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## The Chilean Socialist Party: Prolegomena to its Ideology and Organization

by BENNY POLLACK

### *Introduction*

It is common knowledge that, prior to the military coup of 1973, Chile was the only Latin American country to have strong workers' political parties of the European type.<sup>1</sup> Many reasons have been given for this phenomenon, but it is clear that Chile has been the only country in Latin-America to allow the development of Marxist parties with strong appeal and a strong following, within the framework of what could be called liberal, democratic processes. Up to 1970, the electoral force of the Socialist and Communist Parties in Chile oscillated between 20 and 30 per cent of the total national electorate.<sup>2</sup> This rose to more than 40 per cent during 1971.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, the Socialist and Communist Parties have controlled the main trade union organizations in Chile during this century, have also had a strong following within the universities, a notable parliamentary representation, and were even able to gain the last democratic elections held in 1970, bringing the then Senator Salvador Allende to the Presidency. This gave them, for the first time in Chilean history, the control of the executive power. Within this unusual situation, the case of the Socialist Party itself is even more remarkable, for the following reasons. First, the Chilean Socialist Party had a development of its own, completely independent of the development of the Communist Party. The existence of a strong Marxist party other than the Communist, which has been able to elicit substantial support from the electorate and with a significant membership within the ranks of the working class, is a unique fact in Latin American political history, and this by itself makes the Chilean Socialists interesting enough as a subject for study and research.

<sup>1</sup> Ernst Halperin, in *Proletarian class parties in Europe and Latin-America: A Comparison* (MIT, 1967), makes a strong argument of this issue.

<sup>2</sup> Official statistics of the *Dirección Nacional del Registro Electoral*, Santiago, Chile.

<sup>3</sup> If the percentage obtained that year by the centre-left Radical Party, which was part of the governmental Popular Unity coalition, is added, the figure amounts to more than 50%.

Secondly, and with only a few exceptions, the Chilean Socialist Party has sustained a continued policy of alliances with the Communist Party. This trend has been, of course, unique to Chile in Latin America, and only in Italy and France can some similar features be noted.

Thirdly, it is interesting to study the rather special character of the Chilean Socialists' self-declared Marxism. Even though they always firmly declared their Marxism, their interpretation of it has been clearly different from that of the Communists.

This is an issue which they have been particularly interested in stressing, and it can be summed up in the assertion that Marxism is for them a practical orientation, not a dogma.<sup>4</sup> This concept has led the Chilean Socialists to adopt a nationalist approach to the whole of the political situation in Chile, Latin America and the world, in order to look for socialist solutions within the specific context of Chile and Latin America,<sup>5</sup> as against the more internationalist approach of the Communists. There has been, in fact, a consistent attempt on the part of the Socialists to differentiate themselves from the Communist Party, both in tactics and ideology, even though the final strategy to be implemented, the model of socialism which would finally be established in Chilean society, remained rather ill-defined.

Fourthly, the Socialist Party has been so far almost the only Marxist movement which achieved control of the executive power through democratic, electoral processes (together with the Chilean Communist and Radical Parties), a fact that is in contradiction with the recognized extreme leftist position of the party.<sup>6</sup> It is generally acknowledged that the Chilean Socialist Party has almost always been to the left of the Communists on most internal political and social issues, and it has consistently sustained the idea of the inevitability of violent upheaval to overthrow Chilean legal traditions and the *status quo*. This, however, has not restrained the Socialists from fully participating in Chilean democratic processes.

Furthermore, the Socialist Party was always far from following the classic Leninist model on organization and structure, having a certain flexibility and freedom which differentiated it from the rigidity, both ideological and organizational, of the so-called Leninist parties, namely: (1) a strong party apparatus with full-time paid officials; (2) a strict discipline; (3) a clear concentration of power in the highest party echelons as a consequence of power delegated from the membership to the leadership (demo-

<sup>4</sup> From the *Manifiesto Socialista* (first concrete available document on the foundation of the party); issued in 1934, the concept has been repeated, if not in form, at least in substance.

<sup>5</sup> Again, this idea has been present in almost every socialist document available since the *Manifiesto Socialista*.

<sup>6</sup> Cheddi Jagan's accession to power in 1953, in Guyana, had similar features.

cratic centralism); and (4) an internal secrecy which is rarely broken and which, if it is, entails firm and sometimes drastic punishment.

### Origins

By the end of the 1920s, the political, economic and social situation of Chile could be summarized as follows:

1. The oligarchic nucleus was still strong, but had been weakened by the effects of the nitrate crisis, their power being centred in the nitrate economy.
2. The more feeble faction of the oligarchy shifted their interest from nitrate-linked activities to industrial activities which would not need a radical broadening of the market.
3. Artisan industry was in a state of complete bankruptcy.
4. The State apparatus had gained strength and importance.
5. The vast increase of service activities had created a significant new social force which increased the importance of the middle class and the emerging working class. The incapacity of the system to solve the crisis successfully was already pushing important emerging social groups linked to the new activities to co-operate and work out alliances with working and middle-class groups.<sup>7</sup>

At the end of the Government of Carlos Ibáñez (1927–31), the area of State intervention had greatly expanded. Expansion of fiscal investment in public works and the increase of bureaucracy were the means through which the expansion of the State was being consolidated. However, the financial needs of the Government were so great, and the impact of the world depression and of the nitrate crisis so enormous that the Ibáñez regime was precarious. Falling exports, together with inflation, the chronic budget deficits and the ever increasing foreign debt dragged the Government into inevitable failure.

Juan Esteban Montero followed Ibáñez (1931–2), but the situation was

<sup>7</sup> The following categories are here adopted:

*working class*: all manual workers (industrial workers, peasants, wage-paid technicians, mainly).

*middle class*: what in general Marxists call the 'petty bourgeoisie' (employees, small entrepreneurs, small farmers, professionals and intellectuals, mainly).

*bourgeoisie*: big entrepreneurs and landowners, mainly, employing a wage-paid labour force of more than 50 people.

*oligarchy*: a socio-economic group monopolizing the use of political power, no matter whether it is industrial-oriented, agrarian-oriented, or both.

*dominant class or sector*: those socio-economic groups which own the main means of production in a given society, and whose political, moral, religious and cultural aims normally prevail in that society.

already too serious to enable any democratic government to achieve any measure of success. The world crisis, affecting especially Wall Street, forced the American bankers to suspend all monetary help to Latin America. Montero's attempts to relieve the situation failed.<sup>8</sup> The Communist Party, in existence since 1922, remained only as a small group of workers and intellectuals with no following within the vast majority of the masses.<sup>9</sup> According to Julio César Jobet, the Communist Party was blinded with the sectarianism of the Third International and completely disregarded national realities. Its orientations, strongly internationalist, were theoretical and verbose, but with no real influence within the masses. Besides that, they divided themselves into two factions: one supporting Stalin and the other supporting Trotsky. This brought into the Chilean political arena a purely soviet matter.<sup>10</sup>

Hence, at the beginning of the 1930s there was no organization to represent and articulate the ever increasing working class interests. By then, the failure of Montero had precipitated another constitutional crisis, and on 4 June 1932 he was overthrown by a military coup led by Air Force Commodore Colonel Marmaduke Grove, and a civilian, Eugenio Matte, with the slogan *Pan, Techo y Abrigo para el Pueblo* (Bread, a roof and shelter for the people).

As the deteriorating internal situation in Chile was becoming more acute, the need for a representative working class party was being strongly felt. Between 1931 and 1932, a proliferation of leftist movements tried to fill that vacuum. The most important were *Nueva Acción Socialista* (NAP), *Acción Revolucionaria Socialista* (ARS), *Partido Socialista Marxista*, *Partido Socialista Unificado* y *Orden Socialista*, none of which had been able so far to gain a large popular following. However, unemployment was already severe, exports had diminished abruptly, inflation reached extremely high levels and foreign credits were exhausted.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Montero was elected President after Ibáñez fell, with 182,177 votes against 99,075 for Alessandri, 1,263 for the leftist Manuel Hidalgo, and 2,434 for the communist leader Elias Lafferte. See: *Las grandes luchas revolucionarias del proletariado chileno* (Editorial Marx-Lenin, Santiago, Chile, 1932) and Hernán Ramírez Necochea, *Orígenes y Fundación del Partido Comunista Chileno* (Austral, Santiago, Chile, 1962) *passim*.

The turbulent period 1933-41 is well analyzed by David R. Corkill, in 'The Chilean Socialist Party and the Popular Front, 1933-41', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 11 (1976) 261-73.

For a detailed account of the anti-democratic behaviour of Ibáñez and other personalities, see H. E. Bicheno, 'Anti-parliamentary themes in Chilean History: 1920-1970' in K. Medhurst, *Allende's Chile* (London, Hart-Davies, MacGibbon, 1972).

<sup>9</sup> It had been founded originally in 1912, under the name *Partido Obrero Socialista*, but joined the Third International in 1922.

<sup>10</sup> Julio César Jobet, *El Partido Socialista de Chile* (2 vols, Santiago, 1971), 1, 30-31.

<sup>11</sup> *Las grandes luchas revolucionarias del proletariado Chileno*, *op. cit.*, gives a dramatic

The Communist Party was weak and too committed to the external and alien struggle between Trotsky and Stalin.<sup>12</sup> Other leftist groups had failed to gain substantial support from middle and low strata social groups. With no strong working class representative party in the country, conditions were right for a new party of that kind to develop, and five small left-wing groups, with no real individual relevance in the Chilean political scene, decided to fuse in order to create a single, united organization. On 19 April 1933 *Acción Revolucionaria Socialista*, *Partido Socialista Marxista*, *Nueva Acción Pública*, *Orden Socialista* and *Partido Socialista Unificado* founded the *Partido Socialista de Chile* (Socialist Party of Chile). The immediate origins of the party can be traced to 4 June 1932, when Eugenio Matte Hurtado and Marmaduke Grove overthrew Juan Esteban Montero's oligarchic government. As Eugenio González said,

when the Socialist Party was founded, there was no party (traditional or otherwise), which could properly represent the economic and social interests of the working class. So, there existed objective conditions for the creation of a new party.

On the other hand, the Communist Party was affected by a rigidity in ideology and a world-wide strategy which led to dogmatism. These elements could not serve the interests of the proletariat. . . .<sup>13</sup>

This fact has even been recognized by Communist historian Hernán Ramírez, who stated that in the thirties Communist Party tactics were wrong in so far as they isolated the working class and consequently strengthened its enemies. He added that the line of the party was 'extreme-leftist', 'infantilist', and 'sectarian'.<sup>14</sup>

With the country deeply affected by a social, economic and political crisis, and a Communist Party which was both inefficient and ideologically divided, a new working class party would have a strong potential.

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account of the crisis affecting Chile's popular sectors in the 1930s. More than 50,000 miners were then at the point of being sacked. For interesting statistics on this subject see J. C. Jobet, *El Partido Socialista de Chile*, *op. cit.* 1, 35. See also Markos J. Mamalakis, *The Growth and Structure of the Chilean Economy, From Independence to Allende* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1976).

<sup>12</sup> In Jan. 1922 the *Partido Obrero Socialista* had ceased to exist, to give way to the Communist Party of Chile. It immediately affiliated itself to the Third International.

<sup>13</sup> Eugenio González Rojas, socialist Senator, speech in the Chilean Senate, cited by Alejandro Chelén, *Trayectoria del Socialismo* (Buenos Aires, 1957), p. 37.

<sup>14</sup> Hernán Ramírez Necochea, *Orígenes y fundación del Partido Comunista de Chile*, pp. 283-4. Socialist essayist Manuel Eduardo Hübner sustains a similar view (Manuel Eduardo Hübner, *Sobre el Comunismo*, internal mimeographed pamphlet, Santiago, 1942). The Socialists violently fought the Nazis from 1933 onwards, but the Communists joined in only after Germany's invasion of Poland and the USSR.

*Development*

The development of this new party, the Chilean Socialist Party, might be traced through three main stages: the stage of consolidation (1933–9); the stage of internal division and governmental responsibilities (1939–53), and the stage of ideology (1953 onwards).

## The Stage of Consolidation (1933–9)

The first period clearly corresponded to the need for accommodation of the party in the Chilean political arena. The party was then characterized by its firmly anti-fascist position, which was reflected in bloody street fighting with the *Movimiento Nacional-Socialista* (the Nazi movement) during the time when Communist Party policies were handicapped by the Molotov-Von Ribbentrop pact. Moreover, the party strongly supported the creation of the CTCH (*Confederación de Trabajadores de Chile*) and placed itself in a clear, unambiguous anti-oligarchic position. Pursuing its leftist programme, the party withdrew its own presidential candidate from the 1938 elections, Marmaduke Grove, in order to provide support for the Popular Front candidate, Radical Senator Pedro Aguirre Cerda.

In its first *Declaración de Principios*, the Socialist Party adopted a clear nationalist position on most internal and external issues.

We want to know Chilean reality – said Marmaduke Grove – and make a comprehensive analysis of the social and economic features which characterize it. We want to mobilize the Chilean people to get our second independence. We want to consider all the acceptable aspects of our traditions... my party is anti-imperialist and would like, first, to organize all Latin American working class people to fight against the agents of foreign penetration and exploitation, but we are not going to reproduce here an abject copy of the methods and procedures which have been applied to other countries.<sup>15</sup>

Latin-American Nationalism was a most important feature:

The Socialist Party will fight for the economic and political unity of all Latin American peoples. We want thus to reach a Federation of Socialist Republics of this Continent and an anti-imperialist economy.<sup>16</sup>

Marxism was recognized as a method for the interpretation of reality and class struggle as the expression of antagonistic class interests: 'One class has appropriated for itself the means of production which are exploited to its own profit and the other class works, produces and it earns its living with a wage'.<sup>17</sup> But the acceptance of Marxism did not lead the Chilean

<sup>15</sup> Marmaduke Grove, Senate speech on 23 May 1934. Quoted by *El Mercurio*, 5 June 1934, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> *Declaración de Principios*, party document, 1933. This paragraph was inserted in the first known public document of the new party.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Socialists to adhere promptly to the Internationals of the moment. On the contrary, the first *Declaración de Principios* criticized all of them very firmly.

Besides the general issues of Nationalism and Marxism, some more specific themes were important in the Socialist ideology of the thirties: Proletarian Dictatorship as a necessary step in the building of a socialist society; the claim to represent 'manual and intellectual workers' against 'bourgeois interests'; the class struggle as inevitable in the Chilean situation, as a consequence of social injustices, political failure of the bourgeoisie and economic policies; anti-imperialism with particular reference to the United States; the claim of a 'natural proletarianization' of the middle strata, specially those of the *pequeña burguesía* (petty bourgeoisie), which included artisans, small merchants, public employees, teachers, small farmers, small industrialists and intellectuals of all sorts; the party aimed to represent the interests of these groups besides the interests of the proletarian sectors<sup>18</sup>; anti-capitalism; anti-communism; opposition to all 'internationals'.

Proletarian Dictatorship has been one of the principles most consistently sustained by the Chilean Socialists throughout the years. This aspect of Socialist ideology was clearly established in official documents and speeches of Socialist leaders right from the very beginning of the party as an organized entity. The first declaration of principles states:

during the process of total transformation of the system a workers' dictatorship is needed. Evolution to progress is not possible through the democratic system, because the dominant class is organized in armed civil corps and it has established its own dictatorship in order to keep workers in misery and ignorance. This, in turn, prevents the emancipation of workers.<sup>19</sup>

The assumption that the Socialist Party represents both workers and 'petit bourgeois' interests is rather explicit in party documents of the 1930s.<sup>20</sup> Economic depression, together with the chronic instability of the oligarchic

<sup>18</sup> This contention would be modified later on, when the party would stress its proletarian-oriented ideology and goals.

<sup>19</sup> First *Declaración de Principios*, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Specially relevant to this aspect of the Socialist Party's ideology are: *Acta de Deposition del señor Juan Esteban Montero* (mimeographed document, Santiago, Chile, June 1932); *Acta de la fundación del Partido Socialista* (mimeographed document, Santiago, Chile, April, 1933); *I Congreso General Ordinario* (resolutions), (internal document, Santiago, Chile, 1933); *II Congreso General Ordinario* (resolutions), (internal document, Santiago, Chile, 1934); *III Congreso General Ordinario* (resolutions), (internal document, Santiago, Chile, 1936); *IV Congreso General Ordinario* (resolutions), (internal document, Santiago, Chile, 1937); *I Congreso General Extraordinario* (resolutions), (internal document, Santiago, Chile, 1937); *V Congreso General Ordinario* (resolutions), (internal document, Santiago, Chile, 1938).



regime, the mismanagement of the new social situation created by the development of new social strata, and the lack of articulation of the ever-increasing demands of the new groups led sectors of the middle classes depending on service activities to support parties on the left and centre-left, especially the Radicals and Socialists. The extreme conservatism then exhibited by the old Chilean dominant class enabled the anti-establishment parties to co-opt the allegiance of groups that otherwise could have been gained for the oligarchy, unlike the situation elsewhere in capitalist society where they have commonly supported the parties of the dominant class.<sup>21</sup> This trend culminated in 1938 with the election of Pedro Aguirre Cerda, a Radical Senator, as President, with the support of Socialists, Communists and Radicals, a repetition of the Popular Front phenomenon led by Léon Blum in France and a very similar one to the republican Spanish alliance system of the early 1930s.

Jobet says of the social composition of the party during the 1930s that there were 'nitrate, coal and copper miners; timber, industrial, transport and maritime workers; printers; public, municipal and private employees; small industrialists and farmers; artisans, teachers and technicians; professionals and intellectuals'.<sup>22</sup> But the real interest of the Socialists in representing middle class groups and articulating their demands politically is perhaps related to the social composition of their leadership during the 1930s, when 75 per cent of the top leaders (Central Committee level) were of petty bourgeois origin (intellectuals and professionals, mainly) while only 25 per cent were of working class origin (especially artisans, miners, and industrial workers).

It is evident that the new groups rallied to the Socialists rather than to the Communists, as a consequence of the 'rigidity', 'sectarianism', and 'infantilist extremism' attributed to the latter. The social classes which were closely linked to industrial and governmental activity, and, notably, to a rapidly expanding educational system, would not rely on a Communist

<sup>21</sup> Very illustrative in this respect are, among others: John Raynor, *The Middle Classes* (London, 1969); *La Clase Media* (in Latin America), special studies on several Latin-American countries, prepared by Theo Crevenna (Unión Pan-Americana, Washington, 1950); Herman Lebovics, *Social Conservatism and the Middle Classes in Germany (1914-1933)* (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1969).

<sup>22</sup> Unofficial party statistics put the following average type of membership during the 1930s: Working class (peasants, workers, miners) - 55%; Middle class (professionals, employees, small industrialists and farmers) - 45%. Official statistics are not available and the estimated percentages were given to the author by reliable old party leaders. The situation then looked different from the situation as it looked from 1940 on, when a distinct proletarianization of the party membership began to take place. Last statistics (official, 1973) put membership as follows: Working class - 75%; Middle class - 24%; Bourgeoisie - 1%. (Information given to the writer by Manuel Eduardo Hübner, Central Committee member in the 1930s).

Party which was not then prepared to recognize them as a special social group, different from the classical manual working class. One party leader of the 1930s told the writer that

The Communist Party was then viewed by middle class people as a group of fanatics, a sort of sect dedicated to the cult of the Soviet Union. They were so wrong, that they only reacted to Soviet policies and tried almost always to copy Soviet solutions in Chile. This led them to alienate middle class sectors from becoming members, as they were suspicious of that kind of behaviour. On the other hand they were not able, either, to gain significant support from working class people, because their foreign ideology was absolutely incomprehensible to them.<sup>23</sup>

The idea of class struggle was more present in the Socialist ideology of the 1930s than ever again afterwards. Perhaps the clearest definition of the concept, as then understood by the Socialists, is the one given by Jobet when he analysed the official documents issued by the leadership during the first ten years of the life of the party :

The actual stage of capitalist economic organisation divided Humanity into two classes, which are being more clearly defined every day: one class is the one which has appropriated for itself the means of production and exploits them to its own profit; the other class is the one which really works and has to produce in order to be able to make its living, receiving a wage. The working class needs to fight for its well-being while the class which owns the means of production tries to preserve its privileges. Thus the struggle between the two emerges. The Capitalist class is represented by the State, which is an entity for the oppression of one class by another. Once classes are eliminated the oppressive character of the State will also disappear. Then, it will perform as guide, arbiter and protector of society, only.<sup>24</sup>

Anti-imperialism has certainly been a permanent Socialist issue since the founding of the party, but what is most remarkable are the distinctive Latin American overtones of this position. During the 1930s the party stressed the need for a united Latin American continent in a much clearer way than this was stressed thereafter. Speeches, reports and declarations suggest that the strong anti-imperialist trend of Socialist ideology during the decade was not only to fight what was called 'North-American imperialism' but the position also had a strong *positive* content. This is reflected in the repeated conviction of the usefulness and necessity of a powerful, united supra-national organisation to build up a unique Latin American destiny. The *Federación de Repúblicas Socialistas del Continente* would also create the basis for an anti-imperialist regional economy which

<sup>23</sup> M. E. Hübner, *loc. cit.*

<sup>24</sup> Julio César Jobet, *op. cit.*, 1, 79.

would eventually compete with North-American expansionism and its political arm, imperialism.<sup>25</sup>

Very much linked to their anti-imperialism, the Socialists were, obviously enough, strongly anti-capitalist. The first declaration of principles stated that

the system of capitalist production based on the private property of land, of the means of production, of trade, of credit, and transport, should necessarily be replaced by an economic and social system in which that property be collective property. Socialized production is organized by previous rational plans, scientifically systematized, and always in accordance with the needs of the people.<sup>26</sup>

The concept, which definitively condemns capitalist systems as the means to organise social and political life, has remained untouched as a primary Socialist principle throughout the party's history. The party also continuously stressed the character of its anti-capitalism, which meant that it aimed to represent the interests of 'manual and intellectual workers' against 'bourgeois interests'.<sup>27</sup>

The distinctive anti-communism of the Chilean Socialists during the decade of the 1930s was strongly influenced by a ferocious nationalism.<sup>28</sup>

What happened was that the Communist Party was then fighting for a revolution which would establish a worker-peasants government, with a view to setting up the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. They were guided by the Soviet Revolution without worrying about the fact that Chilean conditions were quite different from those of Czarist Russia. They did not consider, either, the fact that in Russia a war was necessary to allow for the break-up of the old system and the incipient Democracy that was already being implemented.<sup>29</sup>

Thus the Socialist Party tried to put itself in a sort of independent third position, between what was considered as the 'corruption' of social-democracy and the 'sectarianism' of Communism. The circumstances before the Second World War deepened the differences with the Communists, because, while the Socialists adopted a clear anti-fascist and anti-nazi position from the beginning, the Communists in Chile and elsewhere were very much affected by the Soviet-German pact.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Declaración de Principios*, internal document, *op. cit.* This idea remained up to the late 1950s and early 1960s, but was overshadowed afterwards by the emergence of the Cuban revolution as a main ideological source in the Continent. Only in the 1930s was the concept of Latin Americanism so well developed and fought for.

<sup>26</sup> *Declaración de Principios*, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> This contention must be understood as including both working and middle classes, at least in the decade of the thirties.

<sup>28</sup> They publicly repudiated the Second International as 'conciliatory and reformist' and the Third International as 'sectarian'. <sup>29</sup> Alejandro Chelén Rojas, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>30</sup> The change of the Communist Party's position later on lessened the then tense relationships between the two parties in Chile.

The Socialist 'third position' led them to defend Mazzini's theories on the importance of Nationalism and to attack the Soviet Union's contentions to be 'the Motherhood of the proletariat'.<sup>31</sup>

This equidistant position was maintained by the Socialists throughout most of the 1930s and was only partially changed in 1938, once the Communists disengaged themselves from their previous stand on the Nazi issue and particularly when the Popular Front was formed in Chile, including both Communists and Socialists.

During the period of consolidation, the Socialist Party established a nation-wide organisation and developed a consistent policy in favour of democratic and progressive changes in Chile (see organigram 1). Its leaders suffered persecution under the governments of the decade, especially under Alessandri (1932-8), who deported party-founder Marmaduke Grove and other important leaders.

Until the Popular Front's alliance brought Senator Pedro Aguirre Cerda to the presidency in 1938, the party did not form part of any government. Neither did they intend to do so. On the contrary, and up to the end of the decade, the Socialists characterized themselves by strong opposition to the Conservative governments which were in office in the country throughout the 1930s.

The ascension to the Executive power of the new coalition formed by the middle class, centre-left Radical Party, the Communists and the Socialists gave the latter an opportunity to enter into governmental responsibilities.

Thus the first period of the Socialist Party's history was one of organization. The party remained united, concrete policies were consistent with its ideology and the internal organization became stronger. Already in 1938, the party had succeeded in spreading its working units (*núcleos*) throughout the country. The small group of disenchanted intellectuals and workers of the late 1920s had become a political party with real roots in Chilean society.

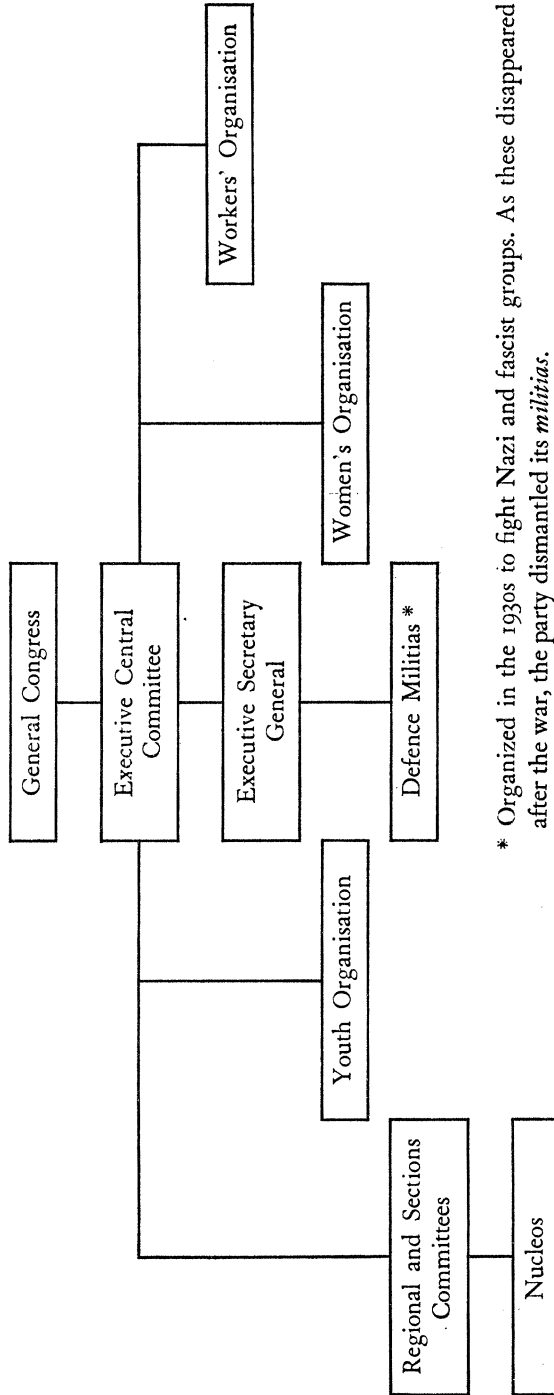
#### The Stage of Internal Division (1939-53)

The second period of Socialist history begins in 1939, with the party's association with the Popular Front Government, and ends in 1953, with the party's withdrawal from the Government of Carlos Ibáñez. During this period of its history, the party had the opportunity of participating in governmental tasks and, consequently, of discovering the temptations and risks of power sharing. Besides participating in government, the party suffered divisions which in one way or other affected its unity and strength.

<sup>31</sup> Jobet, *op. cit.*, 1, 95.

ORGANIGRAM I

*Socialist Party Structure in the 1930s*



\* Organized in the 1930s to fight Nazi and fascist groups. As these disappeared after the war, the party dismantled its *militias*.

For these reasons, this period could be considered as one of governmental collaboration and internal division.

Even though it actively participated in the creation, during Aguirre Cerda's administration, of the Chilean National Development Corporation (*Corporación de Fomento a la Producción*, CORFO), it was clear from the very beginning of Socialist participation in the Popular Front Government that the centre-left Radical Party had the political *hegemony* in the alliance. Communists and Socialists did, in fact, provide electoral support, and a number of party cadres occupied posts in the public administration and even ministries, but the ultimate policies were distinctly moderate. The political and social aims of the Radical Party, with a large middle class allegiance, moderately reformist and progressive, were primarily directed to produce industrial growth and a redistribution of the GNP through progressive taxes, state participation in the economy and protectionist policies. The more extreme stand of the two Marxist Parties of the coalition, which aimed at changing the type of power structure and the economic and social system then prevailing in Chile, was rapidly overcome by the Radicals' able manoeuvring.<sup>32</sup>

The participation of the Socialist Party in the Popular Front caused major internal dissensions and its internal structure suffered from various organizational setbacks.<sup>33</sup> During the first days of 1940, and after the tumultuous Sixth Ordinary Congress held in Santiago from 20 to 23 December, a group of five deputies decided to leave the party, accusing it of being 'corrupted by the appeals of a well-supplied bureaucracy, while the rank-and-file, honest member is still waiting for the implementation of true socialistic measures'.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> In 1937, two years before the accession to the government of the Popular Front alliance, Socialists, Communists and Radicals polled together 37.4% in the parliamentary elections of that year, while the Right (Liberals, Conservatives, Nationalists and others) polled 47.9%. In the first parliamentary elections held after the Popular Front was formed (1941), the Left obtained an impressive 56.9%, a fact which should have enabled the governmental coalition to move further and faster in its reforms. The Radical party's overall control of the administrative structure, a clever co-option policy on the part of the traditional Chilean oligarchy and the Right's own 36.9% in the 1941 elections combined to persuade the Socialists not to push their allies too much and to accept their middle-of-the-road, mildly socialistic approach to political and social reform. This trend was favoured by the stand on the part of the Communist International, which also aimed at supporting class alliances for rather mild social reforms. In Chile, these policies were aimed primarily to produce industrialization and a mild redistribution of GNP, but were deliberately aimed to leave untouched the agrarian structure and not to disturb the development of private ownership. The Socialist and to a certain extent Communist attempts also to produce reforms in those areas were decisively overcome by the Radicals, which relied on these issues upon unconditional support of the Right-wing Liberal and Conservative parties. See Hübner, *op. cit.* and Jobet, *op. cit.*, I, *passim*.

<sup>33</sup> Jobet, *op. cit.*, I, 53.

<sup>34</sup> César Godoy Urrutia, Natalio Berman, Oscar Waiss, Ernesto Herrera, Prudencia Morales

The first recorded division in the party's history was prompted, according to Chelén, by 'the policy of collaborationism with the Popular Front, aimed at suppressing the fighting impulses of the masses'.<sup>35</sup> This view is supported by the fact that the Popular Front's strategy was intended to provide mild reforms, without altering the basis of the existing social and political system. The strategy was obviously related to the world-wide strategy established by the Communist International for Popular Fronts elsewhere (especially the triumphant ones in Spain and France) and it was a rather difficult, if not impossible task for any single party to change that course of events.<sup>36</sup>

The critical attitude adopted by the non-conformists who left the party in 1940 came as a shock to the rank-and-file membership and prompted a new extraordinary Congress, in Curicó, in May 1940. As a result, due if not directly, at least indirectly to this event, the party left the Popular Front coalition and ran alone in the parliamentary elections of 1941, polling 17.9 per cent of the votes, a 3.2 per cent increase in comparison with the result of the 1937 elections, when the party had not yet entered the Popular Front.

The Curicó Congress marked what Jobet considers the starting point of Socialist decadence.

From then on the Socialist Party lost the support and the confidence of the masses and was caught by a rampant and ferocious bureaucratization. During at least five years, the party suffered one division after another and was near total disintegration.<sup>37</sup>

There were several reasons for this state of affairs. First, the party suffered from an administrative structure which did not always correspond to its needs. This in turn provoked a broad set of external relationships with the governmental administration, sometimes on an official basis, others on an unofficial basis (see organigrams 2 and 3 and analysis below). Second, the process of bureaucratization resulted in an excessive number of persons occupying all sorts of posts. These officials became frequently linked with governmental activities through patronage and contracts in which they provided services on a private basis. This process led to a significant

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and Vicente Pérez, *Porqué fundamos el Partido Socialista de Trabajadores* (mimeographed document, Santiago, Chile, 1940), p. 3.

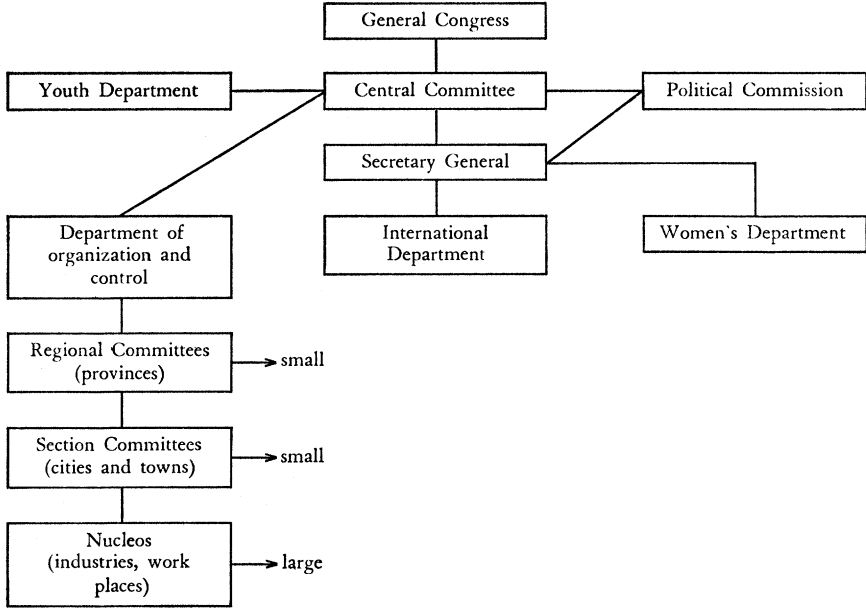
<sup>35</sup> Chelén Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

<sup>36</sup> The *Partido Socialista de Trabajadores* very soon became a full member of the Chilean Communist Party, a rather surprising end for a party that came into existence precisely as a critic of the Communist-oriented Popular Front policies.

<sup>37</sup> Jobet, *op. cit.*, 1, 54. In the 1945 parliamentary elections, the Socialist Party polled a poor 7.2% of the vote, nearly losing all Parliamentary representation.

ORGANIGRAM 2

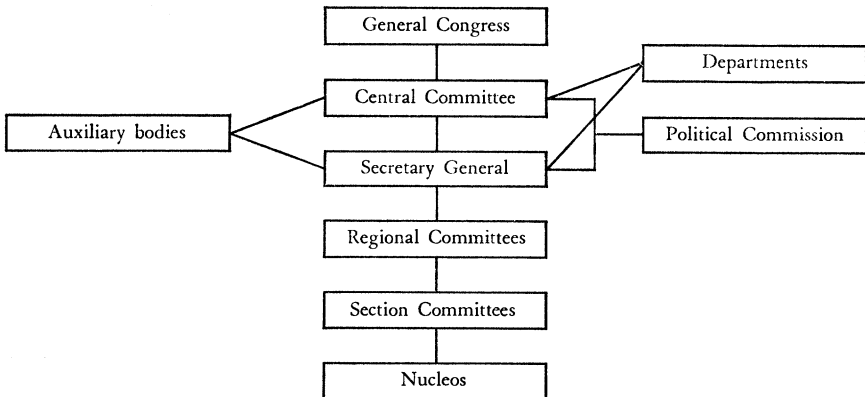
*Socialist Party Organization from 1940 to 1948 \**



\* Partido Socialista, *Estatutos y Estructura*, internal document, Santiago, 1940. Not an official organigram, but one drawn according to the party's description.

ORGANIGRAM 3

*Socialist Party Organization from 1948 to 1967 \**



\* Partido Socialista Popular, *Organigrama de Organización*, internal document, Santiago, 1948.



weakening of theoretical party positions on a variety of issues.<sup>38</sup> The line between what could be considered *legitimate* and what could not is a very thin one and, although there exists no evidence to suggest that a large number of people holding party posts were actually tempted to accept non-legal business transactions, there were individual cases of this kind.

In other words, an increased degree of bureaucratization plagued the party at all levels. Party leaders accepted public and private appointments of all categories. From the very moment that the SP entered the Popular Front Government in 1938, and even after December 1940, when the Popular Front alliance was broken, the SP continued to attract a considerable number of governmental and, to some extent, private business favours, since the Socialists continued to hold ministerial posts to the National Congress of 1946. The withdrawal of the party from the Popular Front had not, in fact, produced the anticipated withdrawal of socialist officials from government responsibilities, and morale fell among party members.

The organisation of the party facilitated the growth of internal friction within it. The organizational scheme adopted by the party in its Sixth Ordinary Congress, in 1940 (see organigram 2), established at the top a Central Committee of not more than twenty members, headed by a Secretary General, who in turn was supposed to work under the guidance of a Political Commission of five members. The relatively small size of both the Central Committee and the Political Commission could lead to wrong conclusions about the real power of this apparently highly centralized bureaucratic structure. In fact, the real power of the Central Committee and the Political Commission was rather small, as the whole set of internal relationships from the top down to the Regional and Section Committees and the *núcleos* was entirely the responsibility of the Department of Organization and Control, which in turn depended on the Central Committee as a body and not simply on the Secretary General. He, of course, was very much responsible to both the Central Committee and the Political Commission, but his duties did not include direct responsibility for handling internal party matters.

The Regional Committees were normally of twelve to fifteen people, the exact number depending on the actual size of each administrative unit (numbers of *Seccionales* (or sections) and geographical limits). The *seccionales* Committees varied in the number of their components, as these were units to be established in industries, geographical zones and even universities. The criterion for establishing Sectional Committees was one

<sup>38</sup> It was an accepted practice to perform duties as party officers, (i.e. Head of the Technical Department) and Governmental officials, (i.e. Under-Secretary of State). Such cases were common and led to conflict of interests.

of necessity. When a reasonable number of *núcleos* had proved difficult to manage, then a Section Committee was founded in order to control those *núcleos*, and these served as intermediaries between the *núcleos* and the Regional Committees. The *núcleos* were maintained as the basic working units of the party, as before. These were formed whenever six members of the party worked together in the same place. At least thirty *núcleos* were considered enough to set up a new *seccional* and at least eight *seccionales* were considered necessary to form a Regional Committee.

This type of organization enabled two developments in internal party relationships: the creation of *caciquista* relations between members of the Central Committee and the lower administrative structures, and the development of factional practices. As the Regional and Section Committees were not, in fact, directly linked to the Secretary General but to the Central Committee, individual members developed spheres of influence within the party. Certain members were strong in the apparatus of certain provincial party organizations while others were strong in others. This very much encouraged the creation and development of factions which had informal but real structures.<sup>39</sup>

Already in 1942, an internal party document was stating the uneasiness of the Secretary General at the 'repeated tendency of Central Committee members to use their hierarchies to build bases for their own, particular political power, with a blatant disregard for Marxist principles'.<sup>40</sup>

But if in internal matters the organization of the party showed handicaps, it was on external issues that its shortcomings proved to be even worse. The so-called 'mechanisms of control' which Carl Beck observed in the Czechoslovak Communist Party were very much the same in the Chilean Socialist Party, whenever the party held governmental responsibilities during this second period.<sup>41</sup> Beck says that these mechanisms take many forms. 'One effective method is that of dual office holdings...'. Another is the fact that 'each individual ministry is subject to various controls'. and a third mechanism consists of the existence of 'party organizations and checkpoints staffed by the party designed to supervise the operation of the ministry'.<sup>42</sup>

The Socialists in Chile clearly corresponded to that model, but

<sup>39</sup> Parliamentarians were in a special position to create factions; they travelled frequently to the provinces they represented, and had easy access to the higher party echelons.

<sup>40</sup> The Secretary General, 'On the use and abuse of Political power' (internal mimeographed document, Santiago, April 1942), p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> Especially during Aguirre Cerda's and Ibáñez's administrations, in 1938-40 and 1952-3, respectively.

<sup>42</sup> Carl Beck, 'Party Control and Bureaucratization in Czechoslovakia', *The Journal of Politics*, 23 (1961), 289-90.

were, nevertheless, unable to exercise due influence on the policies Socialist officials were supposed to carry out, whether they were top level bureaucratic cadres (ministers and under-secretaries), political-appointed medium-level civil servants or even unimportant employees in some remote provincial offices. On the contrary, they continuously disregarded party principles and instructions. If one top leader proved to be too insistent on doctrinal matters, he would be rapidly co-opted by the bureaucratic structure in order to appease him.<sup>43</sup>

Perhaps the most important factor in determining this non-obedience pattern observed between 1939 and 1953 (but especially between 1939 and 1947) is the fact that, unlike the Czechoslovak Communist Party, the Chilean Socialists were part of an open political system in which they shared power with other political parties, while at the same time there existed a well organized opposition. Political controls of the Czechoslovak type to supervise the political and private behaviour of party cadres were and are possible in the context of the overall control of power by a single political party. Cadres have in this case much to lose personally if they venture to disobey instructions. Multi-party systems, on the other hand, provide the basis for continuous bargaining and flexibility in both internal and external party relationships, and these two features can lead to excesses if and when a party is not able to create a working model which can determine a reasonable degree of discipline on the part of its members.

The image of the party as deeply affected by 'corruption and decadence' was at its worst in 1946, when the Eleventh Ordinary Congress took place in Concepción.<sup>44</sup> There, a group of young members, headed by Raúl Ampuero, succeeded in getting a majority in the newly elected Central Committee and pushed for a *Conferencia Nacional de Programa* (National Programme Conference) to be held in November 1947. The Conference of 1947, however, signalled the starting point of a concerted effort aimed at reorganizing the party structures, raising the morale and purging the bureaucratic apparatus at all levels of dishonest elements. The party was no longer sharing governmental responsibilities, but some of its members were still holding positions in the administration.<sup>45</sup> Even though a new Central Committee led by Raúl Ampuero had to use the old, inadequate party

<sup>43</sup> A common practice was to offer him a senior civil service post, or even a position at ministerial level (according to his rank in the party apparatus).

<sup>44</sup> Julio César Jobet reports that during this period, the party 'lost its massive support' (an assertion which is supported by the poor 7.2% polled in 1945 against the 23.2% of 1941, even though this last percentage includes the small vote got by several unrepresentative leftist groups). Jobet, *op. cit.*, I, 54.

<sup>45</sup> The pressures arising from the leaving of five M.P.s in 1940 precipitated the Socialist Party's exodus from both the Popular Front and the Government.

organization, the personality of the man holding the Secretary Generalship filled the vacuum. He was a man with a first-class character, and his knowledge of Marxist theory was much better than that of his predecessors. Besides this, he came to lead the party with the prestige arising from the fact that he had not previously held any governmental post and consequently had no opportunity to be co-opted by either the public or the private sectors of the Chilean system.

However, according to Jobet, 'the Socialist attempt to rebuild party discipline and morale found obstacles in the group defeated at the Concepción Congress'.<sup>46</sup> That group was very much to the left of the official position of the party which had succeeded in provoking the Socialists' engagement in the Popular Front's strategies and policies. They found Ampuero's revitalising measures weak and insufficient.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, Ampuero was also under heavy attack by the internal Right-wing groups which wanted to reactivate the already disintegrating Popular Front and to rally the party's support for González Videla.

The situation reached a climax in 1948, when the new president decided to outlaw the Communist Party and ask for Socialist support to do so. Some leading socialists headed by Juan Bautista Rosetti and Bernardo Ibáñez accepted González Videla's appeal and entered a governmental coalition of Radicals, Liberals and Conservatives (known as the *Gabinete de Concentración Nacional*). They were immediately expelled from the party, together with three Regional Committees which out of a total of twenty-seven had supported Rosetti and Ibáñez.<sup>48</sup>

The group expelled managed to gain the official recognition of the *Dirección del Registro Electoral* (Electoral Registry) and, consequently, were entitled to use the name of *Partido Socialista*. Furthermore, they voted in favour of the *Ley de Defensa de la Democracia* (Law for the Defence of Democracy), which outlawed the Communist Party and culminated in the imprisonment in the concentration camp of Pisagua, in the extreme north of Chile, of all known Communist militants, both officials and rank and file.

The majority socialist group led by Raúl Ampuero voted against the anti-communist law, through its six MPs, and continued a vigorous opposition

<sup>46</sup> Jobet, *op. cit.*, 1, 55.

<sup>47</sup> *Vanguardia*, the internal Socialist newspaper which had only two months of existence in 1946, stated that he was doing well, but that something more should be done to stop the party being pushed into collaboration with González Videla's presidential candidature that year. González Videla was then supported by his own party (the Radical) and by the Communists.

<sup>48</sup> The expulsion meant an actual division of the party, again. Three deputies out of six and two Senators left with the faction.

against González Videla's regime. However, in view of the ruling of the Electoral Registry, they had to change the official name of the party, which from then on, up to 1957, when a Unity Congress was organized to unite both groups, came to be known as the *Partido Socialista Popular* (PSP).

However, the *Partido Socialista Popular* was perhaps the most representative of the two Socialist groups from the beginning of this second important division. The other group, notwithstanding its governmental recognition and the official name *Partido Socialista de Chile*, was, nevertheless, unable to get significant popular support.<sup>49</sup> In 1949, the Partido Socialista Popular enlisted the support of the other opposition parties (*Falange Nacional*, *Radical Democrático* and *Agrario Laborista*) to elect its Secretary General, Eugenio González, as Senator for Santiago, the main province of the country both in population and political weight. While this was happening, the dissident group of Rosetti and Ibáñez was being ousted from the presidential cabinet, after the President decided to replace the *Gabinete de Concentración Nacional* by a different one, including the Social-Christians, the *Falangistas* (later, the Christian Democratic party) the Democrats and the Radicals, and which was known as the *Gabinete de Sensibilidad Social*.

During González Videla's administration, the *Partido Socialista Popular* consistently maintained its opposition stand. In ideology, it began to shape the doctrine of the *Frente de Trabajadores* (Workers Front) as opposed to the *Frente de Liberación Nacional* (National Liberation Front), proposed by the Communists.<sup>50</sup> The *Frente de Trabajadores* argued for the necessity of basing the struggle for socialism in Chile in the formation of an exclusive working-class front, which should exclude the middle class from participation. This position meant in practice excluding the Radical party from sharing in any alliance, as that party was considered to be the main representative of the Chilean middle class. This proposal, was, of course, rejected by the Communists, in line with the international stand consistently supported by them since the Popular Front strategy began in the 1930s.

The most important aspects of Socialist ideology during this second

<sup>49</sup> This can be inferred from the 1949 and 1953 parliamentary elections results, in which they nearly disappeared from the political scene. In the extraordinary senatorial election of 1949 in which the PSP managed to get its candidate elected, the *Partido Socialista de Chile* did not even dare to present a candidate. The election of Eugenio González as Senator for Santiago and the ousting of Rosetti's socialists from González Videla's cabinet contributed, on the other hand, to strengthen the *Partido Socialista Popular* and, on the other, to weaken the *Partido Socialista de Chile*.

<sup>50</sup> The *Frente de Trabajadores* was officially adopted as party policy during the Sixteenth Ordinary Congress, in October, 1955.

period were derived from several contemporary elements. One of them was Titoism. The Chilean Socialists strongly opposed the Stalinist pressures on Yugoslavia, and viewed the Soviet claim to be the main centre of world socialism as completely unacceptable. When Yugoslavia was isolated by the East European countries, the Chilean Socialist party firmly endorsed Marshall Tito's position. This led them even to support the Yugoslav system as *desirable*, as it represented a form of *proletarian control* of power, as opposed to the bureaucratic, extremely centralized Soviet system. Secondly, the coming into existence of several national liberation movements in Asia and Africa, and later of newly independent countries provided the Chilean Socialists with an opportunity to stress their independence from all hegemonic centres. They began in the later 1940s to elaborate the thesis of the need for independent, new forms of socialism to be created in accordance with the national peculiarities of each country concerned. Later, this thesis evolved into the concept of a *Third World Front*, independent of both the capitalist and the communist blocks. The idea acquired a distinct anti-Soviet and anti-American meaning in the 1950s and 1960s, a fact that erroneously led to the conclusion, by some authors, that the Chilean Socialists were holding pro-Chinese views.<sup>51</sup>

Another influence was that of Peronism. During the late 1950s, the Socialists felt strongly attracted by Justicialism, the populist political movement led by General Juan Domingo Perón, in Argentina. Justicialism tried to show itself as a sort of *neutralist* party, which attempted to be different from both capitalism and Marxist-socialism. Its appeal to the Chilean Socialists at that time cannot then be considered surprising in the context of the party's attitudes towards what they called the 'bloc politics' of the United States and the Soviet Union – the aggressive course of Stalin's policies towards Yugoslavia and the continued North American intervention in Latin American politics.

More important at this time, however, was a strong feeling of nationalism. The Titoist, neutralist, somewhat justicialist approaches to Chilean problems of the Socialists confirmed their unchanging and uncompromising nationalism. The Chilean Socialists had never joined any of the Internationals, either Communist or Socialist, and this trend did not change

<sup>51</sup> Ernst Halperin, in *Nationalism and Communism in Chile* (MIT Press, 1965), pp. 118–77, somehow sustains this belief. In fact, the Chilean Socialists were not as pro-Chinese as they were anti-Soviet. A dramatic need for differentiations from the Communist Party provided much, if not all, of the insight for adopting this stand. They have always had very friendly relations with both the Soviet and the Chinese Communist Parties. After the intervention of the Warsaw Pact countries in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the relationship of the Chilean Socialists was strained with the Czechoslovak Communist Party but not with the Soviet Communist Party.

then, nor has it done so since. The Socialists have been always 'ferocious nationalists',<sup>52</sup> suspicious of any international political groupings which attempted to set out strategies and tactics according to what were considered foreign needs and not the peculiarities of each nation.<sup>53</sup>

All the peculiarities of the Socialist ideology of this period served the purpose of creating a truly nationalist, exclusively Chilean kind of Socialism. The task of shaping a kind of independent, native, socialist ideology which could interpret Chilean social, economical and political realities would have been, perhaps, impossible without the leadership of the former party Secretary General and Senator, Raúl Ampuero. Halperin described him as a

highly competent professional, a machine politician of great experience and toughness, who has managed to maintain control over a turbulent and rebellious party ever since he pushed aside the old-guard leadership in 1946. Besides being a skilful and determined machine politician, Ampuero is one of the leading intellectual lights of the Socialist Party and one of its most interesting ideologists.<sup>54</sup>

It is a generally accepted fact that Ampuero helped to shape the very special character of Chilean Socialist ideology, mainly from 1946 onwards, through a policy of stimulating intense internal discussion and, at the same time, insisting on a centralized party leadership keeping a very close watch on any attempt to disrupt party discipline in both ideological and organizational matters.

All that was possible because the new patterns of internal organization of the party allowed for full control of every activity of party cadres from the Political Commission of the Central Committee down to the *núcleos* (see organigram 3). Thus, while the two types of internal structure which had prevailed before permitted the development of almost legitimized factionalist policies on the part of individual members of Central Committees (see organigrams 1 and 2), the type of internal structure now adopted gave the Secretary General and leaders under his command an increased power. The firm, determined, as well as highly political personality of Ampuero contributed further to create a new sense of party discipline and ideological perspective from the time he took office in 1946.

The toughness of the Socialist stand during most of this period was cer-

<sup>52</sup> Halperin, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>53</sup> This stand would lead them, later on, to continue a frank controversy with the Communist Party, over a variety of issues, including the Soviet Union's stand on proletarian revolution, the problem of class alliances or class confrontation in Chilean politics, the question of the Chinese and Yugoslav Communisms, and other important issues. These matters are presented and analysed in this work when describing the last of the three periods of Socialist history.

<sup>54</sup> Halperin, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

tainly reflected in the social character of the party's membership and leadership. While in the 1930s, as noted above, as much as 75 per cent of the party's top leaders (Central Committee) were of petty bourgeois origin and only 25 per cent were of working class origin, the proportions for the next period show a distinct change. In fact, as much as 55 per cent of the leaders of this period were of working class origin, while only 45 per cent were of petty bourgeois origin.

This trend, which clearly showed a tendency towards working-class predominance within the top echelons of the party bureaucratic structure, was very much the same in the case of the rank-and-file members of the party. While unofficial statistics revealed that during the 1930s the working class membership was as high as 55 per cent, and middle class membership 45 per cent, the percentages for this second period are 65 per cent for working class members and 35 per cent for petty bourgeois members.<sup>55</sup> But it should be noted that this tendency began to increase steadily only during the last five years of this period, once Raúl Ampuero had already been able to re-shape party discipline and morale, so depressed during the party's association with the Popular Front.

The dismissal of the dissident Rosetti group from González Videla's cabinet and the election of Eugenio González, one of the party's Secretary Generals of that time, as Senator for the Santiago province, practically destroyed the importance of the small rightist faction which had supported the Radical administration. This, in turn, strengthened the *Partido Socialista Popular* and encouraged it to undertake a new political venture, when it decided to support the Presidential candidature of Carlos Ibáñez in the 1952 election. Both the PSP and Ibáñez coincided in their perception of the 'anti-political' mood affecting Chile at the time. The widespread dissatisfaction of important sectors of the country with the obviously corrupt and disintegrating Radical administration further contributed to rally PSP support for Ibáñez's unstructured nationalism.

The decision of the party to support Ibáñez in the 1952 presidential elections caused a new major division when the then Senator Salvador Allende left the party. He was followed by Astolfo Tapia, a member of Congress, and a small group of party intellectuals and cadres. Shortly afterwards, they entered the already weak and politically discredited *Partido Socialista de Chile*.

The possibility of supporting or not supporting Ibáñez was one of the most controversial issues in the party's history, and it had much to do with his personality and record. He, after all, had been a staunch militarist

<sup>55</sup> Footnote 4 provides the meanings I attach to social class, oligarchy and other concepts.



engaged not in one but in several anti-constitutional attempts from the 1920s on, having succeeded in the 1920s and being deposed by a violent popular upheaval not too long afterwards. He also had clear pro-nazi sympathies during the 1930s and 1940s and had even been proclaimed as a candidate for the Presidency for the 1938 election on behalf of the Chilean Nazi Party.<sup>56</sup>

He was not a member of the Socialist Party nor of any other party and it could be said that this fact was, without doubt, his most popular political asset in a country where political manoeuvring had reached a point where almost any political activity was bound to be considered illegitimate and, worse, dishonest.<sup>57</sup>

The governmental policies of the Radical Party had always met with strong and unremitting resistance from the Socialist Party. It considered the Radical administration as

wholly oriented towards satisfying the demands of the ever increasing monopolistic national and foreign financial groups with complete disregard of the people's needs. The administration had also engaged the country in the ominous Military Pact with the United States, which alienated the traditional sovereign stand of the Chilean people and, further, had persisted in its policies of the persecution of progressive thought and activity, by maintaining the illegal banning of the Communist Party, imprisoning its members and prohibiting any literature that could be considered subversive.<sup>58</sup>

The political situation as viewed from a Left-wing stand by the Chilean Socialists was clear. The Radicals were counting almost exclusively on the support of the Right-wing Liberal and Conservative Parties, while the banning of most pro-leftist activities in trade unions, universities and even high schools was a daily occurrence. Furthermore, the Military Pact signed with the United States had aroused widespread and conflicting reactions within the ranks of the Chilean press and, in general, within Chilean public opinion.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup> He decided to withdraw his candidacy and support the Popular Front candidate, Pedro Aguirre, after President Arturo Alessandri violently defeated a nazi attempt to disrupt the legal life of the country, an incident that was known as the 'masacre del Seguro Obrero' (the Massacre of the Social Security Building, naming the place where the actual event happened). See A. Olavarría, *Chile entre dos Alessandri* (4 vols, Santiago, Orbe, 1964) *passim*.

<sup>57</sup> 'My candidature represents the violent antithesis to all that which the actual regime represents. It is a protest of public character against the scandals in the administration, the illegal dealings, the stealings. It is a vigorous reaction of the national ego against political corruption.' René Montero, *Confesiones Políticas* (Santiago, Orbe, 1938), p. 127 (quoting Ibáñez's proclamation speech).

<sup>58</sup> *González Videla ante la Historia* (party document, mimeographed, Santiago, 1951), p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> The pact established a close collaboration between the Chilean and North American Armed Forces. Among the main features adopted were the following: the common obligation to

The Radicals' eagerness to engage in financial dealings that were not always completely honest added to the general feeling of uneasiness and made the country dissatisfied not only with those allegedly responsible but also with all other political associations as well.

Thus Ibáñez appeared as a sort of saviour, a man not linked to traditional party politics, independent of any known financial group, even a kind of 'anti-politician' who would save the country from its moral crisis.

The support given to Ibáñez was due to the fact that the popular support he was promoting for himself was out of control. The character of this support overwhelms any partisan attempt to contradict it. The party is thus unable to stop the tumultuous, enormous support Ibáñez is getting.<sup>60</sup>

The triumph of Carlos Ibáñez in the 1952 presidential elections certainly reflected the general dissatisfaction with party politics. Posing as an independent with the support of the *Partido Socialista Popular* and the *Partido Agrario Laborista* (a centrist party with a large middle class allegiance taken from the Radical Party, mainly from the bureaucracy, small merchants and industrialists and small farmers), he managed to poll an impressive 446,000 votes, against 265,000 for the liberal Arturo Matte (supported by the Liberal and Conservative parties) and a poor 190,000 for the official candidate, the radical Pedro Enrique Alfonso. Fourth came Salvador Allende, who had run with the support of the small *Partido Socialista de Chile* and the Chilean Communist Party, the latter still banned from political activity.

The impressive showing of Ibáñez in 1952 prompted the formation of a government with Socialist and *Agrario-Laborista* support which included the Socialist Clodomiro Almeyda as Minister of Labour (later in Mining) and Socialist under-Secretary Fernando Morales in the same ministry.

The participation of the socialists in the Ibáñez Government had a completely different character from their role in the Popular Front administration. The party, under the firm guidance and leadership of Raúl Ampuero and the distinctive intellectual lucidity of Clodomiro Almeyda, tried to give the new administration a stamp of discipline and political sanity, a task that after only one year proved difficult and almost impossible to achieve.

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defend the Hemisphere from 'outside' threats, the training of Chilean officers by American officers, technological assistance from the United States to the Chilean Armed Forces, periodical tactical exercises (notably of the two Navies); and, last but not least, the supply of armaments and equipment by the Americans to the Chileans. In the Cold War context which provided the framework in which the pact was agreed, many of its points appeared to most left-wing politicians as tantamount to surrendering Chilean sovereignty to the United States. This impression was further exacerbated when Chilean Officers began to be trained in the anti-subversion school created by the Pentagon in the Panama Canal Zone.

<sup>60</sup> Alejandro Chelén, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

Some of the measures they intended to introduce included consultations with technical advisory bodies before important decisions were taken, and strict adherence to party statutes and principles. Most of them ended in failure, as the party continued its rather undisciplined tradition. From June to October 1953, the Socialist Party obtained two more ministerial posts at Cabinet level, those of mining and finance, in an attempt to press for the implementation of a Socialist-oriented programme with the following characteristics: industrial reform, aimed at nationalising certain strategic enterprises, and workers' participation in their administration; land reform, aimed at redistributing land and lessening social injustice in rural areas; repeal of the Military Pact with the United States; repeal of the anti-communist legislation; general economic reform, aimed at producing anti-trust legislation, progressive taxes and the control of inflation.<sup>61</sup>

However,

all initiatives which attempted to promote these measures, were being obstructed in some way or other by Cabinet Ministers who joined the Cabinet as 'personal friends' of the President. These maintained links with the defeated parties, mainly those of the Right. Every day the influence of this sort of people was increasing, almost always with the support of the ambiguous behaviour of the President. The party decided, therefore, to get out of the Government.<sup>62</sup>

In the 1953 parliamentary elections, the first to be held under the new administration, the Socialists polled 70,000 votes, getting four Senators and nineteen deputies elected, a reasonable showing for a party that was just emerging from a period of depression, popular distrust and moral crises. This fact was no doubt decisive in prompting the party's decision to leave the government coalition in October. What had been gained through clear political commitments could not be risked in a new version of traditional political manoeuvrings and transactions, the very reason for past decadence and discredit.

At the end of 1953, the party had again gained a momentum that its leaders did not want to put at risk by succumbing to the temptations of power. After a period of internal disorganization, the party had adopted a more realistic structure that produced greater discipline and morale; moreover, the two splits that it had suffered had apparently not succeeded in weakening its unity in organization, its decision and the strength of its popular support. The prestige of its leaders was now high, as a product of

<sup>61</sup> Among the documents of that time which more clearly provide the data on the Socialist programme for the Ibáñez Administration, the following can be cited: *El Mercurio*, from Jan. to Oct. 1953; *Un Programa para Ibáñez* (party document, mimeographed, Feb. 1953); *Un Parlamento para Ibáñez* (party document, mimeographed, Jan. 1953).

<sup>62</sup> Chelén, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

their clear, principled position on most issues and their indisputable lack of connection with any known financial dealing. Most of all, the party was now being seen as a true socialist alternative to capitalist tendencies in Chilean politics, and that was certainly an asset not to be disregarded.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, outlawing of the Communists had further contributed to Socialist respectability, a fact that was encouraged by the Socialist decision to struggle to put the Communist Party once again in the arena as a legal political association.

The justification for the party's decision to leave the Ibáñez administration had perhaps its most clear defence in the Political Declaration issued by the Fifteenth General Ordinary Congress of October 1953. There, the Socialists stated that 'during the period of co-operation with the Government, the party made a loyal decision to support the President, even at the risk of being misunderstood'. Because of this position the party on several occasions had to suffer criticisms of policies for which it was not responsible and which came from popular sectors. The party was then guided by the overall necessity to maintain its position of safeguarding the whole of the programme to which it was committed, and which was not being implemented by Ibáñez.

That policy was possible only if the party could effectively implement its programme, mainly aimed at destroying the unjust privileges of the oligarchy and liberating the country from imperialist pressures. We have consistently requested the Government to get straight on with the programme, but we have encountered not only inexcusable vacillations but also open transactions with those groups traditionally enemies of the working class.

The *Partido Socialista Popular* has never accepted nor will ever accept transactions with the enemies of Chile and it prefers to recover its independence. We shall not be tempted to appear in dubious positions.

In retiring from the Government, the party wishes to express the hopes of the majority of the people, who want a firm anti-oligarchical and anti-imperialist policy and is sure its position will be understood by the other parties that have supported Mr. Ibáñez and which expressed the same desire during the elections. These ultimate goals will be never forgotten by the party and that was the only reason why we cooperated with the Government. We call upon all the forces who in some way or other supported the election of his administration to close ranks in order to implement the policies for whose achievement it was originally elected. We are sure that the natural course of events will prove that the social processes now in movement will lead to the creation of a Democratic Republic of Workers, which will form the basis for a socialist system. Through it, all

<sup>63</sup> A veteran socialist leader, then member of the Central Committee, told me that a majority of the leadership then favoured a 'firm intransigent stand against Ibáñez because he was beginning to show himself as the very sort of politician we, under his guidance, were supposed to eradicate from Chilean politics'.

hopes of workers, peasants, employees and, in general, the poorer sectors of our society, will find the satisfaction of all their needs.<sup>64</sup>

### The Stage of Ideology (From 1953)

During this third period, which began with the party's withdrawal from the Ibáñez administration in late 1953, and ended with the elevation of the party to government in 1970, the Socialists had the opportunity to prove themselves as a truly viable political association which was able to exhibit both political experience and internal democracy. The period was, moreover, rich in both internal and external ideological discussion. But the Chilean Communist Party had been already reinstated as a full, legal political association by a law enacted during the Ibáñez Government, and the period in which the Socialist Party was the sole, and somehow unique representative of the popular groups of Chilean society was past. From the late 1950s on, a clear competition between these two popular parties developed for the support of the Chilean working class.

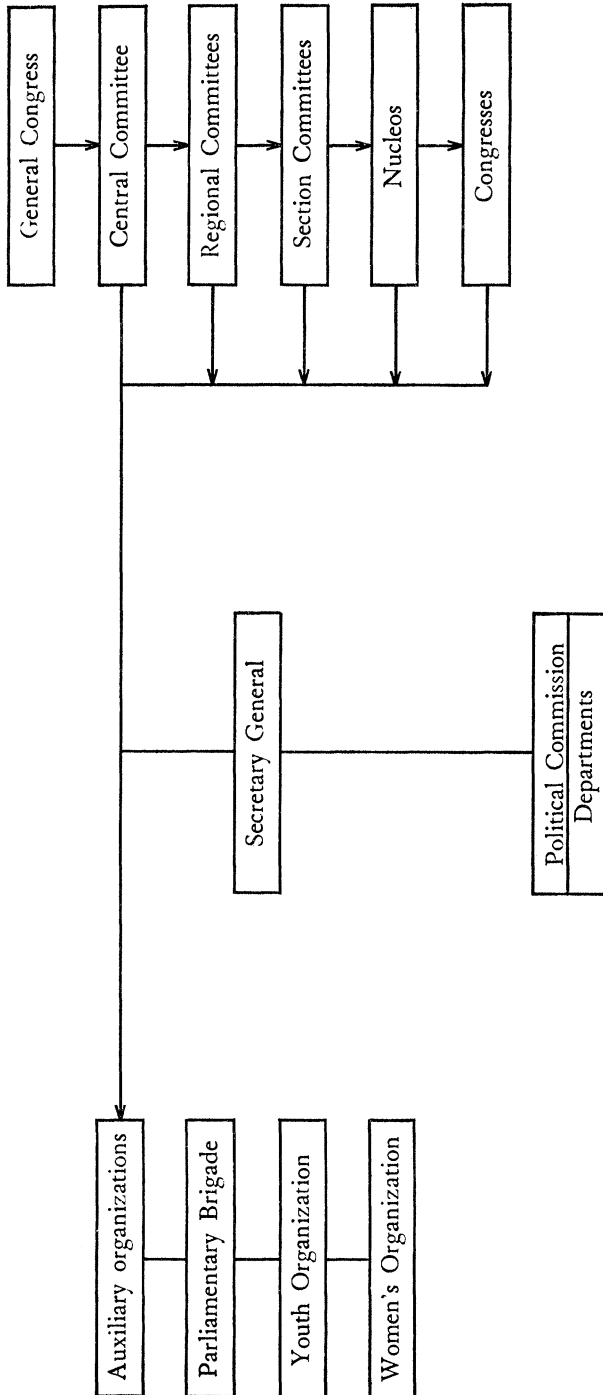
In organization, the Socialists retained up to 1967 the structural scheme they had adopted in 1953 (see organigram 3), with some minor statutory adjustments made from time to time,<sup>65</sup> and the average composition of membership was the following, according to unofficial party statistics: working class, 70 per cent; middle class, 30 per cent, percentages that reflect the continued tendency already developing from the foundation of the party in the 1930s. An examination of the leadership shows that an average of 50 per cent of the members were of petty bourgeois origin, as much as 48 per cent were of working class origin, and 2 per cent were of 'other origin', mainly belonging to the bourgeoisie, a new and interesting fact in the socialist leadership.

In 1967, the Twenty-second General Ordinary Congress held in Chillán adopted a new organizational structure (see organigram 4). The new internal structure provided the organizational answer to most of the questions arising from the increasingly difficult political situation in Chile, which also meant increasing difficulties in dealing with internal and external political affairs for any political party. It concentrated the exercise of decision-making in the highest party echelons, namely the Central Committee and its Political Commission. However, it also clearly emphasised respect for internal discussion in order to allow for the full implementation

<sup>64</sup> *Fifteenth General Ordinary Congress, Partido Socialista Popular* (mimeographed document, December 1953), p. 3.

<sup>65</sup> The most important were adopted in 1959 and 1964, and were aimed at strengthening party discipline and command of the leadership over the lower party echelons. The same trend would find definitive sanction in 1967, when the last party organization scheme was adopted.

ORGANIGRAM 4  
*Socialist Party Organization from 1967\**



\* Adopted in the XXII General Ordinary Congress, Chillán, 1967. Not an official organigram but one drawn according to the description in party statutes.

of the party's stand on such an important doctrinal issue as *internal democracy*.

At every level of party activity, Congresses were reinforced as a forum to provide for an opportunity for discussion and to avoid the excessive or abusive exercise of power on the part of the national leadership. But once decisions were taken, these should only be processed through normal internal procedures, up to the highest level. Here, all decisions were bound to be absolutely respected, unless a Congress changed them, in which case the decisions were valid up to the very moment in which that authority decided that a change should take place.

It is true that, generally, these aspects of party organization were present in practical party behaviour before the Chillán Congress of 1967 sanctioned them as official, written party policies. But it was only then that they were clearly adopted.<sup>66</sup>

In ideology, the party developed support and allegiance to various *isms* from 1953 onwards, a trend that, according to Halperin,

denotes an openmindedness, a curiosity, and an inclination towards intellectual adventure that to this European observer at least are a great relief after the stuffiness, narrowmindedness, and obstinate anti-intellectualism of European Social Democracy . . . it is easy to sneer at the amazing transition of the Chilean Socialists from anti-Communism to Popular-Frontism to Peronism to Titoism to Castroism and, later, at least partially, to Maoism. This seems to be the behaviour of a 'political chameleon'. However, these characteristics appear to have been more a positive approach to the social realities of the Chilean society rather than the dispassionate behaviour of an uncompromising and cold political party.<sup>67</sup>

While agreeing on the whole with Halperin's view, one should also point out the handicaps of this unique Socialist party, for if those characteristics were to be regarded as positive, they were also the very reason for its weaknesses, especially *vis-à-vis* a Communist Party which firmly adhered to its international character, with a rigid revolutionary ideology and a strong, well-trained party apparatus.

On the whole, the Socialist organizational scheme seemed to be rational and logical. But it lacked the necessary practical support to achieve actual success. While the Communist machinery relied on paid workers which in the Leninist concept committed all their time to the party – 'full-time revolutionaries', as Lenin called them – the Socialist Party counted on dedicated rank-and-file members who devoted their leisure time to the

<sup>66</sup> The composition of Regional and Section Committees as well as of *núcleos* remained the same as that adopted in the Sixth Ordinary Congress of 1940.

<sup>67</sup> Halperin, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

party. In other words, while the Communist Party was a *full-time* party, the Socialist Party was only a *part-time* one. This strongly affected overall party life and behaviour, especially during the last ten or fifteen years of its development, when an open competition for working class support was the issue between Communists and Socialists. Trade unions, universities, even high school student bodies were at stake in the daily political fight for supremacy within those ranks. And to a very well organized and determined Communist Party, the Socialists were opposing an unreal model of organization, an uncompromising stand for Socialism in a Chilean fashion, and fluctuating adherences to the 'ism' of the moment. It was a strength, but it was also a weakness, as it provided ground for both internal democracy and irresoluteness.

The most tragic consequence of all this could be observed on the overthrow of President Allende's Government in September 1973, when the Socialist Party organization was quickly dismantled by the military. During the resistance that undoubtedly took place, most of the structure of the Socialist Party of Chile is said to have disappeared. All the information available suggests that the measures adopted by the new authorities (detention, execution and exile of leaders and members) completely dismantled the party's organisation, at least in appearance. On the other hand, it is generally believed that most of the Communist Party apparatus remained intact. Most of its leadership, at the national, regional, and even cellular level, apparently stayed in hiding without suffering any significant setbacks.

The Socialist adherence to the 'intellectual fashions' to which Halperin refers affects this last period more than any of the others. It began with the triumphant development in Argentina of the Justicialist movement headed by General Juan Domingo Perón in the 1940s, when the culminating point of socialist allegiance was reached in the first part of the 1950s and up to the overthrow of Perón in 1955. Halperin says:

the Chilean Socialists admired him for his struggle against the democratic political parties, which were regarded by them as instruments of the oligarchy, and also, with some justification, for his labour legislation and encouragement of the labour movement.<sup>68</sup>

Peronism actually embodies more than simply that and it would be unjust to consider it as a simple, one-sided expression of political populism aimed to promote reformist policies. The Socialists viewed it as a sort of liberation movement.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>69</sup> The Nationalism of Peronism, its vociferous anti-imperialism, though not always matched by its practice, appealed greatly to the independent-minded Socialist Party.



The eclipse of Peronism in Argentina, combined with knowledge of corruption in the movement, brought about a more dispassionate analysis of its true character by the Chilean socialists. It was accepted that the ambiguities of Justicialism embodied the seeds of its own destruction, as it never really tried to achieve clear and unequivocal stands against capitalism, but rather compromising, middle-of-the-road, anti-oligarchical measures that weakened oligarchic power without destroying it.

Furthermore, in 1955, Khrushchev's denunciation of Soviet errors in handling the Yugoslav dissenters strengthened the position of those who, within the party, had been trying to follow a Titoist line. Ampuero himself, Oscar Waiss and Aniceto Rodríguez were among the leading members of this tendency which was later adopted more openly. The Titoist idea of a Socialist state which depended heavily on workers' councils at every level of the social fabric captured the hearts of Chilean Socialists, and so did the neutralist approach of Yugoslavian foreign policy. After a trip to Belgrade, Oscar Waiss, a member of the Central Committee, wrote:

I had learned a great lesson. A lesson of quiet heroism, of efficiency and of modesty, of titanic effort and thrift. I had learned a lesson, the importance of which I could not yet fully appreciate but which would bear fruit in time in my own activity as a fighter for socialism.<sup>70</sup>

The fascination of the Chilean Socialist Party with Titoism caused discomfort in the Communist Party, which repeatedly made its uneasiness known.

It is very much in evidence – stated Communist Party General Secretary, Luis Corvalán – that in the Socialist Party there are influential people who do not hide their sympathy for Yugoslav revisionism... In every case where topical theoretical and political problems, and specifically Yugoslav revisionism, definitely have a practical significance, it becomes necessary to point to the danger involved in differences of opinion about these matters, and to the need for the most determined efforts to overcome them.<sup>71</sup>

The pro-Yugoslav approach to both Chilean and international affairs prompted an occasionally acid debate with the Communists that took place openly, and was only moderated when, on the one hand the Communists gradually began to accept the existence of Titoism as a fact of life and, on the other, the Socialists began to move further to the left in the political sphere, mainly inspired by the new challenges arising from the Cuban experience.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Oscar Waiss, *Amenecer en Belgrado* (Santiago, P.L.A., 1956), p. 158.

<sup>71</sup> *Principios* (official organ of the Chilean Communist Party), July–Aug. 1958, pp. 12–13.

<sup>72</sup> For a further understanding of this issue, see Oscar Waiss, *Amenecer en Belgrado*; Partido Comunista de Chile *Documentos del XI Congreso Nacional realizado en Noviembre de 1958* (Santiago, Lautaro, 1959); *Principios*, July–Aug. 1958; Luis Corvalán *Chile y el nuevo*

From 1960, the influence of the Cuban revolution overshadowed that of Titoism within the Socialist ranks, even though it still retains significant intellectual support. Just as previously Peronism symbolized the Latin American struggle against North American and big-business interferences, which ranged from the co-option and corruption of politicians to direct military intervention, so Castroism appeared now as the catalytic agent for all revolutionaries in that part of the world.

The then Senator Salvador Allende, who had been reinstated as a full party member in 1957 in a special Congress aimed at reuniting the *Partido Socialista Popular* and the *Partido Socialista de Chile*, stated in 1960:

The Chilean people have been aroused and deeply moved by the Cuban revolution: they understand it and defend it as their own . . . the parties of the people, and, with some reticence, even centre parties, have declared their support for the revolution. This means that the immense majority of the Chileans are for the revolution. It is time to realize that the lesson of Guatemala has been learnt. The United States must understand that today Latin America is revitalized by the Cuban revolution. With different methods and strategies, in accordance with the characteristics of each one of our countries, we are marching towards a common goal that will give dignity to our lives and assure the economic independence of our countries.<sup>73</sup>

The Communists, although more reluctantly to begin with, also gave their support to the Cuban revolution. This helped towards a rapprochement with the Socialists. Already in 1956, encouraged by the shortcomings and corruption of the Ibáñez administration, both parties had formed the *Frente de Acción Popular* (FRAP), the historical precursor of the movement of Popular Unity, which also included the then *Socialistas de Chile* and other small leftist groupings.

The formation of the FRAP was the culminating point of a tendency towards political cooperation developing gradually among the cadres in both parties. Until 1962, the FRAP succeeded in concealing the differences between Communists and Socialists, but from that time the Socialists adopted the general strategy and consequently the set of tactics known as the *Frente de Trabajadores* (Workers Front), and the Communists an overall commitment to the *Frente de Liberación Nacional* (National Liberation Front). The differences that actually existed proved increasingly difficult to hide.

The *Frente de Trabajadores* sustained the idea of the need, in the Chilean road to socialism, to present a class front of exclusively working-

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*panorama mundial* (Santiago, Lautaro, 1959); Edvard Kardelj, *La Democracia Socialista en la práctica yugoslava* (Santiago, P.L.A., 1960).

<sup>73</sup> Salvador Allende, *Cuba, un camino* (Santiago, P.L.A., 1960), p. 55.

class parties, as opposed to any other political association and/or grouping. This automatically excluded centrist parties, and especially the middle-of-the-road, left-centre and predominantly middle-class Radical party, and the *Falangistas* (later Christian Democrats) as well.

The Communists' *Frente de Liberación Nacional*, on the other hand, stressed the importance of the support of the middle class and used each and every opportunity to make the point. This clearly meant that, in their view, in any fight to get political influence and eventually to achieve government and power, the collaboration of the Radicals and the Christian Democrats was indispensable.

As early as August, 1956, only four months after the FRAP alliance had been formed, Socialist Secretary General Raúl Ampuero stated that

The Chilean Communist Party always adjusted its policies to the needs of Moscow. They suffer a sort of progressive deformation of their political role which is common to all their fellow parties throughout the world . . . they think that there is a dogma which states that no revolutionary process is genuine if it is not under Soviet inspiration – or does not adjust to general Soviet strategies in world politics. Where the Soviet Union was, there the truth, democracy and peace were. If the old bolshevik guard was sent to death, it was because they were spies and traitors. If they allied themselves with Hitler, it was because the war was an inhuman crime of the imperialists. If they decided to crush Tito, it was because he and his partisans were all fascists. Such a party ends up by considering watchwords as a more reliable truth than the objective examination of reality, it puts its prejudices before its class duties. . . .<sup>74</sup>

This view of Communist strategy and tactics on the part of the Socialist leadership reached its highest and most intensive point in the well known Communist-Socialist debate of 1962, six years after the FRAP had been formed and while both parties were working very closely to gain political influence.

The continuous references of the Socialist leadership to Communist 'weaknesses', namely its tendency repeatedly to invite centrist parties to form coalitions and supposedly to adjust its policies to Soviet needs, got a strong reply from the Communist Central Committee member Orlando Millas in the daily party newspaper *El Siglo*. He accused Ampuero of being 'intransigent' and, without saying so directly but with a very strong hint, of being anti-communist as well.<sup>75</sup>

Ampuero counter-attacked in a long article in *El Siglo* which the Communist leadership courteously allowed to be published. There he not only maintained his party's original traditional stand on Soviet behaviour and

<sup>74</sup> Raúl Ampuero, *Boletín del Comité Central del Partido Socialista Popular*, Aug. 1956, p. 5.

<sup>75</sup> See Orlando Millas, 'El Senador Raúl Ampuero y los tópicos anti-comunistas', in *La Polémica Socialista-Comunista* (Santiago, Chile, P.L.A., 1962).

Communist 'adjustment', but also stressed very strongly the unfortunate consequences that its behaviour had, and would have in the future, on the Chilean and Latin American fight for socialism.

Ampuero's main points are, in fact, a summary of the theoretical stand of the Chilean Socialist Party in the 1960s, in its relations with the Communists: rejection of the principle of unified world leadership of the revolutionary movement under Soviet (or Chinese) control; rejection of the policy of military blocks and of the two camps; rejection of the Communists' claim to an ideological monopoly; criticisms of the Chilean Communists' policy of the 'peaceful road'.

The last point merits a more detailed explanation, as it touches the main ideological stand of the Socialists' *Frente de Trabajadores*. A party statement issued in 1954 declared that the *Frente*

meant and means that we have to recognise that the working class and its allies, the peasants, are the only engine able to produce the great transformations which are needed. . . .<sup>76</sup>

In practice, the strong Socialist opposition to accepting the collaboration of middle-class parties was helped by the ambiguous, rather pro-rightist behaviour of those parties, and particularly the Radicals. Only in the presidential elections of 1970 did the formation of Popular Unity overcome the traditional socialist stand. Then, for the first time in Chilean history, a coalition with predominantly Marxist parties took over government. How far this was possible because of the participation in the coalition of the Radical Party is a matter of conjecture.

It is, however, important to note that during this third period of our study, the ideological discussion flourished at all levels. As the top Raúl Ampuero, Clodomiro Almeyda and Aniceto Rodríguez (Central Committee members for many years) developed unique and vigorous interpretations of the party's role in the Chilean struggle for socialism, the role of the great powers *vis-à-vis* the underdeveloped world, the confrontation between China and the Soviet Union, the Yugoslav way to socialism, and many other topics of political relevance.<sup>77</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The Chilean Socialist Party had an autonomous development – independent of the development of the Chilean Communist Party. However, both

<sup>76</sup> *Informe político del Comité Central del Partido Socialista al Pleno Nacional de Diciembre de 1964* (internal and confidential document, Santiago, 1964), p. 2.

<sup>77</sup> A good and comprehensive description of the theoretical aspects of the Chilean Socialist Party's ideology during the 1960s is provided by Ernst Halperin, *Nationalism and Communism in Chile*, *op. cit.*

parties have competed for the working class vote, prompting rivalries that have not precluded a comprehensive system of alliances, mainly from the 1950s onwards.

The Socialists have tried different models of internal organization, but a clear continuity has existed regarding internal democracy, an important feature which has been generally respected. The lack of full-time functionaries and the excesses in the practice of internal democracy, have weakened the party considerably *vis-à-vis* a Communist Party with a well organized internal structure full of devoted party workers, and a rigid bureaucratic model always prepared to exercise authority.

Marxism has always been the main ideological stream behind the Socialist Party, taken as a general orientation rather than as a dogma. This fact could explain the various adherences of the Socialists to the 'ism' of the moment, as a whole or by some of its factions (Titoism, Maoism, Castroism). Furthermore, Marxism has been taken in the more restrictive framework of a Latin American nationalism, perhaps the main reason for an overt anti-Soviet feeling that sometimes seems to permeate the party cadres and leaders.

The two main tendencies that radically divided the party and the Government of Salvador Allende in 1970-73 (i.e. moderate and radical), responded to long-term stands previously dividing the party, but coming to a peak during the Popular Unity administration.

Last, but not least, the party has exhibited a vigorous internal life, and has provided a forum to important sectors of the Chilean working class and middle class, in many cases out of the disenchantment felt by these strata at the rigidity and sectarianism of the Chilean Communist Party at certain stages of its development. The Socialist Party, therefore, allowed those sectors to have their demands articulated. It is difficult to imagine the *Unidad Popular* Government in 1970 without the Socialist Party as it is difficult to foresee any future political arrangement in which it will not have an important role to play.