

The Colombian case: Peace-Making and Power Sharing

The National Front (1958-1974) and New Constitution (1991-2002) experiences

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1. Introduction: The National Front (1958-1974) and the post 1991 Constitution (1991-2008) Experiences. Analogies and links

After suffering a major internal conflict between 1948 and the late 1950's/early 1960's – known as *La Violencia*, and characterized by Eric Hobsbawm as the biggest peasant mobilization in the Western Hemisphere in the 20th Century--, Colombia has never quite returned to “full normality” (Lleras Restrepo, 1997)³. For the purposes of this paper, there are two characteristics of the 1958-2008 period that deserve to be highlighted. First, there has been a long, and sometimes rather smooth, coexistence between competitive politics and violence. Only very few countries in the world share this characteristic. Second, the repertoire of strategies tested from above to deal with armed challenges has been variegated, ranging from white hot repression to negotiation (and frequently putting both into the same “governance formula”, see below). Thus, the last fifty years can be seen simultaneously as both a history of conflict and a history of peace making. There has hardly been a year during which there was not an ongoing negotiation between the government and a non state challenger (see Table 1).

The state's Janus faced efforts to deal with the problem have been –at least using the bluntest of criteria—unsuccessful: after fifty years of ups and downs, the monopoly over the legitimate use of violence has not been restored. The main counterargument to this statement is the present government's claim that the internal confrontation is either inexistent or basically resolved (Medios para la paz, 2005). Indeed, in 2002 the paramilitary engaged in a

³ Conventionally, *La Violencia* started in 1948 and ended between the late 1950's and early 1960's.

peace process that terminated with the reinsertion of nearly 30.000 combatants (Verdad Abierta, 2009), and in the recent years the main guerrillas have systematically received heavy blows. However, insurgencies have passed by much more critical periods (see section 1), and eventually made a comeback. The fact is that today (2009) the Colombian state still faces a relatively robust guerrilla –in the case of the FARC, between 8 and 10.000 people in arms, and a working organizational structure--, and that after the reinsertion of the paramilitary a whole family of antsubversive/social cleansing/regional control structures associated with narcotrafficking –called generically by the police *Bacrim*, *Bandas Criminales*—have managed to operate with success in several regions. Very much in the spirit of president Lleras’ aphorism, the country is still far, far away from full normality.

Now, this outcome is a bit puzzling. In terms of democracy, institutional building, participation, and delivery of services, the country has not lagged systematically behind any of its neighbors. So what can explain the Colombian state inability to attain peace and obtain the full monopoly of legitimate violence? Two symmetrically opposed answers would solve the quandary without further ado. According to the first one, Colombia has been dominated by a bipartisan oligarchy⁴, coalesced against any kind of reform, and intent on marginalizing the popular sectors from the public space (Guillen Martinez, 1979). According to the second one, the country has been governed by corrupt and dovish politicians, who neglected the defense of the state (Misas Arango et al, 2005). In the first version, the political elites incurred in exclusion and lacked the will to negotiate its privileges. In the second version, they are guilty of blandness and of having negotiated the in-negotiable with economic and political delinquents. If indeed the Colombian record in a *specific type* of reforms is poor (cfr.

⁴ Until 2002, the Colombian political system was dominated by two historical parties, the Liberal and the Conservative. Following common use, we sometimes refer to them as “traditional”. The tag is not meant to have any pejorative implication.

infra), and the investment in public security was strikingly low until 1998 (Leal, 2006), none of these simple versions stands up to empirical scrutiny. In the last fifty years several crucial reforms were launched from above, and actually some of them were both inclusive and successful (the 1991 Constitution)⁵. Several modalities of popular participation have been tolerated, sometimes fostered. On the other hand, practically no Colombian ruler has been above extremely harsh repressive measures. Colombia has not been ruled by particularly indifferent or dovish politicians; at least, not clearly worse in this regard than their Latin American peers. A more fine grained explanation is needed.

Colombia has had so many peace processes in the last decades that a systematic analysis of them would be a major undertaking –with the disadvantage that such processes have not been necessarily linked to either development/economic policies or institution building. Thereby, in this paper we focus rather on the country’s two main experiences which were actually able to combine peace-making, power sharing, and economic policy making: the National Front (1958-1974) and the 1991 Constitution. Both have in common that they incorporated to the public space actors that had been warring against each other, and that they aimed to foster both democracy and development. The NF was a consociational accord (Hartlyn, 1993) between the country’s two historical parties. Our basic claim with respect to the NF is that its three main objectives –peace, development, and transition to democracy—came in the way of each other (for details, see Gutiérrez, 2007). The political elites tried to produce a scenario in which there was synergy between them, but did not manage to do so. Thus, the experience is an instantiation of Hirschman’s motto that “not all good things come together” (1977). The NF fell into a trap –called, using the language of the period, “inmovilismo”- “immobility”—that had fatal consequences after an exogenous shock –the insertion of Colombia in the

⁵ The same can be predicated of previous periods.

marihuana and coca global markets—activated regions where the state had been traditionally weak. The 1991 Constitution was summoned when the traditional way of doing politics entered a deep crisis, and the main party, the Liberal, found that standard, normal politics had come to a dead end. The C-1991 was articulated with a peace negotiation, which incorporated the M-19 to legal political life. The M-19 rapidly became a protagonist, and was able to capture nearly a third of the seats of the Constitutional Assembly. The C-1991 was also an intent to produce a modernization of the country that would help it overcome old, corrupt, politics, and include a wide array of new social sectors/actors, among them other reinserted guerrillas (Patiño, 2000). But: a) the insertion of the country in the global coca market; b) the fact that a side effect of the very program of state modernization was enabling the capture of chunks of the state by illegal actors, begetting a new type of armed competition; and c) the fuzziness and gradual shrinking of the bargaining space, stalled peace efforts and opened the door to more aggressive policies. Thus, we show that the failure to produce a sustainable peaceful settlement was different in each case. However, some important commonalities –the coexistence of democracy and violent challenges to the state, the intent to achieve peace through a broad array of institutional designs, and the combination of inclusiveness and repression-- can be found.

The order of exposition is the following. The first section is dedicated to the basic motivations and institutional architecture of the National Front. The second one focuses on the economic policies and debates, and especially on those oriented towards developmental and pro-poor objectives. The third one explains the basic motivations behind the 1991 Constitution, and the institutional architecture that it created. The fourth one is dedicated to economic policies. The fifth one discusses the 1991 peace program. In the conclusions, we discuss the inability of the Colombian state to produce a sustainable peace in the last fifty

years, and we evaluate some facets of the participation of the international community in the Colombian conflict.

2. Power sharing and participation during the National Front

Already by 1951, in the thicket of *La Violencia*, many members of the Conservative party – by then in power—became aware of the fact that the country had become unmanageable. Factional rows within the CP, plus the inability of the Conservative government to stabilize the country either through repression or through some type of accord with the Liberals -- harshly repressed and in practice banned from open participation in politics-- ended in a military coup headed by General Rojas Pinilla in 1953. This was the second military regime in Colombia's 20th Century. As the first one⁶, its main program was to water down bipartisan polarization and rebuild the country. In this sense, it was a *dictablanda*: a closed regime, fearful of genuine political competition, but intent on *reducing* the intensity of repression and political confrontation. However, also as in the first episode, this General used his position to try to perpetuate himself in power, which prompted the traditional parties to sign two accords of opposition of the dictatorship (at Sitges and Benidorm), after which they were able to mobilize a wave of civil resistance that ended in the defenestration of Rojas. The whole episode was highly ritualized and relatively pacific.

Which were the main points of the Sitges and Benidorm accords? First, the country had to enter a “democratic convalescence”, by building an institutional setup that combined many of the standard workings of democracy –freedom of press, of speech, of mobilization, etc—with bounded competition. The party that lost the election should not be brusquely evicted from

⁶ Headed by General Rafael Reyes (1905-1909).

power, because the brutal struggle for bureaucratic posts, the diagnosis went, was the underlying cause of violence. Thus, and second, a careful power sharing structure was built, which guaranteed that each party had half of all posts, elected and non elected, at all levels (from municipal to national). Correlatively, some actors had to be excluded; mainly the communists and the radicals, but more generally any non-traditional one. Only traditional politicians could be elected, and occupy posts in the legislative branch⁷ and the bureaucracy⁸. If a non-traditional politician was ever elected, he had to declare his affiliation to one of the traditional parties before occupying his post. Third, not only constitutional reforms, but also legislation, had to be approved by super majorities (a two thirds quota⁹). This provided further guarantees that the party that had a provisional majority would not be able to change the rules to perpetuate itself in power. Fourth, there would be compulsory rotation in power; each Conservative term would be succeeded by a Liberal one and vice versa¹⁰. Fifth, the country had to enter a path of accelerated development that entailed launching big scale social reforms; extreme inequality and the failure of the state to deliver goods and services not only undermined democracy –actually, many of the key NF leaders declared that extreme inequality made the term senseless, Lleras Alberto, 1958- but also increased the probability of violent confrontation. These basic agreements were institutionalized rapidly and effectively after a plebiscite, held in 1957, approved by a broad majority the creation of the NF. It was supposed that such institutional arrangement would foster a strong collaboration between the parties, creating common interests and making rupture too costly. For example, the nomination of the presidential NF candidate involved both of them: when it was the

⁷ This expression is a bit inexact, as the in Colombian sub national bodies like the Departmental Assemblies and Municipal Councils formally have administrative and not legislative functions. However, we will incur in this non consequential abuse of notation throughout.

⁸ Including the judiciary.

⁹ This was eventually relaxed, giving the congress the right to decide which bills would be decided by the standard simple majority quota, and the two thirds one. In practice, this did not change much, as it gave to any significant minority the power to try to block any bill which they may consider alarming.

¹⁰ This was only put at the end of the process, when Conservatives failed to agree upon a presidential candidate. The solution was to give the Liberals the first NF presidential period, but to institutionalize forced alternation in the presidency.

Liberals' turn they proposed one name to the Conservatives, who decided to approve him or not¹¹.

A fact that the majority of analysts have omitted is that the six basics of the agreements made of the NF several things at the same time. First of all, it was a democratic transition, with almost all of the characteristics that the literature of the 1980's attributed to such processes (Davila Ladrón de Guevara, 2002). It tried to reinstall civilian government without alienating the military, and to generate a gradual institutional/cultural process to obtain that democracy became the "only game in town" (Linz, 1990). Second, it was certainly a peace and power sharing pact, in which the main contenders of an extremely nasty confrontation decided to abjure the use of violence and invite their constituencies to compete in a reasonable fashion. Third, it was a vast developmental plan, with a stringent time horizon. Development was conceived also, perhaps even mainly, in terms of an anti-violence device. It meant prosperity and services, but also less inequality, so workers and peasants would have less incentives to indulge in violence and/or be disloyal to the system (Melo, 1978). Furthermore, it was urgent, as many explosive materials had been accumulated throughout the years¹². The NF political

¹¹ Though it never happened that a candidate of the party with its presidential turn was rejected, diverse sectors of the other one regularly offered objections, to which the official candidate reacted. Probably there were a lot of backstage negotiations, to calm the fears or appetites of the several factions of the party that was handing back the presidency.

¹² Two among hundreds of examples of this mentality: "We have sent to the congress several bill that will allow us to give the NF a vast social content, even at the cost of demanding more contributions of those who became rich [in past years] ... Millions of compatriots will need permanent help and our own constitution

n offers it as a citizen right and a duty of the state. But now, when we are coming to the bottom of the capacity of resistance, to give this help is not only a duty, but also the only way to prevent the dissolution of the links that tie Colombians together" Alberto Lleras Camargo, 1958. "This NF cannot be a static agreement between two armies...by which Liberals and Conservatives agree not to fight, to chase, to hate, to offend, and to kill, each other ...It has to be a godly truce that allows us to find the definitive solutions to the economic and social problems of the republic. The country would not understand a 16 year accord to divide the pie and not anything for the wellbeing of our people that have waited 150 years vainly in their misery...If I were an egotist I would tell you that the only way of saving private property in Colombia is by approving these [reformist] bills". Alberto Lleras Camargo, 1958.

elites did not shy away from declaring repeatedly that they did not have too much time, and that if the window of opportunity they had been given was not used properly, war and destruction would be the result (Gutierrez, 2007).

It might be claimed, as some authors have done, that these nice intentions were eye wash, and that the NF governments were captured by backward oligarchies which had every intention of blocking reform. This is an over-simplification. In reality, the country engaged in a process of rapid change and modernization –true, only in part dependent on policy--, and several crucial reforms were promoted from above. Growth was also achieved. All in all, as will be seen in the next section, the country's economic path was viable enough as to expect decent results.

3. The NF: a tolerably good performer

At the outset of the NF, Colombia was an agricultural economy with a rather underdeveloped internal market and high prevalence of primary sectors (both agriculture and mining accounted for almost 40% of the GDP and 55.5% of the employment). Manufacturing industry, which mainly took off in the 1930s (Echavarría, 1983) had a share of 17.4% of the GDP. The production structure was related with the geographical distribution of the population: nearly 39% of the inhabitants were located in rural areas. In terms of economic policies, the country had started to apply the recommendations contained in the 1950 World Bank Commission (López, 1998). Just prior to the National Front, the Colombian economy

had a growth rate of 6%, an outstanding figure for that historic context, but was starting to face both fiscal and monetary pressures, the first ones arising from publically financed infrastructure projects and their subsequent impact over a fiscal deficit mostly financed with primary emission and with significant concerns over the balance of payments.

The beginning of the NF goes along with one of the administrative features that would shape the administration of economic policy all through this stage. One of the first measures (1958) of the Lleras Camargo administration was an administrative reform aimed to face fiscal instability, which was attributed to the international crisis of coffee prices and the lack of coordination over the economic policy (López, 1998: 334). The reform (Law 19 of 1958), created the National Planning Department (DNP) and the National Council for Planning and Economic Policy (CONPES). The existence of these two institutions reduced the dependence of recurrent short-term expert commissions appointed either for specific thematic purposes or to support the elaboration of the National Development Plan, a responsibility of each administration. The government could resort to the CONPES for technical discussion and decision of economic measures and the DNP would be responsible for the National Development Plan. This reform may very well be seen as a structural effort to provide an institutional arrangement beyond the short-term organization that either the liberal or conservative governments were able to provide to the economic and social policy.

The structural relationship between the deficit on the balance of payments (generated by the interaction between coffee exports, foreign reserves, external debt and fiscal deficit) was first modified by the policies implanted in 1967, but the changes only managed to maintain prices' relative stability until 1970, when the inflation rate started to grow with a high, stable rate,

which by 1974, when the National Front finished, had reached 26.04%. According to Ocampo (1987:268), this inflation, though much lower than the Latin American average, damaged politically the NF.

In order to introduce the fiscal dimension, it may be said that Colombia's macroeconomic performance throughout the NF seems to be the result of different interactions between a persistent public deficit, high dependence on the resources provided by either good coffee trade outcomes or increasing external debt, and the monetary dilemma between exchange rate devaluation and inflation (which happened to be influenced by the lack of discipline on prices' stability generated by the "promotion loans" policy). One account, provided by Meisel (1996:10), suggests the following periodization of the NF macroeconomic performance: a stop and go period until the creation of the Monetary Board in 1963, a transition between 1963 and 1967, and finally between 1967 to 1974. . In the first period, given the fixed exchange rate policy, monetary expansions (greatly supported by the "promotion loans" policy which actually expanded the monetary base) led to revaluation pressures over the real exchange rate (thereby nominal exchange rate devaluations) that eventually started all over again the inflationary cycle. The 1963-1967 period actually seems to be an odd one, hard to explain just through macroeconomic data. According to GRECO's figures, the public deficit fell from \$736'000.000 in 1964 to a positive figure of \$54'000.000 in 1966! How could this have happened? One of the potential explanations is foreign aid. As Fajardo (2003: 16) emphasizes, between 1962 and 1966, the US balance of payments aid provided to Colombia through the AFP reached nearly U\$204'000.000. According to Avella (2004: 250) by 1966, AFP loans (AID ones in this case) amounted to nearly 30% of the external public debt. The author suggests that a combination of factors (the 33% devaluation in 1962, the outstanding

loans provided by the AFP at the end of 1962, and the 40% wage increase of 1963) led to a strange situation where public deficit fell while inflation grew up.

What about the real sector's outcomes? Ocampo (1987: 262) claims that the economic platform of the National Front emphasized the structural economic development strategy conceived in the early 1950s. The falling tendency of international coffee prices (from mid 1950s onwards) invited a more aggressive imports-substitution model. Financial support to industrial development was provided by the "promotion loans" policy, which involved both the Central Bank and industrial development financial funds. As a whole, the average rate of economic growth (i.e. real GDP growth rate) for the National Front period was 5.37%. Counting by presidential periods and not surprisingly, given the balance of payments deficit already described, the Valencia administration (1962-1966) faced a lower growth rate (4.7%) than the Lleras Camargo one (1958-1962, 5.3%). After the structural reforms related with the exchange rate, strict control of imports and development of an export manufacturing sector, all of them supported by an expanding public expenditure fiscal policy, the Lleras Restrepo government actually increased the economic growth rate to 5.75%, which got even higher during the Pastrana administration (with specific and big scale stimuli for the construction sector), reaching a performance peak for the NF of 6.5%. As we have already said, one of the main macroeconomic trade-offs of these achievements were the two-digit inflation rates, which however never went out of control (and which by then were rather low in the Latin American context).

According to Ocampo (1987), the behavior of the foreign trade outcomes was stable for all the four decades after the II World War. It was shaped by two main variables: the coffee trade

and the excessively slow diversification of the export goods. It was this second variable, Ocampo says, that proved to have a different pattern in the National Front years: as diversification of exports depended highly of policy measures, the policy that aimed to promote exports actually started in 1959, got radically strengthened in 1967 and finished in 1974. Minor exports (which exclude gold, coffee and oil), which were 7% of total exports between 1955-1959, increased between 1960-1964 their share to 12%, up to 23.7% for 1965-1969 and 40% of total exports for 1970-1974. But actually they represented an increasing slice of a shrinking cake: the total value of exports was falling, due to the slow growth of coffee exports. The international price of coffee influenced the Colombian economy by both increasing/reducing the effective demand of coffee growers and through the availability of foreign reserves.

The whole process of social development that came parallel to this economic landscape was characterized by a more dramatic transformation. During the third quarter of the XXth Century Colombia went through the main stages of its demographic transition. According to this concept, all through their process of development, societies managed to reduce their mortality rates by both reducing external (mostly related to crime and violence) and preventing (related with advances on public health) internal causes of death. According to Flórez (2000: 10), all this was possible because of the incorporation of prevention-oriented criteria to the public health policy in the mid 1950s, the increasing levels of public expenditure on health and the improvement of the population's standards of life, being urbanization (internal migration) one of the ways through this improvement was achieved.

Regarding internal migration, the period between 1951 and 1973 shows an extremely dramatic transformation of the population patterns in the country: Colombia evolved from

being a rural country to an urban one. Between 1951 and 1963 the annual average rural-urban migration rate was 2.3%. This migratory flow increased in the 1964-1973 years, going up to 3.3% (Banguero et al., 1983). Summing up, it can be said that between 1950 and 1975 the internal migration process led to a specific regional landscape for Colombia, in terms of gender (rural-urban migration had female prevalence), age profiles (mostly young migrants), urban concentration but not in only one city, and a geographical and causal pattern of violence with regions which either expelled population or actually received forced migrants (Flórez, 2000; Guzmán, 1968; Guataquí, 2005). The relationship between internal migration, economic development and regional imbalances is very strong. Cárdenas and Pontón (1993) make two important points about it. First, regional imbalances (at least those related to the disparity on regional per capita GDP growth) fell at a 4% rate between 1951 and 1985. Second, this reduction is mainly been explained by internal migration from regions with low rates of GDP growth per capita, to regions with high ones. Finally, following the argument presented in the previous paragraph, the authors actually find a positive relationship between violence and migration.

Actually, it may be said that social development as a whole was handled in a more constant and structural perspective than macroeconomic policy. Between 1953 and 1964 there was an improvement in both the housing conditions and access to public services for the poor: earth-floored houses as a share of the housing profile fell from 53% to 38%, houses built with poor materials fell to from 90% to 51%, houses with aqueduct access increased their share from 29% to 39% and those ones with sewerage services went up from 32% to 41%. For the 1964-1973 period, aqueduct access grew up to 63% and sewerage services access grew to 68%.

Infant mortality rates also fell, but this responded to more long term trends, starting at least in the 1930s. For our specific period of concern, child mortality rates fell by more of 50% over a 20 years period: from rates of 124 per thousand births in the 1951-1964 period, to 56.7 for the 1975-1980 one. Rico-Velasco (1992) attributes this outstanding improvement to the fact that the incidence of most of the diseases related with high mortality rates tend to be quickly reduced by preventive health programs. It is undeniable that these remarkable improvements in living conditions and health indicators were the result of a huge institutional effort, which combined centralization of policies and fiscal management with regional decentralization of administrative duties. Public expenditure, as a share of GDP, grew up from 10% in the early 1950s to 18% in the 1970s. From the social policy point of view, the starting point was a clause, included in the 1957 Plebiscite, according to which 10% of national budget would be assigned to finance primary school, a line of thought that also gave priority to public health expenditure. Finally, the Lleras Camargo (1958-1962) started the first massive housing program. Nonetheless, lobbying capability and voting power (as a function of population levels) clearly led to the exclusion of some regions in terms budget allocation and services' provision (see Table ?, Bottom 20% on Convergence Indicators 1950 – 1999). Both regional and local budget allocations were subject to factionalism, a point that we will go on detail in the next section.

4. The defeat of reformism¹³

So Colombia was a society in full process of growth, urbanization, and modernization. Indeed several problems remained –a relatively high inflation, which however was way below the Latin American average-- and an increasing fiscal strain –about which exactly the same can

¹³ In this section we draw on Gutiérrez, 2007.

be predicated--. The developmental model of the country, typically gradualist and carefully managed to escape the boom and boost cycles of many other Latin American countries, did not deliver spectacular growth, but produced quite consistent outcomes; actually, the best in the last fifty years (in terms of growth and inequality, see Table5).

If Colombia was at least as healthy economically as its neighbors, it was more violent. It had just survived a civil war that pitted the traditional parties against each other, and produced a huge number of deaths¹⁴. As said above, Carlos Lleras's aphorism --according to which the country never quite returned to full normalcy—is correct. However, as a pacification project the NF was anything but a failure, despite the fact that it faced difficult conditions. At the outset there was a host of potential spoilers --from General Rojas and supporters of the previous military regime to radical conservatives who felt that delivering power to the Liberals was outright treason-, but they were gradually neutralized. Despite the orders at the top by leaders of the two parties, many Liberal guerrillas and Conservative right wing hit-men (the so called *pájaros*) kept active in the regions, and in some of them networked with criminals and politicians to produce fearsome regional structures with the capacity of challenging the state (for example, in the emerald producing region at the West of the department of Boyacá, Guerrero Baron, 1991¹⁵). As a product of *La Violencia*, a sector of liberal peasants had radicalized, and some started to adopt an ideology that went beyond self defense against the conservative regime. This originated the Bloque Sur and eventually the FARC, a guerrilla movement associated with the Communist Party whose members were already weathered veterans of the *La Violencia* episodes. The existence of a peasant sector that knew how to fight and had managed to challenge the government and survive was

¹⁴ Several of the standard estimations are probably problematic. The figures offered by students range from 200 000 to 300 000, in nearly 10 years (for a population of 9-10 million inhabitants).

¹⁵ See also Sánchez and Meertens, 1983

catalyzed by the Cuban revolution, which enthused thousands of youngsters throughout Latin America. However, while in the rest of the continent armed resistance was generally rather inept¹⁶ and the rule was that it was rapidly crushed, in Colombia –due to various factors, including the mountains and a combination of previously existing skills and traditions—it was a much tougher nut to crack. Even then, the performance of the NF with respect to insurgency cannot be derided. None of the several insurgent denominations that were created in the mid 1960's was able to grow. For example, in 1978 the FARC was still a very small force (780 people in arms, Ferro and Uribe, 2004), and the other ones were even more minuscule (see for example Velez, 1999 and Medina Gallego, 2002). We do not know if armed struggle was attractive for broad sectors of the population, and then for which ones (opinion polls only start to be performed systematically at the end of the NF). We do know that some popular leaders –notably priest Camilo Torres Restrepo—were attracted by the example set by the guerrillas¹⁷, and that an important sector of the youth –especially in the universities—held radical sympathies. Nonetheless, the guerrillas were rather isolated politically. Broderick speaks about the “imaginary war” waged by the ELN (2000), in complete dissociation with respect to the main of political, social and economic life of the country. Perhaps the struggle of the FARC and its predecessor structures was a bit less imaginary. By 1962 it stepped into the limelight¹⁸, when it was denounced in the parliament by a Conservative faction as leading “independent republics” in the South of the country¹⁹. The “republics” were bombed, but the organization survived, achieving thus an important military (and probably political) success. However, it rapidly lost momentum. By 1970 it was fully isolated, and it was a marginal rural group. The Communist Party (CoP), even

¹⁶ We have to wait until the late 1970's/ early 1980's to find other serious armed challenges, this time in Central America and Perú.

¹⁷ Eventually Torres joined the ELN and was killed in combat.

¹⁸ More precisely: the peasant nuclei that eventually would constitute the FARC.

¹⁹ This was probably much more a result of the internal factional dynamics of the CP than of the true importance of the so called “independent republics”.

controlling for exclusion, did not perform well in the electoral terrain²⁰. The frequent claim that somehow the NF “legitimized” insurgency (Cárdenas; Junguito and Pachón, 2005) has to be nuanced. Nor was the NF militarily inert; indeed, it is the period where the guerrillas got worse results (including today). The ELN was crushed in the Anorí operation²¹. The FARC also received hard blows (for example, in 1967, Ferro, 2002). Other denominations did not fare better. There is one important exception –the M-19--, but we will treat it separately.

Criminality became an NF highlight, as happens with rapidly urbanizing societies, a feature of the demographic transition that we have already pointed out. The NF leaders faced a host of new problems posed by demographics and social change, and not always provided deft solutions. Even then, as can be seen in Figure 3, both politically caused and aggregated homicides had a notable slump during the NF. This picture is tentative²², but other evidences suggest that it is not incorrect. For sure at some point the most lucid NF leaders felt that they had not quite achieved full normalcy, but that they were almost there.

Then, why the experience eventually lost the main of its popular support? In effect, at the end of the NF the prevalent feeling was rejection and bitterness, and an urgent call for change. That this is the case seems beyond reasonable doubt. The issue can be evaluated from at least three points of view. First, the very first professional opinion polls made in Colombia found that: a) the majority of respondents gave poor marks to the NF experience; b) the degree of

²⁰ It cannot be claimed that the CoP was victim of high levels of repression during the NF (in the 1980's it became the target of a murderous offensive). It was institutionally excluded, as any non-traditional competitor, and object of monitoring and some episodes of selective repression. The CoP and other forces were brutally repressed (certainly, victims of a politicized) in the 1980's.

²¹ It only made a comeback years after, when different people and ideas instilled new life into the old acronym. Medina Gallego, 1996.

²² Because homicide –especially political homicide-- data sets are convenience, not statistical samples. There is a way out of this problem, but it is generally highly demanding in informational terms. See Ball, 1996, who has established the golden standard in the field.

support to the NF separated respondents with respect to age and socio-economic condition. Both the older and the richer were more favorable, or less allergic, to the NF. Second, the increasing alienation of vast sectors of the population with respect to politics may have found an outlet in electoral abstention. Indeed, it is not easy to read into the phenomenon, as abstention can mean several things at different moments. However, the very low, and falling, rates of participation (see Table 2) seemed to indicate a growing sense of apathy. As if on any case²³ both parties would get half of the pie, and if no other force could participate, why bother to vote? Third, and perhaps more importantly, the malaise with the NF found an electoral expression. Table 3 counts the votes of three types of candidate: a) official NF ones; b) dissident NF (i.e., traditional politicians who challenged the official NF bipartisan nomination); c) anti-NF candidates. As can be seen, there was a practically constant fall in the second category, and a correlative increase in the first and third one. At the end of the experience, its upholders were quite isolated²⁴.

There are basically three reasons for the NF deterioration. The first one is that power sharing became too tight. Contrary to other Latin American experiences (for example in Venezuela and Perú) the NF excluded the participation of the left. It has been claimed that the reason for this specificity—which indeed exists, as in neighboring countries like Venezuela or Perú other type of dynamics can be found—is self interest. There was much of this, but the fundamental problems seem to have been the need to provide effective guarantees to entice the CP to go

²³ For example, in Puerto Boyacá, a small municipality, the preferences were overwhelmingly pro-LP, and to find the people to occupy the CP posts at the municipal council became a problem.

²⁴ Note the type of problems posed by the specific type of NF exclusion. Opponents and dissidents could run for the presidency, but would not win; only the NF candidate could. From the very beginning, a LP splinter group leader posed the following question: what would happen if a non NF candidate defeated the official one? A destabilizing dual legitimacy would take place (Gutierrez, 2007). This is more or less what happened in 1970.

into the agreement²⁵. A substantial part of the CP leadership feared that the Liberals would be unable to resist the temptation of using their dominant position in the electorate to marginalize the Conservatives. But strictly protecting the most important minority had several noxious unintended consequences. The guarantees for the minority in the power sharing scheme may have precluded a more open and smooth evolution. Furthermore, the reach of the scheme itself was too comprehensive. For example, it included the judiciary. This undermined the system of checks and balances. Nonetheless, it would be wrong to go too far on this assertion, as there were many examples of Congressional, judiciary, and constitutional control during the NF. On the other hand, whenever there was a convergence of interests of the politicians of both parties, they could easily coordinate all the branches of the public power to short circuit any type of restriction, including legal ones. In towns and municipalities, for example, traditional leaders were able to create stable fiefdoms by the control of the municipal council, the mayor²⁶ and the judiciary. At the national level, the politicians had the power of setting their own salaries and travel agendas, and they were not above using this prerogative as a bargaining chip, especially when the executive needed the urgent approval of critical bills. Power sharing thus rapidly became a symbol of aloofness and corruption. By the end of the NF, not only the pact, but also politicians in general, were victims of broad discredit (Samper, 1978).

The second reason is that the reformist agenda failed –or went too slow, which according to the mentality of NF politicians themselves boiled down to the same outcome: reforms had to occur fast, or would not have their antiviolence properties-. As said above, the prevalent

²⁵ During la Violencia, the CP affirmed that the LP was a communist Trojan horse. This was Laureano Gómez' preferred thesis. Gómez was the Conservative leader defenestrated by General Rojas, and a signatory of Sitges and Benidorm.

²⁶ The latter was appointed by the governor. One of the key criteria of performance was the ability to maintain "political peace", i.e., obtain the approval of powerful local politicians. In these conditions, it was easy to discipline any mayor, even if he was reformist or not an insider.

interpretation of this failure is that it was due to the tight closure of the system. This is only partly true. Indeed, the institutional exclusion of the left and of the partisans of General Rojas—who eventually formed a force called *Alianza Nacional Popular, ANAPO*—must have weakened the transformative power of the political system. However, this exclusion was in some senses rather formal. For example, ANAPO held throughout a parliamentary representation; its members in the legislative branch simply had to declare Liberal or Conservative affiliations before occupying their seat, but afterwards they could operate without further restrictions. The CoP was much smaller, but even then it was able to make it to the legislative in alliance with a Liberal splinter group, the MRL. Furthermore, neither the ANAPO nor the CoP was in a better position than the traditional parties to push forward the agenda of macro-reforms (mainly but not only, the agrarian one). The ANAPO did have increasing power, but lacked the skills. The CoP probably had neither. So institutional exclusion only explains a part of the impotence of the reformist drive.

At least two additional factors—one institutional, the other one related to the dynamics of the political system—must be taken into account. Let us start with the institutional one: supermajorities. Despite the fact that the supermajority rule (SR) was relaxed somewhat in the 1968 Constitutional Reform (Varios, 1969), it remained a fundamental piece of the architecture of the pact throughout. In practice, the SR entailed giving big chunks of power to small minorities, and thus fostering the proliferation of veto actors. This is illustrated in Table 4A, which analyzes an electoral scenario in the Lower House in 1962²⁷. The situation was the following. The majority of the members of the House belonged to the NF coalition. There was one ANAPO member, one NF defector, and the MRL, the Left wing Liberal splinter group which in turn had two wings (“hard” and “soft”) (for the details, see Table 4A). Given

²⁷ For details, see Gutiérrez, 2007.

this distribution, there were several scenarios: the MRL voted together or separated, etc. Utilizing a standard voting power index –the Banzhaf Index—it can be seen that, while using the standard quota the NF bloc had all the power, but with the SR, the NF and MRL blocs had the same amount of power. As these scenarios are a simplification –we will see in a moment that intra NF discipline was very poor—the real life contrast was even neater. The simple implication is that to pass any bill the government had to negotiate carefully with every Liberal and Conservative faction. Otherwise, the proposal ran a high risk of being defeated. As a matter of fact, transcriptions of the debates on the agrarian reform show how obvious this specter was for all the actors involved. That this was common knowledge only increased the vetoing power created by the SR. With the gradual increase of dissident and anti NF vote, the situation became more and more critical.

This had an immediate connection with the second factor –the evolution of the political system-. The Colombian parties had always allowed latitude to factionalism. However, when entering the NF, they were –especially the CP—severely divided. In terms of macro reforms, there was a sector which staunchly opposed them. On the other hand, the NF was based on a state-community pact –institutionalized through an association of neighbors, the *Juntas de Acción Comunal*²⁸-- according to which the basic elements for the developmental process were contributed in the following way: the state provided the goods and the infrastructure, and the community the manual work (think in this scheme applied to the building of a bridge, for example). The intermediary between both was the traditional politician. The politician was necessary both to identify needs and to identify loyalties (both to the NF and to its components parties). Very rapidly the scheme implied a great empowerment of petty politicians in the regions, at the cost of the center. This can be seen through the brutal growth

²⁸ Also a creature of the Alliance for Progress.

of factionalism²⁹ in both parties, especially within the LP. At the end of the National Front, the LP was presenting more lists than seats in the majority of electoral districts (Gutiérrez, 2007), which is an ostensibly suboptimal practice (at least some votes will be squandered). So it can only be explained as a product of a growing autonomy of politicians with respect to their parties. Regional bosses were being increasingly empowered, and starting to become as important vote gatherers as the party identity. They were rather anti reformist, intimately linked as they were to backward agrarian regional elites; in some departments they were actually THE representatives of those elites (Escobar, Cristina; 1998; Reyes, Alejandro, 1978). They had strong incentives try to capture individual rents from their political activity, given their position of brokers. On a vicious circle, their factional activity was rewarded with strong voting power –which allowed them to blackmail, and thus to increase their possibility of capturing rents-.

Now it is easy to understand why macro reforms, like the agrarian one, failed³⁰. Using Sartori's lingo (1987), traditional parties had *fractions* –i.e., national, ideological trends—and *factions* –regional and local, pork oriented, groupings-. Of the former, an important CP once opposed social reform. Of the latter, all of them had good reasons –both because of their links to regional elites and their interests as brokers- to block bills and ask for perks to allow them to pass. Activist presidents had to overcome both obstacles, which were formidable, given the pro-peace institutional designs. For example, the 1968 constitutional reform process, was extremely traumatic. Actually, in order to pass the reform through, president Carlos Lleras

²⁹ Please note that in purely electoral terms, this phenomenon makes no sense IF the party is the unit of analysis: parties had nothing to gain dividing their forces, as their 50% share of the posts was guaranteed.

³⁰ Note that many Colombia's neighbors (Perú, Ecuador, Bolivia) were able to make theirs, under non democratic regimes.

had to offer regional politicians a more permanent and substantial access to pork, which increased their power even more³¹ (Varios, 1969).

Summing up, it is not the case that the NF was devoid of any reformist program. Rather the contrary is the case: it was rather obsessed with it. In some cases, reform was implemented, like in national economic planning and macroeconomic policy. In others, such as infrastructure and public services, implementation was carried out, with rather complex results though, as in many regions planning was captured by clientelistic cliques. Regarding agrarian reform, the Alliance for Progress and its call for prophylactic social change found the Colombian elites rather well prepared. Several sectors, especially, but not only of the LP, had studied it on detail and were aware of the political and technical difficulties it could face (see for example Hirschman, 1977). They also believed on its anti subversive and anti violence potential. In 1961 several tries were promoted by president Alberto Lleras, with modest progress. At any rate, the basic motives of prophylactic reformism surfaced with great intensity during the Congress discussions of the agrarian reform bills. In 1966, the agenda was revived, as the newly elected president, Carlos Lleras, was its main ideologue (and had a first class technical knowledge of the problem³²). To push it forward, Lleras promoted a peasant association, ANUC –acronym for *Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos*—which eventually became the biggest peasant movement in Latin America (Zamosc, 1978). Lleras calculated that pressure from above plus pressure from below, plus benevolent indifference from the United States, were nearly ideal conditions for reformist success. However, the staunch opposition of the rural elites and feet dragging of politicians, including those of his own party, substantially watered down the proposal and eventually blocked it.

³¹ He also –ritually—resigned expecting that, as it happened, he would be asked to not leave power.

³² He had been working on it for thirty years.

Under these conditions, the ANUC leadership was conquered –against Lleras’ previsions— by radical cadres of different radical ideological (Maoist, Trotskyist, etc) hues. On the other hand, the strongest link between big landowners and regional/local politicians happen to be held in what was probably the main LP –Lleras’s party—stronghold: the Atlantic Coast. Atlantic Coast landowners had the power to electorally punish the LP if things happen to go too far. Instead of convergent pressures, Lleras found himself in a scenario of loss of control. The next, and last, NF government eventually buried the reform, something formalized in the Chicoral Pact (1972) between the government and landowners.

This was typical NF *inmovilismo*. On the meantime, broad sectors of the public opinion were getting increasingly impatient, as both the activity in the streets and electoral results were showing. In the 1970’s, the majority of votes went to non-official NF candidates (see Table 4A). The official one managed to beat ANAPO’s General Rojas by a razor edge margin. Lleras was accused of stealing the elections. While this has not been fully proven, it is a fact that the free transmission of news about electoral results was abruptly interrupted just when Rojas was taking the upper hand. This “robbery” radicalized a sector of the ANAPO which had roots in the masses. From this process a new guerrilla was born, the M-19. While the M-19 –which reinserted in 1990, see Annex-- was not particularly militarily strong, it did had a much more powerful political voice than the other guerrillas. It was able to bring the war to the center of the political stage. But this already goes beyond our period.

The epilogue goes as follows. At the end of the NF, the traditional parties were undergoing a deep change. They were increasingly being captured by regional brokers. Additionally, a new type of guerrilla had appeared, because finally the institutional closure of the NF got

activated. The NF power sharing scheme did not have any clear and viable response to the eventuality that it could happen to get defeated in the elections, as one of its foundational assumptions was that “each party constitutes half of the country” (Alberto Lleras, 1958).

It was under these conditions that –by the mid 1970’s—the country got linked to the global markets of marihuana and eventually coca. Not by chance, these crops rapidly grew in regions –like the south of the country-- where the state was extremely weak, there was no infrastructure, and had very low demographic density. For a country that always looks to its own political belly, they did not see it coming. Regionalized politics, high levels of corruption, new and powerful anti-system motives, new rents that entailed the incorporation of big stateless areas of the country to illegal global markets, happen to be an explosive combination. By the end of the 1970’s, the country was already in a very severe process of heating up.

We have shown in this account how the power sharing, peace, reformist, and development designs all got in the way of each other. The mechanisms through which this happened are rather easy to identify. They were:

- a. Vicious circles. For example, regional budgets approval fosters fragmentation, empowerment of small groups, which again fosters fragmentation
- b. Timing issues. Windows of opportunity open and close. The political processes that allow agents to take profit of the opening may last longer than the period in which the window is open.

- c. Existence of perilous skills and their combination. One of the problems of reconstruction after a wave of violence is that there are thousands of people who have the knowledge and the capacity of organizing and structuring violence (Lleras Camargo, 1958). One of the problems of power sharing is that it can marginalize players that know how to compete politically and mobilize the masses. These skills are not necessarily held by the same actors, but a result of some institutional arrays is to produce alliances between those who have them.
- d. Complexity: The attainment of a desirable objective blocks the attainment of another one. Guarantees to minorities empowered fractions and factions, which stalled the reformist and developmental drive.

5. The meaning and context of the C1991

All through the late 1970's and early 1980's, there were two important developments. First, war and violence severely increased in intensity. The south of the country became a stronghold of guerrilla influence. Second, the interaction between organized crime and a highly fragmented polity went out of control. In particular, the main party of the political system, the LP, was captured by a set of factions that expressed a pork oriented, in the benevolent version, or criminalized, in the worse one, type of politics. This new version – which was highly regionalized, and acted as a network of departmental electoral bosses—was known as *oficialismo liberal*, or simply *oficialismo*, and became the dominant electoral force in the country. Luis Carlos Galán, a dissident LP leader, launched an offensive against the *oficialismo*, with mixed results, but maintaining a good performance in the capital, Bogotá. When it finally appeared that he was going to win the presidential elections, he got assassinated (in 1990) by the mafia and politicians allied to it.

After some arm twisting, Colombia had subscribed an extradition treaty (1978) with the US. The intent to take it down, or at least neutralize it, became a focal point of the mafia violence, but also of its intents to put the political system at its service. The decade of the 1980's was a period of deep crisis and permanent turbulence (even more than other ones). Thus, by the late 1980's, Colombia was facing the following big scale simultaneous problems:

- a. A medium- intensity political war. The guerrillas had grown rapidly. The FARC was achieving its 20 000 members peak, and was a structure that had already covered all the country. The ELN was perhaps half its size. Other denominations, smaller and less militarily skilled, did participate in a military alliance, the *Coordinadora Guerrillera Simón Bolívar*. On the other hand, paramilitary groups, created at the beginning of the 1980's by an alliance of narcos, cattle ranchers and agents of the state (Gutiérrez and Barón, 2005) proliferated and also grew quickly.
- b. A terrorist war against the state, declared by the Medellín Cartel, to combat the extradition treaty between Colombia and the United States.
- c. A narco penetration of the state, of which the Cali Cartel was the main, but by far not the only player. Narcos and other criminals systematically penetrated the police, the army, and the political system.
- d. A fracture between the national and regional demands to be processed by the political system. While the former entailed supporting the extradition treaty, human rights, and other moves to legitimize internationally the Colombian state, the former involved the creation of broad anti subversive regional coalitions with the participation of narcos and paramilitaries, and the use of a very broad tolerated repertoire of violence (Savage Restraint, Leal and Zamosc, 1990) to evict the guerrillas and to control social movements.

- e. The chronically rural nature of traditional politics being held against a radically increasing urban country. Socio-economic forces, including violence were changing the political map.

When violence and corruption went out of hand, and threatened to jeopardize the international conditions for the stability of the Colombian state –for example in 1989 the majority of the LP voted in favor of a reform which would submit extradition to popular vote³³-, president Virgilio Barco used a legal artifice to push forward a Constitutional Assembly (CA), which eventually got summoned in the next administration (Gaviria, 1990-1994). In the meantime, four presidential candidates –including the probable winner— were assassinated.

The 1990 presidential and CA elections, revealed how deep was the crisis of the Colombian political system. In the period immediately preceding the CA, the M-19, had demobilized, along with a host of smaller groups. The M-19 had pursued a less than optimal military strategy and had already been substantially weakened as a military force (Gutiérrez, 2002). At the same time, it had always had much better political skills than the other guerrillas, and was born from a process –the failed thrust of ANAPO for power—that made it conversant with mass politics from the very beginning. After its reinsertion, the M19 created an alliance --the AD-M19, *Alianza Democrática M 19*— which made a spectacular showing, arriving second and capturing nearly a third of the seats. The other aspect is that in those elections,

³³ This favored the narcos. It is highly probable that extradition would have been defeated in that moment.

summoned to relegitimize politics and the state, the electoral output was lower than the historical average³⁴.

The CA happened to become a very complicated artifact, and many of its key aspects are as yet sub analyzed. For our purposes it would suffice to say that:

- a. It expressed several convergences and alliances. First one, between modernizing traditional and non-traditional politicians, in order to transform the system and evict corrupt and pre-modern practices. Second one, between two notions of modernization: the Neoliberal Program of president Gaviria and the one based on the promotion of social and regional movements (Fals Borda, 1986) and on the celebration of ethnic and cultural diversity. Third alliance, between pro-state technocrats and social leaderships. The tensions between them were temporarily bridged by the fact that the main target of both was the premodern political system.
- b. It was supposed to be a peace pact –or perhaps a set of pacts. Since it came after the negotiated reincorporation of the M-19 and the EPL –by then militarily in bad shape-, and given the fact that the M-19 was utterly successful in the electoral terrain, it could symbolically express this. It also aspired to entice the FARC to a peace negotiation, an effort that aborted in a very traumatic way. Last but not least, in a silent and restrained way, it also addressed the interests of the narcos –this time not as in a 1989 criminalized way (as we referred to the Congress vote against extradition) but as a part of a national reconstruction program. Extradition of Colombian nationals was

³⁴ There are at least two possible, and competitive, interpretations about this phenomenon. The first one is that in the CA elections no pork was involved, so the only people who participated were those who genuinely wanted to express their preferences. The second one is that the CA addressed the interests and passions of only a sector –e.g., the Bogotá middle class—of the population; perhaps a particularly shrill, but not a particularly big, one. Until now, nobody has tried to settle the issue through systematic analysis.

banned (Tokatlian, 1997)³⁵. Indeed, this was eventually followed by the surrender of the leaders of the Medellín Cartel, including its boss, Pablo Escobar. However, Escobar was jailed under such comfortable conditions and had such a wide margin of maneuver to continue his criminal activities –*The Cathedral* was the name of the jail especially arranged for him— that very soon the war with the narcos continued with even more intensity.

- c. It was seen by its architects as an effort to open up the Colombian economy, its political system, and its society. These three openings were considered isomorphic. Regarding the economic *Apertura*, the program is described below –it basically corresponded to a set of neoliberal reforms, which actually with nuances and context-driven specificities, was implemented throughout Latin America in the 1990’s. Regarding the political system, the main effort was to lower the formal entry barriers of new political actors. As by then these were fairly low³⁶ and the Colombian electoral quota was one of the most proportional in the world³⁷, the main step was to institutionalize “participatory democracy”, a set of devices associated with decentralization that allowed citizens to engage in forms of participation, different from voting. The electoral menu was also significantly broadened, though. Mayors – who, thanks to a 1986 reform should be elected from 1988 onwards—were given new attributions at the constitutional level. Popular election of governors was introduced. The senate –which was voted by departmental districts—was now elected by a single, national district, which made the elections even more proportional. With respect to society, the defense of individual rights was significantly strengthened, through the *Acción de Tutela*, which allowed citizens to present a complaint to the judiciary – without the intermediation of a lawyer—if their fundamental rights were jeopardized.

³⁵ Eventually, it was reintroduced by a constitutional reform by president Samper (Tokatlian, 1997).

³⁶ The NF constraints had long disappeared. On the other hand, the opposition was being regularly assassinated.

³⁷ The Hare quota.

New groups that represented the modern, diverse Colombia –from religious denominations different from the Catholic to sexual minorities- promoted and utilized these changes.

- d. Facing Criminality. The C1991 was an explicit effort to fully reintroduce politics into legality. It also created key agencies to deal with criminality.
- e. It was also a social, egalitarian bet. Indigenous peoples and Afro-Colombians were empowered, and received important assets (especially lands, through the creation of *resguardos*).
- f. As shown in the previous points, decentralization was strongly emphasized.

One may wonder if this set of aspirations and proposals was internally consistent. Against the optimistic version –that it was—it must be noted that the final form of the C1991 came through bargaining (Gutierrez, 2007). The different versions of modernization were negotiated by mutual concessions, each actor trying to guarantee the constitutionalization of its own program (Gutierrez, 2002). This is one of the reasons for which the C1991 is so prolix.

As seen above, the C-1991 was both power-sharing and peace oriented, although in a very different sense than the NF was. C-1991 power sharing was asymmetric, as –despite the spectacular success of the M-19 in the CA elections—the two main parties were deeply rooted, had a wealth of technical cadres and knowledge of the state, etc. (in a moment we will see how consequential this was). It was also diffuse. From a point of view –quite explicitly made in several discourses—it was an effort to establish a pact between politicians and the civil society, so that the latter did not feel marginalized and excluded from decision making.

In practice, this meant trying to fill the yawning gap between an increasingly criminalized, many a times rural-oriented, traditional politics, and an urban public opinion. Peace making also went in a different direction. While the NF had incorporated the main contenders of a civil war to the pact, which had involved society as a whole, the C1991 tried to manage a confrontation in which the main of the citizenry felt as spectators. The peace was made with the weakest –militarily- groups. This wasn't necessarily bad. The architects of the process believed that an opening and legitimizing of politics, plus positive public examples (for example, despite the assassination of its presidential candidate in 1990, the M19 did not suffer a butchery as the Unión Patriótica did) would eventually produce a strong pro-peace environment. Neither was wrong the notion that the system needed more legitimacy. Opinion polls in the period show that the politicians were by then as discredited as the guerrillas and the paramilitary (Gutiérrez, 2007).

However, from the beginning things did not result as expected. Both figures and qualitative descriptions reveal that the war increased in intensity. Neoliberal reforms triggered against them a high degree of social mobilization –but probably significantly less than the Latin American standards. Nonetheless, the economy grew, but at a lower level than the NF average (see Table 9). In 1998-9 there was a deep slump in the economy, which combined with the increased conflict, all lead to a huge humanitarian crisis, mostly expressed on homicides, emigration and forced displacement.

6. The economic dimension

Accordingly, the 1990s have proven to be the most bizarre decade in terms of economic development for Colombia. Following the sequence applied to the NF period, we will start by describing the institutional economic background and from it we will go to the economic and social indicators.

The Gaviria administration (1990-1994) assembled a whole set of reforms in order to provide institutional support to the new economic model (mostly explicitly based on the opening of trade). His government also gave full implementation to the political and fiscal decentralization process that had already been started in the mid 1980s. Following Lozano (2001), these structural reforms were:

- a. Trade Reform: It both included institutional measures (creation of a Foreign Trade Ministry, an information and regulation agency – Incomex, a promotion institution – ProExport, and a financial front – Bancoldex) and policy measures (reduction of imports' nominal tariff from 49.4% to 11.7%).
- b. Exchange Administration Reform: Despite providing open right to trade with foreign currencies, the crawling peg exchange rate regime was maintained until 1994, when it got replaced by exchange rate bands. By the end of the 1990s (sept. 1999), a free floating exchange rate system was implanted.
- c. Financial Reform: Among many policy measures, the ones related with the Central Bank are the most important. They redefined the relationships between the monetary authority and the government: inability to make i) direct loans to the Government, ii) subsidized (“promotion”) loans to specific sectors. Additionally, the financial sector was opened to foreign investment and property.
- d. Employment Reforms: Aimed to both extend social security systems and to provide more flexible employment conditions. The social security framework was modified to

create an individual pension regime, a new public health system, working safety and to make workers' hiring and firing conditions more internationally competitive.

Maybe due to the fact that these decentralization processes, both political and fiscal, had already started in the mid 1980s, Lozano does not mention fiscal decentralization. However, and as will be seen later on, this reform is paramount on understanding Colombia's irregular economic performance, and perhaps, we argue, the deepening of regional structural imbalances that actually can be related with either persistence or emergence of conflict.

Simultaneous with the reforms listed, and reforming the budget/planning centralization and administrative decentralization processes of the NF, the 1991 Constitution included a whole set of policy duties and fiscal resources that should be transferred to the regional political divisions (departments and municipalities). Following these, for example, the share of the National Current Income actually being transferred from the central budget to regions went from 14% in 1993 to 22% in 2001.

When approaching a structural macroeconomic evaluation of the 1990s period in Colombia, the complex interactions between fiscal, monetary and real outcomes lead to different interpretations. Perhaps a clearer perspective can be obtained by specific thematic descriptions. Regarding the fiscal front, it may be said that, among the many structural reforms that took place in the early 1990s, some of them did have a fiscal impact, although not all of them were structurally oriented. Some were explicitly oriented to face the public deficit. At least eight national tax reforms took place in this 10 year period. As a whole, the Colombian fiscal performance through the 1990s was rather disappointing and can be divided in two more or less distinct sub-periods. One of them goes from 1990 to 1995, when the average fiscal deficit was -0.04 measured as a share of GDP. Between 1995 and 2000, it increased dramatically and steadily, reaching an average of -3.34%. Actually, the 1990s fiscal experience suggests that despite the structural reforms, the fiscal imbalances persist and

reflect political dynamics and a high structural dependence of the rate of growth of the economy.

Perhaps, given the wide range and reach of all the structural reforms listed, it is not surprising to find that most of the evaluations related with the Colombian fiscal performance in the 1990s actually put the blame of the fiscal performance outcomes on the economic factors and not in the political ones, as happened during the National Front period. Some of the suggested economic pressures are:

- Transfers generated by the decentralization process.
- Increasing contributions from the government to the new social security system.
- Suboptimal performance of the government's revenue.

These pressures were quite real (in fact both political and economic). Increasing levels of public expenditure came mostly from commitments generated by both the new Constitution and structural reforms. Another significant pressure was internal security expenses. As a share of GDP, central government expenditure grew up from 11% in 1990 to 18% in 1998, and half of this increase can be directly explained by the new expenditure commitments (BID, 2003). Government's revenue, despite of recurrent tax reforms, did not grow at the pace required to face those increases on public expenditure.

Finally, it may be point out that according to the estimations made by Posada and Escobar (2003) of the Barro (1990) model for public expenditure and economic growth, the behavior of the Colombian public expenditure, mainly from mid 1990s onwards, explains the reduction

on the GDP growth rate that took place after 1997. Given the fact of its effective openness to foreign trade and the whole set of structural reforms we have reviewed, the performance of the Colombian economy all through the 1990s actually involved more influences than it used to have in the past. In the first half of the 1990s the economy seemed to be responding accurately. The average GDP rate of growth was 4.51%. From 1996 onwards, we can find the deterioration of macroeconomic conditions, GDP's rate of growth fell to 0.96%. Figure 3 shows the trends for fiscal deficit and economic growth between 1990 and 2000.

In the first half of the 1990s, private investment increased due to real state and construction dynamics, but this did not become a trend. A banking systemic crisis, combined with a contraction of the most dynamic economic activities, all affected in some way by the uncertain outcomes of the Peace Process between FARC and the Pastrana administration, got combined to increase the country's vulnerability to external imbalances. The Russian and Brazilian crisis of 1998-1999 reduced capital flows, and this deeply affected both the trade and fiscal deficits. By 1999 Colombia was facing the most dramatic economic recession in more than 60 years.

Lozano and Aristizábal (2001) support the idea that the fiscal deficit depends on economic growth, and that the prevalence of a structural deficit, combined with low levels of economic growth, actually explain the increasing levels of fiscal deficit found from the mid-nineties onwards; for the authors, in order to achieve substantial deficit reductions, the rate of economic growth must reach levels of 4-5%. For Posada and Escobar (2003) the increasing levels of public expenditure are one of the main explanations for the economic crisis of the late 1990s.

What can be said about economic reforms, development and conflict resolution? To approach this issue as a whole has proven to be a very difficult task, given the complexity of economic, social and political interactions. Nonetheless, there is a paramount fact that could provide us with substantial arguments to support our previous arguments. The point is that despite the fact that the early 1990s structural reforms actually brought significant welfare gains, poverty was only marginally reduced, mostly due to increases on inequality, especially rural-urban one (Bussolo and Lay, 2003). The most important feature of this process is that the high levels of rural poverty have not been reduced. We can argue that an inverse gravitational process (in some sense opposite to the migratory one portrayed by Galvis, 2002) actually affected development outcomes: health, education and poverty indicators are better in urban areas, lower in small towns and much worse in rural areas.

In terms of social development the 1990s witnessed both significant improvements in those indicators and, mostly due to the economic crisis that took place in the end of the decade, a reversion of them. Detailed analysis of the poverty indicators shows the dramatic backward step in social development. Although most of the social indicators related with the long term development process (health and education, mostly) were not deeply affected, those that have a strong relationship with short-term economic outcomes suffered strong negative shocks. The unemployment rate (see Table 6), which by march 1990 was 10.1% and actually by September 1994 have been reduced to 7.58% (the lowest unemployment level ever to be found in the public records) got eventually increased to more than 20% at the end of the decade. This radical deterioration on labor market conditions was also reflected on household incomes and income distribution. Between 1990 and 1999 real labor income by economic sector of activity did not grown in eight out the ten economic sectors³⁸, income inequality

³⁸ According to the DNP calculations, by 1999 labor income in electricity-gas-water, financial services and government services were 125, 149 and 106% of their respective 1990 counterparts.

became even worse as the Gini coefficient got increased from 46% to 53.3% (see Table 6, 1990-1999 labor market outcomes).

Being migration a combination of both social and economic issues, the 1990s have been, as no other period of the Colombian history, the scene for some of the most radical migration flows ever experienced by the country –even more so than during the NF. Multiple factors (internal political conflict, macroeconomic performance, narcotraffic and structural regional disparities, among them) got combined to generate a complex process where all the possible modalities of migration could be found. The emergence and growth of forced displacement is probably one of the most remarkable ones. According to the *Feeding the Tiger* report, from the U.S. Committee for Refugees (1993), the displacement events detected in the early 1990s were part of a forced migration flow, which dated from 1981, intimately related to the growth of the cocaine and heroin cartels and to the conflict. The report predicted –and correctly so– that if the 1993 political conditions persisted, they would eventually lead to a situation with levels of displacement of about 2'000.000 people.

Summing up, if we take decentralization as a potential power-sharing scheme (as Faguet, 2005, points out, policy elites sought to increase the levels of electoral and citizen participation within the existing institutional framework), the economic landscape of the post C-1991 period provided an important lesson regarding the fiscal outcomes of generous schemes. Faguet (op. Cit) shows that municipalities actually responded very well to invest in health, education and public services³⁹ the increasing budget transfers. However, the lack of control over regional budget constraints (which led to increasing sub-national public debt) led to fiscal pressures, the main driver of the late 1990s economic crisis.

³⁹ According to Faguet (2005, p. 13) between 1993 and 2002 investment on education, health and water rose between three and seven times in constant peso terms.

7. Peace making and power sharing after the C1991

In this section we concentrate in the experience of the 1991 Constitution, a big scale reform process with explicit pro-peace objectives. The constitutional reformist impulse started under very favorable auspices, but eventually stagnated. Power sharing between the old political establishment –at least the sector that promoted reform—and demobilized leftist guerrillas hardly took place, and the constitution itself has been subject to major surgery.

All in all, why weren't reform, power sharing and peace making effective? The state started with a big plus: the support of a broad sector of the population, and a genuinely democratic program. This program established adequate connections –in terms of language and of proposals—with the main international trends and actors of the period. And it was supposed that the fall of the Berlin Wall would facilitate the surrender, or at least the reincorporation, of the guerrillas. However:

- a. The C1991 coalition was feeble, and after its dissolution there was no set of actors capable of simultaneously pushing forward reforms in the constitutional spirit AND winning the elections⁴⁰.
- b. The existence of huge illegal rents that fueled both war and corruption, and some aspects of the very modernization of the state that supposedly were to act as anti-violence devices –especially decentralization, in the form it took-, transformed the war and made it more difficult for the state to deal with it using the methods of previous decades.

⁴⁰ This is not the case at the sub national level. At least in big cities some C1991 coalitions were able to do both.

- c. The economic crisis –which did not disrupt the delivery of services in any reasonable sense—and the violent response of the guerrilla to peace efforts critically weakened the president
- d. Given the instability of the peace process, and its technical weakness (on both sides), and the US policies –war on drugs—the government was not able to sell to the international community the idea of a plan linking peace and development.

Note the similarities and differences between the NF and the C1991 experiences. Both were designed by the political elites when confronted with a big scale crisis. Both were thought of as a process of modernization. Both dialogued with critical international conjunctures –the FN with the Cuban revolution and the Alliance for Progress, the C1991 with the end of real socialism--, but responded to major national problems and traditions. But the NF was based on a CEPAL-based model, which identified the creation of an internal market and import substitution as the way to development and stability, while for the C1991 the key was the open market-open society-open polity isomorphism. Furthermore, the NF in effect ended the bipartisan war, and contained more or less contained the new, revolutionary one. On the other direction, the C1991 was much more effective democratizing, and in the last short two decades it has held its own as a source of legitimacy. While a broad sector of the population – and even of the political elites— were disappointed of the NF experience already in the first years, the C1991 still is eulogized even by its adversaries. Opinion polls show that it is a very positive reference point for the population.

How should this contrast be understood? We start with the power sharing story, and then turn our eyes to the peace one. The tripartite presidency of the CA had the following composition: a member of the M19 (Antonio Navarro), a member of the Liberal Party (Horacio Serpa Uribe), and a member of the Movimiento de Salvación Nacional (CP splinter group –radical; Álvaro Gómez Hurtado). The three expected to represent the coalition that was to govern modern Colombia and express the huge multiclass rage against criminalized politics. In fact, the CA elections were the first time –if we are agnostic enough with respect to the 1970 episode—that traditional parties were defeated in the electoral booth. The CA crafted several institutional mechanisms to permit the alliance of modernizers against the *oficialismo*. The first one was the introduction of the run off for presidential elections. Additionally, the figure of vice-president was created; as in other countries, its governing functions were rather fuzzy. In the Colombian context, it was basically an electoral device. It was expected that a presidential ticket with two figures would allow second round alliances against strong *oficialistas*. Because it was clear that only an alliance could defeat it, by making the electoral system even more proportional –making of the senate a single electoral district—and multiplying the repertoire of participatory tools were the complements of the recipe. Last but not least, the creation of a powerful independent agency in charge of the prosecution of major criminal offences –the Fiscalía General de la Nación—would buttress the capacity of the state to combat effectively organized crime and weaken its links with politics.

All these measures were consequential –but not necessarily in the sense and direction expected by their architects. These were defeated electorally, and in a quite spectacular manner, between 1991 and 1994. The M19, which had triggered a wave of hope, had a poor idea of the workings of the state, and in general its parliamentary caucus did a poor showing. It did not have the basic skills to participate in routine, every day congress activity. One thing

is to denunciate and criticize in a public meeting, another is to go into the technical details of complicated bill, which demands the coordination of several knowledge sources (law, familiarity with the substantial issues, structure of the state budget) which the M19 leaders simply ignored. Also, the group had a more or less clear idea of what did it rejected, but not one of what did it really want. Furthermore, it soon divided in several fractions. The other two forces –the LP modernizers and the CP radicals—lost their internal struggles and/or were incorporated into other fractions⁴¹. By 1994, the traditional parties and practices had made a comeback with full force. The coalition that forged the Constitution had evaporated. After two very turbulent governments of the LP and CP, respectively, power fell in the hands of Álvaro Uribe, an LP dissident who has built a very broad majority with a program that in many areas is not compatible with the letter of C1991⁴², and definitely at odds with the *ethos* of the CA.

With respect to peace making, the C1991 was a child of a successful process, and entertained hopes of achieving a definitive settlement with the major groups (the FARC and the ELN⁴³). The negotiations broke down, and war raged with renewed impetus. President Gaviria was not able to achieve peace during his administration. As seen above, if the diagnosis of the causes of violence made by the political elites during the NF was a combination of self serving sadism of political operators and economic inequality (Gutierrez, 2007), the one associated to the C1991 was lack of legitimacy. Said in other terms, a key piece of the rhetoric of the NF political elites was that violence was the product of the activity of greedy bureaucrats –or greedy bureaucratic hopefuls—and normative degradation. This explanation

⁴¹ Álvaro Gómez Hurtado was assassinated in 1995.

⁴² The C1991 is still the country's constitution, but it has been submitted to several major reforms, including immediate presidential reelection, with new reforms already announced.

⁴³ Actually, the C1991 also pioneered a small peace agreement with paramilitary.

played a fundamental role for the legitimization of the accord (in a shared government, alternation of power will not produce a traumatic loss of jobs, and thus will not generate violence). In contrast, the way in which CA political elites linked peace and institutional reform was the following: the political system had become criminalized, and lost its legitimacy, thus producing a closure of the regime. To achieve peace, corruption had to be curtailed, and democracy opened. A strong relation between “openness” and “peace” was rhetorically achieved.

Thus, the stained election⁴⁴ of Ernesto Samper (1994-1998) was felt by many as a major blow. Samper simply did not have time or energy to engage in serious and sustained peace efforts. He was succeeded by Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002), the forerunner of 1994, whose main promise was precisely to bring peace and moralization to the country.

Pastrana had had previous peace oriented contacts with FARC leaders, and was ready to take spectacular steps. He conceded the insurgents a 40.000 km. demilitarized zone, and initiated formal talks. The guerrilla, though, insisted in negotiating without suspending hostilities. In a very short period, this resulted terribly disruptive. Additionally, it was clear that the FARC leadership did not have a very clear idea of what to demand. Once again, one main bulwark in the path of peace was the ignorance of the FARC of the basic workings of a modern state⁴⁵. The group defended its foundational ten point program, but never descended to the discussion of how, when and by whom it should be implemented, and what to do with the

⁴⁴ It was proved that his campaign got a massive funding of Cali Cartel narcos. The president claimed that the money had entered to the campaign at his back, and was eventually acquitted by the congress.

⁴⁵ Since the FARC was much more ruralist than the M19, the gap between it and technocratic, modern languages was much bigger. There are important precedents (see for example the peace process with the Medellín militias, Gutiérrez and Jaramillo, 2004).

modern Colombia that inhabited in the cities. The program was a typical 1960's radical chart, with some sensible points –the need of an agrarian reform, and to invest more in science and technology—which had already been forwarded, with much more details, by actors within the political system. Additionally --though there is no definite set of evidences about this-- the peace process left in many observers the definite impression that the main bet of the FARC was to come to an agreement to exchange prisoners, not to strike a peace accord⁴⁶. Certainly, there was no definite statement by the FARC according to which, given these and that conditions, it would abandon the armed struggle. Even worse, state officials in charge of the process had not a much better idea of what they could really offer. The president emphasized strongly confidence building, and nobody can deny that the concession of a 40 000 km demilitarized zone was a powerful pacifist symbol. But he and his team missed completely the obvious fact that the FARC was not going to settle for a demobilization process. Which were the political and socio-economic reforms that government could offer at the negotiation table? Nobody knew. Eventually, the substantive aspect of the peace talks was left to very opaque and low level “discussion tables”, which indulged (in the name of participation and openness) in an undefined agenda of very heterogeneous, hazy and half baked, sometimes simply fringe, proposals, in complete disarticulation from the leaderships of both sides. The conversations stagnated, in the midst of an escalation of violence and institutional disarray. The “third actor” –the paramilitaries—chipped in, sabotaging many of the peace initiatives, and eventually launching a massacring campaign supposedly to denounce the complicity of the state with subversion. The eruption of a deep economic crisis –a phenomenon with which the country had no familiarity; it had not witnessed nothing of the sort for three generations— had fatal effects and irreparably undermined the popularity of the president.

⁴⁶ There are evidences, though, about the utilization by the FARC of the demilitarized zone to strengthen their military capacity. Once again, this suggests that at least a substantial part of its leadership was thinking of the process in instrumental terms.

Why was the guerrilla response to Pastrana's peace efforts so lukewarm? There are at least three –complementary-- reasons. First one, past experiences. The Unión Patriótica (UP), born from a similar process with a CP president, was relentlessly destroyed, and its leaders physically eliminated. Second one, the military situation. The FARC had had spectacular successes in the field battle in the last year. In a longer perspective, it had been able to fulfill almost step by step the strategic objectives that it traced itself in its 7th Conference (1982). In these conditions, it was more inclined to utilize both the demilitarized zone and the opening of negotiations to arm and reinforce itself. Last but not least, the decentralization process – that preceded the C1991, and was deepened by it—changed quite deeply the system of incentives in which insurgents and paramilitaries waged their war. Until 1988, non state combat organizations had several sources of funding: capturing rents from legal and illegal production processes (marihuana, coca, mining), and kidnapping were the main ones. After that, “protecting” municipalities and taking them under their influence became a focal point. The C1991 made local influence even more important. According to it, the nation gave to sub national units (departments and/or municipalities) three types of resources: a) funds transferences from the center, many of them earmarked, for bureaucracy and investment in health and education; b) some important taxes (land tax, industry and commerce); c) royalties (from example, from mining). Weak municipalities and departments, where there was no or poor monitoring, feeble bureaucracy and police, and the capacity of violent retaliation in case of defection, became an ideal target. Additionally, putting a municipality under the influence of an armed group gave the latter not only economic resources, but also power, legitimacy and influence. By the mid 1990's, the guerrillas –mainly the FARC, but not only them (see Harnecker, 1989)—were under the illusion that this type of local activity made part of their path to power. We speak about an illusion, because the guerrillas were not aware that the

paramilitary would generalize the utilization of the same technique, in a much improved version. In the measure that they had a much more direct link to regional rural elites and state agencies, they were able to develop really effective and stable forms of territorial control: once again, the defeat of innovators at the hands of crafty imitators.

Be it as it may, the FARC either read the peace advances of Pastrana as a sign of weakness, or as an initial overture that had to be enhanced by military pressure. The outcome was destabilization and the end of peace. In the meantime, Pastrana had launched several initiatives, among which the most known is the Plan Colombia. The Plan Colombia was presented by Pastrana as a Marshal plan for the country; it linked peace with development. However, the initial idea was transformed by a US technical team into an anti-drug and modernization of the military plan. At the beginning, especially, the preeminence of the military component in the Plan Colombia was overwhelming. The modernization of the military was continued by current president Uribe, and has had a big impact in the turning of the tables of the luck of the adversaries in the Colombian war.

8. Conclusions

Why was the Colombian state unable to attain and maintain the monopoly over big scale violence?

Economic outcomes by their own do not seem to provide specific answers to this question. The regional context does not seem to show the radical transformations that the Colombian economy went through. If we consider the comparative economic performance (Table 7), between 1950 and 1998, for seven Latin American countries⁴⁷, Colombia is neither the best nor the worst performer. Its GDP per capita growth rate is the most stable among the countries of the sample, perhaps a sign of both responsible monetary and fiscal policies and conservative approaches towards economic growth. For the NF period as a whole (Table 5), the average growth rate of GDP per capita was 2.39%, whereas for the C1991 one was much lower (0.89%), which is, as we saw, only one of the clear indicators of the economic and social crisis the country experienced at the end of the 20th century. This decade actually combined some quite outstanding, and some of the worst economic outcomes experienced in the fifty years between 1950 and 2000 (see Tables 5 and 6). In 1994 the country experienced one of the highest GDP growth rates (5.57%) and the lowest unemployment rate (7.6%) in the history of records available, and the economic recession eventually led to a completely opposite situation: a GDP growth rate of -6.10% and an unemployment rate of 20.1%.

So what can explain the inability to produce a stable accord AND to win the war? For us, four types of answers –once again complementary—can be offered. First, the incapacity of the state to pursue big scale reforms, which let wide expanses of territory inhabited, devoid of infrastructure, and strategically vulnerable. While these remained in “non active” state during long periods, once politicized they had the potential to trigger a very nasty type of politics. In Colombia, the regular use of violence during the long wave of expansion of the agrarian frontier, plus the incorporation of the country to illegal substance markets, generated big rents in these places, where the state was only feebly present and where, due to demographics,

⁴⁷ Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, México, Peru and Venezuela.

there was no incentive for politicians to substantially increase its presence (this geographic pattern is shown on detail in Diaz and Sanchez, 2004). Second, institutional factors. The notion that all good things come together, and that success in one dimension entails success in all the rest, should be banned from peace and development thinking. In reality, different types of “peace capital” are not easily convertible. An experience can be very good at democratization, but not in terms of conflict resolution. It also seems that timing plays a very, very important role. Key reforms –as the agrarian one—should be pushed forward at a rapid pace (Berry, 2002); otherwise, they have few possibilities of surviving. Third, a combination of both structural and institutional factors. The best example is migration, which deeply changed the country. Migration: a) created an oblique conflict trap (Collier, 2000), because while the conflict is mainly rural the country is increasingly urban –which means that the resources (economic, social, political), incentives and foci of attention necessary to deal with the problem are not where they should be; b) destabilized the political system. Last but not least, paying attention to pro peace and power sharing coalitions and their conditions of survival is essential (Yashar, 1997; Putzel, 2004). Some coalitions are likely to break down fast (like the constitutional coalition of 1991). Others have to be protected with a set of devices that can give origin to new waves of violence. Since both war and peace making trigger big scale transformations of the state and society, the existence of cohesive and technically savvy political parties that hold their own during big social transformations appears to be a crucial variable to evaluate the odds in favor of long term stabilizations.

With respect to the economy and the economic policy, there are also some quite clear issues, which sit well with the political narrative. According to the Colombian literature available on regional GDP convergence (mainly Cárdenas et Al., 1993; Cárdenas and Escobar, 1995; Cárdenas and Pontón, 1995) Colombia can be considered a successful case of regional

convergence, as the GDP per capita differentials have been reducing at a 4% annual rate. However, when the different components of this convergence are analyzed, a different landscape pops up. Taking into account economic growth, internal migration, indicators of violence, social development and presence of the state (public infrastructure) we see that while “in general” the differentials of economic growth between Colombian departments have in effect shrunk, some departments/regions have been totally left behind.

Institutional patterns of economic policy are also a crucial dimension. As we saw, the NF period was mostly characterized by a conservative economic policy which, taking advantage on the AFP funding, aimed to maintain stable both fiscal and monetary policies. This combination was finally untenable and the (bounded, in the Latin American context) lack of fiscal discipline and the end of soft loans from the AFP both lead to devaluation and inflation. In the late 1990s, as monetary policy was no longer under control by the government (Central Bank), fiscal deficit and the loss of investors’ trust both lead to economic crisis. Cárdenas and Urrutia (1993) made an early, although unattended, warning: the fiscal deficit had to be reduced, because if used to finance public expenditure, the long-term costs of this policy would eventually be higher than the social benefit of public expenditure (even in the terrain of the behavior of social indicators).

Throughout this paper, the role of international factors in the Colombian experience appears rather ambiguous. Nobody could reasonably deny the positive effects that many international

pressures have had on the Colombian state. The obvious case is human rights. But also a whole set of anti-criminal, anti-corruption and pro state building initiatives can be invoked. On the other hand, both the growth of the illicit substance market and the US war on drugs have crushed the Colombian state⁴⁸. As seen during this narrative, many of the horrors of the Colombia's last wave of conflict were caused by one or the other. Less prominently, there are some types of influence which may have been positive had they not come in a formulaic form, without paying attention to the specifics of a country with the type of war Colombia was waging. Decentralization is the best example. All this said, until today even in the best international conditions –the 1966-1970 presidency—reforms conceived to impulse simultaneously development, peace and power sharing may be difficult to implement. More than benevolent indifference may be needed.

⁴⁸ For late developers, peace making and stabilization have always been related to global markets. See From silver to cocaine, Topik, Frank and Marichal, 2006.

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Tables

Table 1. Colombian illegal armed groups

Name	Acronym	Characteristics
Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia	FARC	1964-?, started as a force related to the pro-Soviet communist party, by the late 80s and early 90s became totally independent. Presently has between 13 000 and 20 000 members
Ejército de Liberación Nacional	ELN	1966. Castroist organization, was almost completely destroyed in 1973 but came back to life in the 1980s. Presently it has way less than 5 000 members
Movimiento 19 de Abril	M-19	1973-1991. Nationalist-populist. It stroke a peace agreement with the government and became a successful political party
Ejército Popular de Liberación	EPL	1966-? Started as a Maoist force, in 1991 it made a peace agreement, but was crushed by the FARC. Some of its remainders have maintained certain armed activity (completely dependent from the FARC) until today
Paramilitaries-self defences	Several; the main denomination is the AUC (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia)	Begun in the early 1980s as an antsubversive force. Some of these death squads developed into big regional organizations. In the late 1990s a national federation was built, but did not last long. In 2002 started a

		peace process
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Table 2. Evolution of abstention during the National Front (%)

Year	Presidency	Senate	House
1958	42.06	31.08	31
1962	51	43	42
1966	60	56	56
1970	47	48	48
1974	41.6	43	43

Source: Jaime Buenahora Febres: “La democracia en Colombia, un proyecto en construcción”, Imprenta de la Contraloría general de la República, Bogotá. P. 295

Table 3 – Distribution of preferences by political option (%)

Category	1958	1962	1966	1970
NF candidates	80.13	62.3	69.96	40.59
Dissident traditional party candidates	19.8	35.6	--	39.08
Adversaries of the NF	0	2.09	30.03	20.32

Source: Gutiérrez, 2007

Table 4 A – Composition of the House in 1970 by voting bloc (N=89)

Members of the FN coalition	FN dissidents	MRL “soft line”	MRL “hard line”	ANAPO	Movimiento Independiente Liberal
55	1	22	9	1	1

Source: Gutiérrez (2007)

Table 4 B – Voting scenarios in the House with the preference distribution of Table 4 A

Rules and coalitions	Outcome
Simple majority quota (45 votes), with any kind of distribution, as long as the FN members are disciplined	FN coalition Banzhaf power index= 1 BP index of everybody else=0
2/3 quota (60 votes) with each bloc voting separately	BP FN bloc index=0.6 MRL soft=0.2 MRL hard=0.2 The others=0
2/3 quota with the MRL hues voting together	FN=0.5 MRL=0.5 The others=0

Source: Gutiérrez (2007)

Table 5. – Consolidate Economic Indicators 1954 – 1999

Year	GDP Growth Rate	Inflation Rate	Population	Net Mortality Rate	Child Mortality Rate	Average Years of Schooling (Total)	Average Years of Schooling (Urban)	Average Years of Schooling (Rural)
1954	6,92%	2,22%	12748287	16,68	123,17	3,03	4,11	2,03
1955	3,91%	7,80%	13155759	16,68	123,17	3,06	4,12	2,07
1956	4,06%	20,20%	13576252	13,32	105,34	3,09	4,13	2,10
1957	2,23%	6,38%	14010186	13,32	105,34	3,11	4,14	2,14
1958	2,46%	8,10%	14457992	13,32	105,34	3,14	4,15	2,17
1959	7,23%	7,86%	14920106	13,32	105,34	3,18	4,17	2,21
1960	4,27%	7,22%	15396994	13,32	105,34	3,24	4,19	2,25
1961	5,09%	5,87%	15889120	11,48	92,1	3,26	4,20	2,29
1962	5,41%	6,41%	16396979	11,48	92,1	3,30	4,22	2,33
1963	3,29%	32,55%	16921070	11,48	92,1	3,33	4,23	2,37
1964	6,17%	8,91%	17461916	11,48	92,1	3,35	4,23	2,41
1965	3,60%	14,55%	17975949	11,48	92,1	3,47	4,43	2,45
1966	5,24%	12,98%	18503170	10,06	82,18	3,62	4,63	2,49
1967	4,13%	7,32%	19045856	10,06	82,18	3,74	4,84	2,53
1968	5,93%	6,55%	19604458	10,06	82,18	3,88	5,05	2,57
1969	6,10%	8,58%	20179446	10,06	82,18	4,02	5,26	2,62
1970	6,21%	6,78%	20771293	10,06	82,18	4,20	5,48	2,66
1971	5,96%	13,62%	21380505	8,71	73,03	4,40	5,75	2,71
1972	7,67%	14,01%	22007578	8,71	73,03	4,56	5,97	2,75
1973	6,72%	23,53%	22653044	8,71	73,03	4,69	6,10	2,80
1974	5,75%	26,04%	23324669	8,71	73,03	4,74	6,16	2,85
1975	2,32%	17,72%	24019677	8,71	73,03	4,81	6,23	2,91
1976	4,73%	25,68%	24735394	7,63	59,43	4,89	6,29	2,96
1977	4,16%	28,37%	25472437	7,63	59,43	4,98	6,36	3,02
1978	8,47%	18,77%	26231445	7,63	59,43	5,05	6,42	3,08
1979	5,38%	28,82%	27013061	7,63	59,43	5,15	6,49	3,14
1980	4,09%	26,00%	27817970	7,63	59,43	5,25	6,56	3,20
1981	2,28%	26,40%	28646865	6,81	41,16	5,32	6,63	3,26

1982	0,95%	24,00%	29500459	6,81	41,16	5,44	6,69	3,32
1983	1,57%	16,60%	30379485	6,81	41,16	5,55	6,76	3,39
1984	3,35%	18,30%	31284703	6,81	41,16	5,64	6,83	3,45
1985	3,11%	22,50%	32216902	6,81	41,16	5,68	6,91	3,52
1986	5,82%	20,90%	32920712	6,09	39,66	5,79	6,98	3,59
1987	5,37%	24,00%	33531945	6,09	39,66	5,87	7,05	3,66
1988	4,06%	28,10%	34154517	6,09	39,66	5,98	7,12	3,73
1989	3,41%	26,10%	34788655	6,09	39,66	6,06	7,20	3,80
1990	4,28%	32,37%	35434566	6,09	39,66	6,13	7,27	3,87
1991	2,00%	26,82%	36092470	5,91	36,96	6,22	7,35	3,95
1992	4,04%	25,13%	36762586	5,91	36,96	6,36	7,42	4,02
1993	5,39%	22,61%	37445146	5,91	36,96	6,50	7,50	4,10
1994	5,81%	22,59%	38132974	5,91	36,96	6,62	7,58	4,18
1995	5,68%	19,47%	38814162	5,91	36,96	6,72	7,65	4,24
1996	2,20%	21,60%	39510657	5,75	34,25	6,84	7,73	4,31
1997	3,05%	17,70%	40214723	5,79	30	7,00	8,00	3,90
1998	0,06%	16,70%	40772994	5,68	29	7,00	8,10	3,80
1999	-4,20%	9,23%	41539011	5,6	28,1	7,10	8,10	4,20

Source: Estadísticas Históricas – DNP.

Table 6 - 1990-1999 Labor Market Outcomes

	Gini Coefficient	Employment Rate	Unemployment Rate
90 I	46,00%	52,20%	10,12%
II	47,38%	51,86%	10,93%
III	46,69%	51,35%	10,21%
IV	47,35%	53,52%	10,60%
91 I	47,33%	58,10%	9,88%
II	47,85%	58,42%	9,90%
III	48,25%	58,60%	9,05%
IV	45,89%	58,71%	8,71%
92 I	48,46%	58,82%	9,93%
II	48,23%	60,30%	10,23%
III	49,09%	59,26%	8,40%
IV	49,33%	60,96%	9,00%
93 I	47,76%	54,36%	9,66%
II	50,57%	54,62%	9,11%
III	47,27%	55,56%	7,79%
IV	51,19%	55,35%	7,84%
94 I	49,26%	54,34%	10,20%
II	49,88%	53,95%	9,90%
III	49,80%	54,50%	7,58%
IV	49,67%	55,81%	7,96%
95 I	48,45%	54,48%	8,07%
II	50,32%	54,03%	9,05%
III	51,27%	54,25%	8,72%
IV	49,91%	55,56%	9,54%
96 I	48,45%	54,44%	10,21%
II	51,67%	52,34%	11,44%
III	50,03%	52,02%	11,95%

IV	49,23%	53,02%	11,30%
97 I	50,96%	51,16%	12,31%
II	51,11%	51,93%	13,31%
III	49,90%	52,62%	12,12%
IV	50,49%	54,10%	12,03%
98 I	53,30%	53,32%	14,41%
II	51,74%	52,76%	15,91%
III	52,82%	51,81%	15,00%
IV	51,47%	52,87%	15,63%
99 I	53,16%	50,12%	19,51%
II	53,60%	50,41%	19,88%
III	54,04%	50,57%	20,06%
IV	53,23%	52,33%	17,98%

Source: DNP, Estadísticas Históricas de Colombia.

Table 7 – GDP Growth for a Sample of Latin American Countries

Country	<i>GDP per Capita a/</i>				<i>GDP Per Capita Growth Rate</i>		
	1950	1973	1990	1998	1913–50	1950–73	1973–98
Argentina	4.987	7.973	6.512	9.219	0,74	2,06	0,58
Brazil	1.672	3.882	4.924	5.459	1,97	3,73	1,37
Chile	3.821	5.093	6.401	9.756	0,99	1,26	2,63
Colombia	2.153	3.499	4.822	5.317	1,51	2,13	1,69
Mexico	2.365	4.845	6.097	6.655	0,85	3,17	1,28
Peru	2.263	3.952	2.955	3.666	2,13	2,45	-0,3
Venezuela	7.462	10.625	8.313	8.965	5,3	1,55	-0,68

Source: Maddison (2006)

a/: 1990 U\$

Table 8

Colombia: Department GDP per Capita Rankings 1950 – 1989

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1989
ANTIOQUIA	8	7	7	5	10
ATLANTICO	2	5	4	9	12
BOGOTA	1	1	1	2	2
BOLIVAR	10	6	10	13	16
BOYACA	20	17	21	14	15
CALDAS	6	9	13	16	14
CAQUETA	N/A	N/A	N/A	17	19
CAUCA	12	22	23	21	21
CESAR	3	3	5	15	20
CHOCO	24	24	24	25	24
CORDOBA	21	15	19	20	18
CUNDINAMARCA	17	12	9	4	3
GUAJIRA	23	19	15	19	1
HUILA	19	18	16	12	13

INTENDENCIAS	16	23	6	10	4
MAGDALENA	11	16	14	22	23
META	4	4	3	6	7
N. SANTANDER	13	10	18	18	17
NARIÑO	22	21	22	24	22
QUINDIO	7	13	20	1	5
RISARALDA	5	11	12	7	9
SANTANDER	14	8	8	8	8
SUCRE	18	20	17	23	25
TOLIMA	15	14	11	11	11
VALLE	9	2	2	3	6

Source: Cárdenas and Pontón (1995)

Table 9

Colombia: Department GDP per Capita Growth Rate 1950 – 1989

	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-1989	1950-1989
ANTIOQUIA	-0,17	2,56	4,1	0,61	1,81
ATLANTICO	-2	1,59	1,38	-1,11	-0,01
BOGOTA	-1,09	1,6	1,98	0,48	0,75
BOLIVAR	2,34	0,9	1,54	-0,01	1,22
BOYACA	4,86	-0,1	5,32	1	2,82
CALDAS	-1,32	0,97	1,53	2,22	0,81
CAQUETA	nd	Nd	nd	0,29	nd
CAUCA	-2,93	0,52	5,14	1,21	0,98
CESAR	-1,37	1,11	-0,76	-1,22	-0,52
CHOCO	3,85	0,61	7,36	4,53	4,08
CORDOBA	5,87	0,44	1,38	1,99	2,43
CUNDINAMARCA	5,07	2,57	5,11	3,41	4,04
GUAJIRA	7,59	2,37	1,03	11,96	5,58
HUILA	4,22	1,93	3,84	0,96	2,78
INTENDENCIAS	-1,12	9,34	2,12	4,82	3,76
MAGDALENA	0,03	1,85	-0,1	0,71	0,62
META	0,2	1,82	2,37	1,31	1,43
N. SANTANDER	1,88	-0,16	2,44	0,82	1,26
NARIÑO	4,32	0,89	2,5	2,39	2,53
QUINDIO	-1,67	0,27	10,72	-1,27	2,1
RISARALDA	-2,54	1,98	4,15	2,47	1,49
SANTANDER	2,31	2,58	3,09	2,61	2,65
SUCRE	2,71	2,79	-0,28	1,04	1,58
TOLIMA	3,48	2,49	2,55	1,04	2,43
VALLE	2,5	1,83	2,75	1,18	2,09

Source: Cárdenas and Pontón (1995)

Table 10

GDP Per Capita Growth Rate 1950 – 1989: Ranking

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1989
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ANTIOQUIA	1	11	3	12	5
ATLANTICO	2	2	1	13	17
BOGOTA	3	4	5	6	4
BOLIVAR	4	12	18	20	14
BOYACA	5	20	17	17	6
CALDAS	6	9	11	19	15
CAQUETA	7	5	7	8	3
CAUCA	8	16	24	25	18
CESAR	9	15	16	15	13
CHOCO	10	10	4	16	24
CORDOBA	11	6	6	3	2
CUNDINAMARCA	12	18	23	1	11
GUAJIRA	13	7	9	7	9
HUILA	14	23	22	24	22
INTENDENCIAS	15	13	2	10	23
MAGDALENA	16	8	12	9	7
META	17	19	8	21	16
N. SANTANDER	18	22	25	22	19
NARIÑO	19	17	13	23	21
QUINDIO	20	25	19	2	12
RISARALDA	21	24	15	18	25
SANTANDER	22	3	14	14	10
SUCRE	23	14	21	4	8
TOLIMA	24	21	10	5	20
VALLE	25	1	20	11	1

Source: Cárdenas and Pontón (1995)

Table 10

Colombia: Department Electric Power Coverage 1951 – 1985

	1951	1964	1973	1985
ANTIOQUIA	37,65	44,18	65,8	82,44
ATLANTICO	61,68	63,58	87,42	96,47
BOLIVAR	11,81	26,9	50,73	73,88
BOYACA	5,95	14,46	23,96	63,97
CALDAS	37,75	21,57	65,92	87,48
CAQUETA	18,57	9,58	25,36	37,08
CAUCA	10,78	15,91	33,03	53,65
CESAR	16,76	25,57	43,01	65,14
CHOCO	6,32	5,54	23,93	33,69
CORDOBA	11,81	18,78	27,99	47,79
CUNDINAMARCA	16,82	20,5	38,52	71,35
GUAJIRA	16,09	21,87	44,97	81,31
HUILA	12,59	21,77	43,49	71,2
MAGDALENA	16,76	25,57	47,66	63,22
META	18,57	25,21	36,97	61,24
NARIÑO	9,4	21,16	34,14	61,35
N. SANTANDER	27,7	39,01	54,44	70,69
QUINDIO	37,75	21,57	78,91	96,23
RISARALDA	37,75	21,57	74,86	91,87

BOGOTA	75,1	85,45	94,79	98,39
SANTANDER	21,14	34,01	47,06	71,49
SUCRE	11,81	26,9	30,14	60,36
TOLIMA	17,53	23,42	43,58	67,19
VALLE	38,54	47,29	80,15	91,62
INTENDENCIAS	9,34	12,64	40,26	48,51

Source: Cárdenas and Escobar (1995). Based on National Population Censuses

Table 11

Colombia: Department Aqueduct Coverage 1951 – 1985

	1951	1964	1973	1985
ANTIOQUIA	41,23	55,61	72,44	73,16
ATLANTICO	63,17	60,63	80,55	77,12
BOLIVAR	13,9	23,6	45,27	47,39
BOYACA	7,33	22,13	34,03	50,07
CALDAS	47,03	24,56	81,22	79,16
CAQUETA	13,64	11,16	31,17	45,52
CAUCA	9,58	18,01	37,81	50,98
CESAR	18,23	27,66	52,25	63,5
CHOCO	4,21	5,25	15,9	20,21
CORDOBA	13,89	19,75	33,11	39,75
CUNDINAMARCA	19,95	31,56	44,66	56,58
GUAJIRA	17,24	20,12	56,49	63,88
HUILA	16,59	24,79	62,83	73,82
MAGDALENA	18,23	27,66	47,53	48,57
META	13,64	36,29	50,18	65,96
NARIÑO	7,67	22,33	42,08	54,46
N. SANTANDER	26,23	45,7	65,32	64,44
QUINDIO	47,03	24,56	89,18	93,67
RISARALDA	47,03	24,56	83,46	83,56
BOGOTA	79,98	86,86	91,18	95,88
SANTANDER	23,66	39,76	55,12	67,2
SUCRE	13,9	23,6	30,11	43,2
TOLIMA	24,48	28,79	61,28	67,5
VALLE	42,27	46,79	81,52	83,3
INTENDENCIAS	6,43	14,04	38,82	42,29

Source: Cárdenas and Escobar (1995). Based on National Population Censuses

Table 12

Colombia: Department Sewage Coverage

	1951	1964	1973	1985
ANTIOQUIA	30,51	43,74	59,65	68,65
ATLANTICO	39,83	47,55	49,28	60,04
BOLIVAR	7,45	17,14	13,56	22,33

BOYACA	5,17	13,36	21,28	37,18
CALDAS	34,88	21,45	63,24	75,19
CAQUETA	10,57	6,47	18,35	40,35
CAUCA	7,95	12,05	23,78	34,84
CESAR	8,93	16,14	12,41	29,05
CHOCO	3,46	2,96	9,69	10,9
CORDOBA	7,45	12,99	5,87	11,61
CUNDINAMARCA	19,48	21,65	29,92	45,43
GUAJIRA	8,4	7,97	11,33	19,29
HUILA	9,44	16,28	36,23	52,72
MAGDALENA	8,93	16,13	15,86	21,94
META	10,57	24,65	35,64	54,71
NARIÑO	4,96	14,12	25,15	37,25
N. SANTANDER	15,55	31,55	41,01	51,41
QUINDIO	34,88	21,45	74,77	87,28
RISARALDA	34,88	21,45	69,63	79,48
BOGOTA	65,11	84,7	91,13	95,6
SANTANDER	15,71	29,72	41,27	58,86
SUCRE	7,46	17,14	11,82	23,57
TOLIMA	13,44	18,48	37,39	56,45
VALLE	33,53	41,7	68,19	74,81
INTENDENCIAS	3,09	7,15	17,92	17,84

Source: Cárdenas and Escobar (1995). Based on National Population Censuses

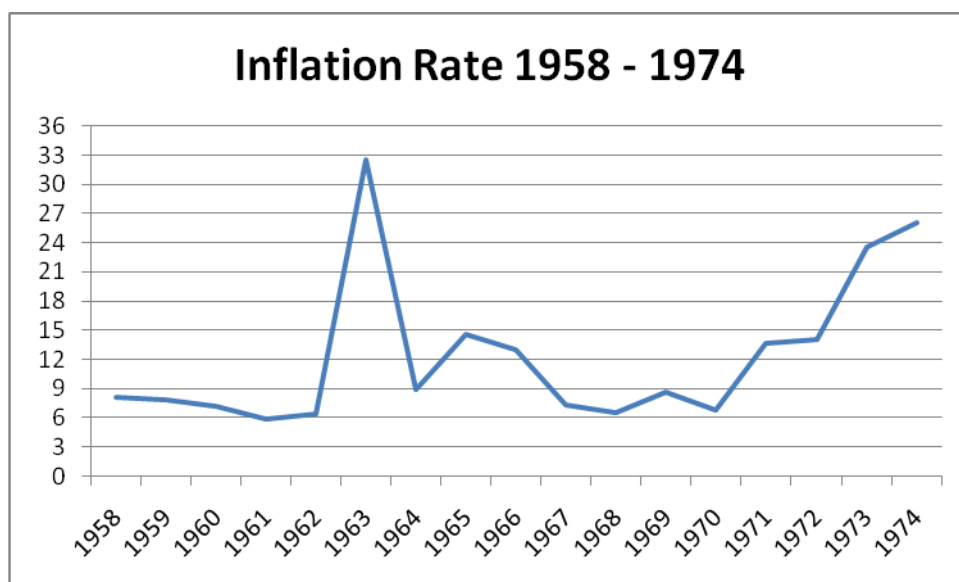
Table 13

Bottom 20% on Convergence Indicators 1950 - 1999

Indicator	1951	1964	1973	1985	1993	1999
Lowest Population Density	Guajira	Guajira	Guajira	Guajira	Guajira	Guajira
	Chocó	Chocó	Chocó	Chocó	Chocó	Chocó
	Meta	Meta	Meta	Meta	Meta	Meta
	Caquetá	Caquetá	Caquetá	Caquetá	Caquetá	Caquetá
	Ints.	Ints.	Ints.	Ints.	Ints.	Ints.
Electric Power Coverage	Cauca	Cauca	Sucre	Cauca		
	Nariño	Boyaca	Cordoba	Ints.		
	Ints.	Ints.	Caqueta	Cordoba		
	Choco	Caqueta	Boyaca	Caqueta		
	Boyaca	Choco	Choco	Choco		
Aqueduct Coverage	Cauca	Cordoba	Boyaca	Caqueta		
	Nariño	Cauca	Cordoba	Sucre		
	Boyaca	Ints.	Caqueta	Ints.		
	Ints.	Caqueta	Sucre	Cordoba		
	Choco	Choco	Choco	Choco		
Sewage Coverage	Cordoba	Cauca	Cesar	Magdalena		
	Boyaca	Guajira	Sucre	Guajira		
	Nariño	Ints.	Guajira	Ints.		
	Choco	Caqueta	Choco	Cordoba		
	Ints.	Choco	Cordoba	Choco		
	1950	1960	1970	1980	1989	
GDP pC Growth Rate	Quindio	Cordoba	Guajira	Bogota	Bogota	
	Atlantico	Quindio	Magdalena	Magdalena	Magdalena	
	Risaralda	Boyaca	Sucre	Atlantico	Atlantico	

	Cauca	N. Santander	Cesar	Cesar	Cesar	
	Caqueta	Caqueta	Caqueta	Caqueta	Caqueta	
Gross Enrollment Rates	Magdalena	Sucre	Choco	Atlantico	Bolivar	
	Cundinamarca	Cordoba	Cesar	Cordoba	Cesar	
	Choco	Cesar	Ints.	Bolivar	Meta	
	Sucre	Magdalena	Nariño	Cesar	Huila	
	Guajira	Caqueta	Cordoba	Nariño	Magdalena	

Figures 1. Inflation Rate 1958- 1974



Source: GRECO – Banco de la Republica.

Figure 2. GDP 1958- 1974

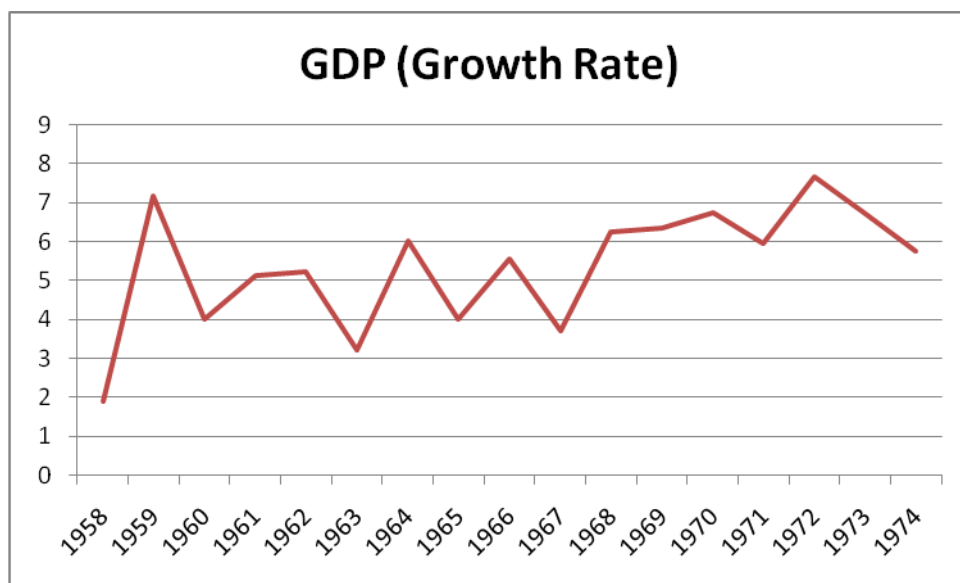
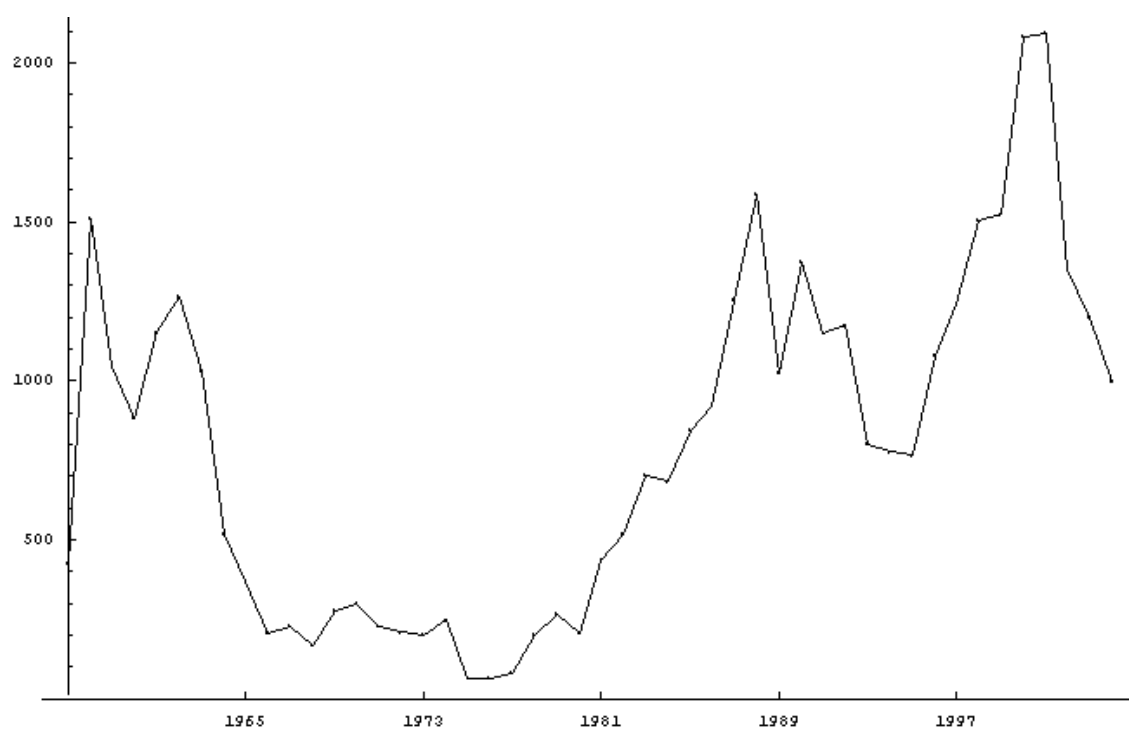


Figure 3. Political homicides – second period (1957-2006)



Source: Data Base of Political Homicide in Colombia 1930-2005. Constructed by Francisco Gutierrez and William Mancera.

Figure 34. GDP growth vs. Fiscal Deficit 1990 - 2000

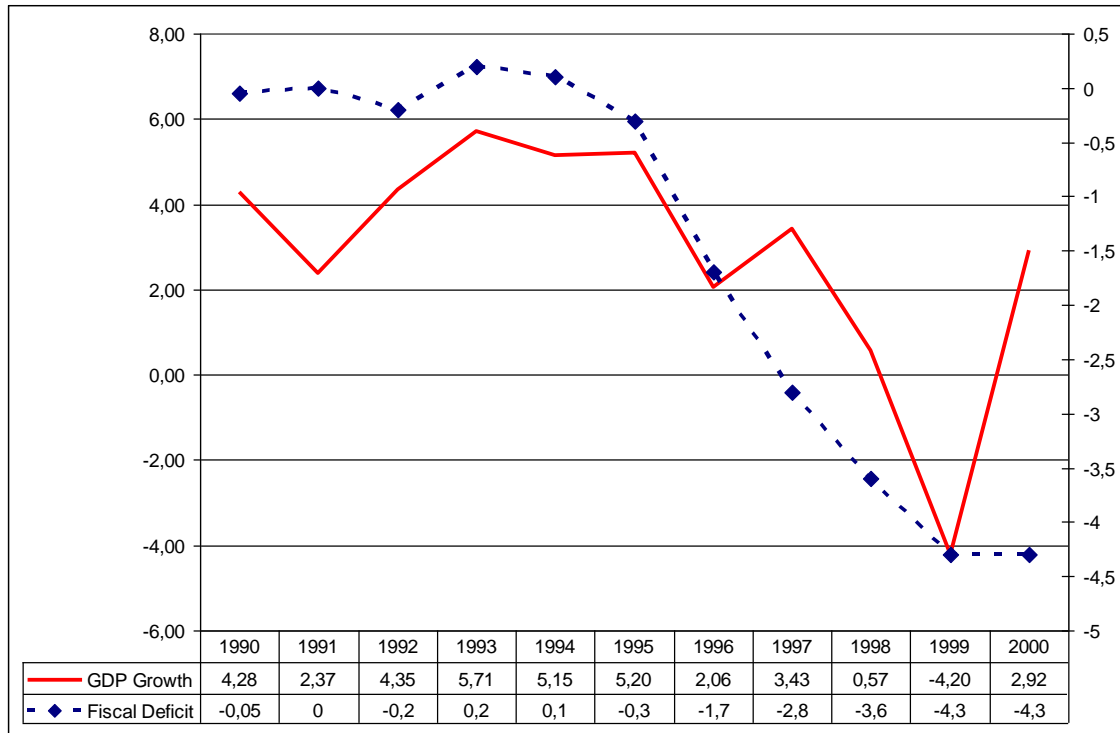
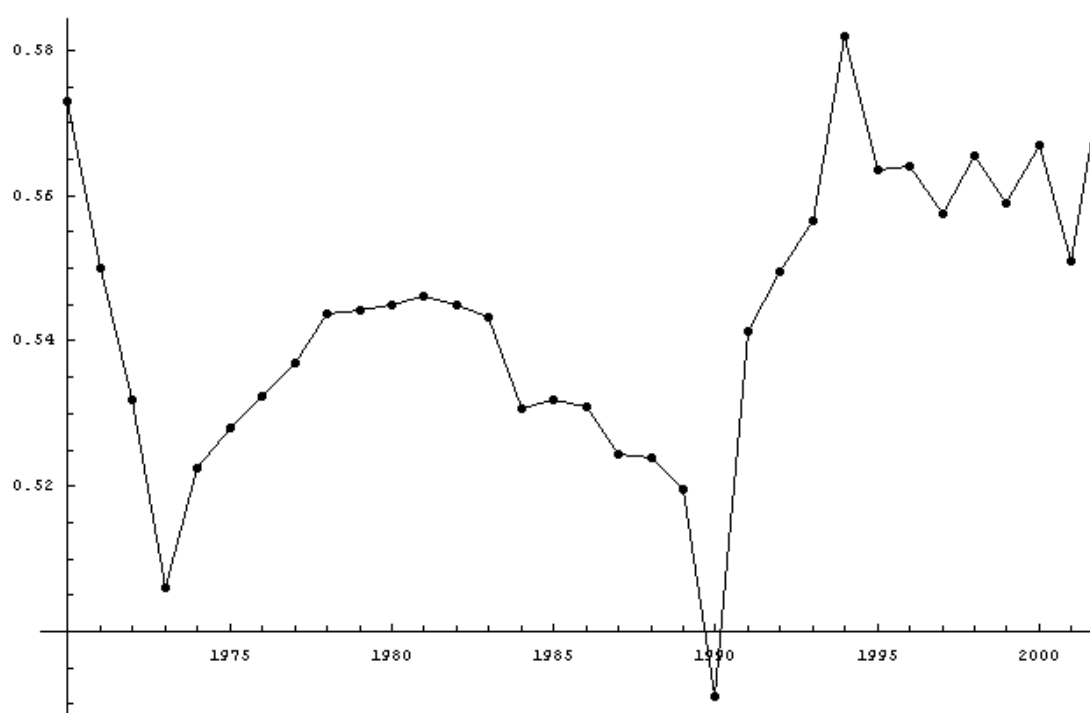


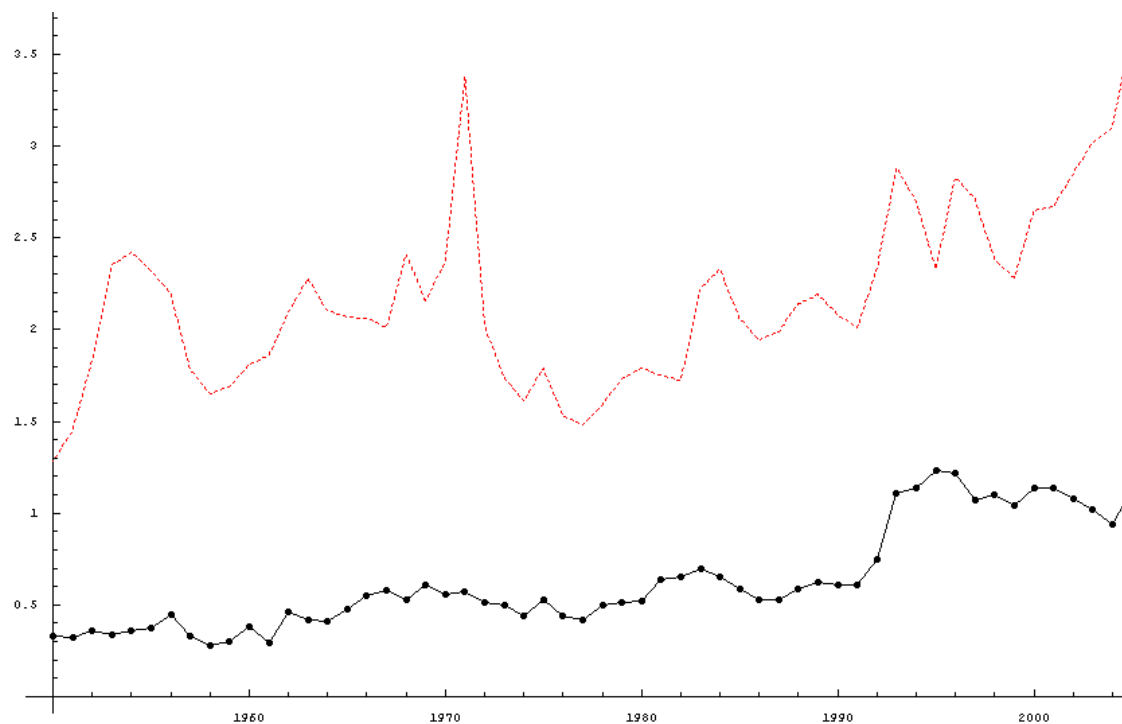
Figure 5 – Evolution of the Gini – 1975 – 2003



Source: Montenegro Armando y Rivas Rafael. Las Piezas del Rompecabezas. Desigualdad, Pobreza y Crecimiento. Bogotá: Taurus, 2005. pp. 39-40⁴⁹

Figure 6 – Weight of the investment in justice (black dotted line) and in defense (red line) from 1950 until 2005

⁴⁹ Montenegro and Rivas average the different estimation of the Gini index by different sources: 1991-2003 (DNP 2004); 1984-1990 (DNP 1996); 1991-1999 (Székely); 1974-1989 (Núñez and Sánchez); 1978-1988 (Ocampo, Pérez and Tovar); 1978-1988 (World Bank); 1970-1993 (Londoño and Székely).



Source 1950-1994: Numpaque Cielo, María, Rodríguez Cuestas, Ligia (1996): Evolución y comportamiento del gasto publico en Colombia 1950-1991. In: Archivos de Macroeconomía. Departamento Nacional de Planeación. Documento No. 45. May 1996.