional policies that negatively affected peasant economies, 10.8%



demanded the protection of human and political rights, 9% demanded utility services, and 5.4% were mobilizations for social services (Prada 2003). In the Velasco file, 37.6% of peasants' mobilizations were against government incompetence (or government neglect and violation of agreed-upon settlements). Rural actors also criticized macroeconomic policies (25.1%), and mobilized for political rights (22%).

Historically, peasant and Indian contention has fundamentally been a struggle for land: against its concentration in the hands of a few landowners and in opposition to violent eviction. But Colombian governments have historically failed to respond to peasant claims for land. The unsuccessful agrarian reforms of 1936 and 1966 attest to this, as the Liberal governments' efforts to redistribute land were followed by violent land re-concentration. Landowners, usually supported by Conservative administrations, unleashed violent periods and recovered or augmented their landholdings. In the 1990s, neoliberal governments failed Colombian peasants once more by approving free trade policies without offering safeguards to protect agrarian production. In addition, the government's security policies have not been aimed at protecting peasants from massacres ordered by paramilitary forces and guerrillas. Neither has the government stopped the latest bout of violent concentration of land led by illegally armed groups who threaten people, take their lands or buy land at preposterously low prices.

The following data illustrates the degree to which land has been concentrated in this country. In 1960, owners of fewer than 20 hectares of land (1 hectare = 2.47 acres) held 18% of all agricultural land, but by 1984, their holdings had been reduced to 15% of all arable land. On the other hand, in 1960, 3% of owners occupied 59% of agricultural

land, and by 1984 their holdings had increased to 60.3% of all arable land. These statistics show that in 24 years, the government's land reform policies had failed as large landowners kept, and even increased, their share of agricultural lands.

Table 4.2 presents comparative data on land concentration and demonstrates that from 1984 to 1996 fewer people owned more land.

**Table 4.2.** Distribution of Rural Land in Colombia, 1984 and 1996<sup>53</sup>

Number of Hectares	1984		1996	
	Percent Owners of Land	Percent Agricultural Surface	Percent Owners of Land	Percent Agricultural Surface
< 1	31	0.66	33.12	0.59
1 – 3	23.96	2.22	23.38	1.89
3 – 5	10.73	2.11	10.34	1.79
5 – 10	11.3	4.03	11.15	3.55
10 – 20	8.3	5.94	8.23	5.25
20 – 50	7.68	12.47	7.48	10.94
50 – 100	3.53	12.3	3.36	10.58
100 – 200	1.96	12.96	1.7	10.13
200 – 500	1.08	14.59	0.89	10.65
500 - 1000	0.29	7.94	0.22	6.4
> 1000	0.17	24.78	0.13	38.23
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Taken from Apolinar Diaz-Callejas, who based information on data from Igac and the Center for the Study of Livestock and Agriculture (CEGA).<sup>54</sup>

According to the above statistics, between 1984 and 1996, people who owned more than 1,000 hectares of land increased their land holdings from 25% to 38% of Colombia's arable lands. Meanwhile, those with fewer than 20 hectares of land saw their share reduced from 15% to 13% of the country's agricultural surface. Finally, a 2005 study on land concentration by the General Controller's Office<sup>55</sup> finds that drug

<sup>53</sup> In 1984 the sample excludes the departments of Antioquia, Vichada, Guaviare, San Andrés, Chocó, Putumayo, Guainía and Amazonas. In 1996 it excludes all the previous departments as well as the department of Vaupés.

<sup>54</sup> *Colombia: La cuestión agraria* ([http://www.apolindiaz.org/documentosdetema.php?id\\_tema=8](http://www.apolindiaz.org/documentosdetema.php?id_tema=8))

<sup>55</sup> Contraloría General de la República.

traffickers and illegally armed groups have either purchased or appropriated by force an additional 4.5 million hectares of land in the country.<sup>56</sup>

As the Colombian state failed to prevent—and even abetted—the process of land concentration, landless peasants had no other option than to settle Colombia’s less fertile and uninhabited agricultural frontier in the tropical rainforests and savannahs of departments such as Caquetá, Putumayo, Guaviare, Meta, or Arauca, where they were more likely to find land (Ocampo 1988, 290). Some 3.5 million hectares were colonized in the years between 1960-1980 by both landless peasants and even large landowners, who used rainforest and savannah lands to raise cattle.

#### *Peasant Contention and State and Citizen Capacities*

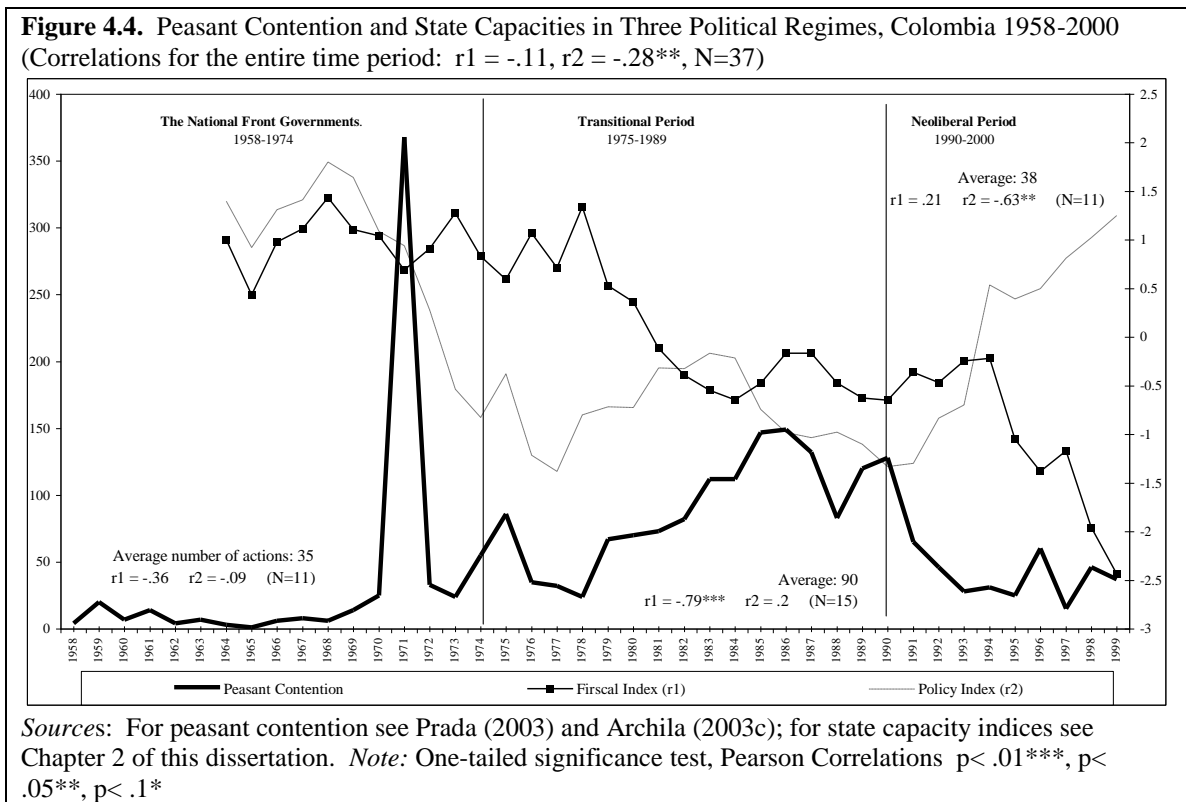
Figure 4.4 plots the annual number of peasant actions from 1958 until 2000 against state capacities. If we contrast this series with the social contention series (Figure 3.1), we find that peasant protests have not followed an increasing tendency over time. In fact, during the Transitional Period peasant contention increased to an average of 90 protests a year, but in the neoliberal period the average number of protests was similar to that of the National Front governments.

The 1971 crest is explained by the large number of land invasions encouraged by the ANUC (the Peasant Association created in 1966) after President Pastrana, in a coalition with landowners, overturned the Agrarian Reform law of 1966. In 1971, Indian peasants also formed the first independent Indian organization, after indigenous members of the ANUC amicably left the organization and formed their own Cauca Regional

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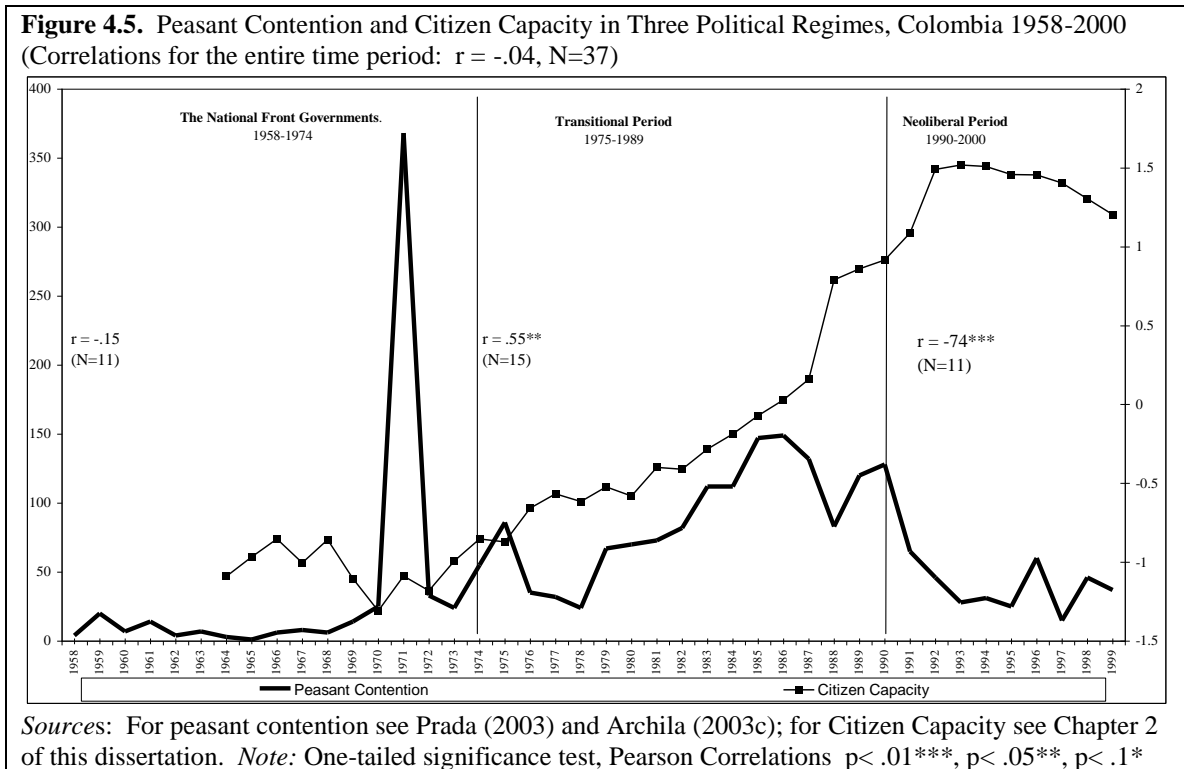
<sup>56</sup> “50% de la tierra fértil, en poder de narcos,” *El País*, June 10, 2005.

Indigenous Council (CRIC) to claim ancestral lands and collective land titles in the Cauca department. In contrast to peasant organizations—which were largely disbanded by the 1980s—the CRIC succeeded in its claims for land, organized Indian groups in other departments, and in 1982 created the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) to encourage a unified Indian movement.



After the 1971 peak, peasants were largely demobilized as a consequence of government repression. The 1975 peak coincides with the large historic protests that took place during this year after a new administration reduced state repression and promised widespread reforms in the countryside, but failed to deliver the reforms. The 1980s recovery is explained by the lessening of state repression during the Betancur and Barco

governments, but also by peasant discontent with deteriorating economic conditions and increasing human rights violations (Prada 2003, 128).



Peasant contention decreased in the early 1990s, primarily as a result of extreme right- and left-wing violence. Notwithstanding, during the 1999 economic downturn (one of the country's worst), peasants mobilized in union with other social actors, especially with rural associations of agro-industrial producers, against the government's free trade policies that inundated Colombian markets with subsidized foreign foodstuffs, bankrupting peasant economies and many agro-industries.

The Pearson Correlations between peasant contention and state capacities over the entire time period are very weak even though there is a negative and significant relationship between the Policy Index and contention. This is contrary to the findings of

Figure 3.1, where a stronger and negative relationship is established between social contention and the state capacity indices over the 37-year period. We do find, however, important negative correlations between peasant contention and the Fiscal Index during the Transitional Period, and the Policy Index during the Neoliberal governments. Figure 4.5 shows no correlation between citizen capacity and peasant contention in the long run, although significant and strong negative correlations are found during the Transitional and Neoliberal periods.

#### *Peasant and Indian Contention in the 1990s*

Rural contention in the 1990s, therefore, did not decrease as a result of the use of the political opportunities offered by the 1991 constitution, but rather as a consequence of violence and dirty-war tactics. Notwithstanding the decline in peasant contention, there were some important mobilizations against the neoliberal macroeconomic policies that bankrupted agrarian production. In the early 1990s, the administration of President Gaviria decided to increase the import of agricultural products at a point in time when industrialized countries were subsidizing, on average, up to 44% of the value of their agricultural products (Vargas 1992). By 1992, cheaper food imports from industrialized countries in North America and Europe bankrupted Colombian rural producers, who stopped cultivating 118,000 hectares of land. Also, between 1990 and 1999, as domestically produced foodstuffs were replaced by imports, the cultivated area of the country was reduced by 36% (Torres 2001). Although imports may have initially cheapened food prices for urban residents, the reduction of cultivated land reduced rural

employment. This left up to one million people in the countryside without jobs, and small producers without markets.

On the other hand, coffee production and coffee prices—the country's most important agrarian commodity—decreased during much of the 1990s, which reduced by 30% the incomes of the 550,000 families that grow coffee.<sup>57</sup> Further, one million insolvent small and medium sized producers were at risk of losing their lands because they could not pay their loans (Prada 2003). Finally, poverty in the countryside has increased gradually in the 1990s, standing at 66% in 2005. These structural conditions were the source of the few but important peasant protests in the 1990s against the Neoliberal governments.

#### *Contention at the Departmental Level*

In the Velasco Data File (see Appendix 9), rural contention was highest in departments with bigger populations, such as Antioquia and Valle, or, in the case of Cauca, where an independent organization formed (i.e., the Cauca Regional Indigenous Council). The most quiescent peasants lived in the more economically developed coffee departments of Caldas, Quindío and Risaralda, where people have land and have benefited from government investment in development. The departments in Colombia's Amazon basin land frontier (Amazonas, Caquetá, Guanía, Guaviare, Vaupés and Vichada) were also less contentious as these have very few inhabitants and very little state presence. Appendix 9 presents further information on peasant and Indian contention between 1991 and 2002 in all Colombian departments.

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<sup>57</sup> "Fondo del café rumbo a insolvencia," *El Espectador*, December 12, 2000.

The protests described below stand out for being longer and more aggressive than most others, and they offer important insight into contentious relations between peasants and the government during the 1990s. In particular, the following descriptions show government incapacity to follow through on policy demands, and citizen incapacity to use legal mechanisms to make claims.

In 1994 eighteen hundred peasants from more than 10 municipalities in Huila blockaded the roads outside the department's capital of Neiva and cut the communication between this city and Bogotá. They were asking for their debts to be forgiven—the majority of which had been provided by the Caja Agraria—after decreasing prices and demand reduced their production margins and ability to repay.<sup>58</sup> After negotiations, the central government forgave the debts of the poorest peasants and the payment of interest of the more well-off peasants.<sup>59</sup> Huila's problems, however, continued. In 1998, more than thirty thousand peasants went on strike and blocked the main roads of the department. At this time, 60% of all the activities in the city of Neiva (population 251,000) were paralyzed, and as the blockade progressed, the city's food was in short supply. Food shortages were also felt in the departments of Cauca and Guaviare.<sup>60</sup>

Peasants and their *Asociación Agropecuaria del Huila* were now protesting the government's failure to fulfill a set of previous agreements reached with peasants (such as the one agreed upon in 1994).<sup>61</sup> As the protest dragged on, the central government first sent the Vice Minister of Agriculture, who held a meeting with 4,000 peasants and

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<sup>58</sup> "Campesinos taponan vías del Huila," *El Tiempo*, November 16, 1994.

<sup>59</sup> "Levantado paro campesino en el Huila," *El Nuevo Siglo*, November 18, 1994.

<sup>60</sup> "Sigue paro campesino," *El Nuevo Siglo*, May 22, 1998.

<sup>61</sup> "El Huila quedó aislado por el paro campesino," *El Espectador* May 20, 1998.



the leaders. After peasants refused the government's terms, the Minister of Agriculture came. The blockades ended after thirty hours of negotiation, when the Minister agreed to invest 3.5 billion pesos (U.S.\$2.6 million) to restructure the debts of more than 6,000 peasants and invest in the region's rural development.<sup>62</sup>

Cauca's Indians and peasants were far more contentious. After their civic strikes in 1994, the government agreed to invest 880 million pesos (U.S.\$1.1 million) in electricity and water, and other development projects.<sup>63</sup> They went again on strike in 1996, demanding similar investment projects when the government failed to comply with the previous accords. In 1999, Cauca and Nariño peasants from 29 municipalities blockaded roads for almost a month in November to protest neoliberal policies and government incompetence.<sup>64</sup> They also demanded that the government fulfill agreements signed over the previous fifteen years to improve health services, roads, education and housing in the two departments. Their organization, the *Comité de Integración del Macizo Colombiano*, reached an agreement with the Vice Minister of the Interior after 26 days of protests. The Vice Minister promised \$53 million that would be distributed in a variety of social and infrastructure projects.

The protests of coca producers against the U.S. and Colombian governments' repressive eradication policies in Colombia's southern departments constitute another example of peasant contention. The government's policies to reduce the production of illegal drugs have been organized around two large-scale projects: the National Program

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<sup>62</sup> "A punta de naranja se levantó para en el Huila," *El Tiempo*, May 25, 1998.

<sup>63</sup> "Más promesas a campesinos del Cauca," *El Espectador*, February 25, 1994.

<sup>64</sup> "El suroccidente pide la palabra: cronología del paro cívico del Macizo colombiano," *Cien días vistos por Cinep* 10 (45), 1999.

for Alternative Development (1994-1999), and Plan Colombia (2000-2006). These projects seek to reduce the supply of drugs and include the forceful eradication and criminalization of coca leaf production, which is mostly planted by peasants in small plots. Fumigations began in the period between 1992 and 1994, but were intensified when Plan Colombia came into effect. The Uribe administration (2002-2006) is ready to strengthen the eradication strategies by expanding fumigations to most Colombian rural areas, including natural parks and reserves. The two plans also incorporate alternative development and crop substitution strategies to provide peasants with other means of economic subsistence. However, both substitution and fumigation strategies have failed.<sup>65</sup>

In 1994, Guaviare peasants went on a strike that lasted several days and ended after successful negotiations between strike leaders and delegates sent by Horacio Serpa, Minister of the Interior. The parties agreed that peasants would voluntarily eliminate coca production if the government allocated a sum no lower than 1 billion pesos (U.S.\$1.2 million) for coca eradication programs.<sup>66</sup> In return, the government agreed to develop infrastructure and social programs, give peasants title to lands, and not fumigate crops smaller than 3 hectares.<sup>67</sup> Meanwhile, Putumayo peasant leaders, along with twenty Community Action Juntas, sent a missive to President Samper asking him to discontinue fumigations.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> In 1995, it was estimated that 50,000 hectares of land were cultivated with coca. In 1999 the number increased to 103,000 (Prada 2001), and in 2001 there were 169,000, which were reduced to 144,450 by the year 2002 (Ahumada 2003).

<sup>66</sup> "Terminó paro del Guaviare," *El País*, December 16, 1994.

<sup>67</sup> "Levantado ayer el paro en el Guaviare," *El Espectador*, December 16, 1994.

<sup>68</sup> "No al uso de glisofato en Putumayo," *El Tiempo*, December 22, 1994.

However, as the United States government toughened its stand on drug production and increased its yearly military aid from \$88 million in 1997 to \$605 million in 2003 (a seven-year total of \$2.5 billion),<sup>69</sup> subsequent Colombian administrations have increased the persecution of peasant coca growers, and have failed to comply with previously reached agreements. Since the late 1990s, fumigations have forcibly displaced peasants from their lands; therefore, peasants associate fumigations with government repression (Prada 2001). As a result, in 2001 peasants organized four large regional protests in the department of Putumayo.

Compared to the rural actors described above, peasants (as well as other social actors) from the coffee growing departments of Caldas, Risaralda and Quindío have been traditionally quiescent. These are relatively wealthier departments, where land is less concentrated and the government and the National Federation of Colombian Coffee Growers (FEDECAFE)<sup>70</sup> have invested in economic development. However, coffee growers resorted to contentious politics in the 1990s, after the International Coffee Pact (managed by Brazil, Colombia and smaller producers) that controlled prices and production was dissolved and a free market for international coffee prices was established in 1989. Soon after the pact was dissolved, coffee prices went down.

In addition, Vietnam flooded the international coffee market with cheaply produced coffee subsidized by a World Bank credit, and became the second largest

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<sup>69</sup> “US Aid to Colombia since 1997” ([www.ciponline.org/colombia/aidtable.htm](http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/aidtable.htm)) cited by Ahumada (2003).

<sup>70</sup> FEDECAFE, founded in 1927 by presidential initiative, represented Colombians in the coffee pact. In 1997, FEDECAFE had 247,000 members (Robledo 1999, 21). In its 70 years of work, FEDECAFE tried to keep price stability for Colombian coffee producers by depositing money in the coffee fund when international prices were higher than the national price, and taking money from the fund when international prices were lower (Robledo 1999).

producer of coffee after Brazil. Small Colombian coffee producers staged a number of large national and regional protests and by 1992 they had organized alternative political organizations such as *Unidad Cafetera Nacional* (UCN) to oppose specific FEDECAFE and governmental agrarian policies, and to demand internal price stability and the refinancing of small coffee-growers debts (Robledo 1999: 38). In 1995, the UCN convoked the first ever National Coffee-Growers Civic Strike, in which 100,000 people participated. In response, Congress passed Law 223 to forgive the coffee-growers' debt.

#### *The Protests of Indigenous Peoples*

Colombia's indigenous peoples are 1.8% of the population,<sup>71</sup> but their acts of political contention have had a significant impact on public opinion. Indigenous peoples not only claim ancestral lands. They also criticize environmental degradation—including the indiscriminate defoliation of forests and legal crops that result from the fumigation of coca plants—and the incursions of armed groups into their territories. As already discussed, the largest and most recurrent indigenous protests occurred in the department of Cauca, but Indians in other parts of the country also staged important actions of social contention. For instance, in the mid -1990s, the Emberá Katío Indians of the department of Córdoba protested the construction of the Urrá hydroelectric project that dammed the Sinú River, flooded much of their land, and ended the spawning cycle of the fish species on which they depend for protein. Concurrently, the U'wa Indians of Boyacá and Casanare contested oil exploration in their sacred lands by Occidental Petroleum

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<sup>71</sup> There are about 80 different ethnic groups that speak 60 languages. The most numerous populations are settled in the Andes mountain range, although there is a large population in the Caribbean desert of la Guajira.

Corporation (OXY). The U'wa gained international notoriety, were supported by international NGOs and indigenous groups, and were surprisingly successful in negotiating the terms under which their land would be exploited with OXY officials and the Colombian government.

The series of events describing rural conflict highlight how the national government of 1990s, and especially the Samper administration (1994-1998), institutionalized the practice of managing peasant (and other) discontent by willingly negotiating with protesters. After contentious actors are disbanded, the government fails to comply with its part of the agreements and puts off the conflict until the next administration, at which point contention may or may not escalate. The next president then starts the cycle of negotiation, failure to comply or repression.

### **Urban or Territorial Actors**

Urban or territorial actors live in the same vicinity, and have varied social identities (e.g., gender, generational, racial), socioeconomic characteristics (e.g., income, education), and organizational affiliations (e.g., religious, government, private sectors). These actors are normally associated with poor towns or neighborhoods where services are deficient or the government has failed to develop the community, and the press or the government labels them inhabitants, residents, settlers (*pobladores*) or civic groups (*grupos cívicos*). They have also been defined by their use of the civic strike as a form of collective action to make claims on the state. During a civic strike, most socioeconomic activities in a town are obstructed as a peaceful mechanism to draw the government's attention to a communal problem.

The role of the state in institutionalizing communities also explains why urban residents have been specifically defined as contentious actors. A settlement is recognized by the state once the settlers obtain legal titles to their land after buying it or having the government confer the titles.<sup>72</sup> Until the 1990s, the Colombian government provided water and electricity services to legal settlers, and subsidized the cost of the service of poorer communities by charging wealthier customers (in both homes and businesses) higher rates. Further, during many years public companies tolerated illegal connections, especially to electricity services, and in this way, some of the poorest homes used electricity without paying for the service (García 2003a, 81).

In the 1970s and part of the 1980s, the government destined resources (including foreign credits) to increase household access to utility services. Although there are significant differences between urban and rural areas, by the year 2000, the government provided water to 95% of urban households (in 1985 it was 85%) and sewer service to 87% of urban homes. Rural coverage is 44% and 21% respectively. Electricity service reached 50.3% of households in the year 2000 and there were 15.89 telephone lines per 100 people in 1999.<sup>73</sup> If the government failed to provide utility services, residents would demand these using contentious politics. Thus, in the initial phase illegal settlers demand titles to the lands they occupy in order to avoid eviction. Once they become legal settlers, they begin to protest if the government fails to install utility and other services. And, after the 1991 constitution allowed the privatization of utility services, *pobladores* began to contest their rising costs.

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<sup>72</sup> Personal communication with Luz Angela Herrera, CINEP researcher, 2003

<sup>73</sup> All the data of utility services comes from Gaitán and Galeano (2002).

Urban settlers became increasingly contentious in response to rapid urbanization and state incapacity to meet the needs of a growing urban population. The urbanization process was driven by violence and land concentration in the countryside and as a result, city populations began to grow faster than urban economies. From 1958 until 2000, the urban population increased from roughly 6 million to 30 million people, and in 1958, forty-six percent of the population lived in urban areas, and by 2000 the number had increased to 71% (DNP 1999; 2002). Unlike peasants—who subsist on the production of basic foodstuffs—city dwellers need to participate in labor, service, and commodity markets to survive. But once in the cities, settlers found few sources of employment, housing and social welfare. At the same time, local government budgets were overwhelmed by the money needed to transport, house, keep sanitary conditions for, and educate a larger population (Ocampo et al. 1988).

Immigrants settled (and often invaded) deprived city peripheries and were often excluded from formal economic activities such as industry, government work or other private services. With little access to stable and/or formal employment, poor urban residents enlarged the informal economy sector—an array of marginal occupations such as selling in street corners, housecleaning, gardening, or repairing household items. All the above factors explain why most conflicts in urban settings involve poor working residents or families, stressed by high levels of unemployment, and growing utility, service and consumer prices.

In the 1990s, urban contention was highest in those departments where Colombia's five biggest cities are located, or Antioquia, Bogotá, Valle, Santander and

Atlántico (See Appendix 10).<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, urban residents are mobilized by a variety of organizations that represent local community interests in the development of infrastructure and other public service projects, such as the Associations of Utility Service Users, who monitor the prices and the quality of these services. The most notorious of these organizations are the Community Action Juntas, or the town or neighborhood organizations created by National Front president Lleras in 1966 to assist the government with infrastructure and other development projects.

I also found that local-level elected officials (mayors, governors, and members of local councils and departmental assemblies) joined a number of contentious actions alongside urban residents, normally when the protests were directed against illegally armed groups, or the central government. For example, in 2002, Antioquia mayors from 23 municipalities became notorious for resigning en masse to protest both FARC guerrilla threats on their lives, and central government's inability to offer security in their regions. Local elected leaders in Bogotá, Valle and Atlántico, among others, were quick to join local resident protests for peace and against human rights violations. Finally, local authorities in southern departments joined resident protests against the national government's repressive anti-drug policies.

Local-level officials were more likely to participate in contentious politics after the decentralization laws of 1986. Decentralization had the effect of passing on the conflict between the national government and local residents to the inexperienced local administrations. Sub-national administrations were often incapable of solving local

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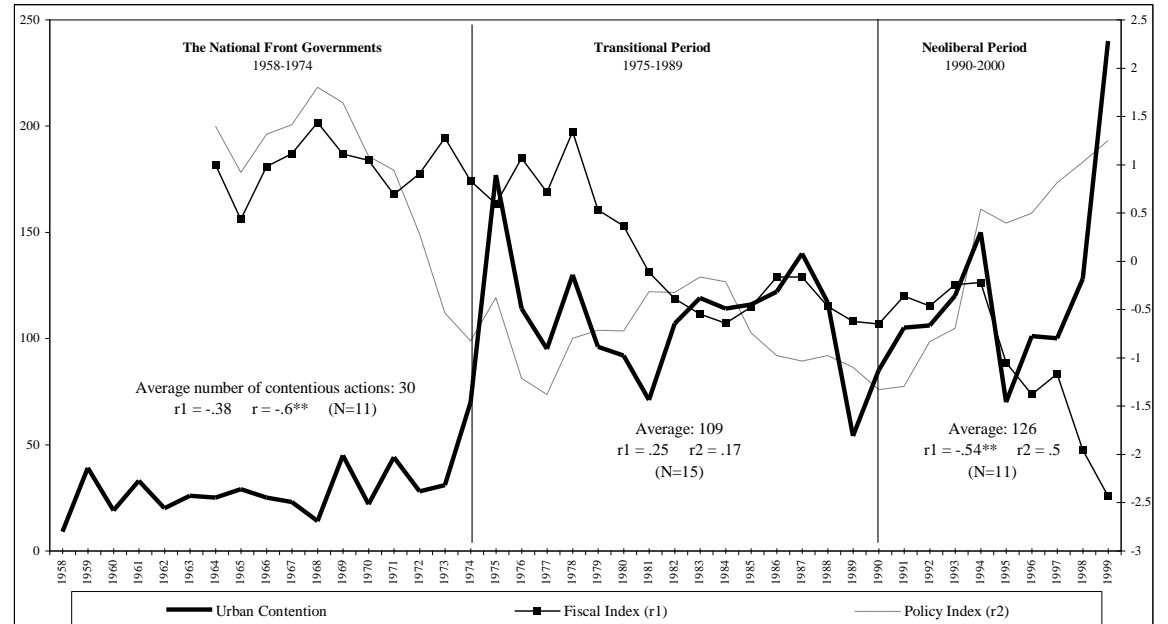
<sup>74</sup> Please refer to Appendix 7 for information on department population.



problems that originated in national or international macroeconomic affairs (e.g., privatizations, import of locally produced goods, and budget cuts aimed at reducing central government obligations with local communities) (Ahumada and Velasco 2002).

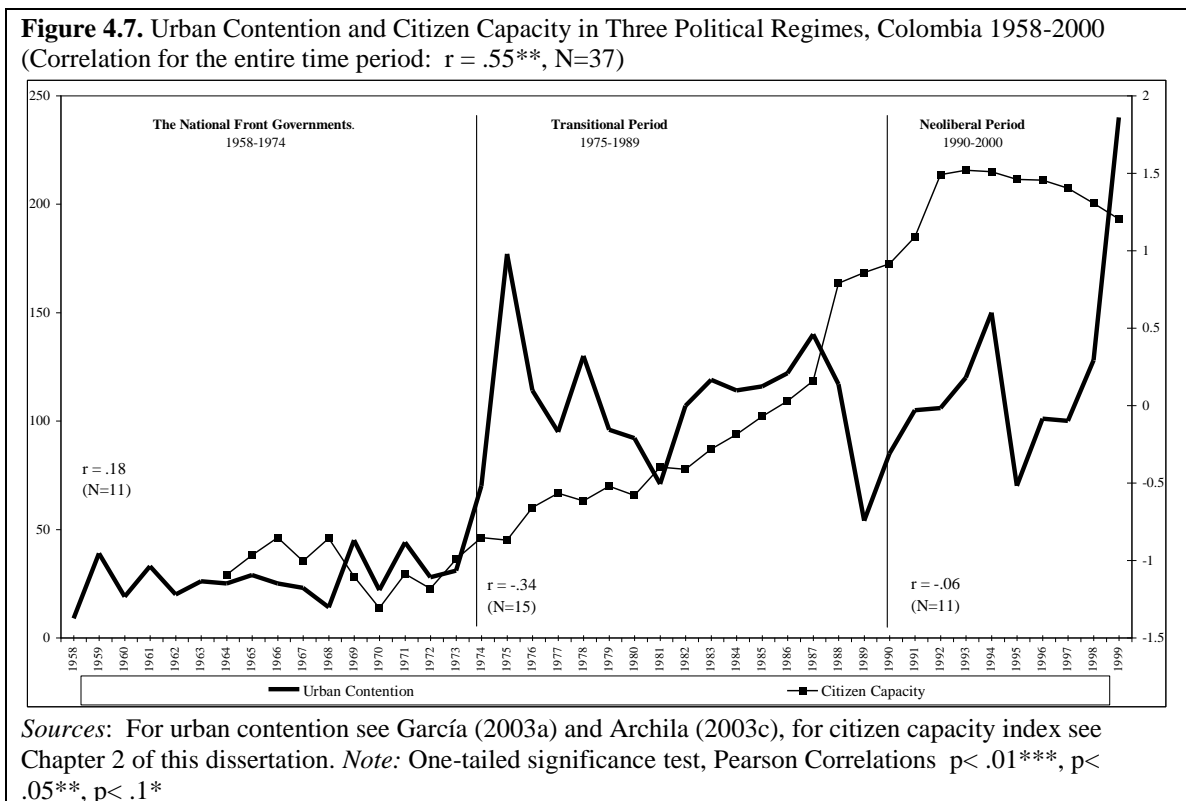
The CINEP file finds that between 1975 and 2000, 35.1% of resident actions were for both utility and transportation services, 18.6% were demands for housing, and 17% were against human rights violations (García 2003a, 80-98). In the Velasco File, community residents protested rate increases or the deterioration of utility services (27.2% of the time). They also mobilized to demand government policies for health and daycare services, investment in housing, and the alleviation of the effects of a natural catastrophe (20.8%).

**Figure 4.6.** Urban Contention and State Capacity Indices in Three Political Regimes, Colombia 1958-2000 (Correlations for the entire time period:  $r_1 = -.63^{***}$ ,  $r_2 = -.31^{**}$ ,  $N=37$ )



Sources: For urban contention see García (2003a) and Archila (2003c); for state capacity indices see Chapter 2 of this dissertation. Note: One-tailed significance test, Pearson Correlations  $p < .01^{***}$ ,  $p < .05^{**}$ ,  $p < .1^*$

Figures 4.6 and 4.7 plot urban contention against state and citizen capacities. The 1974-1986 cycle of protests might have been a response to an increase in living expenses due to declining wages and growing unemployment. Analysts argue that the 1986-1990 drop in urban contention responds to the encouraging effects of the decentralization laws that allowed the election of mayors and other sub-national officials (García 2003a; Santana 1988). These reforms encouraged the founding of local political parties—often named “civic” movements or political “currents”—to avoid being identified with the traditional political parties. Because of the availability of new parties, many urban movement leaders began to use electoral politics to make their claims. Urban contention continued to be high in the 1990s, and was not immediately reduced by the 1991 Constitution.



The Pearson Correlations show that there is a negative and significant association between urban contention and state capacities, and a positive link between urban protests and citizen capacities over time. This is a similar finding to that previously reported for social contention in Chapter 3.

*Urban Contention in the 1990s*

As explained before, the main catalyst of urban protests is the bad quality or unavailability of utility services. Until the 1980s, these were delivered and subsidized by the government, but by the late 1980s, government officials complained that the predominant tariff rates were not covering the real value of the services rendered, and that state utility companies were distressed by the central government's fiscal and debt crises, by internal corruption and by problems of bureaucratic supply, which afflicted operational efficiency and coverage. Thus, after the 1991 constitution allowed for the privatization of utility service companies, a private-sector solution was sought. Law 142 of 1994 provided the legal framework to start the process of privatization, and allowed tariff increases and the reduction of subsidies.

The market solution was questioned especially by workers' unions and urban actors, who pointed out that the World Bank conditioned new credits to develop and implement policies concerning the participation of private service providers in utility companies (Ahumada 2002, 184).<sup>75</sup> According to labor unions, these strategic companies for Colombia's economic development were to be sold below their real value to foreign

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<sup>75</sup> Workers' unions found issue with transferring strategic services such as water and telecommunications to foreign companies, and some senators alleged that just when the provision of utility services had become profitable, the business was handed over to the private sector.

companies uninterested in investing their profits in Colombia's development. Thus, as tariffs increased, so did complaints against mounting utility costs.<sup>76</sup> Between 1995 and 2000, for example, the water tariffs increased 238% in the poorest homes, while the richest households saw an increase of 57.3% (Gaitán and Galeano 2002, 241).

Tax increases and road tolls were also important sources of contention between the government and the urban poor in the 1990s. One of the Colombian government's main goals in the past decade has been to improve internal revenues for which it has increased the tax burden on citizens. But as military spending and debt obligations rise, the government's tax efforts produce fewer communal or social services. And as Kalmanovitz (2001b) forewarns, there hasn't been an institutional relationship in Colombia between taxation and representation. Consequently, citizens are more likely to perceive tax-paying as a burden for which there is little return and as government fundraising to pay for a growing debt service and internal war.

Protests against bad road services and deficient transportation have also topped the list of urban demands. Before the 1990s, when the government constructed and maintained the nation's roads through public works, residents protested to have the government extend the service to their communities. But after the government passed Law 105 of 1993 in order to appeal to private capital to invest in highway development and to reduce government spending on infrastructure,<sup>77</sup> the cost of building roads was

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<sup>76</sup> In the year 2001, for example, almost 60,000 complaints of bad service, double fees, and incorrect meter readings, among others, inundated the Office of the Utility Service Superintendent (Ahumada 2002, 188-189).

<sup>77</sup> The government signed joint-venture road building contracts, in which the government shares the risks of the enterprise with the private providers, but covers their losses if a minimum profit is not obtained.

passed to the users in the form of road tolls. These tolls constitute a bigger burden on poor households and poor towns. Notwithstanding, Law 105 did not lessen the government's financial burden, and in fact spending on infrastructure increased. Therefore, to raise funds for the development of infrastructure projects, the government began to apply a "valorization" tax to property owners. The valorization tax is another form of property tax charged to people who own land or houses in areas where new roads, bridges, or sidewalks will be developed. Increasing valorization taxes and road tolls led to an important number of civic strikes across communities where private consortia took over road-building and maintenance.

Finally, debtors and street vendors organized the most notorious protests of "new" or normally quiescent social actors in urban areas. In 1999, the National Association of Financial System Users (ANUSIF) organized a set of protests after an alarming number of homeowners lost their homes or had problems making mortgage payments. The root of their problem lay in the financial system reforms promoted by the neoliberal governments. Before the 1990 financial reforms that liberated interests, monetary authorities controlled these rates by setting a 5% limit over what was called the UPAC unit (which was similar to the rate of inflation). The Constant Unit of Acquisitive Capacity or UPAC system was created in the 1970s to shield bank accounts from the effects of inflation. Thus, the UPAC was computed based on the average rate of inflation (i.e., if the average was computed at 30% then the UPAC would be somewhere near 30 units). Credits were convened on the UPAC unit plus no more than a 5% interest rate,

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However, the government is still assuming up to 75% of the spending, while the private consortia invest the remaining 25%, but keep 100% of road-toll revenues (Pérez 2005).

and the life of the loans would vary according to fluctuations in the UPAC unit. In a similar way, savers contracted bank accounts in which their deposits would earn the UPAC units plus a convened percentage above the unit.

When interest rates as well as UPAC units were liberalized in order to attract foreign investors, mortgage rates quickly went up (Rebolledo 1999). As a result many households that had contracted mortgage debts at variable interest and UPAC rates stopped paying mortgages that grew to amounts higher than the family's income. Further, some debts grew to amounts higher than the property's market value; thus, if people sold their house they would still owe the bank money. By the year 2000, the banks had repossessed 9,304 properties and, as an increasing number of debtors stopped paying their quotas, the financial system felt the loss. The government opted to socialize the banks' shortfall among Colombian tax payers by charging financial system users a 2-per-1,000 Peso fee every time a transaction is made.<sup>78</sup>

ANUSIF (the debtors association) which claimed to represent 140,000 of the 800,000 debtors, sent a letter to the president, threatening to rebel against the financial system by not paying their quotas, as on average these represented more than 50% of family incomes (Rebolledo 1999). The situation turned dramatic as newspapers began to report that heads of households on the brink of losing their homes were committing suicide.<sup>79</sup> Debtors finally got the attention of the Constitutional Court, which in 1999 expressed that the government had to change the credit system.

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<sup>78</sup> The government has since raised this fee to 4 per 1,000.

<sup>79</sup> Some papers claimed that up to 2000 heads of households had committed suicide.

The Ministry of Finance complained that the court knew nothing about economic policy and should not be intervening in these matters, and scorned ANUSIF for promoting civil disobedience by encouraging a no-payment movement (Rebolledo 1999). However, the House of Representatives passed a law to reform the system and give debtors some legal mechanisms to recover their homes or renegotiate their credits. Soon after this, ANUSIF filed 10,000 legal suits against the financial corporations. The 1998-99 UPAC crisis is still unresolved as homeowners continue to lose their homes (although at a lower rate) and interest rates continue to be high (Ahumada 2002).

Informal vendors became contentious actors when local administrations throughout Colombia's biggest cities passed measures to evict people who were using streets and parks irregularly for commercial purposes. Bogotá mayors Enrique Peñalosa (1998-2000) and Antanas Mockus (2001-2003) implemented aggressive plans to end the negative side effects of informal vending such as tax evasion, obstruction of pedestrian mobility, invasion of city parks and plazas, crime, deterioration of real estate, and disruption of formal economic activities in retail stores. These plans were also aimed at renovating real state in deteriorated but still-central areas of the city.

Though the administrations offered to relocate vendors in small shopping centers in different areas of the city, only a minority benefited from these measures (Zamudio 1999). When vendors refused to comply with the local government's deadlines, police were given the order to expel them. Vendors rioted and often returned to the places that had been cleared of informal vendors. In most cities, informal vendor associations were created to lead acts of contention or to negotiate with unwavering local governments.

The public-space problem continues as unemployment and underemployment persist and informality is the only source of income for many poor urban families.

To conclude, urban residents—as opposed to peasants and labor—are not organized actors, although community associations—such as the church, the Community Action Juntas or neighborhood groups of various sorts—may convoke civic strikes whenever the community’s welfare is at risk. This section on urban resident contention argues that the state’s role in urban development explains resident protests when public policies either pressure household incomes, or fail to provide basic facilities. The following section will provide an analysis of the Colombian student movement.

### **Students**

The student category includes 58% university students, 41.5% high school students and 0.5% elementary and middle school students (García 2003b). The student population began to grow in the 1960s and 1970s, and their protests have been primarily against factors that deteriorate their education, such as social services or education policies. Appendix 11 shows that the majority of student protests occurred in Bogotá, Antioquia, Valle, and Santander, where the biggest public and private universities are located, and where the student population is large and concentrated.<sup>80</sup>

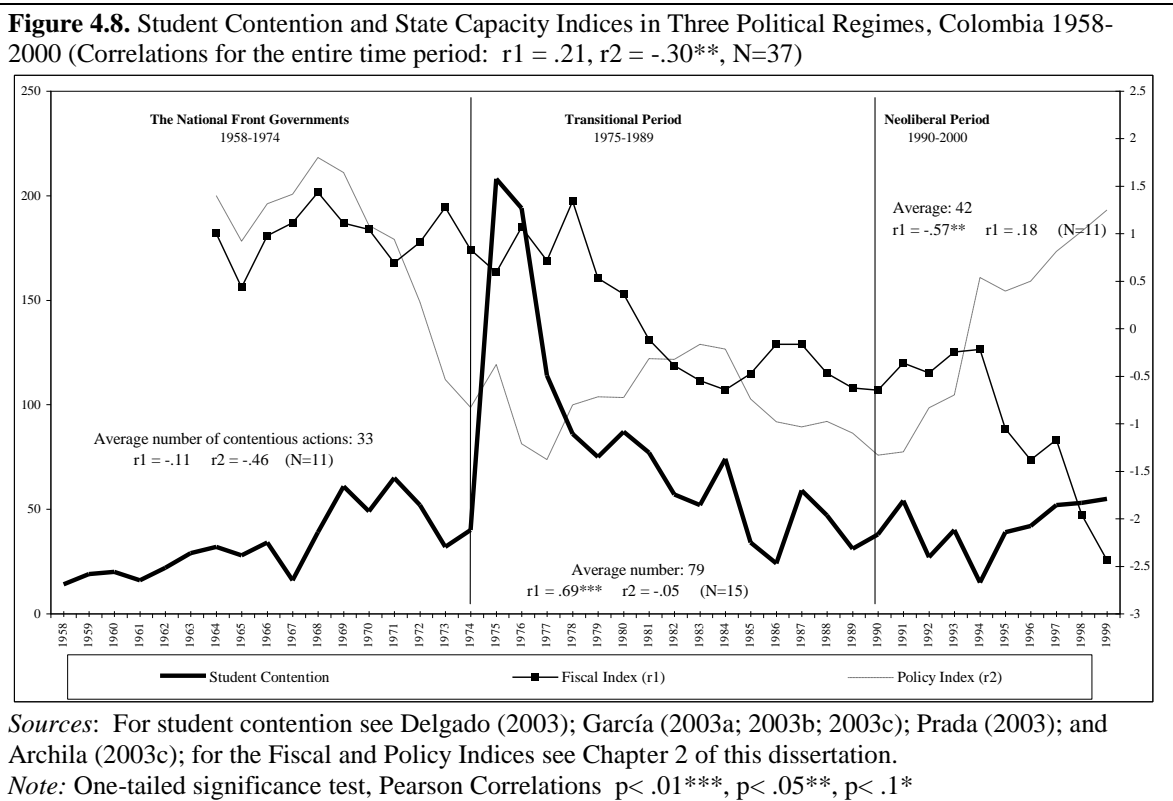
García (2003b, 190-195) finds that 30.5% of student demands between the years 1975 and 2000 were for social services related to the quality and availability of educational activities (i.e., more teachers, better academic quality, health services, student housing, cafeterias, etc.); 17.8% of their actions criticized the performance and decisions

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<sup>80</sup> Colombia’s biggest cities are located in these departments.



taken by education authorities; 14% challenged national government policies; and 13.1% protested human rights violations. I found that students contested education policies 43.5% of the time. They also mobilized for civil and political rights (17.8%), for peace (13%), and to challenge macroeconomic policies (12.7%). Most peace and civil rights protests were led by high school students, while university students had a marked tendency to engage in political disputes against the government.



Figures 4.8 and 4.9 plot student protests against state and citizen capacities, and show that student contention increased after 1966, when the government proposed the privatization of higher education following the recommendations of the Rudolph Atcon

report<sup>81</sup> (commissioned by the United Nations), and of the 1966-1967 University of California/USAID mission (contracted by the Colombian Association of Universities and the National University Fund). Both missions suggested that Colombia copy the North American university model, where the private sector is an important provider of education services, and the state keeps only some public universities.<sup>82</sup> Students disapproved of the mixed model because it promoted a model of learning not suitable for the educational needs of a developing country (García 2003b).

This wave of contention followed into the 1970s and produced the 1971 student movement, which became notorious for its capacity to convoke students and cooperate with other contentious social actors, such as labor or urban residents. The 1975-77 peak is explained by student mobilizations against the less-than-democratic post-National Front governments, and by student-movement empathy with the struggle of other social actors. Students demobilized in the middle and late 1970s, largely as a result of repression, but they continued to contend budget cutbacks or specific education plans.

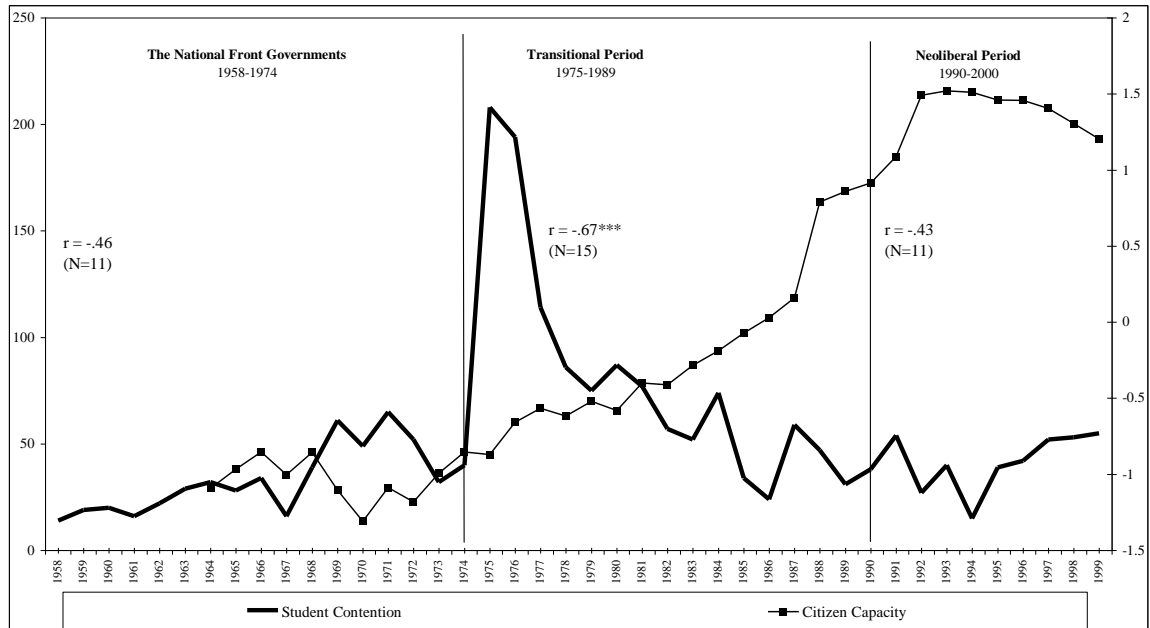
The Pearson Correlations show that there is a negative and significant association between student contention and the Policy Index, and a negative link between student protests and citizen capacities over time. The correlations also confirm significant relationships between the student movement and state capacities during the Transitional and Neoliberal periods; however, the former is a positive correlation and the latter is negative.

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<sup>81</sup> Rudolph Atcon. (1961/2005). *La universidad latinoamericana. Clave para un enfoque conjunto del desarrollo coordinado social, económico y educativo en América Latina*. Bogota: UNAL.

<sup>82</sup> See Iván Pacheco. "Educación culpable, educación redentora. Evolución legislativa de la educación superior en Colombia." [http://www.iesalc.unesco.org.ve/programas/legislacion/nacionales/colombia/leg\\_co.pdf](http://www.iesalc.unesco.org.ve/programas/legislacion/nacionales/colombia/leg_co.pdf). Accessed on June 1, 2005.

**Figure 4.9.** Student Contention and Citizen Capacity in Three Political Regimes, Colombia 1958-2000  
(Correlation for the entire time period:  $r = -.28^{**}$ ,  $N=37$ )



Source: For student contention see Delgado (2003); García (2003a; 2003b; 2003c); Prada (2003); and Archila (2003c); for the Fiscal and Policy Indices see Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

Note: One-tailed significance test, Pearson Correlations  $p < .01^{***}$ ,  $p < .05^{**}$ ,  $p < .1^*$

### *Student Contention in the 1990s*

The most important student mobilizations of the 1990s are the “student movement for a new constitution” that advocated the new 1991 Constitution, and the 1995 private university student mobilizations against President Samper, accused of financing his campaign with drug money. By 1997 public school and university students demonstrated against the Pastrana government’s plans to make public schools financially self-sufficient by increasing public school tuitions. Furthermore, the 1998 budget cuts that reduced public university finances almost liquidated these institutions as they were left without funds to pay for operating costs. Although allegations were proven true that corrupt school administrators and professors were sometimes responsible for most public

universities' budget crisis, the government's intention was to reduce the budgets of these schools and eventually privatize them.

In 2001 students and unionized teachers—organized in the Colombian Federation of Educators (FECODE)—led national protests against the Legislative Act 012 of 2000 that reformed articles 347, 356 and 357 of the 1991 Constitution. By way of these articles, the new Constitution had set the resources transferred to local government administrations—for education, health and social programs—to roughly one third of the central government's funds (Aranguren et. al. 2002). However, by the late 1990s the central government's debt payments were taking up more than a third of its budget. Thus, Act 012 was aimed at reducing the central government's financial obligations with the sub-national governments. President Pastrana agreed to pass the reform as part of the December 1999 “extended agreement” signed with the IMF. In this accord the government agreed to earmark between 0.4% and 0.8% of the GDP to cover for debt obligations (Arroyave 2001). But to protesting students and teachers, this act could leave up to 1.3 million children without a public school education (in Colombia poor families compete to find a place in the public school system: if they don't get a place, they have to find a private school or leave the children out of school).<sup>83</sup>

### **Conclusions**

Various conclusions can be drawn from this chapter. First, labor's capacity to act collectively and protect its rights must be contrasted with peasant organizational frailty. The peasant movement's high point came in the early 1970s, after which their

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<sup>83</sup> “El 012: Un enigma que el tiempo resolverá,” *El Colombiano*, August 5, 2001.

organizations were persecuted or disbanded. Indians, however, survived repression, strengthened their organizations, and won important legislative victories. Even though government as well as armed group repression has been aimed at both labor and peasant leaders, peasants have been more victimized by armed actors who seek to concentrate land and control parts of the territory for the arms and drug trade. Finally, workers and peasants (specifically coffee farmers) positioned in Colombia's strategic sectors of production were more likely to gain political or legal benefits that favored the institutionalization of citizen rights and increased the citizen capacities of all Colombians.

Urban residents and students differ from labor and peasants in that they cannot be characterized as class actors. Even if basic economic interests explain much of their protests, these actors are more likely to respond to contingencies that reduce their welfare. Finally, the urban poor as well as students also seem to increase their protests when political opportunities are opened for citizen participation, a phenomenon that will be examined with the use of statistical data in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5. STATE AND CITIZEN CAPACITIES AS PREDICTORS OF CONTENTION**

In the first chapter of this dissertation I laid out five hypotheses to be tested with both time series and cross-sectional data. The first hypothesis establishes that social contention increases in Colombia as citizen and state capacities decrease. The second proposition states that in the context of state and citizen capacity failures, the passing of time heightens social contention. The third hypothesis argues that in the context of failing state and citizen capacities, the 1991 Constitution had no effect on contentious politics. The fourth hypothesis claims that regime changes that increase political participation should reduce the use of contentious politics. The last hypothesis proposes that social contention is higher in departments where state and citizen capacities are comparatively stronger. The present chapter tests these relationships using regression analysis.

### **Contention and State and Citizen Capacities through Time (1964-2000)**

I tested hypotheses 1 through 4 by regressing social contention with the state- and citizen-capacity indices. The social contention measures are taken from the CINEP File and cover the years 1964 to 2000, because that was the time period for which complete data was available. The term “state capacity” refers to the government’s level of control over people, activities and resources in its jurisdiction, as well as its ability to comply with or respond to policy demands, and bargain for the country’s interests in the

international arena. Citizen capacity is the population's ability to pursue rights and well-being.

The Fiscal Index and the Policy Index measure a number of internal and international dimensions of state performance by including variables such as external debt, fiscal deficit, kidnappings and GDP growth among others.<sup>84</sup> The two state indices are linear combinations of eleven variables and were computed by using factor analysis. The Citizen Capacity index is also a linear combination of seven variables that measure socioeconomic and political conditions that affect citizen abilities to uphold their well-being (see Chapter 2 for more information).<sup>85</sup> The equations include a time variable (1964 is the first year and equals 1, and 2000 is the last year and equals 37), and four dummy variables: three for regime and one for the 1991 constitution. The 1991 Constitution is measured as a dichotomous variable (0=years when reform was not in place [1958-1990] and 1=years after implementation from 1991-2000). The National Front governments have a 1 from 1958 until 1974, and 0 from 1975 until 2000. The transitional governments have a 0 from 1958 until 1974, and from 1990 until 2000, and a 1 from 1975 until 1989. The neoliberal governments have a 0 from 1958 until 1989, and a 1 from 1990 until 2000.

The hypotheses are tested with times-series linear regressions corrected for serial dependency using the Stata statistical program and the Cochrane-Orcutt and Prais Winsten correction. These techniques remove serial dependency in time series data.

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<sup>84</sup> Aid as % of Gross National Income, % of Government Budget from Taxes, Inflation Rate, % of Spending on Infrastructure, % of Government Spending on Justice and Security, % of Social Spending as of total revenue, and the External Balance on Goods and Services as % of GDP

<sup>85</sup> Homicide Rate, Local Elections of Mayors, Years of Schooling (National Average), Life Expectancy at Birth, Implementation of *Tutela*, Minimum Urban Wage, and the Rate of Unemployment

Without it, the data would violate an assumption of multiple regression analysis that the observations (in this case years) are independent of each other. In the first model testing hypothesis 1, the state- and citizen-capacities factor scores are introduced into the equation to predict the social contention measure. In the second model testing hypothesis 2, a time variable is added to examine the effect that the passage of time has on the dependent and independent variables. In model 3 testing the third hypothesis, I include a dummy variable for the 1991 Constitution to see whether it has a significant effect on contention. The fourth model testing hypothesis 4 includes political regime dummy variables to evaluate the impact of democratization on social contention.

In the regression equations, the unstandardized regression coefficients indicate how much the dependent variable changes with a one-unit increase in the independent variable, statistically controlling for the other independent variables (O'Sullivan and Rassel 1999). The Beta weights are standardized regression coefficients that show the relative influence of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The larger the Beta weight, the stronger its relationship with the dependent variable. Finally, the significance level is the criterion used for rejecting a null hypothesis. Since this is exploratory research, I will use a .10 significance level as the threshold.

The total social contention measure aggregates the yearly actions of labor, residents, peasants, students and other actors from 1964 until the year 2000. This social contention series is plotted in Figure 3.1 against state capacities, and in Figure 3.2 against citizen capacity. Models 1 through 4 in Table 5.1 explain anywhere between 31% and



37% of the variation in social contention (see adjusted  $R^2$  statistics).<sup>86</sup> Further, models 1 through 3 have very little serial dependency—as the original Durbin Watson Statistic is very close to 2. Such a lack of auto-correlation is indicative of independence between the equations' residuals and is highly unusual in time series data. It suggests there is considerable random fluctuation in the data.

**Table 5.1.** Time Series Regression Analysis for Total Social Contention, Colombia 1964-2000

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	DEPENDENT VARIABLE												
	<i>Social Contention</i>												
	Mean: 355.5												
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4			
Mean	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Sig. Levels	Beta Weight	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Sig. Levels	Beta Weight	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Sig. Levels	Beta Weight	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Sig. Levels	Beta Weight	
<b>Fiscal and Jurisdictional State Capacity Index (Fiscal Index)</b>	5.43E-07	-124.702	0.002 ***	-0.780	-71.402	0.170	-0.447	-72.479	0.197	-0.453	-94.555	0.070 *	-0.591
<b>Monetary and Policy State Capacity Index (Policy Index)</b>	-5.44E-07	-63.383	0.007 ***	-0.396	-48.530	0.048 **	-0.304	-49.781	0.117	-0.311	28.532	0.397	0.178
<b>Citizen Capacity Index</b>	-8.04E-07	-73.648	0.061 *	-0.461	-150.574	0.022 **	-0.942	-152.739	0.042 **	-0.955	-67.260	0.471	-0.421
<b>Time</b> (1964=1, 1965=2, 1966=3 ~ 2000=37)	19			12.326	0.149	0.968	12.194	0.174	0.958	-11.884	0.307	-0.933	
<b>1991 Constitution Dummy</b> (1964-1990=0, 1991-2000=1)	0.27						6.360	0.952	0.017				
<b>National Front Governments Dummy</b> (1964-1974=1, 1975-2000=0)	0.30												
<b>Transitional Governments Dummy</b> (1964-1974=0, 1975-1989=1, 1990-2000=0)	0.41										400.284	0.000 ***	1.207
<b>Neoliberal Governments Dummy</b> (1964-1989=0, 1990-2000=1)	0.30										455.942	0.008 ***	1.259
<b>Constant</b>		357.587	0.000	47.443	0.823		49.028	0.822		361.550	0.183		
<b>Number of Cases</b>		36		36			36			36			
<b>F-Ratio</b>		6.240	0.002 ***	6.230	0.001 ***		4.860	0.002 ***		4.140	0.004 ***		
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>		0.369		0.446			0.448			0.462			
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>		0.310		0.374			0.355			0.350			
<b>Durbin-Watson Statistic (original)</b>		1.822		1.928			1.937			1.669			
<b>Durbin-Watson (transformed)</b>		1.967		1.970			1.970			2.168			

Note:  $p < .01$ \*\*\*,  $p < .05$ \*\* ,  $p < .1$ \*. The means for dummy variables are the percentage of cases that have a 1.

Model 1 in Table 5.1 explains 31% of the variation in social contention as a whole and establishes that declining state and citizen capacities increase the use of contentious politics among social actors. As can be seen by the Beta weight of -0.78, the most influential variable in the model is the Fiscal Index. The Policy Index is, however, less important than Citizen Capacity, and all three are statistically significant. In short, Model

<sup>86</sup> The  $R^2$  is the coefficient of multiple determination and is a multivariate measure of association. The  $R^2$  shows the degree of variation in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables included in the equation. The adjusted  $R^2$  “shrinks” the value of  $R^2$  by “penalizing” for each additional independent variable (O’Sullivan and Rassel 1999: 440).

1 confirms my first hypothesis that as citizen and state capacities increase, social contention decreases.

Model 2 introduces time as a variable to evaluate its effect on the relationship between capacities and social contention. In time series regressions, the coefficients for the independent variables (in this case, the dummy variables and the state- and citizen-capacity indices) measure both the passage of time and the variable, unless time is introduced as a variable in the equation. When time is included, the coefficients of the other independent variables will no longer be measuring time and that specific variable. In other words, introducing the time variable in the equation allows me to evaluate the real effect of each independent variable on social contention.

Model 2 finds that the effect of time on the dependent variable has a positive but statistically insignificant effect on contention when in the same equation with the state and citizen indices. Notwithstanding, the time variable shows that the influence of the citizen capacity and Fiscal Indices on social contention is confounded by time in Model 1.<sup>87</sup> Once time is introduced into the equation, the Fiscal Index becomes statistically insignificant and the Policy Index stays about the same in importance. Model 2 also shows that the citizen capacity Beta weight increases to -0.94, making this the strongest variable in the equation. This result modifies the second hypothesis of this dissertation, which is that as time passes, failing state and citizen capacities increase contention. Consequently, once we control for the passing of time, citizen capacities become the more important predictors of social contention, and even if state capacity fluctuations

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<sup>87</sup> The zero order correlation between time and social contention is 0.47.

continue to be important, only the Policy Index is significantly associated with social contention.

Model 3 (in Table 5.1) includes a dummy variable for the 1991 Constitution, but its effect on the equation is not statistically significant. This corroborates the proposition that the new constitution had no effect on social contention, when controlling for State and citizen capacity. Thus, the democratizing effects of the new constitution—purportedly aimed at reducing social contention—don't influence contention. All the same, adding the Constitution dummy variable into the equation cancels out the two State indices, but not the citizen capacity Index, which is still the strongest variable in the equation.

Model 4 in Table 5.1 introduces the political regime variables. The Constitution dummy is not included in this equation, as it is highly correlated with the Neoliberal Government dummy. As the equation shows, the Transitional Governments (1975-1989) and the Neoliberal period (1990-2000) had a positive and significant effect on the rise of social contention, compared to the omitted National Front (1958-1974) dummy variable.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, the Neoliberal variable is the strongest predictor with a Beta weight of 1.259. The regime dummy variables make the State Policy and citizen capacity indices insignificant, and increase the importance of the Fiscal Index.

I infer from this that the most important state variables in explaining contention are the regimes in power, as they either offer greater political opportunities for the

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<sup>88</sup> The number of dummy variables entered into an equation is  $K-1$ . Thus, if there are three regime variables, only two are entered. The coefficients of the regime dummy variables measure the relationship of the variable to the dependent variable in comparison to the omitted variable.

exercise of citizen rights—among which is the use of contentious mechanisms to influence the policy process—or they implement unpopular policies widely rejected by contentious social actors, as in the case of the market reforms that attended the liberal reforms of the 1990s. This finding means that I must reject the hypothesis that contention is reduced by regime changes that increase the possibilities for formal political participation. I must also reject the hypothesis that social contention increases as citizen capacity decreases, since that variable is no longer significant. In fact, the only capacity variable that is significant in model 4 is the Fiscal Index.

In sum, I have found that only state capacity failures increase the use of contentious politics among social actors in Colombia once all the important variables are controlled for, thus only partially validating the first hypothesis of my dissertation. Time is not related to social contention when citizen capacity is in the model; thus, hypothesis 2 must be rejected. I also found that the 1991 Constitution had an insignificant effect on contention when in combination with the capacity indices and time. Conversely, the fourth hypothesis was not proven because I expected to find a negative relationship between social contention and the transitional and neoliberal government regimes, against the background of failing state and citizen capacities. The regimes had a direct and statistically significant influence on social contention, and caused the Policy and citizen capacity indices to become statistically insignificant. Only the Fiscal Index had a significance level below the 0.1 threshold.

### **Social Contention at the Departmental Level for the Year 1998**

The fifth hypothesis states that people who live in jurisdictions where authorities are more concentrated, where the state is comparatively stronger, and/or where citizens are more organized will protest when state and citizen capacities fail. In other words, contention is higher in departments where state and citizen capacities are comparatively stronger. This hypothesis will be tested with Ordinary Least Squares regression analysis using the Stata statistical program, and taking the 1998 departmental cross-section from the Velasco File, since statistics that allow me to measure the independent variables for each of the departments and all the years between 1991 and 2002 are not readily available.

The independent variables are measured using Sandoval and Téllez's (1998) "state index," which measures the physical and financial presence of the state by quantifying the number of civil servants, law enforcement officials, public buildings, spending per capita and by economic sectors, and tax collection in all 32 departments and the city of Bogotá. This index will be used as a measure of state capacity (Appendix 12 lists the index scores for all departments). Bogotá, with a score of 99.8, has the greatest presence of state authority in Colombia. The average state-index score is 19.7, and the mode is 13. Thus, in the majority of the departments there is very little state presence. Only the departments where the biggest cities of Colombia are situated have scores above 20. The distance between Bogotá and the remaining regions, as measured by this index, characterizes Colombian state capacities as frail.

I will also use Álvarez, Castillo and Villar's (1998) participation index that considers the number and diversity of citizen organizations, electoral participation and the capacity of citizens to convoke social mobilizations in each of the departments. In all, the participation index measures organizational density and civil society strength for the year 1998 in 32 departments and the city of Bogotá (See Appendix 12). Bogotá obtains the highest index (84.7), and the most developed departments receive scores between 40 and 47. The average index score is 26.5 and the most frequent is 24, which demonstrates that Colombia has a weak civil society and its citizens are not very organized. The participation index will be used as a measure of Citizen Capacity.

Table 5.2. presents the regressions for social contention in 32 departments and the capital city of Bogotá for 1998. All the models in this equation are valid and explain more than 80% of the variation in the dependent variable. The first model regresses social contention using both the state and participation indices. Although the model validates the hypothesis that capacities explain contention, it is affected by multicollinearity, making the two independent variables statistically insignificant. Since citizen capacities are broader in those areas of the country where the state has a stronger presence, the correlation between state and participation indices is high ( $r = 0.97$ ).

**Table 5.2.** Ordinary Least Square Regression for Total Social Contention using State and Participation Indices, Thirty-two Colombian departments and Bogotá 1998.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	DEPENDENT VARIABLE									
	<i>Social Contention</i>									
	Mean: 9.2									
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			
Mean	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Sig. Levels	Beta Weight	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Sig. Levels	Beta Weight	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient	Sig. Levels	Beta Weight	
State Index	19.72	0.45	0.160	0.45	0.89	0.000	0.90			
Participation Index	26.55	0.59	0.145	0.47				1.15	0.000	0.90
Constant		-15.33	0.005		-8.41	0.000		-21.27	0.000	
Number of Cases		33			33			33		
F-Ratio		70.76	0.000		133.91	0.000		134.75	0.000	
R <sup>2</sup>		0.83			0.81			0.81		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>		0.81			0.81			0.81		

In this case, however, multicollinearity is not a concern because I am interested in evaluating the combined effect of both state and participation indices on social contention. Notwithstanding, the two additional regressions in Table 5.2 evaluate the relationship between social contention and state and participation indices independently of each other. Therefore, Model 1 confirms that contention is highest in those departments of Colombia where the state has more governability and citizens are more participatory. Finally, Models 2 and 3 explain 81% of the variation in social contention at the departmental level in 1998, and establish positive and statistically significant relationships between the indices and social contention.

### Discussion of the Results

In sum, the statistical analysis proved that the most important state variables for explaining social contention are the regimes in place. Through time, the more politically liberal regimes had a direct and statistically significant influence on social contention, and only the Fiscal Index of state capacity continued to have a significant and negative relationship with protests. In other words, as regimes opened political opportunities to

include the claims of both contentious and quiescent political challengers, contention increased regardless of the strength or weakness of citizenship. However, from a cross-sectional view of Colombia's departments, I found that contention is highest in those places where state and citizens have relatively more capacities. The logic of the latter finding is that people protest where authorities will notice their demands.

I assumed that the loss of state capacities would translate into socioeconomic and political insecurity for polity members. For this reason I anticipated that decreases in state and citizen capacities would cause contention. On the other hand, no matter how poor or disenfranchised, polity members have enough capacities to bring their claims to the government using formal or informal mechanisms. As a result, people would use contentious means if authorities did not respond to policy demands placed through formal channels, or if governments did not provide meaningful mechanisms of interest representation. Taking into account the high costs of contentious collective action in a country deep in conflict, I also expected that the opening of a number of political opportunities by the transitional and neoliberal governments would to some extent alleviate the need to use protests as a mechanism to represent policy preferences. However, the statistical analysis shows that social contention increased as the more democratic regimes came into place.

“States assume empirical reality through regimes that attempt to establish political order... and determine the representation of interests within decision-making contexts” (Grindle 1996, 4). Like any other political regime, the Transitional and Neoliberal administrations interpreted and used the country's political institutions, the state's



instruments of social control, and the government's economic mechanisms for explicit purposes, such as liberalizing markets in the 1990s; representing specific groups, such as landowners in the 1970s; and dealing with the armed conflict. As seen in previous chapters, Colombia's political history was marked by significant transformations in economic policy-making as well as in state-society relations in the last four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In terms of economic policy, the National Front government of Lleras (1966-1970) encouraged industrialization as a development strategy, the Transitional governments introduced some free trade reforms to liberalize imports and promote Colombian exports, and the Neoliberals favored globalizing the economy and subjecting domestic production to foreign competition. Another substantial development was the slow replacement of the traditional political party elites by self-described apolitical Neoliberals, or technocrats, which occurred in the transition from the National Front to the Neoliberal regimes.

The last part of this chapter tries to make sense of the statistical findings by drawing conclusions from the quantitative and qualitative discussions. These conclusions are organized around the following themes: (1) the extent to which the transitional and neoliberal governments were democratic regimes, (2) the uneasy relationship between market reforms and the system of political representation, (3) the challenges of democratizing politics in the context of state-capacity building, and (4) the history of government incompetence and violation of social pacts.

*On Political Liberties*

Historians of Colombia's political system generally agree that the National Front governments were not liberal, even though elections continued to be held and some democratic institutions were respected. The administrations of the Transitional Regimes slowly opened political opportunities that would eventually dismantle the National Front's coalitional ruling agreement. But between 1975 and 1989, the Transitional governments unreservedly governed with states of siege that limited constitutional guarantees and gave the military and the police ample powers to detain, torture, and search the homes and workplaces of opponents. However, there are significant differences between governments: while the Turbay administration (1978-1982) stands out for giving the armed forces ample powers to violently persecute opponents, Betancur (1982-1986) became notorious for paving the way to more political liberties by allowing local elections and supporting peace talks with guerrillas, even if the peace talks ultimately failed.

One of the biggest achievements of the 1991 Constitution was that it put an end to the habitual application of state-of-siege measures by confining their use to circumstances of threats to national security, and by obliging judicial approval of executive requests to implement states of siege. Notwithstanding this positive achievement for the protection of citizen rights, many of the participatory mechanisms approved by the new Constitution continue to be meaningless as a result of government incapacity to put them into practice or to follow up on agreements reached by way of participatory mechanisms. Furthermore, the Neoliberal Governments resorted to

authoritarian practices as a last resort to implement some of the most unpopular market reforms, many of which were demanded by international institutions such as the IMF.

The illiberal and violent practices of drug traffickers, guerrillas and paramilitaries have further contributed to the deterioration of Colombia's institutions of democracy and to the reduction of the rights of most Colombian citizens. In other words, state incapacity to restrain illegal armed group violence against polity members, and the government's political unwillingness to make the institutions of democracy more meaningful, are mining democratic rights.

As a result, many organized citizens understandably deduce that the neoliberal governments only pay lip service to democracy, and that political institutions generally fail to represent the public good. For this reason, it is logical if not imperative to combine formal and contentious methods to make claims. On the one hand, citizens have quickly given meaning to and have widely used some of the more efficient political opportunities provided by the 1991 Constitution (i.e., the *tutela* or the judicial reform that gives citizens fast access to court-ordered resolutions to basic constitutional rights violations). They have also found allies in the Constitutional Court, the Ombudsman's Office, and even in the Attorney General's and General Procurer's offices, who on occasion have acted on behalf of organized citizen interests by criticizing sloppy privatization processes, the government's role in human rights violations, and the financial reforms that victimized homeowners. Thus, *tutelas*, popular actions and other mechanisms of political participation have generally increased, while protests remain high. Additional mechanisms of representation used by organized citizens to forward

their claims include international instruments provided by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the Red Cross, the International Labor Organization, and the United Nation's Human Rights and Refugee Programs, which may serve to command government action on behalf of victims.

In sum, what sets apart the more democratic Neoliberal Regimes from the Transitional and National Front governments is the variety of political opportunities that have been opened inside and outside Colombia's political system to make demands. Consequently, organized citizens have diversified their channels of interest representation by combining formal and transgressive political instruments to manifest their policy preferences and consumption needs. This diversification of mechanisms splinters and decentralizes conflict and popular collective action. Meanwhile, Colombia's national and sub-national governments deal with multiple fronts of conflict and interest representation. But in the end, this turns out to be a beneficial trade-off for the state as it shields itself from the effects of large-scale conflicts (such as the 1977 national civic strike), and adapts to coping with fragmented break-outs of social discontent that pose less of a threat to its endurance and political stability. However, the diversification of political channels of representation also has a positive result for popular actors. As more institutions inside and outside Colombia take on the representation of popular interests, it becomes more politically costly for the state to use its repressive force indiscriminately on Colombian citizens or to overtly disregard its duty to protect their lives and liberties from ill-treatment by guerrillas and paramilitaries.

*On Market Reforms and the System of Political Representation*

While the 1991 Constitution democratized politics, it also shifted policymaking from state-centered to market-oriented economic reforms. This shift in Colombia's economic model of development was supported by the liberal elites who seized political power in the early 1990s. Liberals were committed to aligning Colombia's economic model with international trends, and supported the market reforms out of ideological compromise. As the country was forced into stand-by agreements with the IMF and was subjected to Washington's policy preferences, the Colombian executive intensified its loyalty to market reforms. Consequently, contentious social actors reasoned that market reforms came not out of domestic consensus to find appropriate solutions to problems of economic development, but out of elite volitions and foreign imposition.

Contentious social actors believe that such reforms were passed to serve the interests of multinationals and their Colombian affiliates, who were eager to expand their businesses and make profits in new communications, utility and energy markets. Between 1996 and 2004, for example, foreign firms established in Colombia have remitted \$7.7 billion in profits to foreign banks or businesses,<sup>89</sup> and it is expected that as more of Colombia's private and public firms are bought by multinationals, a bigger part of their profits will continue to be divested from Colombia's economy. Furthermore, according to the United Nations, the Latin American market reforms created more inequality as the poor failed to benefit from economic growth.<sup>90</sup> In addition, the

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<sup>89</sup> Juan Londoño. "Venta de empresas, no todo es fiesta," *El Tiempo*, July 24, 2005.

<sup>90</sup> "Reformas económicas llevan a América Latina a ser la más desigual del mundo," *Portafolio*, August 26, 2005.

economic sectors pushing GDP growth in the 1990s are the banking system, oil exports, and multinationals, industries that are neither creating the jobs needed to employ Colombia's workforce, nor trickling down their utilities to the poor. Finally, the more than four million Colombians who left the country after the mid-1990s to find employment abroad (about 10% of the population) are sending remittances that averaged 4% of the country's GDP between 1994 and 2000.<sup>91</sup> These remittances keep many family economies afloat, and contribute to positive GDP growth.

In all, market reforms are very unpopular policies, as their end-results are tax increases and privatization of services that were once subsidized or free. Consequently, social actors organized around the labor, Indian, peasant, and urban movements trust that the country's ongoing economic suffering—evidenced by unalleviated rates of poverty and unemployment in the face of increasing wealth—is as much a result of anti-nationalist market reforms as of underdevelopment and violence. In such a context of widespread economic and human insecurity, the government's efforts to protect financial groups, sell public assets at unreasonable prices, raise funds without lessening the tax burden of the poor, cut social spending, and lay off government workers seem callous and counter-productive. Therefore, contention is justified to counteract this setback to the country's process of economic development. As discussed before, the privatization of state companies was strongly opposed by the labor movement, the financial reforms that bankrupted many middle-class families mobilized homeowners to protest the loss of their

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<sup>91</sup> "Remesas, un factor que seguirá presionando la tasa de cambio," *Portafolio*, May 4, 2005.

homes, and the tariff increases of utility services resulted in significant tension between the government and urban residents.

*Democratization and State-Capacity Building*

To fulfill their prerogatives, political elites take on the process of developing the state's institutional capacities. Therefore, state-capacity building does not respond to the needs of all social actors or reflect the common good, unless a process of democratization is also undertaken. In the 1930s and 1960s, some Colombian government elites took upon themselves the project of strengthening the state's administrative capacity by building its economic and monetary institutions, as well as developing political capacities to control the activities of specific groups such as workers, peasants, and the urban poor. In the 1980s, sociopolitical upheaval and crises in state management drew warranted attention to the fact that Colombia's political elites—organized in the traditional parties—had failed at state-building. Consequently, the neoliberal restructuring sought to strengthen the state by democratizing its institutions, downsizing to make it more economically efficient, and improving its management effectiveness.

However, as the Colombian state failed to control large parts of its territory, paramilitaries and drug-traffickers began to challenge capacity-building by upping their violence in order to secure their territorial and economic claims. All the while, guerrillas reinforced their military strategies to maintain their domains. Mobilizations for the defense of human rights increased from the late 1980s to the 1990s, as the government failed to protect the civil and political rights of polity members, and armed groups

increased their use of violence against the civilian population, especially against peasant, labor and human rights leaders.

Even if state-building in Colombia has always been checked by international pressures and constraints on its institutions, in the 1990s Colombia's weak international position as an indebted, drug-producing country with internal conflict intensified foreign pressures on state-building. As Washington's Latin American analysts concluded that Colombia's state had failed, the U.S. government prepared to intervene with more aggressive policy instruments. In consequence, the control of drug trafficking and terrorism has become a policy priority for the Colombian government, and has been incorporated into agrarian and justice system programs. The U.S. government also expects strict observance of free trade policy principles and protection of its economic and political priorities on Colombian soil.

As the drug trade continued unabated, the governments of Pastrana (1998-2002) and Uribe (2002-2006) received more and more military aid from the United States. Coca growers, peasants who grow legal crops, and even the local authorities of areas singled out by both U.S. and Colombian governments for fumigation became increasingly contentious as they fell victim to policies that overwhelmingly favored repression and failed to provide poor peasants with economic alternatives to growing coca.

Rueschemeyer and colleagues warn that a strong and autonomous state is a necessary condition for the expansion of democracy (1992), and that states need to be sufficiently strong to guarantee regimes of protected consultation wherein all polity



members exercise some control over government and are sheltered from arbitrary actions by state agents or others (McAdam et al. 2001). In other words, democratization does not succeed where states are weak or politically dependent. The Colombian state is neither autonomous—it represents foreign and domestic class and sectorial interests—nor strong. Even though Colombia's state is resource-poor and politically dependent, government elites in the 1990s exercise significant levels of control over Colombia's unorganized poor, as well as over organized labor, peasants, and other members of the country's popular classes. They have deployed authoritarian measures to quell labor and to privatize companies, and have overpowered their opposition to pass unpopular reforms such as the decree that reduced central government transfers to local administrations.

#### *Government Violation of Social Pacts*

An essential state-building benchmark is the capacity of rules and regulations to survive political elite fallout, so that institutional continuity and public policy stability are guaranteed. Consequently, the recurrent violation of social settlements was a central cause of social contention and the result of failed state-building. Examples of the violation of social pacts include the 1930s Liberal reforms that were overturned by the Conservatives in the 1950s, the Agrarian Reform of the sixties that was canceled by the early 1970s, and the chronic violation of government agreements in the 1990s.

Despite Liberal party efforts in the 1930s to modernize the state, the capacity benchmark previously mentioned was not achieved. The traditional governing structures based on clientelistic networks and strongman politics in rural areas—supported by regional political party elites—challenged and prevented the central government's efforts

to standardize liberal norms and institutions in the 1930s (Orjuela 2005). Thus, this embryonic modern state did not survive political party friction over the liberal reforms, and was replaced by traditional political institutions.

The National Front governments came to end partisan strife, but also to build the state. However, since traditional political institutions had not altogether been displaced, the Front strengthened the state only partially (Bejarano and Segura 1996) by allowing the survival of Colombia's "*ancien régime*." All the same, the Lleras administration's (1964-1970) reforms institutionalized planning and financial administrations—which are still active today—and violated the National Front's compromise of avoiding confrontations with traditional elites and their political institutions by passing some reforms that went against their interests. To suppress these reforms, Pastrana's conservative government (1970-1974) supported the "uprising" of rural landowners against the agrarian reform. The peasant 1971 upheaval; the 1971 student movement; and later, the 1975 labor, urban, and rural uprisings and the 1977 national civic strike can all be seen as responses to the government's violation of social pacts that had favored popular demands.

Subsequent measures to decentralize power in the 1980s and to improve sub-national bureaucratic competence in the 1990s are central targets to develop state capacities, and to institutionalize liberal politics. To be fair, even if the government policy instruments continue to fail, the Colombian state has achieved some degree of institutional continuity throughout the 1980s and 1990s. But as already discussed, Colombia's state is receiving military aid and strict policy recommendations on budget

priorities. Therefore, government violation of agreed-upon pacts results from budgetary restrictions, but also from a recurrent incapacity to command and control all social actors to observe policy priorities. Moreover, it is not just peasants, workers, or students who accuse the government of violating agreements. It is also the IMF, the American government, and important sectors of the country's elites who unremittingly complain about these infringements. It goes without saying that government elites bend over backwards to disregard their obligations to the former in order to obey the latter.

In sum, elite and counter-elite configurations, international restrictions, and internal limitations deteriorated state capacities, impaired democratic institutions and effectively reduced the rights of Colombia's citizens. Furthermore, violence and blanket market reforms that abandoned measures to protect agrarian and industrial production have combined to limit Colombia's economic development. Notwithstanding, the government is raising military and security spending to increase state capacities, and attracting foreign investors to encourage growth. In this overall context of economic and political crisis, social actors use contentious politics to criticize the institutional reforms that reduce their rights and limit the country's possibilities for development.

## APPENDIX 1: THE CODING PROTOCOL

This protocol was used to analyze one newspaper article at a time. Various boxes were provided after each variable (except municipality, dates and sources) to fill in multiple observations, as most contentious actions consisted of diverse actors, motives, etc. A code was not created for Colombia's more than 1000 municipalities.<sup>92</sup> Chapter 4 lists the original codes and categories used for each of the following multiple response variables: (1) Source, (2) Type of Mobilization Actor, (3) Motive, (4) Entity, and (5) Response.

Source										
Date of Source										
Date Action Started										
Date Action Ended										
Municipality										
Type of Action										
Department										
Actor										
Motive										
Entity										
Entity's response										
Comments										

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<sup>92</sup> I thank Camilo A. Jiménez for helping me design this protocol and the codes used to analyze the newspaper articles.

## APPENDIX 2: SOCIAL ACTORS IN THE VELASCO FILE

### Social Actors, Colombia 1991-2002

<i>Social Actor</i>	<i>Number of Contentious Actions in which Actors Participated</i>	<i>Percent of the Actions</i>
Community Residents	1013	41.5
Peasants	487	19.9
Students	276	11.3
Transportation	234	9.6
Community Associations and NGO	234	9.6
Business Associations	192	7.9
Indigenous Peoples	163	6.7
Workers	154	6.3
Government Officials	133	5.4
Retailers/formal vendors	84	3.4
Other Actors	305	12.5

0 missing cases; 2,443 valid cases. The numbers add up to more than 2,443 and 100% because in some contentious events (or cases), more than one actor could be identified.

*Community residents* are people who normally live in poor neighborhoods, towns or regions but who share a similar problem, normally related to the quality, availability and price of utility services, infrastructure, property taxes, or other public services crucial to the community's economic and social welfare. *Peasants* are residents of rural areas who subsist on small-scale production, have small properties, or are landless. The category includes coca growers and internal refugees. Coca growers are peasants who grow an illegal crop, and refugees are overwhelmingly rural dwellers violently forced out of their lands. *Students* are high school and university pupils. The category labeled *transportation* includes people who own and drive a truck, bus, or taxi, or who work for people who own these vehicles.

*Business Associations* includes the organizations of small entrepreneurs, especially transportation cooperatives and agricultural producers. *Community*

*Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations* serve as representatives of local communities in the development of infrastructure and other public service projects.

*Indigenous* people mobilize against cultural and racial discrimination, and for communal ownership of their lands. *Workers* are blue- and white-collar workers, who labor in strategic sectors of the economy and/or who are organized in labor unions. *Government officials* from the municipal and departmental governments—including mayors, governors, and members of local councils and departmental assemblies—often joined their communities in protest against the central government. Retailers and formal vendors are normally small shop-owners.

The most important social actors in the *other actors* category are informal street vendors, women, and debtors. Debtors are heads of households who had mortgages and lost their homes as a result of increasing interest rates that made their debts un-payable. Protesters who were homeless, victims of violence, members of religious groups, and parents of schoolchildren were also in this category. Women participate actively alongside men in labor, rural, and urban protests. However, feminist, or female-only, protests are very few compared to the bigger labor or peasant categories.

### APPENDIX 3: MOTIVES IN THE VELASCO FILE

#### Motives of Social Contention, Colombia 1991-2002

<i>Motive</i>	<i>Number of Contentious Actions in which Motive was Claimed</i>	<i>Percent of Contentious Actions</i>
Violations of civil and political rights	465	19.0
Other government policies	449	18.4
Government incompetence	411	16.8
Macroeconomic policies	384	15.7
Peace/against armed conflict	366	15.0
Quality/price utility services	345	14.1
Economic	309	12.6
Infrastructure	191	7.8
Education	179	7.3
Transportation policies	125	5.1
Other Motives	111	4.5

0 missing cases; 2,443 valid cases. The numbers add up to more than 2,443 and 100% because in many contentious events (or cases), more than one motive could be identified.

The variable *violations of civil and political rights* pulls together those claims to governmental protection of first generation human rights, as described in articles 3 through 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human rights.<sup>93</sup> Civil rights include the rights to life, liberty, personal security, privacy, property, *habeas corpus*, and protection from cruel and unusual punishment. Political rights include free association and expression, freedom of movement, suffrage, and free and fair elections. The variable *other government policies* includes public investment in the provision of social services such as health, daycare centers, and housing, as well as funds to alleviate the economic effects of a natural catastrophe. It also takes into account policies that (a) clear urban streets, sidewalks and parks from informal vending activities in order to regulate and normalize the use of public space; (b) eradicate illegal drug production by fumigating large natural areas and even legal crops; and (c) deteriorate the environment. There were also a few

<sup>93</sup> <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

demonstrations against central government plans to demilitarize and call in the civil servants of various towns in order to clear (“*despejar*”) a region of the country for peace-talks with guerrillas.

*Government incompetence* includes corruption, abuse of power, neglect, and the violation of settlements and solutions agreed upon between the government and any set of social actors in order to bring a conflict to a close. The variable *macroeconomic policies* groups the privatization of state-owned companies at the local and national level, resulting in budget cuts that shut down public hospitals, schools, and other social institutions. It also includes the government’s reforms to increase the tax base, augment property taxes, tackle contraband and tax evasion, and expand the number of road tolls.

The protests *for peace and against the armed conflict* include the defense of civilian neutrality, and resistance to the militarization of wide regions of the country. *Quality and price of utility services* are associated with the availability, accessibility, quality, and prices of potable water, electricity, public sanitation, and telephone service. *Economic* demands include calls for employment, better salaries, credits, and the solution of conflicts between private parties (e.g., quarrels between formal retailers and informal street vendors, wherein the former argue that the latter take away customers or reduce street safety).

*Infrastructure* covers claims for the construction of sidewalks, streets, roads, bridges, and highways. *Education* includes student demands for more teachers, better equipment and installations, and lower tuition or fees. *Transportation policies* criticize government measures that increase the costs of moving cargo, liberalize gasoline prices,



and increase the fees and number of road tolls. *Other motives* include calls for animal rights and vegetarianism, as well as protests against nuclear testing in other countries.

## APPENDIX 4: TYPES OF ACTIONS

### **Types of Contentious Actions, Colombia 1991-2002**

<i>Types of Contentious Actions</i>	<i>Number of Times Action was Used</i>	<i>Percent Actions</i>
Mobilizations	903	37.0
Protests	406	16.6
Blockades	345	14.1
Civic strikes	289	11.8
Takeovers	207	8.5
Threats of strike	197	8.1
Other mobilizations	224	9.2

0 missing cases; 2,443 valid cases. The numbers add up to more than 2,443 or 100% because in many contentious events (or cases), more than one type of action could be identified.

*Mobilizations* are peaceful and very symbolic actions such as marches, demonstrations or rallies. *Protests* can be more violent and include clashes with the police, revolts, or riots. *Blockades* are obstructions of streets and roads to prevent the movement of people and goods between towns or within entire regions. *Civic strikes* paralyze most if not all private and public activities in a town or neighborhood. During civic strikes, schools and businesses close, and people may stop going to work. *Takeovers* include the seizure of state buildings, embassies, or churches for a prolonged number of days. *Threats of civic strikes* comprise publishing statements about possible plans to shut down all commercial activities.

Finally, *other mobilizations* include land conflicts and invasions (e.g., direct claims to land by forcefully occupying or settling private or public properties), civil disobedience (e.g., the civilian population peacefully prevents guerrilla or other armed-group intrusions into their towns), assemblies (e.g., community meetings where common problems and possible solutions are discussed and made public so that government officials become aware that a group is planning contentious actions), and hunger strikes.

## APPENDIX 5: TARGETS OF DEMANDS AND ENTITY RESPONSE

The two tables below offer summary statistics of the entities that were the targets of contentious action and the response of those entities. The *National government* includes the central government's executive branch, some bureaucracies, state-owned companies, and the police and armed forces. The *Municipal government* is the mayor's office. The *Departmental government* is the governor's office. *Guerrillas and paramilitaries* are illegally armed groups that violate human rights.

### Entity that was the Object of Claim, Colombia 1991-2002

<i>Entity</i>	<i>Number of Actions in which Entity was Evoked</i>	<i>Percent Actions</i>
National Government	919	37.6
Municipal Government	556	22.8
Departmental Government	301	12.3
Guerrillas and Paramilitaries	189	7.7
Other Entities	231	9.5
No information on Entity	559	22.9

0 missing cases; 2,443 valid cases. The number of actions adds up to more than 2,443 because in most contentious events (or cases), more than one entity could be identified.

*Other Entities* include private establishments such as stores, multinational oil companies, and foreign governments. Not all newspaper articles on contentious events gave information on the target of demands, which explains the high *no information* number of cases.

Most newspaper articles on contentious events did not provide information on the entity's response. Entity response could be obtained, if at all, days later in subsequent reporting of the same event. Given time and resource limitations, it was not possible to do further research on events for which information on response was not provided. This explains why the majority of responses fall in the *No Information* category.

**Entity Response, Colombia 1991-2002**

<i>Response</i>	<i>Number of Actions in which Response was Evoked</i>	<i>Percent Actions</i>
Negotiated	207	8.5
Accepted	110	4.5
Sent Communication	81	3.3
Repressed	65	2.7
Denied	40	1.6
Ignored	13	0.5
No Information	2000	81.9

0 missing cases; 2,443 valid cases. The number of actions adds up to more than 2,443 because in some contentious events (or cases), more than one response could be identified.

Nevertheless, of the 19.1% cases for which a response was obtained, negotiation with contentious actors was the most frequently observed category in these variables, followed by acceptance of some of the demands (usually after some negotiation), sending a communiqué (e.g., of solidarity, acknowledgement, or rejection), and finally, repression of the most contentious acts with police involvement.

## APPENDIX 6: LOCALITY

This table lists the number of contentious events in each of Colombia's 32 departments, and the Capital City of Bogotá between 1991 and 2002.

**Number of Contentious Actions in Colombia's 32 departments and Bogotá (1991-2002)**

Department	Number of Protests	Percent	Department	Number of Protests	Percent	Department	Number of Protests	Percent
AMAZONAS	1	0.04	CÓRDOBA	29	1.19	RISARALDA	20	0.82
ANTIOQUIA	341	13.96	CUNDINAMARCA	69	2.82	SAN ANDRÉS	12	0.49
ARAUCA	28	1.15	LA GUAJIRA	54	2.21	SANTANDER	209	8.56
ATLÁNTICO	113	4.63	GUAINÍA	1	0.04	SUCRE	17	0.70
BOLIVAR	74	3.03	GUAVIARE	5	0.20	TOLIMA	23	0.94
BOYACÁ	77	3.15	HUILA	36	1.47	VALLE	218	8.92
CALDAS	23	0.94	MAGDALENA	45	1.84	VAUPÉS	2	0.08
CAQUETÁ	19	0.78	META	42	1.72	VICHADA	1	0.04
CASANARE	13	0.53	NARIÑO	69	2.82	BOGOTA	428	17.52
CAUCA	131	5.36	NORTE SANTANDER	34	1.39	NATIONAL	116	4.75
CESAR	46	1.88	PUTUMAYO	14	0.57	MULTIPLE DEPARTMENTS	88	3.60
CHOCÓ	33	1.35	QUINDÍO	12	0.49	Total	2443	100

Note: See map of Colombia and the 32 departments in Appendix 7

Contentious actions occurred in most major cities and departments. “Multiple departments” refers to contentious events where social actors from at least two departments staged an act of contention. The data on locality in the Velasco File allows me to observe how department-level variation in the independent variables affects contention.

## APPENDIX 7: MAP OF COLOMBIA'S 32 DEPARTMENTS



<i>CODE</i>	<i>DEPARTMENT</i>	<i>CAPITAL</i>	<i>DEPARTMENT POPULATION</i>
1	AMAZONAS	Leticia	80,360
2	ANTIOQUIA	Medellín	5,750,478
3	ARAUCA	Arauca	282,302
4	ATLÁNTICO	Barranquilla	2,365,663
5	BOLIVAR	Cartagena	2,229,967
6	BOYACÁ	Tunja	1,411,239
7	CALDAS	Manizales	1,170,187
8	CAQUETÁ	Florencia	463,333
9	CASANARE	Yopal	325,713
10	CAUCA	Popayán	1,363,054
11	CESAR	Valledupar	1,050,303
12	CHOCÓ	Quibdó	413,173
13	CÓRDOBA	Montería	1,392,905
14	CUNDINAMARCA	Bogotá	2,349,578
15	LA GUAJIRA	Puerto Inírida	43,314
16	GUAINÍA	San José	133,236
17	GUAVIARE	Neiva	994,218
18	HUILA	Riohacha	524,619
19	MAGDALENA	Santa Marta	1,403,318
20	META	Villavicencio	771,089
21	NARIÑO	Pasto	1,775,139
22	NORTE SANTANDER	Cúcuta	1,493,932
23	PUTUMAYO	Mocoa	378,483
24	QUINDÍO	Armenia	613,375
25	RISARALDA	Pereira	1,024,362
26	SAN ANDRÉS	San Andrés	83,491
27	SANTANDER	Bucaramanga	2,085,084
28	SUCRE	Sincelejo	868,648
29	TOLIMA	Ibagué	1,312,972
30	VALLE	Cali	4,524,678
31	VAUPÉS	Mitú	33,152
32	VICHADA	Puerto Carreño	97,276
	BOGOTA	Distrito Capital	7,117,984
	COLOMBIA		45,926,625

## APPENDIX 8: REVERSED INDICATORS

<p><i>External Debt.</i> Millions of Dollars. To change the directionality of this indicator (i.e., where a higher number equals a lower debt) I subtracted each year's statistic from the time-series highest indicator: \$20,051,279,872 (debt for 2000).</p>
<p><i>Foreign Aid as % of Gross National Income.</i> To change the directionality of this indicator (i.e., where a higher number equals less aid) I subtracted each year's statistic from the time-series highest indicator: 3.27% in 1968.</p>
<p><i>Inflation Rate.</i> To change the directionality of this indicator (i.e., where a higher number equals a lower inflation rate) I subtracted each year's statistic from the time-series highest indicator: 32.37 (inflation for 1990).</p>
<p><i>Number of People Kidnapped.</i> To change the directionality of this indicator (i.e., where a higher number equals fewer people kidnapped) I subtracted each year's statistic from the time-series highest indicator: 3706 (1999).</p>
<p><i>Reversed Measure of Homicide Rate.</i> To change the directionality of this indicator (i.e., where a higher number equals a lower homicide rate) I subtracted each year's statistic from the time-series highest indicator: 78 (rate for 1991).</p>
<p><i>Reversed Measure of Unemployment Rate.</i> To reverse this indicator (i.e., where a higher number equals lower unemployment) I subtracted each year's statistic from the time-series highest indicator: 20.52 (rate for 2000).</p>

## APPENDIX 9: RURAL CONTENTION IN THE VELASCO FILE

**Peasant and Indian Contention in 32 Departments and the city of Bogotá, 1991-2002**

DEPARTMENT	PEASANTS		INDIANS		RURAL CONTENTION	
	Number of Contentious Events	Percent	Number of Contentious Events	Percent	Number of Contentious Events	Percent
AMAZONAS	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
ANTIOQUIA	45	9.2	9	5.5	54	8.3
ARAUCA	8	1.6	2	1.2	10	1.5
ATLÁNTICO	17	3.5	0	0.0	17	2.6
BOLIVAR	18	3.7	0	0.0	18	2.8
BOYACÁ	14	2.9	2	1.2	16	2.5
CALDAS	2	0.4	0	0.0	2	0.3
CAQUETÁ	7	1.4	0	0.0	7	1.1
CASANARE	5	1.0	0	0.0	5	0.8
CAUCA	53	10.9	60	36.8	113	17.4
CESAR	13	2.7	1	0.6	14	2.2
CHOCÓ	14	2.9	4	2.5	18	2.8
CÓRDOBA	5	1.0	6	3.7	11	1.7
CUNDINAMARCA	6	1.2	0	0.0	6	0.9
LA GUAJIRA	5	1.0	10	6.1	15	2.3
GUAINÍA	1	0.2	1	0.6	2	0.3
GUAVIARE	5	1.0	1	0.6	6	0.9
HUILA	19	3.9	1	0.6	20	3.1
MAGDALENA	13	2.7	1	0.6	14	2.2
META	13	2.7	1	0.6	14	2.2
NARIÑO	13	2.7	10	6.1	23	3.5
NORTE SANTANDER	11	2.3	0	0.0	11	1.7
PUTUMAYO	10	2.1	0	0.0	10	1.5
QUINDÍO	0	0	1	0.6	1	0.2
RISARALDA	3	0.6	4	2.5	7	1.1
SAN ANDRÉS	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0
SANTANDER	55	11.3	1	0.6	56	8.6
SUCRE	6	1.2	0	0.0	6	0.9
TOLIMA	4	0.8	4	2.5	8	1.2
VALLE	20	4.1	10	6.1	30	4.6
VAUPÉS	0	0.0	1	0.6	1	0.2
VICHADA	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
BOGOTA	23	4.7	2	1.2	25	3.8
REGIONAL	31	6.4	4	2.5	35	5.4
NATIONAL	48	9.9	27	16.6	75	11.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source:* Velasco Data File, see chapter 2.

Regional protests convoked and mobilized peasants or Indians who live in areas with similar economic, geographic and cultural conditions. National protests mobilized peasants from all the country's departments to the regional capitals or to Bogotá.



## APPENDIX 10: URBAN CONTENTION IN THE VELASCO FILE

Urban Contention in 32 Departments and the city of Bogotá, 1991-2002

DEPARTMENT	URBAN RESIDENTS		GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS		COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS AND NGOS	
	Number of Contentious Events	Percent	Number of Contentious Events	Percent	Number of Contentious Events	Percent
ANTIOQUIA	149	14.7	25	18.8	31	13.2
BOGOTA	142	14.0	18	13.5	44	18.8
VALLE	98	9.7	14	10.5	22	9.4
SANTANDER	80	7.9	7	5.3	19	8.1
ATLÁNTICO	70	6.9	5	3.8	11	4.7
CUNDINAMARCA	46	4.5	4	3.0	2	0.9
BOLIVAR	36	3.6	3	2.3	3	1.3
BOYACÁ	35	3.5	6	4.5	9	3.8
CAUCA	31	3.1	4	3.0	15	6.4
NARIÑO	29	2.9	10	7.5	5	2.1
LA GUAJIRA	27	2.7	2	1.5	2	0.9
MAGDALENA	25	2.5	0	0.0	1	0.4
META	25	2.5	4	3.0	3	1.3
CESAR	24	2.4	1	0.8	2	0.9
NATIONAL	24	2.4	8	6.0	13	5.6
CHOCÓ	20	2.0	2	1.5	3	1.3
ARAUCA	18	1.8	2	1.5	4	1.7
CÓRDOBA	18	1.8	1	0.8	3	1.3
CALDAS	15	1.5	2	1.5	1	0.4
REGIONAL	15	1.5	4	3.0	24	10.3
NORTE SANTANDER	11	1.1	4	3.0	2	0.9
CAQUETÁ	10	1.0	2	1.5	0	0.0
RISARALDA	10	1.0	1	0.8	3	1.3
TOLIMA	10	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.4
CASANARE	8	0.8	1	0.8	1	0.4
HUILA	8	0.8	1	0.8	2	0.9
SAN ANDRÉS	8	0.8	2	1.5	6	2.6
SUCRE	8	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
PUTUMAYO	6	0.6	0	0.0	1	0.4
QUINDÍO	5	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
VAUPÉS	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.4
VICHADA	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
AMAZONAS	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
GUAINÍA	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
GUAVIARE	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
TOTAL	1013	100	133	100	234	100

Source: Velasco Data File, see Chapter 2.

## APPENDIX 11: STUDENT CONTENTION IN THE VELASCO FILE

Student Contention in 32 Departments and the City of Bogotá, 1991-2002

DEPARTMENT	STUDENTS		DEPARTMENT	STUDENTS		DEPARTMENT	STUDENTS	
	Number of Contentious Events	Percent		Number of Contentious Events	Percent		Number of Contentious Events	Percent
AMAZONAS	0	0.0	CÓRDOBA	3	1.1	RISARALDA	2	0.7
ANTIOQUIA	40	14.5	CUNDINAMARCA	5	1.8	SAN ANDRÉS	1	0.4
ARAUCA	0	0.0	LA GUAJIRA	4	1.4	SANTANDER	22	8.0
ATLÁNTICO	11	4.0	GUAINÍA	0	0.0	SUCRE	1	0.4
BOLIVAR	2	0.7	GUAVIARE	0	0.0	TOLIMA	5	1.8
BOYACÁ	13	4.7	HUILA	0	0.0	VALLE	35	12.7
CALDAS	1	0.4	MAGDALENA	3	1.1	VAUPÉS	0	0.0
CAQUETÁ	0	0.0	META	3	1.1	VICHADA	0	0.0
CASANARE	1	0.4	NARIÑO	8	2.9	BOGOTA	89	32.2
CAUCA	12	4.3	NORTE SANTANDER	1	0.4	REGIONAL	7	2.5
CESAR	2	0.7	PUTUMAYO	0	0.0	NATIONAL	2	0.7
CHOCÓ	0	0.0	QUINDÍO	3	1.1	TOTAL	276	100

Source: Velasco Data File, see chapter 2.

## APPENDIX 12: DEPARTMENT DATA 1998

Department Name	Total Number of Contentious Actions, Excluding Labor	Poverty Rate	Gini Coefficient	Unemployment Rate	NBI	Years of Schooling	Homicides	Economy Index	State	Participation Index
ANTIOQUIA	54	52	0.60	12.0	25	6	5375	48.1	37.6	40.9
ATLÁNTICO	18	52	0.53	10.3	20	8	643	44.1	34.5	47.4
BOGOTÁ	76	41	0.56	13.3	13	10	2005	100.0	99.8	84.7
BOLIVAR	7	56	0.49	12.7	36	6	338	31.5	22.8	28.0
BOYACÁ	7	65	0.49	4.5	41	6	295	22.9	14.1	21.0
CALDAS	5	48	0.54	9.8	19	6	366	34.4	16.3	26.5
CAQUETÁ	3	50	0.45	8.4	21	6	440	22.0	14.0	21.4
CAUCA	5	62	0.60	11.8	35	5	385	17.9	14.3	24.3
CESAR	4	56	0.54	6.3	36	6	437	24.2	15.3	25.7
CÓRDOBA	1	65	0.51	14.0	50	5	274	22.1	14.8	24.3
CUNDINAMARCA	12	46	0.48	10.7	22	6	741	28.9	14.2	21.9
CHOCÓ	4	72	0.61	10.3	60	5	163	10.7	13.9	22.7
HUILA	7	52	0.54	11.5	22	6	.	26.1	15.4	24.2
LA GUAJIRA	9	52	0.48	5.1	37	7	248	24.5	14.6	23.0
MAGDALENA	1	59	0.48	6.9	40	6	512	24.2	15.5	25.0
META	4	35	0.44	16.7	29	6	314	30.0	16.8	24.1
NARIÑO	11	70	0.54	10.2	37	6	329	24.2	14.6	27.1
NORTE SANTANDER	4	60	0.53	11.3	26	6	226	30.4	16.0	26.7
QUINDÍO	3	48	0.51	11.7	23	7	315	30.4	16.0	24.9
RISARALDA	4	53	0.48	14.9	18	7	927	38.7	17.8	26.9
SANTANDER	24	44	0.50	10.6	20	7	811	38.6	17.3	30.0
SUCRE	3	58	0.51	3.7	45	6	210	19.5	14.5	21.7
TOLIMA	3	55	0.52	10.2	28	6	632	29.9	15.7	23.3
VALLE	25	45	0.53	21.7	20	7	3280	52.9	44.0	42.1
ARAUCA	9	.	.	.	.	.	212	22.3	14.9	21.6
CASANARE	0	.	.	.	.	.	320	23.0	14.0	21.2
PUTUMAYO	1	.	.	.	.	.	339	19.5	13.6	19.0
SAN ANDRÉS	0	.	.	.	.	.	5	32.9	13.0	19.9
AMAZONAS	0	.	.	.	.	.	5	16.4	13.5	16.3
GUAINÍA	0	.	.	.	.	.	0	13.9	13.0	17.4
GUAVIARE	0	.	.	.	.	.	133	18.7	13.0	17.8
VAUPÉS	0	.	.	.	.	.	30	14.3	13.0	18.3
VICHADA	0	.	.	.	.	.	36	12.2	13.0	16.7

Sources: The poverty rate, gini coefficients, unemployment, basic necessities, years of schooling and number of homicides indicators were taken from DNP, Sistema de Indicadores Sociodemográficos ([http://www.dnp.gov.co/01\\_CONT/INDICADO/SISD.HTM](http://www.dnp.gov.co/01_CONT/INDICADO/SISD.HTM)). The economy index comes from Sarmiento et. al. (1998), the state index from Sandoval and Téllez (1998) and the participation index from Álvarez, Castillo and Villar (1998). The total number of contentious actions come from the 10 newspapers listed before.

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**Education**

Ph.D. (expected date of graduation, January 2007). Political Science, Boston University.  
Dissertation “Manifesting the People’s Will: Protests and Institutional Change in Colombia (1958-2002).” Defended on 5/12/2006.

MA (1995). Latin American and Caribbean Studies, New York University.

BA (1993). Sociology and Women’s Studies, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

**Academic Positions**

2006 Assistant Professor, Political Science, Universidad de los Andes (Bogotá, Colombia)

2004-2005 Lecturer, Sociology Program, School of Human Sciences, Universidad del Rosario (Bogotá, Colombia).

2003 Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Universidad Javeriana (Bogotá, Colombia).

2000-2002 Teaching Fellow, Department of Political Science, Boston University.

1997-2000                      Lecturer and Researcher, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Universidad Javeriana (Bogotá, Colombia).

### **Work Experience**

1996                      Library Assistant, United Nations International Children's Fund, UNICEF, Colombia Area Office, Bogotá.

*Responsibilities:* Classify, catalog and acquire information, circulate materials and assist all the areas (Education, Health, Nutrition, Women, Public Policy, Children under Difficult Circumstances) with bibliographic material for the organization of training workshops, publications and reports.

1995                      Assistant, Women's Office, National Indigenous Organization of Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia.

*Responsibilities:* Political organization workshops. Organization of the "First South American Indigenous Women's Workshop" (Bogotá: July, 1995) and compilation of the Workshop's Memoirs. May-August 1994. Organization of the "Third National Indigenous Women's Workshop" (Bogotá, June 1994) and compilation of the Workshop's Memoirs.

### **Conferences**

"La contestación social en la Región Andina". In *Región Andina: Entre los nuevos populismos y la movilización social* (Bogotá: April 29, 2003). Organized by the Andean Observatory of the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.

"Decentralization and Community Participation in Five Municipalities in Colombia." Paper presented at the Second International Seminar on Citizenship Participation Policies at the Municipal Level (Buenos Aires, Argentina: May 17-19, 1999); and at the International Seminar on Citizenship Participation Policies at the Municipal Level in South America (Cochabamba, Bolivia: July 29-31, 1998). Seminar organized by the Organization of American States.

### **Publications**

"Un marco analítico para analizar la contestación social en la región andina" en *Populismo y movimientos sociales en la región andina*. Bogotá: PUJ, 2003.

With Consuelo Ahumada. "Descentralización, poder local y participación comunitaria en cinco municipios colombianos." In *Descentralización andina*, Pablo Franky, compilador. Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2000.

With Consuelo Ahumada. "Colombia. Descentralización, poder local y participación comunitaria. Estudio de caso." En *Descentralización, municipio y participación ciudadana en Chile, Colombia y Guatemala*. Bogotá: Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2000.

### **Academic Awards**

*Teaching Fellow* (2000-present). Political Science Department, Boston University.

*Summer Research Grant* (1994). Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, New York University. Title of the Research Project: "Indigenous Women's Political Organization in Colombia."

*Graduate Assistant* (1993-95). Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, New York University.

### **Areas of Teaching Competence**

Comparative politics. Latin American politics. Contentious politics and social movements in Latin America. Political development.

### **Languages**

Spanish and English (fluent spoken and written)

French (good reading knowledge, some speaking ability)