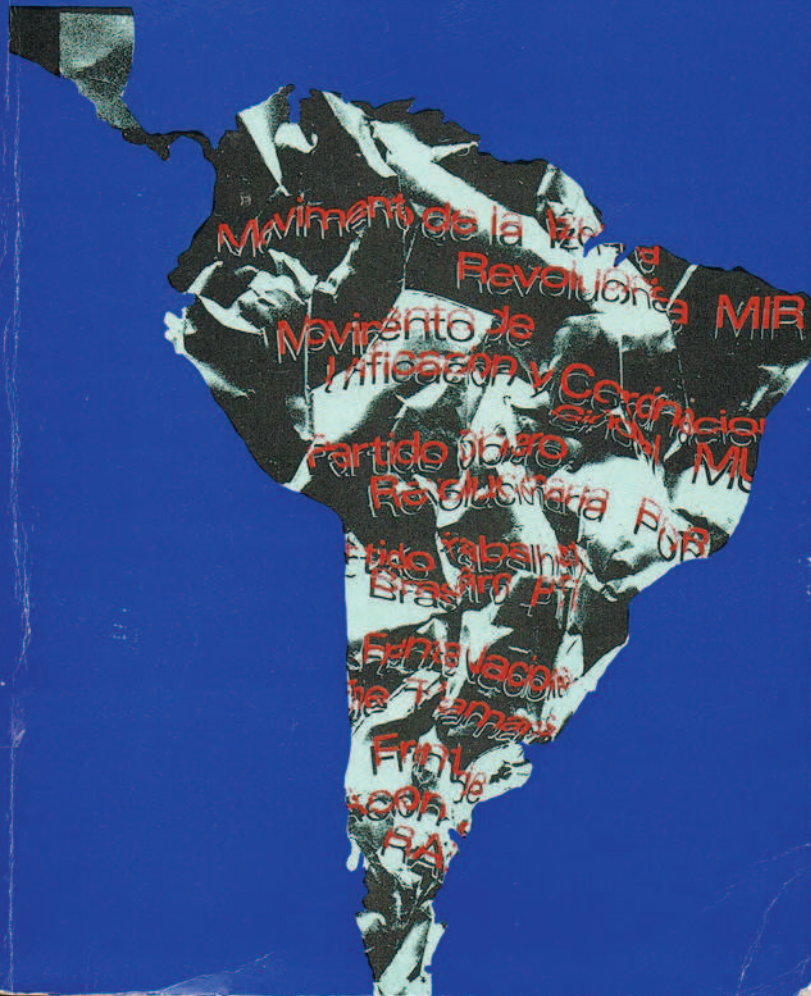


## The Pelican Latin American Library

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### GUIDE TO THE POLITICAL PARTIES OF SOUTH AMERICA



# Contents

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HUGO NEIRA

## Ecuador

### THE COUNTRY

Ecuador has a population of more than 5½ million, over an area of 106,178 square miles. Of the three regions that make up the country's territory (the coast, the sierra and Amazonia), the sierra is both the smallest (23 per cent of the territory) and the most densely populated (56 per cent of the total population). About 38 per cent of the population live on the coast, while Amazonia and the Galapagos archipelago (twelve islands 250 miles from the coast) are very sparsely populated regions. Racially, the population consists of about 10 per cent whites, 39 per cent Indians, 41 per cent half-castes (white and Indian), 5 per cent Negroes and mulattos, and 5 per cent other coloured peoples.<sup>1</sup>

On the political plane, the low level of education (42 per cent of the population over 15 is illiterate) and the very uneven geographical distribution of the working population (66 per cent of the labour force lives outside the towns) considerably restricts popular participation in public affairs. In fact the parties represent minority groups. Their ruling elites generally belong to the white and creole sectors of the population; the Indians and half-castes (1,250,000 in the sierra, with a smaller, unknown number on the coast, where they

1. 'Ecuador en cifras', in *El desarrollo económico del Ecuador*, Santiago de Chile, CEPAL, 1964.

are called *montuvios*) only provide, at best, their electoral clientele.

### Urban and Electoral Centres

The two biggest towns in Ecuador are Guayaquil and Quito. Guayaquil (population: 700,000) is a port on the Pacific coast, and is the country's most important commercial centre; Quito (population 500,000) is the political and administrative capital.

### Political and Administrative Organizations

The country is divided into twenty provinces and one 'national territory', the Galapagos archipelago, administered by the National Defence Ministry. Each province is divided into cantons, and the cantons into parishes (there are 169 urban and 626 rural parishes); the provinces are governed by a provincial council and the cantons by a municipal council.

In 'normal' times, direct universal elections are held to renew the mandates of the executive and the two houses of parliament (in the Chamber of Deputies there is one deputy for every fifty thousand inhabitants, or seventy-three deputies in 1963; in the Senate, there are two senators for each province). The 1946 Constitution (in force until 1963) laid down that the Senate should also include five senators to represent the various economic interest groups in the country, without being affiliated to any particular party.

The regime is unitary in form. The latest Constitution only permits three parties: the Conservatives, the Liberals and the Socialists; no President of the Republic is eligible for re-election; a Supreme Court is established under the Constitution; every citizen aged twenty years who has completed his primary education is entitled to vote. The military junta which took power in July 1963 suspended the Constitution.



## HISTORY

So far as concerns the emergence and establishment of the national state, Ecuador has followed the same course of development as the other countries born of the old Spanish American Empire. After the wars of independence, the country found itself part of 'Greater Colombia' (as Bolívar had wished). In 1830, however, the southern region of this Colombian federation embarked on a secessionist movement, and at Riobamba drew up a Constitution and appointed a President, the Venezuelan Juan José Flores, then commander-in-chief of the armed forces in the southern region. This man remained in power until 1845 (with a short interruption from 1839 to 1844). In the ensuing period, there was a nationalist reaction against 'foreign militarism' (as in Peru and Bolivia), and Flores was removed from power. From 1845 to 1859, liberal and progressive governments introduced a number of reforms, such as the emancipation of the slaves in 1861, and the abolition of the death penalty for political offences in 1859. Between 1861 and 1875 a Conservative reaction directed against the Liberals and their reforms, and also against the Army which supported them, brought Gabriel García Moreno to power.

This third period in the history of Ecuador witnessed the beginnings of the alliance between the ruling power and the Church, despite Liberal and anti-clerical opposition, and it laid the foundations for a future Conservative and clericalist party. García Moreno established a dictatorship based on theocratic principles. The government's frontier disputes with Peru, and the major public works projects embarked upon (for instance the Guayaquil-Quito railway) were to give this government a remarkable cohesion and dynamism. From 1875 to 1895 neither the Conservatives nor the Liberals managed to win a majority.

The fourth period in Ecuador's history began in 1895,

when Eloy Alfaro installed a Liberal and secularist regime, following a popular revolution. Between 1895 and 1933 the country was affected by a number of changes. Under Eloy Alfaro's inspiration, a divorce law was adopted in 1902, and in 1908 a law was passed expropriating ecclesiastical property (the law of *manos muertas*); in 1906, General Plaza's government drew up a Constitution that was to serve as the model for all the others subsequently adopted in Ecuador. (There were to be twenty-two.)

Economically, Ecuador has increasingly concentrated on the export of a single product – cocoa – and falling prices of this product, coupled with a drop in exports (in 1929), go far to explain the repercussions on this country of the 1930s economic crisis. This was the period during which Ecuador signed frontier treaties with Brazil (1904) and Colombia (1916) through which she lost about 300,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the Amazonian region, or almost half her entire territory.

From 1924, the political system, based on the opposition between Liberals and Conservatives, was shaken by the appearance of new forces on the political scene. By 1922, the Confederación Obrera del Guayas (the province to which the town of Guayaquil belongs) dominated economic life on the coast and was in a position to paralyse the country's principal port at will. In 1925, again in Guayaquil, a military coup d'état took place, led by Ildefonso Mendoza with the support of the younger officers; the uprising provided the spark to inflame the whole country, and the revolt quickly spread. This was not a coup d'état of the traditional type. A (civilian) ruling junta was set up, but it was based on military juntas in the provinces. These military rulers (nicknamed 'the ideologues') shortly handed over power to civilians (demonstrating that they had not intended to seize it for themselves) and undertook a substantial revision of the structures of the state. With their support, the provisional President Isidro Ayora carried



out a number of important measures,<sup>2</sup> such as the creation of the Ecuador Central Bank, the Mortgage Credit Bank, and of a development bank, the establishment of a Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour, and a General Inspectorate of Labour. New parties made their appearance in Ecuador at this time: the Social Democratic Party was born in Quito in July 1925, and in December of the same year the Ecuadorian Socialist Party held its inaugural assembly. In 1932 the final conflict between Conservatives and Liberals on the question of the election of Neptali Bonifaz (Bonifaz, the candidate of the right, won the election thanks to the Liberals' internal divisions) paved the way for the appearance of a new political force connected neither to the Liberals nor the Conservatives: this force was what we shall here term Velasquism.

#### Partido Conservador (PC)

The Conservative Party came into being during the theocratic dictatorship of García Moreno (1859-71). When the

2. These measures were inspired by the North American Kemmerer trade mission. Between 1920 and 1931, a group of American financial consultants, led by Edwin W. Kemmerer, visited a number of Latin American countries, notably Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. The Kemmerer mission recommended to the various governments that had invited and financed it a number of measures based on the strictest financial orthodoxy - the establishment of a modern banking network, the improvement of public services, etc. But the mission's chief aim was to stabilize the currencies of these countries within a monetary zone that remained loyal to the Gold Exchange Standard, i.e. to ensure the convertibility of these currencies into gold, dollars or sterling. The key currencies thus became the dollar and the pound sterling. This was, in fact, an episode in 'dollar diplomacy' in Latin America. As a result, through their attachment to British and American monetary circuits, these countries were profoundly affected by the 1929 crisis, and after 1932 by the fall in the prices of raw materials.

latter disappeared from the scene, the Conservatives and Liberals took turns in power until 1895. In that year a revolution, possibly the only popular revolution in Ecuador's history, brought to power Eloy Alfaro and the Liberals. The Liberal hegemony was further reinforced in 1925 by a military coup carried out by progressively-minded army officers. Since then, the Conservatives have only won elections twice: in 1931 Neptali Bonifaz won the election with the support of a number of dissident Liberal groups; in 1956 Camilo Ponce won the election with only 29 per cent of the votes, and the elections were denounced by the opposition as rigged. Finally, Arosemena Gómez, a Deputy belonging to the Constitutional Democratic Concentration, was elected President by the Constituent Assembly in November 1966 (with the support of the Social Christians).

In defining Conservatism in Ecuador it is important to examine the role within the Conservative Party itself played by a number of different forces, especially the Church and the Army; the latter acts as a regulator when the balance between the parties is disturbed either by excessively autocratic presidential rule or by mass movements operating outside the framework of the traditional parties. It is unusual for the Army to act on its own initiative without reference to the wishes of the Conservative Party. It has happened twice, however, in 1925 and in 1947. For this reason the Army will be considered under a separate heading.

As for the Church, while it plays no direct role, it is nearer to the Conservative Party than to any other. Following the publication of papal encyclicals such as *Rerum novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*, the Church has become the prime source of Conservative ideology, as the latter recognizes in its programme and manifestoes. No study of Conservatism in Ecuador can therefore ignore this bond between the Church and the Party. The intellectual bond that unites the party's leaders to the clergy is nourished within the party itself by



an internal pressure-group that acts as a kind of 'think-tank', whose effectiveness is proportional to the clergy's influence over political decisions. Moreover the Conservative Party, as an avowedly Catholic party, declares its submission to an international authority – the authority of the Pope. The 1952 split, which gave birth to the Social Christians, can therefore be explained as a conflict within the Conservative Party between the 'old guard' concerned with the preservation of the *status quo* and younger elements in the party who pressed for the application of the Church's social policy. The Conservatives claim to represent 'order', but then so do the Liberals. The only question on which they are really divided is therefore the religious question, the Liberals being traditionally 'rabid anti-clericalists'. On other questions – e.g. the nature of the ruling oligarchy, conditions of party membership, the relations between the various social classes – they hold similar attitudes. Both Liberals and Conservatives in fact support the maintenance of the *status quo*, a representative republic and the legitimacy of the presidential power. On the economic plane, they are in favour of free trade and the defence of private property, and both are equally opposed to state intervention in the economy. Socially, the Liberals and Conservatives spring from the same social class, that is to say the upper middle class with its urban and rural dependants.

There is in reality only one Conservative Party, but various forces and pressure-groups are clustered around this party. Two similar but for the most part mutually hostile types of conservative faction can be distinguished, differing in the criterion which came uppermost in their decision to support the Conservatives: the Conservatives with Christian leanings, and the Conservatives with fascist leanings.

*The Christian tendency is represented by:*

– The Movimiento Social Cristiano, a wing of the Conservative Party led by Camilo Ponce Enríquez. In its electoral

alliances, and in its opposition to the military junta after 1963, this movement has proved independent of the Conservatives. This opposition is chiefly one of personalities within the Conservative Party itself. The Social Christians and the Conservatives presented joint lists at the elections of 1967 (for the Constituent Assembly) after the fall of the military junta.

– The Frente Anti-Comunista de Defensa Nacional (FADN); this movement was very active under the presidencies of Velasco and Carlos Julio Arosemena, and organized Christian militias to fight the 'communist menace'.

*The fascist tendency is expressed by:*

– The Alianza Revolucionaria Nacionalista Ecuatoriana (ARNE). The Alliance made its appearance in 1948, during Galo Plaza's government, under the influence of the Partido Sinarquista Mexicano and the Spanish Falange. It recruited most of its sympathizers from among the younger members of the upper middle class. It is avowedly nationalist and Christian. Small in number, but militantly anti-Communist, its supporters attend workers' meetings to provoke direct confrontation with active members of the Socialist and Communist Parties. They are highly disciplined and readily engage in street battles. The main leader of the group in 1965 was Jorge Luna. Together with the rest of the Conservative Party, the ARNE gave its support to Velasco.

#### *Extent of Conservative Party Support*

The Conservative Party is very influential in the provinces of the sierra where 60 per cent of the population live (Azuay, Canar, Loja and Pichincha). The Party is led by a small number of aristocratic land-owning families and middle-class merchants, recruiting most of its support among the half-castes of the sierra, in Quito and in the smaller towns, and in that



sector of the middle class associated with the civil service and therefore sensitive to changes of President.

#### *Social Structure of the Conservative Electorate*

Peasants and tenant farmers dependent on the big landowners are only enabled to work on the land by means of temporary contracts of employment. Although they do not vote, these sectors do constitute potential manpower for the 'right-wing jacqueries' that have frequently broken out in Ecuador since 1923. By their participation in Conservative meetings in the towns, the peasants also exercise some influence on the coastal region (which has many migrants) and on the so-called *montuvios* (more independent half-castes of the coastal region).

Small artisans, especially in the provinces of Azuay and Canar. The *toquila* straw weavers (the only exported Ecuadorian manufacture) are also a Conservative group.

The urban middle class, state employees, connected to a Conservative *cacique* by bonds of personal loyalty. This group also includes the half-caste and white middle class, which is devoutly Catholic and votes Conservative to preserve its social status.

The aristocratic families that are traditionally Conservative.

#### *Structure of the Party*

The Conservative Party does not have a strongly-articulated chain of command, but it does organize national conventions to choose its candidate. In the Constituent Assemblies of 1938 and 1947, the Conservatives succeeded in having the number of legally permitted parties reduced to three: the Liberal Party, the Socialist Party, and the Conservative Party – a state of affairs that obviously favoured them. In the pattern of elections and electoral alliances, the Conservatives

have emerged as the most stable force in Ecuador's political system.

#### *Election Results*

In 1933 the Conservative Party won the elections in alliance with Velasco, whom they had backed for the presidency. However, it is difficult to say exactly what share of the vote cast for Velasco (60 per cent) is attributable to Conservatives and how much to Velasquists.

In 1948 the Frente Democrático Nacional, which supported Galo Plaza against the Conservatives, inflicted a severe defeat on them. In 1952, the Conservative candidate Ruperto Alarcón was again defeated, this time by Velasco; however, the party obtained 105,000 out of 340,000 votes, or 31.1 per cent of the total cast, thus representing the country's second most powerful electoral force, after Velasquism. It actually obtained a majority in the Senate (sixteen seats out of thirty-four) and twenty seats in the Chamber of Deputies, only one fewer than the Velasquists.

In 1965 the Conservatives won the elections under the leadership of Camilo Ponce Enríquez, but this victory was disputed by its opponents, who denounced various electoral malpractices. The Conservative Party had allied itself with the Christian Democrats on this occasion, and had only won 27.9 per cent of the vote (or 178,421 votes out of some 600,000): President Ponce was therefore forced to bring four liberals and two Christian Democrats into his Cabinet, accompanied by one solitary Conservative.

In 1960, the Conservatives came second, with their leader, Gonzalo Cordero Crespo, only obtaining 150,254 out of 800,000 votes in the presidential elections. The Conservative Party nevertheless remained the second largest political force in the country, after the Velasquists. It held seventeen seats in the Chamber of Deputies, and eight in the Senate. How-



ever, the number of votes cast for it had proportionately diminished by comparison with previous years. On the other hand, the Conservative Party was victorious in the local elections both in 1957 and 1961 over the whole of the country except for Guayaquil and Portoviejo.

#### *Party Alliances*

In 1944 the Conservative Party joined with the Liberals, Socialists, Velasquists and Communists in a Democratic Alliance to oust President Arroyo del Río, following the war with Peru and the subsequent treaties.

In 1956, the party joined the centre-right Popular Alliance to promote the candidature of Camilo Ponce Enríquez, with the support of Francisco Illienworth Icaza of the Social Christian Party. In 1964 it joined with the Social Christians in the Constitutionalist Front led by Camilo Ponce and opposed to the military junta in power.

#### *Main Leaders*

Gonzalo Cordero Crespo, the chairman of the party, Camilo Ponce Enríquez, and Enrique Arroyo Delgado, who all belong to the 'Christian' faction.

#### *Press Outlets*

*El Mercurio* (circulation: 8,000), a Social Christian daily published in Cuenca; *El Heraldo* (circulation 3,000), a Conservative paper published in Ambato.

#### *Partido Liberal Radical*

##### *Historical Outline*

*The Traditional Liberal Party.* The Liberal Party was founded in 1878, and was the ideological expression of the group

opposed to the personal exercise of power and to Church participation in national politics. To some extent, this Liberal tradition has continued into modern times, taking the form of opposition to the authoritarian caudillism of a Velasco, or of alliance with the Socialist left through opposition to Conservatism or through anti-clericalism.

Despite this, the period of Liberal Party hegemony (1895-1925) is directly associated with the actions of two (Liberal) caudillos: Eloy Alfaro and Leonidas Plaza. Once in power, the forces of Liberalism initially embarked upon a series of reforms on two levels, administrative and economic. On the administrative plane, the Church was separated from the State, education was secularized and greatly expanded in a crash programme against illiteracy; new penal and commercial codes were promulgated, and a new law governing the police was introduced; a law of 1908 made inroads on the property of the Church, the country's biggest landed proprietor. On the economic plane, the railway and road networks were extended, and agriculture, which was too heavily concentrated on cocoa production, was diversified. Finally, from the social angle, Liberalism represented the interests of the new middle class on the coast (commerce and finance) as against those of the upper classes in the Andean region (land-owners).

*The Liberal Party from 1925 to the Present Day.* Neither the application of the early Liberal programmes nor the coastal bourgeoisie's rise to power and influence were enough to transform Ecuador and prepare it for the changes of the period from 1920-30, which brought about profound changes in the face of the country and of the Liberal Party itself. The cocoa crisis and the emergence of new social forces both had their effect on the party. Between 1922 and 1933 the first labour unions were founded (in Guayaquil) and the Socialist Party also made its appearance. This period is characterized by the



first sortie into politics by the military, in the July revolution of 1925, with the object of increasing the role of the state. Moreover, the revolutions in the Soviet Union and in Mexico influenced intellectuals and some sectors of the coastal middle class opposed to the traditionalism of the Andean oligarchy. While continuing the old polemic struggle with the Conservative Party on the role of the Church in the political life of the country, Liberalism itself began to change (witness the 1923 Liberal programme), and adopt some Marxist ideas, finding in the Socialist Party its most determined ally in opposing the new authoritarianism that had emerged in Ecuador.

As its power and influence began to wane, the Liberal Party found itself in a paradoxical situation. In practice, almost all the Presidents of the country claimed allegiance to the Liberals, but without actually belonging to the party. (Velasco is the most notable example.) New leaders such as Galo Plaza, who started out as the United Fruit Company's lawyer, were ideologically very close to the Liberal Party but regarded themselves as 'independents'. The Liberal Party's prestige was therefore greater than its electoral strength, and extended beyond the framework of the party proper. The reasons for this prestige reside primarily in the Liberal ideology (the party's 1952 programme based itself on the Rights of Man). Its second source of prestige was the social origins of the Liberal Party workers, who wished for the modernization of Ecuador and were therefore ready to make alliances which would accelerate some of the structural changes they wanted, although without going so far as to support the claims of the far left.

#### *Ideology and Programme*

In Ecuador, Liberalism is distinguished from the forces of Conservatism primarily by its intransigent anti-clericalism

(the legacy of the nineteenth century and of European influence). This is its basic characteristic, for as far as economic and social policy is concerned, the Liberals, like the Conservatives, are champions of private property and in favour of a representative and Republican political system. The alliances made by the Liberal Party with the Socialists and Independents (who are Liberals not officially connected with the Liberal Party itself) were dictated more by political than economic considerations.

In the Liberal Party programme and ideology, a distinction should be drawn between the ideas inherited from the nineteenth century and the newer elements, i.e. the content of the 1923 programme. Anti-clericalism is the traditional element in the Party's programme. After 1923, Liberalism placed greater emphasis on economic and social questions than on its older demands, which were for the most part based on questions of high principle: respect for the individual, the right to vote, separation of Church and State and so on. In particular it demanded the protection of the rights of the Indians, subjected to three-fold exploitation by the Church, white man's alcohol, and the *huasipungo* system.<sup>3</sup> For this reason the Liberal Party was the first to call for land reform. The Liberals are moreover opposed to the personal exercise of power, and the Ecuadorian people's economic and political dependence on the upper class and on foreign interests. In other words, they are opposed to the practices of the *caudillo*, the oligarchy, and imperialism.

3. In Latin America, the *huasipunguero*, like the *inquilino*, the *finquero*, etc., is a peasant. He is a small farmer who in exchange for his labour owns a life interest in the land which he cultivates. Although he is dependent on the *hacienda* system to which he is attached, he is protected to some extent by the network of conventions between his status (in the American sense) and the *hacienda*. Hence the Liberals' opposition to this system, which resulted in the maintenance of traditional ties between the boss (the *hacendado*) and his personal clientele of native *huasipungueros*.



The Liberals have also proposed a number of measures designed to set up new production areas in the Amazonian region, and to increase the role of the state as the protector of the family and its standard of living. In the agricultural sphere, they demand the conversion of private property in accordance with the needs of technology and of social welfare.

This programme, which is based on technical progress, on safeguarding the national interest, and the integration of new categories of consumer and producer into the national market, bears certain similarities to that of the Social Democrats; its chief defect is perhaps that it is over-optimistic for a country whose main natural resources are based on the production of one single crop – also a major factor in creating social instability.

#### *The Party's Social Composition*

For historical reasons that go back to the foundation of the Liberal Party, some of Ecuador's oldest aristocratic families can be found among its leaders. However, the party recruits its support chiefly among the social classes of more recent appearance in the towns of the interior, following the economic development of the littoral and the expansion of trade. The Liberal Party electorate may be broken down as follows:

*The Upper Middle Class of Guayaquil (bankers and exporters).* The expansion of this class between 1910 and 1920 coincides with the heyday of Liberalism. This class was concerned primarily with the exploitation of exportable agricultural products of the big plantations (at that time cocoa, bananas, coffee, coconuts, sugar cane and cotton), and benefited from a number of Liberal measures such as the law of *manos muertas* (expropriating Church property) of 1908. Moreover because of the constant migrations from the sierra (in 1946 only 61 per cent of the population of Guayaquil

originated in that province; 25 per cent came from other provinces and 11 per cent from the sierra), this middle class was faced with social problems very different from those typical of the plateau. Some indication of this is given by the dynamism exhibited by the Guayaquil authorities in the social field. A major portion of local revenue from the harbour was used for social purposes. (For instance a welfare committee was set up, a central Public Assistance Board for the province of the littoral was created, an anti-malaria campaign was instituted, a League of Education to combat illiteracy was founded, a child welfare society was established.)

*The middle class.* The educational profession, including both primary and secondary school teachers, constitutes a traditionally liberal sector, first of all because educational reform was born of Eloy Alfaro's secularist policy and finally became a reality in 1925, and secondly because a liberal law (*ley de escalafón y salarios*) gave them stability of status and protected them from arbitrary dismissal.

The middle classes of Guayaquil: this town far outdistances the rest of the country in the level of trade and public services (the average utilization of libraries and the cinema is far above that of the capital, Quito, and other towns), and artisans (6,422 in the town itself), merchants and white-collar workers vote both for the Liberals and for other parties opposed to the Conservatives (in particular the *Concentración de Fuerzas Populares*, or CFP, which in Guayaquil rivals the electoral strength of the Liberals and the Velasquists). These same sectors tend to vote Liberal in the rest of the country.

The low density of Liberal votes is accounted for by the numerical weakness of these sectors of the middle class.

#### *Chief Areas of Support*

The party is strongest in the port of Guayaquil and in the urban areas in the Andes; it also enjoys some support in the



coastal provinces of Esmeralda, Manabí, Los Ríos, Guayas and El Oro.

#### *Structure of the Party*

The Liberal Party has the same type of structure as the Conservative Party: candidates for parliamentary and presidential elections are chosen by national convention. In each province the Liberal clientele is grouped around a few notables; the Liberal leaders belong to families that are traditionally connected with the party, or are members of the Liberal professions from the urban middle class (generally known as *liberales populares*).

#### *Election Results*

From 1925 to 1940, the Liberal Party did not win a single election. In 1940 it brought Carlos Arroyo del Río to the presidency, but the results of these elections gave no clear indication of the party's strength since electoral malpractices played a very important part in the victory. In 1948 the Liberals and Socialists together were unable to prevent the election of Galo Plaza (a non-party Liberal) who won the election with the support of independent centrists who themselves did not constitute a party.

After the split in the party in 1950, the Radical Liberal Party supported José Ricardo Chiriboga Villagómez; it won a majority in Guayaquil and Quito, but was beaten over the rest of the country. The presidential candidate only obtained 65,000 votes, against 150,000 for Velasco and 105,000 for the Conservative candidate Ruperto Alarcón. The votes cast for the Radical Liberal Party in this election were augmented by those cast for the Democratic Alliance (17,000) which under Modesto Larrea Jijón represented the dissident faction

in the Liberals. Two dissident Liberals were brought into Velasco's Cabinet. The Liberals were very poorly represented in Parliament: they obtained nine seats in the Senate (as against sixteen for the Conservatives, seven for the Velasquists and one to the Independents), and thirteen in the Chamber of Deputies (as against twenty-one to the Velasquists, twenty to the Conservatives and five to the Independents). After these elections, the Liberals were therefore only the third strongest political force in the country.

In 1956, after Velasco's exclusion from the elections, the central struggle was that between the Liberals and the Conservatives. The latter, under Camilo Ponce, won, but only just. The difference was only 6,000 votes (Ponce: 178,421 and Raúl Clemente Huerta: 172,979). It should be mentioned that the Liberals were allied with the Socialists and Independents in the Frente Democrático Nacional (FDN) for these elections. In 1960 Galo Plaza, this time the official candidate of the FDN, came third (146,867 votes), beaten by Velasco (323,348 votes) and by the Conservative Gonzalo Cordero Crespo (150,254 votes). The Liberals won about the same proportion of seats in the two Houses as in the previous elections (seventeen deputies and four senators). However, the percentage of votes obtained by the Liberal Party had risen slightly: in 1952, it represented 19.29 per cent of the electorate, and in 1956 27.90 per cent (although it fell back to 23 per cent in 1960). In October 1966, it opposed the election of Otto Arosemena Gómez, putting forward its own candidate Raúl Clemente Huerta, who obtained 35 out of 78 votes in Parliament in the election for President of the Republic. After his election, he proposed a coalition Cabinet.

#### *Alliances and Schisms*

*Electoral Alliances.* In 1944 the party joined the Democratic Alliance, with the Velasquists, the Conservatives and the



left (Socialist and Communist) against the regime of Carlos Arroyo del Río. These disparate groups were united in this incongruous alliance by nationalist sentiment and the fear of fraudulent elections.

In 1960, the party joined with the Socialist Party and some other groups of the centre-left in the Frente Democrático Nacional. The Front was defeated, obtaining only 23 per cent of the votes, as has already been mentioned. The FDN resulted from an electoral agreement at national level between the Socialists and the Liberals. In local elections, this alliance was sometimes maintained and sometimes the two parties presented separate candidates. In 1957, for example, the Liberals and Socialists stood separately in the Quito council elections; in Guayaquil, on the other hand, they united under the FDN label to fight the candidature of Luis Robles Plaza, the candidate of the CFP (Concentración de Fuerzas Populares). Every time the FDN presented joint lists, it found itself faced by adversaries who were also in alliance. In 1960 the Archbishop of Cuenca branded the Liberals, Socialists and Independents supporting Galo Plaza as 'atheists' and 'Marxists'.

*Schisms.* Some sectors broke away from the Liberal Party in 1948 to form the Movimiento Cívico Independiente, which supported Galo Plaza and carried him to victory. In 1952, some Liberals grouped in the Partido Liberal Auténtico swelled the ranks of the Democratic Alliance; their candidate, Modesto Larrea Jijón, obtained 17,000 votes out of the total 340,000 cast. In 1960 'authentic Liberalism' supported Velasco Ibarra against the Radical Liberals' candidate.

#### *Main Leaders*

Pedro José Arteta and Alfonso Mora Veintimilla.

#### *Press*

Dailies: *El Telégrafo* (circulation: 12,000) and *El Universo* (50,000), published in Guayaquil; *El Comercio* (45,000) in Quito. One monthly journal, *Vistazo* (40,000), Radical Liberal in tendency, published in Guayaquil; finally *La Calle* (2,000), an independent Socialist periodical, published in Quito.

#### *Velasquism (1933-61)*

The great tradition of caudillism lives on in Ecuador in the form of Velasquism. Before it became a party, as late as 1952, Velasquism was a movement the principles, aims and ideology of which were embodied by one man: José María Velasco Ibarra. However, both in the composition of its political following and the means it employs to gain power, Velasquism goes well beyond the normal bounds of personalism; nor is it precisely identical to the type of caudillism represented by José María Urbina or by Eloy Afroy in the nineteenth century. On the political level it is an expression of the appearance in Ecuadorian society of new political forces resistant to integration in the traditional parties, and on a sociological level Velasquism bears witness to the impact which a charismatic leader can make on a country where there has always been a strong tendency for power to become personalized. As in the case of Vargas's Brazil or Perón's Argentina, the programme and organization of the new mass party ('Getulismo', 'Peronismo', 'Velasquismo') should be considered rather as a function of the series of alliances entered into by the party leader in order to gain power than from the point of view of the actual aims of the party or its frequently ambiguous and contradictory electoral platform.



*Tendencies and Methods*

Velasquism first appeared as a political movement in 1933. Between 1933 and 1960 it brought José María Velasco Ibarra to power four times. Velasquism has oscillated between the right and left: it started off as a Conservative movement in 1933, but in 1944 called itself Liberal Socialist. In 1952 and 1960, however, it presented itself in its true colours, simply calling itself *Movimiento Nacional Velasquista*. But in any case Velasquism always enjoyed a current of popularity quite independent of allegiances to other groups, regardless of the vagaries of its own political line. When the Velasquist movement did not support the candidature of Velasco himself (in 1952 it supported Camilo Ponce) it seemed to lose strength and even tended to melt into the other parties. The first condition for the existence of Velasquism is therefore the candidature of Velasco in person.

The methods which he used to obtain power also varied; in 1933, 1952 and 1960 he got in after free elections. (It should be noted that with the exception of the 1948 elections, which brought to power the independent liberal candidate Galo Plaza, the election of Velasco Ibarra has coincided with the only periods of democracy in the political life of the country.) Although Velasco won power three times by election, this was not the only means employed by Velasquism to get itself in: it also exerted pressure on the two Houses to declare the presidency vacant (the method used in 1933 against Juan de Dios Martínez Mera), or obtained *a posteriori* recognition of a coup d'état by a constituent assembly (1944). Velasco for his part, was unable to complete his term of office during any of his periods in power except one (1952-6); he was overthrown by the Army on three occasions, in 1935, 1947 and 1961, although that same Army once brought him to power, in 1944.

*Ideology*

*Opposition to the Parties.* By rejecting other political parties as valueless and unworthy of consideration, Velasco Ibarra endeavoured to create a mass movement on the margin of the traditional parties. How is his own popularity to be accounted for? It is in no small part due to the reaction of the 'people' to the obsolescence of the other parties' programmes:

On 1 June (1952), the people of Ecuador voted against those organizations that call themselves political parties. In recent years, there have unfortunately been no political parties in Ecuador. When national morale weakens, political parties disappear. There can be no political party without a doctrine and without mass support to back it up.<sup>4</sup>

... Ideally, political parties like to be small committees of individuals calling themselves socialists, liberals or conservatives, with no contact with the people, no contact with the nation, having absolutely no communion with the collective consciousness. All this calls itself 'avant-garde political ideas' and in the name of all this I am forbidden to return to my country and govern with the help of the people.<sup>5</sup>

*Nationalism.* First of all, Velasco's intransigent position on the problem of Ecuador's frontier with Peru should be emphasized. In 1933, he accused Martínez Mera of weakness in foreign policy, which provoked the latter's fall. In 1944 President del Río was brought down by exploitation of the defeats suffered in the war against Peru (the province of del Oro was occupied by Peruvian troops in 1941) and of the

4. Velasco's speech on assuming the presidency, 1 September 1952.

5. A speech made on 2 March 1952 to a welcoming demonstration in Guayaquil.



general discontent aroused by the Treaty of Rio de Janeiro (a treaty 'de paz, amistad y límites') between Peru and Ecuador. On this nationalist platform Velasco constructed the Democratic Alliance, which included Liberals, Conservatives, Communists and Socialists.

*Liberalism.* Although he opposed the Liberal Party and actually banned it, Velasco always laid claim to some degree of liberalism, in which he included a number of very general notions, mainly spirituality and respect for the individual. The notions of morality and democracy were often added.

Velasco's programme also contained other points, such as decentralization, greater autonomy for the provinces, free and secular education, and included periodic attacks against the 'liberal and conservative oligarchy' and against imperialism. Velasquism constantly professed its anti-Communism in the name of Christianity and individualism; it defended private property and was favourable to foreign investment.

#### *Velasquism and the Other Parties*

In 1933 Velasco won the support of the Conservatives, since he first appeared on the scene as one of the disciples of Neptali Bonifaz, a Conservative *caudillo*. In 1944 the Conservatives joined the Democratic Alliance, which in the course of that year organized an uprising to counter the possibility of electoral fraud, and a constituent assembly set up in 1946 was dominated by that party. A new Constitution was adopted (the sixteenth), and Velasco was elected President of the Republic. In 1952 and 1960 the Conservatives presented their own candidate in competition with the Velasquists (who by then campaigned under their own party label).

The Liberals, who allied themselves with the Velasquists in 1944 to overthrow Carlos Arroyo del Río, joined forces

with the Socialists and Independents in 1956 and 1960 (Frente Democrático Nacional) to oppose them.

The Communists joined forces with the Velasquists in 1940, 1944, 1948, 1952 and 1960. They opposed them whenever Velasquism in power moved towards authoritarianism with no other object than to preserve its power. As a result, the anti-Velasquist opposition in 1961 included socialist and communist elements, in particular the *Central de Trabajadores del Guayas*, the *Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios del Ecuador*, intellectuals and part of the press.

#### *Electoral Support*

Velasquism, which is able to call upon a mass electoral support outside the framework of the traditional parties and their electoral clientele, is perhaps partly the product of the growth in the country's population, illustrated by the increase in the Ecuadorian electorate between 1875 and 1960. In 1875 the electorate totalled about 45,000; by 1933 (when Velasco Ibarra won his first victory at the polls) it had risen to 62,000, and in 1960 the total number of votes cast amounted to 800,000. In 1968, the number of registered electors was 1,178,613. Voting is compulsory for those over 18 and literate.

The social composition of Velasquism is varied and heterogeneous. The first to support Velasco Ibarra's candidature and programme were the so-called *compactados* (a kind of mercenary in the pay of local *caudillos*) from the Andean region (Quito), half-castes and Indians who supported the Conservative leader Bonifaz. The Liberals, for their part, called this social group the *chusma* (the rabble), an expression which indicates both the humble origins of Velasco's first supporters, and the prejudices or lack of understanding on the part of the Liberal elite in the face of new social phenomena in the Ecuador of that time. Velasquism also seems to



have won the support of the middle class, seduced either by the nationalism or the liberalism professed by the Leader. The third group of supporters consisted basically of the population of the town of Guayaquil, the country's commercial centre; this fact is of some importance, since of the 249,000 electors registered in the province of Guayaquil in 1962, 222,000 were on the urban electoral list. The concentration of unskilled labourers and dockers, a middle class formed primarily of merchants and members of the liberal professions, and a rural proletariat organized in trade unions (especially on the banana plantations) made Guayaquil an electoral region highly receptive to the Velasquist ideology. It should be emphasized, however, that these same sectors may contribute to the success of other political currents such as the Unión Popular Republicana (UPR) of Carlos Guevara Moreno that are just as far removed from the Liberal-Conservative axis as Velasquism. In general terms, the UPR and Velasquist electorate of the town of Guayaquil stands confronting the much more conservative electorate of the sierra.

#### *Electoral Results*

In 1933, the Velasquists won 60 per cent of the total vote. In 1952, Velasco Ibarra won 153,934 votes (out of a total of 352,000 electors), or almost 45 per cent of the votes, seven seats in the Senate and twenty-one in the Chamber of Deputies. In 1960, the number of votes had risen again: 323,348 votes out of almost 800,000 registered electors, or more than 41 per cent of the total vote. After these elections, the composition of the two Houses was as follows: in the Senate, eighteen Velasquists as against seventeen members of opposition parties (Conservatives, Democratic Front, Independents), and in the lower house thirty-two Velasquists out of a total of seventy-three deputies.

#### *Velasquism in 1960-61*

Whereas the movement had both a conservative and a liberal tendency during the 1935-45 period, between 1950 and 1956 it was heavily influenced by Argentine 'justicialism' (although Velasco publicly rejected any identification between his own ideas and those of Perón). What is certain is that in May 1952 Galo Plaza's government expelled the Argentine Ambassador, César Salvador Mazzetti, who made no secret of his sympathies and activities on behalf of Velasco.

However, by 1960, when Velasco returned to power, the focal point in foreign affairs was the Cuban question, not the Peronist question. Various domestic problems had arisen, moreover. There was agitation among the students, the Popular Republican Union was enjoying increasing popularity with the poorer sections of the electorate (at the expense of Velasquism), a number of militant anti-Communist groups had appeared, the working class was hostile, and finally the Army used its power to act as ultimate arbiter. Velasco's fall was due to this combination of international and national pressures.

In foreign affairs, Velasco supported his Foreign Secretary, Chiriboga Villagómez, in 1960 in the adoption of a kind of neutralist position, the famous 'Third Course'. When the leaders of a new movement called the Anti-Communist Front for National Defence accused him of cowardice and compromise with the extreme left and the USSR, Velasco replied, 'Bananas have no ideology.' In his opinion, Ecuador needed to find new markets, and with this in mind Carlos Julio Arosemena, Vice-President of the Republic, paid a visit to the Soviet Union. There was an instant reaction: a Christian militia announced its readiness to 'die sword in hand', the Radical Liberal Party went over to the opposition, and a number of terrorist outrages were carried out against Velasco.



in November 1961. The left wing, on the other hand, was not satisfied with the government's neutralist policy; on his return to Ecuador, Carlos Julio Arosemena seemed to have decided on a more left-wing policy, but still did not manage to win the confidence of the Confederation of Ecuadorian Workers and the Ecuadorian University Student Federation, both of which departed to swell the ranks of the opposition. Finally, the Army intervened, on 7 November 1961, to halt the regime's growing tendency to authoritarianism (a major scandal was caused by an attempt on the life of a strongly anti-Velasquist journalist). Following this coup d'état, Arosemena automatically succeeded to the presidency.<sup>6</sup>

Velasquismo has proved a political force capable of bringing its leader to power on several occasions, but incapable of keeping him there. The variety of its social composition, and the absence of any definite programme, have enabled it to assume a variety of political attitudes: Liberal, Conservative, Social-Christian, justicialist, and finally moderate left. It remains to be seen which way the mass Velasquist electorate will jump when its leader disappears. Because of its nationalist sympathies, and its founder and guide's penchant for audacious and combative oratory, it seems likely that if Velasquism does not disintegrate of its own accord its supporters will join a group with authoritarian tendencies, whether of the left or of the right.

#### *Biographical Note*

José María Velasco Ibarra was born in Quito on 19 November 1893. He studied law and philosophy in Paris, at the Sorbonne. He started his political career as a member of the Quito council, and then of the Consultative Council of the

6. He should not be confused with a subsequent President, Otto Arosemena Gómez. The Arosemena family has provided three Presidents of Ecuador, not one of whom was elected by the people.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He was elected deputy for the province of Pichincha in 1932, taking his seat as an independent of Catholic and conservative views. He was elected Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies in 1933. He became President of the Republic in 1934, from which post he was deposed in 1935. After a period in exile in Colombia, he travelled around Latin America and returned to Ecuador in 1944 when the Democratic Alliance, which he had founded from exile, came to power. In 1946 he was elected President by a Constituent Assembly, and overthrown shortly afterwards by a military coup, inspired on this occasion by the left. Velasco returned to power in 1952, this time following a General Election, and again in 1961. He was elected again in 1968, and deposed in 1972.

#### *Concentración de Fuerzas Populares (CFP)*

The Concentration of Popular Forces resembles Velasquism in several respects: most of its votes are concentrated in the coastal region, and it is led by a charismatic leader; it is able to make alliances with either the right or the left, either with the object of plotting insurrection or for electoral ends. It is a kind of Ecuadorian version of the APRA.

In 1944, the founder and leader of this party, Carlos Guevara Moreno, nicknamed 'the people's captain', was secretary to the central administration and then Minister of Home Affairs in Velasco Ibarra's Cabinet. Although he called himself a Marxist and probably fought in the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, he banned the Ecuadorian Socialist and Communist parties. In 1946 he founded the Unión Popular Republicana, which in 1948 became the Concentración de Fuerzas Populares. He vilified the leaders of Ecuadorian Marxist Socialism, calling them 'old dodderers'.



*Party Following*

The CFP is strongly represented in Guayaquil: the *montuvios* and the mass of the dock workers provide its most loyal support.

*Areas of Support*

Like the Velasquists, the CFP is strongly entrenched in the working-class areas of the coast (especially in the Confederación de Trabajadores del Guayas). Its influence even extends to some of the coastal military garrisons.

*Leaders*

These include Carlos Guevara Moreno, the party's founder; Germán Alarcón, José Hanna-Musse, Assad Bucaram (mayor of Guayaquil in 1967) and Rafael Coello Serrano, a dissident from the PCE. Intellectuals and artists who support the CFP, especially in the coastal region, should also be included in this group: Agustín Vera Loo, Jorge Icaza, Hugo Maldonado Dueñas, Alfonso Zambrano Orejuela, Elías Gallegos, and others.

*Electoral Results*

In 1960, the CFP candidate for the presidency of the Republic, Antonio Parra, won 150,000 votes, and the CFP won two seats in Parliament. At this time, the movement was also called *Movimiento de la Segunda Independencia* and included the Communists and some Socialist groups; Antonio Parra was at that time rector of the University of Guayaquil, Minister of Education and Ecuadorian delegate to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

*Ideology*

The party tends towards authoritarianism; it opposes the oligarchy and imperialism, i.e. excessive power for the ruling class in the political and economic fields. It is also opposed to foreign investment, especially from North America. In 1950-54, the CFP proclaimed its sympathy for Perón. It has also been attracted to Castroism, which it regarded as a form of 'Creole Socialism'.

*Partido Socialista*

Although it represents the left in the spectrum of Ecuadorian political parties, the Socialist Party has always had close connections with the Liberal Party. A number of factors exist which help to explain both this bond and the birth of the party.

The Socialist Party was set up in 1925, just at the time when the Liberal Party was adopting a programme based on neo-Marxist principles. The working-class nucleus of the province of Guayas (the first in Ecuador to found a trade union), and intellectuals and university students provided the Socialist Party's early support, and these same sectors were the ones on which the new liberalism also relied. This was the first reason for this centre-left alliance; moreover, after 1931, both the Liberals and the Socialists were opposed to Velasquism (having in 1925 already united to support a left-wing military coup).

The first groups to call themselves Socialist appeared in Pichincha, Loja (where they soon went over to the Communists), Azuay and Manabí. In 1924, a Social Democratic Party with no very clearly defined programme was created in Riobamba, and this party was to provide leading personalities



of both the Socialist and the Communist parties. The working class in the province of Guayas provided the toughest and most militant Socialist leaders.

Both the Soviet and the Mexican revolutions had a marked impact on Socialism: in 1925, a Society of the Friends of Lenin was founded, and the Mexican ambassador, Rafael Ramos Pedraza, exercised considerable influence over the party's intellectuals.

The Ecuadorian Socialist Party's affiliation to the Third International coincided with a period of internal crisis between the leaders and the rank and file, and also with the appearance of Velasquism. As in most Latin American countries, a minority faction in the party broke away to form the Communist Party. Despite its hopes of representing the whole of the new working class and the emergent middle class, the Socialist Party's influence was soon limited to intellectuals, because of the rigidity of its party programme, which was almost entirely borrowed from European Socialist Parties. To combat the resurgence of conservative caudillism between 1931 and 1961, the Socialists united with the progressive Liberals, and acted in alliance with them in Parliament.

The Socialist Party never managed to become a mass party. It was limited to a few sectors of the working class, to intellectuals and to students; it borrowed slogans from the Communists with the object of attracting the masses; nevertheless, it remained impotent in the face of Velasquist demagogy. Moreover the Socialists had little understanding for the new needs of the social groups that had recently emerged in Ecuador, who oscillated between political inertia and bloody insurrection, those of the new sectors of the middle class associated with petty commerce, or those of the marginal sectors of the population (the unemployed, casual labourers, etc.). Nor did the party's ruling elite have any contacts with these new groups. The Socialist Party therefore became a

party of the intellectual sector of the Ecuadorian middle class. As a result, following the crisis in the traditional parties in 1964 and the overthrow of Velasquism by a military coup, the Socialists suffered an internal crisis of their own which resulted in a split. Two distinct wings emerged within the party, with different nomenclatures: The Ecuadorian Socialist Party (the moderate wing) and the Revolutionary Socialist Party (hard-line); one further group may be mentioned in this context, the Unified Socialist Party.

#### *The Moderate 'Democratic' Line of the Ecuadorian Socialist Party*

This group includes the older party officials and keeps to the traditional line of collaboration with the Liberals. The object of this collaboration was to secure for the party its legal reintegration in the democratic, parliamentary and party system from the military junta, or any other authoritarian regime.

This attitude reflects the Socialist Party's traditional line. In 1933, in conjunction with the Liberals, the Socialists put up against Velasco a candidate who was soundly beaten, winning only 11,500 votes out of 62,000. In 1948, again supported by the Liberals, they opposed Galo Plaza and suffered another defeat. In 1952, this time in alliance with the Communists and other groups in the Democratic Alliance, they supported Larrea Jijón: they only won 17,000 out of 340,000 votes and had five deputies returned to Parliament. In 1956, again in alliance with the Liberals in the Frente Democrático Nacional (FDN), the Socialists put forward their own presidential candidate, Raúl Clemente Huerta, who won only 172,974 out of 600,000 votes. In 1960 the Front supported Galo Plaza's candidature, and he only managed to come third, after Velasco and Gonzalo Cordero Crespo (Conserva-



tive), with 146,000 votes as against 323,000 and 150,000 respectively.

The internal crisis in the party was unavoidable, although the party obtained a few seats in Parliament in 1960, thanks to the FDN, was fairly strongly represented in the Workers' Federation in the province of Guayas, and supported by a large number of intellectuals. In 1954 Guillermo Jaramillo Larrea was elected General Secretary at the 26th Party Congress. In order to avoid a schism, the party then defined itself as the centre of an anti-Conservative group, since the disagreements in the party were over the continuance of the alliance with the Liberals. However, after 1960 the university agitation against Velasco, in the first instance, and subsequently in favour of Arosemena Monroy (1961) and the military junta, brought out the divisions between the two wings of the Socialist Party even more clearly. The hostility between these two groups came out into the open in September 1964, at the time of the party's twentieth congress.

The main leaders of the moderate line are Francisco Leoro and Clímaco Bastidas.

#### *The Pro-Castro Hard Line in the Ecuadorian Socialist Party*

In the 1960 elections part of the Socialist Party, led by Antonio Parra and Benjamín Carrión, decided to ally itself with the CFP and the Communists to put forward Antonio Parra's candidature for the presidency, forming the self-styled Second Independence Movement; this movement was largely controlled and influenced by the CFP and the dissident socialists.

However, this dissident group still only indicated its split from the parent party on the electoral level. After the 1961 military coup, carried out against Carlos Julio Arosemena, and also as a consequence of the agitation against the junta led by the Federación Estudiantil Universitaria Equatoriana

and the growing influence of Castroism among intellectuals, the left-wing socialists proposed an action programme which was rejected by the Party's 30th Congress. From that moment, the minority hard-line socialists came into existence as a separate entity.

The main leaders of the hard-line are Telmo Hidalgo, Rafael Villalva and Neptali Zuñiga.

The main Socialist newspaper is *La Tierra*, a left-wing Socialist weekly.

#### *Partido Comunista*

This party has the same origins as the Socialist Party: it was also born out of the crisis of the Liberal Party in its early days, plus various other influences, such as the progressive military coup of 1925, the Russian revolution of 1917, and the Mexican revolution. It also finds its support among the same sectors of the population: part of the working class, intellectuals, and students.

The internal struggle between moderates and extremists resulted in the formation, in 1925, of a Socialist Party and a Communist Party. As in other Latin American countries, the existence of the Socialist Party prevented the Communist faction, affiliated to the Third International, from setting up popular fronts. The CP's internationalism and its extremism (because the Socialists were allied with the Liberals, the Party represented the extreme left) resulted in continual persecution and repeated bans.

In contrast to the Socialist Party, the Ecuadorian Communist Party did not always oppose military coups or the rise of Velasquism. They even found themselves occasionally in alliance with the Conservatives against centrist coalitions, for example in the Democratic Alliance, which



triumphed over President Arroyo del Río in 1944, in the leftist coup of 1947, and in the 1952 and 1960 elections.

Like all the Latin American Communist Parties, the Ecuadorian Party proved highly sensitive to the effects of the Cuban revolution and to the Sino-Soviet dispute. After 1952 it joined forces with the CFP, an authoritarian grouping with a political following used to Velasquism and with a broader electoral base than the CP itself. At the moment the (now legal) CP is endeavouring to join up with the various Socialist Parties and the National Arosemenista Movement (led by C. Arosemena Monroy) in the Front of the Popular Left (FRIP).

#### *Party Organization and Programme*

Although the Ecuadorian CP's programme contains the basic traditional principles of all Communist parties (dictatorship of the proletariat, national liberation from imperialism), it is still fairly sensitive to national problems. For example, it demands land reform, the diversification of agriculture and the re-establishment of Ecuador's natural frontiers in Amazonia. On this latter point, the Ecuadorian CP supports the traditional claims put forward by the country against the injustice of the Treaty of Rio (1941) between Ecuador and Peru, laying down the frontiers. Since the United States happens to be one of the three guarantors of this treaty, the Communist Party has taken the opportunity to associate its nationalist demands with those of anti-imperialism. It is therefore violently 'irredentist'.

Because of its well-known links with Velasquism, the CP has played the role of something of an *éminence grise* in Ecuadorian politics. Some of its leaders have held major posts in the administration, and from this position of strength have attempted to put into practice an agricultural, financial or foreign policy in keeping with their political principles (these

indirect links with the ruling power have rarely lasted for any length of time, because such Communist ministers were soon denounced by anti-Communist elements, who succeeded in getting them removed).

#### *Areas of Support*

On the coast: workers affiliated to the Northern Federation of Agricultural Workers, and to the Guayas Confederation of Labour.

In the sierra: urban areas, and in particular the students and intellectuals in the Ecuadorian Federation of University Students. In the countryside, the Communists are supported by the Ecuadorian Indian Federation.

#### *Main Leaders*

The CP has been led since its foundation by Pedro A. Saad, who is still its leading personality. His leading colleagues include Enrique Gil, Luis Castro Villamar (workers' leader on the coast), Oswaldo Esteves, Gustavo Estrella, S. Manuel Agustín Aguirre.

1967

#### *Subsequent Developments*

A four-man military junta had ruled from 1963 to 1966, and in that year the junta asked the Congress to elect an interim civilian President to prepare for elections to be held in June 1968. The choice of the Congress fell on Dr Otto Arosemena Gómez, who was supported by the Conservative Party.



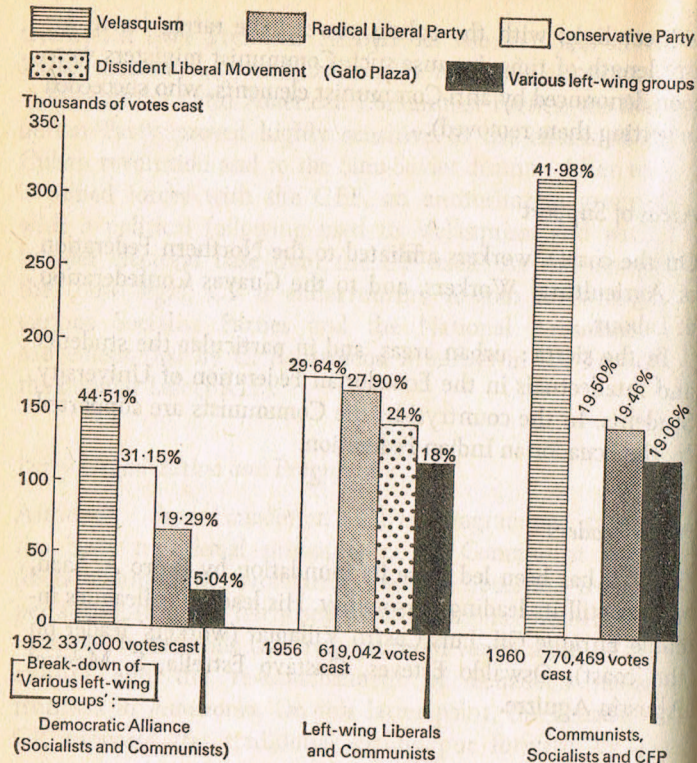


Figure 14. Votes Cast for the Various Parties in the Presidential Elections of 1952, 1956 and 1960

The results of the elections held on 2 June 1968 were as follows:

- 1 José María Velasco Ibarra (aged 75) 274,782
- 2 Andres Fernandez Cordova Nieto (aged 76) supported by the Liberal Party and the CFP 259,508
- 3 Camilo Ponce Enríquez (aged 56) supported by the Social Christians and the Conservative Party, business circles and most of the army 251,628

- 4 Jorge Crespo Toral, supported by ARNE 28,000
- 5 Elias Gallegos Anda, supported by the Communist Party and other leftist groups 13,000

In his inaugural address in 1968, Velasco called for support for the Pope's views on birth control, banned the use of miniskirts and make-up by female employees of the government, and forbade all government employees to smoke while at work.

Velasco had no majority in Congress and was forced to rule through a coalition. The large conservative element in Congress was hostile to Velasco's taxation measures, and when he tried to force them through by decree, the Supreme Court declared this to be illegal. In June 1970, Velasco wanted to resign, but after being urged by the army not to do so, he seized supreme power, closed the Congress and sent troops into the university.

Elections were scheduled for June 1972, but on 16 February 1972 Velasco was once more deposed by the army, the new President being General Guillermo Rodriguez Lara. It appears that sections of the army were concerned about the possible victory in June of Asaad Bucaram and the CFP, and had urged Velasco to remain in power for another two years. Velasco refused, and was overthrown.

February 1972