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COLD WAR POLITICS (1945–74)

The inter-American system

During the Second World War the United States appeared as the champion of democracy fighting the evil of fascism. Its positive image and prestige both in Latin America and the wider world were boosted by the idealism expressed in President Roosevelt's public espousal of the 'Four Freedoms' of speech, worship, and freedom from want and fear, as well as the universal democratic principles similarly enunciated in the 1941 Atlantic Charter. This favourable image greatly facilitated hemispheric cooperation and compliance as the United States once again during wartime forged unusually close political, economic, military and cultural relations with Latin America. The region was highly significant for the United States as a source of supply of vital war materials and an aid in maintaining military security. In return for their support, the Latin American governments made considerable economic gains. They also confidently expected that the close wartime relationship and the 'Good Neighbor Policy' would continue into the post-war period. Indeed, American assistance was considered a crucial element in preventing a recurrence of the economically depressed years of the 1930s. Most of all, such aid would promote domestic economic development, which was a priority of the new liberal governments that, at the end of the war, had overthrown long-standing dictatorships and risen to political power in several of the Latin American countries. Economic development was widely regarded as the best means to combat the problems of exploding population growth and the rising expectations of the masses for a higher standard of living and social justice. Some American diplomats shared the vision of a flourishing inter-American partnership based on capitalist principles of free trade and open markets. 'The resources of the Americas are unlimited', considered Sumner Welles, and he added: 'They can be developed to the benefit of each nation, with a resulting increase in living standards, if all the Americas share in the enterprise.'[1]

Welles's ideas foreshadowed the Alliance For Progress and were ahead of his time. A very different outcome resulted because the war marked the

transformation of the United States from a nation historically on the margin of an international system centred on Europe to the new status of the world's superpower. American economic and especially military power had grown rapidly and massively during the wartime years. But the other great powers had suffered relatively badly. While the United States had escaped the damaging destruction of total war, by contrast Nazi Germany and Japan were devastated and occupied. Moreover, America's principal wartime allies, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union, had suffered huge economic losses. The new superpower status meant that the United States abandoned its traditional isolationism and policy of avoiding entangling alliances and accepted world-wide commitments notably in western Europe and the Far East. For the first time in the history of the American republic, these commitments even took the form of concluding formal military alliances and were greatly expanded as a result of the outbreak of conflict with the Soviet Union that led to a state of 'Cold War'. Consequently, in the decade after 1945 American foreign policy was truly international in its scope and range. Indeed, the pre-eminence of the United States in the Western Hemisphere was actually more secure than even before the war in that any external threat from the great European powers, either military or economic, was effectively eliminated for at least a decade. In the process, American political and public interest rapidly diminished as Latin America was relegated to the periphery of America's strategic concern. A policy of complacency mixed with indifference was adopted towards the region whose diplomatic support was generally taken for granted and not always given very much significance.

The new stress on internationalism in American foreign policy threatened to upset the existing system of regional organization based upon the regular meetings of the Pan-American (after 1948 replaced by 'Inter-American') conference system which had taken place since 1889. The conference system had proved to be a valuable means by which the Latin American countries could raise common hemispheric issues and debate them with the United States. At times of emergency, meetings of foreign ministers had also been scheduled at short notice. For example, in January 1942, shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, a meeting of foreign ministers was held at Rio de Janeiro. During the war, however, the wider global concerns of the United States were reflected in a marked reluctance to schedule further inter-American conferences.[2] By contrast, a series of often well-publicized meetings were held between American, British and Soviet leaders, showing that American policy and priorities had shifted from regionalism to internationalism. A major conference to discuss the creation of a future world organization to replace the League of Nations was convened at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington in 1944. Only representatives from the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China attended the conference. Latin American countries were informed of developments but not invited to the

meeting. As a result they reacted with understandable suspicion when they learned of the proposal to create a Security Council consisting of the great powers. The new body would not only be separate from the General Assembly but its permanent members would also possess a right to veto all resolutions. This was perceived as a calculated means by which the great powers would use their privileged position to dominate the new organization in contrast to the inter-American system in which all the states were equal members with the same voting rights.

It was only as the war neared its close that the United States finally gave way to Latin America pressure for an inter-American conference of foreign ministers and agreed that a Special Pan-American Conference on the Problems of War and Peace would be held at Chapultepec Palace in Mexico City from 21 February to 8 March 1945. In effect, this meeting provided a timely opportunity for a discussion of post-war matters, especially the new world organization unveiled at Dumbarton Oaks and how this would affect the future working of regional associations such as the existing inter-American system. While expressing a wish for 'amplifying and making more specific the powers of the General Assembly' and also for 'giving an adequate representation to Latin America on the Security Council',[3] the Latin American delegates pleased their American colleagues by agreeing to continue their participation in the preparations for and also to attend the Conference on International Organization scheduled for San Francisco in June at which the actual Charter of the United Nations (UN) would be drawn up.

The delegates also discussed the issue of hemispheric defence and in the Act of Chapultepec agreed that, when the world war came to a formal end, a meeting would be convened to set up a permanent treaty system of military alliance based upon the principle of collective security. Agreement was also reached over the awkward question of future relations with Argentina whose pro-fascist government had not been invited to the conference. On condition that the Argentine government would officially declare war on Germany, the United States undertook to endorse Argentina's admission to the UN. Considerable divergence emerged, however, in the debates over the direction of future economic policy. American diplomats talked in vague terms of accepting broad general principles designed to promote international free trade and private enterprise from which they claimed that not only the United States but also every country in the world stood to benefit. Latin American officials, however, wanted specific programmes of aid for domestic economic development and industrialization and support for fixed international commodity prices.

The future direction of American policy was made more uncertain by Roosevelt's sudden death on 12 April 1945 and his replacement by Harry Truman who was relatively inexperienced in foreign affairs and little known in Latin America. In July 1945, after the end of the war in Europe, the

leaders of the 'Big Three' powers of the United States, the Soviet Union and Great Britain met at Potsdam in Germany. The Potsdam Conference was preoccupied with settling the political boundaries of Europe and displayed an attitude of indifference towards peripheral regions of the world such as Latin America. This was especially disturbing to the nations of the region because the Second World War had virtually subordinated the Latin American economy to that of the United States. In terms of trade and investment American influence throughout the whole of the hemisphere had risen to an unprecedented degree. As the Latin American delegates at the Chapultepec Conference had pointed out, for regional economic growth and development to be sustained there was a need for the continuation of American capital investment, transfer of technology and the maintenance of the high trade levels and guaranteed prices for raw materials that had occurred during the war. After 1945, however, the United States showed little economic favour to Latin America. Indeed, American war orders and Lend-Lease aid were abruptly cancelled shortly after the end of the conflict. When Latin American governments subsequently implemented nationalistic economic policies that resulted in high tariff barriers that restricted trade, they encountered American criticism.[4] Moreover, American officials supported American businessmen in their exploitation of Latin American dependence on the US market by using their country's economic strength to bring down the prices of raw materials and primary products.

'To the Latin American countries economic development is a foremost objective of national policy', noted a state department report in 1948, which added: 'At international conferences, at United Nations meetings and whenever the opportunity arises, they have actively sought measures to promote economic development.'[5] Latin American governments drew particular attention to the Marshall Plan, the massive programme of American financial assistance designed to aid the economic recovery of Western Europe that had been launched in 1947. Despite the concession of a 'Point Four' programme of technical assistance offered later (in 1949) by Truman, they persistently complained that there was no counterpart of the Marshall Plan in Latin America and that they had been allocated an inferior status to Western Europe. 'We fought in the last war and were entirely forgotten and rejected in the division of the spoils', protested Brazilian President Getúlio Vargas in 1951.[6] Indeed, between 1945 and 1952 Belgium and Luxembourg received more direct financial aid from the United States than all the twenty nations of Latin America combined. Replying to charges that they were parsimonious and ungrateful to their wartime allies, American diplomats characteristically preached and urged the adoption of the values of self-help and private enterprise. Truman's secretary of state, George C. Marshall, explained in 1948 that the United States did not possess unlimited financial resources. Moreover, the role and power of the state were constrained in the economic sphere:

> My Government is prepared to increase the scale of assistance it has been giving to the economic development of the American republics. But it is beyond the capacity of the United States Government itself to finance more than a small portion of the vast development needed. The capital required through the years must come from private sources, both domestic and foreign.[7]

American officials considered Europe a priority for economic reconstruction on account of its perceived vulnerability to Communist expansion and because it had suffered so much more extensive damage and destruction than Latin America during the war. Moreover, the traditional American criticism of Latin Americans was reflected in the opinion that the economic difficulties of the region were linked with their alleged incompetence and inefficiency in political and economic management. The state department official George F. Kennan visited Latin America for the first time in 1950 and concluded pessimistically that: 'the shadow of a tremendous helplessness and impotence falls today over most of the Latin American world'. He simplistically singled out for blame the influence of Spanish fanaticism: 'The handicaps to progress are written in blood and in the tracings of geography; and in neither case are they readily susceptible of obliteration.'[8] In a similar vein Truman's secretary of state, Dean Acheson, attributed Latin American economic backwardness to 'Hispano-Indian culture – or lack of it [that] had been piling up its problems for centuries'.[9]

While carefully avoiding discussion of economic matters, American officials displayed much keener interest in grasping opportunities to assert their country's exclusive political and military leadership of the hemisphere. Following on from the Chapultepec Conference they agreed to strengthen inter-American relations by establishing a permanent military alliance. Indeed, disappointment over the role of the UN and growing conflict with the Soviet Union meant that the idea of a regional military alliance had found more favour among American officials. In 1947 at the Pan-American Conference held in Rio de Janeiro, the Inter-American Treaty for Reciprocal Assistance set up a regional system of collective security known as the Rio Treaty or Rio Pact. Article 3 of the treaty foreshadowed and served as a model for the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) by providing 'that an armed attack by any State against an American State shall be considered as an attack against all the American States'.[10] It was understood, however, that the response to an attack might not necessarily involve the use of armed force. Nor was a response necessarily automatic but would depend on a decision reached by a meeting of foreign ministers – and a two-thirds majority vote in favour. In effect, this was an important safeguard for the Latin American countries, because it put in place a procedure that would serve to constrain the United States from armed intervention on account of the requirement to consult with

and secure the consent of a majority of the Latin American members. Nevertheless, the military role of the United States was acknowledged as crucial. Although the treaty was a pact rather than an alliance, it represented a commitment given by the United States to take primary responsibility for military action to protect the hemisphere. It thereby demonstrated that the Latin American countries recognized the fundamental importance of military collaboration with the United States for their own national security. 'The vital spirit of Pan American solidarity is implicit in the provisions of the treaty and there is every reason to believe that the treaty affords an adequate guarantee of the peace and security of this Hemisphere', summed up Truman's acting secretary of state, Robert Lovett.[11]

American political leadership was also enhanced during the following year at the Ninth Pan-American Conference in Bogotá, when the United States replaced the long-standing but informal Pan-American system based upon Special Conferences and the Pan-American Union with a new political institution still located in Washington but now consisting of a permanent headquarters and staff. This was to be known as the Organization of American States (OAS) and was created in accordance with articles 52–4 of the UN Charter that allowed member states to enter into separate regional organizations to deal with their local security problems. The Charter of the OAS affirmed the equality of its member nations. It also included a guarantee of the principle of non-intervention. 'No State or group of States', declared Article 15, 'has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State.'[12] The OAS gave the Latin American governments what they had long desired in the form of a permanent forum and machinery to debate and directly influence hemispheric issues. But the United States also stood to gain from the new institution. The OAS was valuable for American diplomacy because it provided a convenient tool that could be used to prevent external political influence and interference in the Western Hemisphere. Moreover, the compliance with the UN Charter meant that international re-affirmation of the Monroe Doctrine had also essentially been secured. 'We have preserved the Monroe Doctrine and the Inter-American system', remarked the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, and more to the point he added: 'We have retained a complete veto – exclusive in our own hands – over any decisions involving external activities.'[13]

Responding to crisis events in the Balkans, in March 1947 President Truman had proclaimed the Truman Doctrine in which he pledged support for 'free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures'.[14] In effect, the United States adopted the policy of 'containing' the perceived expansive tendencies of international Communism. Although the Western Hemisphere was judged to be quite

different to the Balkans, the Middle East or the Philippines in not facing an immediate external Communist threat, American officials confidently assumed and anticipated that the countries of Latin America would play a supportive role in the emerging Cold War. In the process, the Rio Pact and the OAS became part of the evolving policy of the global containment of international Communism. For example, Latin American countries were expected to support the United States at the UN. They were also encouraged to break off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Five countries did so between 1947 and 1952. Only Mexico, Argentina and Uruguay had relations with the Soviets in 1952. Moreover, national Communist parties suffered severe restrictions on their activities and were made illegal in several countries.

The Korean War, however, exposed a divergence of opinion over how to respond to the external Communist threat. Most Latin American governments initially joined the United States in approving the UN action condemning the North Korean invasion of South Korea in June 1950. But attitudes became more ambivalent when the war was widened after the military intervention of the People's Republic of China in November. Seeking hemispheric support for the war effort, the Truman Administration invited Latin American foreign ministers to a conference at Washington in March 1951. They were welcomed by the president, who noted that their purpose was 'to work out ways and means by which our united strength may be employed in the struggle for freedom throughout the world'.[15] Under the US Mutual Security Act of 1951, designed to promote the common defence of the hemisphere, twelve Latin American governments signed treaties with the United States for the provision of weapons and training. With the exception of a small token force from Colombia, however, they were unwilling to participate directly in the Korean War. The Brazilian government pointedly blamed American economic policy for the negative response. 'If [Washington] had elaborated a recovery plan for Latin America similar to the Marshall Plan for Europe', explained Brazilian Foreign Minister João Neves da Fontoura, 'Brazil's present situation would be different and our cooperation in the present emergency could probably be greater.'[16] Economic factors were influential, but the geopolitical reality was that, in contrast to the United States, Cold War battles in Europe or the Far East were not a pressing strategic concern of Latin American governments.

Resisting Communism in Guatemala

During an era in which anxiety over the 'red scare', the 'loss of China' to Communism and the Korean War resulted in public anti-Communist hysteria in the United States in the form of McCarthyism, it was not surprising that American officials were disturbed by any sign of alleged

Communist activity in Latin America. The talk of major land reform, greater power for labour unions and expropriation of foreign companies was not a new phenomenon and notably had been associated with the Mexican Revolution earlier in the twentieth century. It was, however, now simplistically and at times conveniently attributed not to internal nationalist political forces but to the pernicious influence of an international Communist conspiracy led and orchestrated by the Soviet Union. While American officials dismissed the prospect of Soviet military aggression in the Western Hemisphere as unrealistic, the much more sinister employment of covert political infiltration and subversion by local Communists and their sympathizers was believed to be spreading. In effect, the fascist danger of the 1930s and early 1940s was now replaced by the Communist threat.

In his report on his 1950 visit to Latin America, George Kennan warned: 'as things stand today, the activities of the communists represent our most serious problem in the area. They have progressed to a point where they must be regarded as an urgent, major problem.'[17] Nevertheless, he believed that presently only in Guatemala was there a real prospect of Communist political advance. Kennan took comfort in the historical fact that the negative view of Communism as an alien and anti-Christian ideology was so strong and ingrained in Latin American society that American diplomacy was able to persuade not only conservative but even some radical nationalist governments to put restrictions on the activities of their Communist parties and left-wing labour unions. This occurred, for example, in Costa Rica in 1953 where Communist activities were severely curtailed by President José Figueres Ferrer. 'Communism has no political appeal to individualistic, liberty-loving Latin Americans', the Costa Rican president had declared before assuming office.[18] 'The new government is anti-Communist and animated by a devotion to democratic procedure', noted an American journalist who approvingly added: 'It is a model other Latin American reformers could well follow.'[19]

A similar course of events took place in Bolivia where a self-styled 'revolutionary' party, known as the National Revolutionary Movement (*Movimento Nacional Revolucionario* or MNR), seized power in a violent uprising in 1952, but proceeded to modify its radical policies of economic nationalism and major land reform. The Bolivian Revolution, however, did not cause the same difficulties as the earlier Mexican Revolution because the MNR agreed to compensate the foreign-owned tin companies that suffered expropriation. In return, the United States consented to continue programmes of financial aid and to maintain substantial purchases of Bolivian tin, to the extent of having to stockpile large quantities. 'The economic respite US aid gave to Bolivia', concluded a state department assessment, 'encouraged the government to moderate its policies, particularly with regard to economic nationalism.'[20] During the decade of the 1950s Bolivia received more American financial aid than any other Latin American country.

The sum amounted to a third of the country's annual budget and was regarded in Washington as a most successful political and economic investment. Eisenhower's assistant secretary of state, Henry Holland, remarked in 1955 that American financial assistance had 'been of great assistance in maintaining economic and political stability . . . and aiding the Bolivian Government to counteract Communist pressures'.[21]

In general, however, officials in the Eisenhower Administration (1953–61) conveyed characteristic American attitudes of superiority in dismissing many Latin American political leaders as 'immature and impractical idealists', who 'not only are inadequately trained to conduct government business efficiently but also lack the disposition to combat extremists within their ranks, including communists'.[22] According to Eisenhower's secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, Latin Americans were 'people who have practically no capacity for self-government and indeed are like children'.[23] The sense of frustration felt by American officials was most evident in their policy towards Guatemala. In 1944 a left-wing political coalition had overthrown the dictatorship of Jorge Ubico Castañeda in that country and, inspired by the visionary and socialist ideas of President Juan José Arévalo, had inaugurated a period of radical economic and social reform known as the Guatemalan Revolution. In November 1950 President Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán won the presidential election and in 1952 proceeded to go further than his predecessor in implementing schemes of major agrarian reform based on the expropriation of uncultivated land for redistribution to peasant families. The expropriation included land owned by the Boston-based United Fruit Company (UFCO), a major exporter of bananas. While the Guatemalan government offered UFCO $1 million in compensation, the American company claimed that the value of the land in question was at least $16 million. Except among the landed elite, there was little sympathy for UFCO in Guatemala where the company had established itself in 1899 and was believed to own 550,000 acres of land of which it was estimated that no more than 15 per cent was currently under cultivation. UFCO was popularly and unflatteringly known as 'the Octopus' (*el pulpo*) and regarded as the supreme symbol of American imperialism.[24]

The dispute had ramifications far beyond Guatemala because American officials regarded the agrarian reform measure as having been instigated by local Communists who were reported to have infiltrated into influential positions in the government and labour unions. 'American interests in Guatemala are being hard pressed by extremist labor demands, sparked by Communist leaders and by the open partisanship of the Government', noted a state department report in 1951, which added: 'The United Fruit Company is continually being subjected to harassing work stoppages and extreme demands and threats backed by Government pressure.'[25] Moreover, UFCO had direct influence among government officials in Washington because several senior members of the Eisenhower Administration, notably

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and his brother, CIA Director Allen Dulles, had previously worked for an international law firm, Sullivan and Cromwell, that still retained contracts with the company. A skilful lobbying exercise was mounted by UFCO in the United States, which not only outlined the view that the company was suffering excessively harsh and unfair treatment in Guatemala but also more importantly contributed to the Cold War mindset of the Eisenhower Administration and also of American politicians, who became convinced that Arbenz was being unduly influenced if not manipulated by Communists. In the US Senate, Allan Ellender of Louisiana denounced the activities of 'fanatical and determined' Communists who have 'cunningly devised to identify themselves as the champions of the social justice and nationalist aspects of the Guatemalan Revolution'.[26] The particular concerns and economic interests of UFCO, however, became a secondary consideration as a growing anxiety emerged in Washington over the prospect that a Soviet satellite state was about to be created in Central America. Such a development would pose a serious strategic threat to American security because of its geographical proximity to Mexico and the Panama Canal and would also register a major setback for the United States in the Cold War with the Soviet Union.

The Eisenhower Administration responded to the perceived Communist danger by placing increasing diplomatic and economic pressure on President Arbenz to remove alleged Communists from their positions in the government and labour unions. To convey Eisenhower's views, the abrasive and strongly anti-Communist John Peurifoy was appointed as the new American ambassador to Guatemala. After a lengthy private meeting with Arbenz in December 1953, Peurifoy informed the state department that their suspicions of the president's ideological leanings and alarm over Communist subversion of the government were entirely justified: 'I came away definitely convinced that if President [Arbenz] is not a Communist, he will certainly do until one comes along, and that normal approaches will not work in Guatemala.'[27] In March 1954 John Foster Dulles went to the Tenth Inter-American Conference at Caracas determined to gain Latin American support for a resolution condemning foreign intervention in the form of international Communism. It was evident, however, that what Dulles wanted was not discussion but an explicit Latin American endorsement of American armed intervention to punish Arbenz. The Guatemalan foreign minister, Guillermo Toriello Garrido, defiantly argued that the US government:

> wanted to find a ready expedient to maintain the economic dependence of the American Republics and suppress the legitimate desires of their people, cataloguing as 'Communist' every manifestation of nationalism or economic independence, and desire for social progress, and intellectual curiosity, and any interest in progressive or liberal reforms.[28]

A ‘Declaration of Solidarity’ critical of the ‘aggressive character’ of International Communism was passed at Caracas.[29] Contrary to Dulles’s wishes, however, it made no specific mention of Guatemala. Moreover, while Guatemala was the only delegation to vote against the resolution, it was not isolated in its opposition because Mexico and Argentina were also notable abstainers in the vote.

The failure to secure Latin American approval or support was disappointing, but did not deter the Eisenhower Administration. Even before the meeting in Caracas, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had been assigned the task of preparing a covert military operation, codenamed ‘Operation PBSUCCESS’, to bring down the government of President Arbenz. A small army of Guatemalan political exiles was duly recruited, equipped and organized in Honduras and Nicaragua. Meanwhile, Arbenz refused to be deflected from implementing his agrarian reforms. He also sought to strengthen his own military forces, but was denied weapons from the United States. When the Guatemalan president looked to alternative suppliers and succeeded in purchasing weapons and ammunition from Czechoslovakian sources in 1954, John Foster Dulles ominously warned at a press conference that ‘a government in which Communist influence is very strong has come into a position to dominate militarily the Central American area’.[30] The implication was that a clear danger to American and hemispheric national security now existed. ‘The threat of Communist imperialism is no longer academic, it has arrived’, declared the *Washington Post* in an editorial entitled ‘Communist Beachhead’.[31]

The decision was duly taken in Washington to implement the covert plan to overthrow Arbenz. Consequently, in June the CIA directed its small army of around 150 Guatemalan exiles commanded by Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas to prepare to invade Guatemala from Honduras. While the rebels would be given air support by bombers supplied by the CIA and flown by privately contracted American pilots, no American troops were to be involved in the fighting on the ground. Meanwhile, CIA agents would take control of Guatemalan radio communications and broadcast anti-Arbenz propaganda. The actual invasion began on 18 June. Ten days later Arbenz resigned. The CIA had been very effective in transmitting radio broadcasts to the Guatemalan people that portrayed the advancing rebel army as a large invasion force. For Arbenz, however, the crucial factor was his inability to count on the loyalty of the Guatemalan army. ‘If you don’t resign,’ a trusted aide informed him, ‘the Army will march on the capital to depose you.’[32] Without any major battle being fought, Arbenz decided to resign and was replaced by Castillo Armas, who was strongly anti-Communist and, most of all, the choice of the United States. The significant role of the CIA in the coup was widely suspected but was not revealed at the time. Instead, John Foster Dulles denied American involvement and publicly declared that the coup was internally motivated. He also

disingenuously claimed that the Guatemalan people had determined events and that the country's future would now be directed by 'loyal' leaders 'who have not treasonably become the agents of an alien despotism which sought to use Guatemala for its own evil ends'.[33] The same message was faithfully conveyed in an editorial in the *New York Times* that was entitled 'Red Defeat in Guatemala' and triumphantly described the course of events as 'the first successful anti-Communist revolt since the last war'.[34]

The new government of Castillo Armas brought an end to the 1944 Guatemala Revolution by carrying out the policies that the Eisenhower Administration had wanted Arbenz to follow. It arrested suspected Communists, renegotiated UFCO's financial contracts, reversed the policies of agrarian reform, and restricted the activities of labour unions. After a visit to Guatemala in 1955, Vice-President Richard Nixon reported to a meeting of the national security council that Castillo Armas was 'a good man with good intentions'. Nixon confidently believed that: 'We [the United States] had good possibilities of succeeding in Guatemala and of holding up to the world the picture of our success.'[35] Castillo Armas, however, was soon overthrown by assassination in 1957 and Guatemala subsequently became a byword for civil unrest and a series of brutal military governments, a development for which American policy could not escape some of the moral responsibility. The 1954 coup would also have an important influence on future behaviour at a critical time. Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, who would later become Fidel Castro's most famous fellow guerrilla fighter, was living in Guatemala in 1954 and regarded the example of Arbenz's lack of control over the army and his subsequent abject surrender as an example of how not to respond to an armed incursion.

'By the middle of 1954 Latin America was free, for the time being at least, of any fixed outposts of Communism', proudly remarked President Eisenhower.[36] Latin American governments, however, were generally dismayed by America's use of armed force in the guise of a covert operation to overthrow a legally elected government and suppress radical reforms. In effect, the Guatemalan episode marked a reversion to the policy of unilateral interventionism and thereby the definitive end of the 'Good Neighbor Policy' launched by Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt. What the Guatemalan coup and its aftermath also demonstrated was that, in its desire for political stability, public order and resistance to Communism, the United States was prepared to destabilize elected governments. Furthermore, it continued to cooperate with and, indeed, to give material support to the most reactionary dictators in Latin America. While outwardly in favour of democratic governments, the United States often found it easier and preferable to work with right-wing authoritarian regimes and those political and especially military leaders who shared America's anti-Communist ethos. Prominent examples of leaders who were given American approval and backing were Fulgencio Batista in Cuba, the Somoza family

in Nicaragua, Marcos Pérez Jiménez in Venezuela, Manuel Odría in Peru, and Alfredo Stroessner in Paraguay. 'It is better to have a strong regime in power than a liberal government if it is indulgent and relaxed and penetrated by Communists', summed up George Kennan after his visit to Latin America in 1950.[37] As events in Guatemala demonstrated, this attitude meant that the United States could become a major obstacle to the achievement of social and economic progress. Moreover, not only did American officials appear to give open support to brutal dictatorships but they also were accused of actively colluding with their huge business corporations such as UFCO to exploit and plunder the rich resources of the hemisphere.

Alliance For Progress

The fall of Arbenz briefly provoked a few minor demonstrations organized mainly by students and labour unions in Latin America. Latent anti-American sentiment, however, emerged at its most virulent during Vice-President Richard Nixon's 'goodwill' tour of Latin America in May 1958. Nixon's visit started peacefully in Buenos Aires with his attendance at the inauguration of the Argentine president, Arturo Frondizi. In Lima, however, he was confronted by student riots. In Caracas his life was endangered when a howling mob attacked his motorcade. 'There is considerable evidence that the demonstrations in the various countries visited by the Vice President followed a pattern and were Communist inspired and staged', reported Deputy Under Secretary of State Robert D. Murphy.[38] Despite the attribution that the actions against Nixon were the work of Communists, the Eisenhower Administration was more taken aback by the depth of anti-American hostility that had been so openly displayed. Indeed, Nixon had completed what had been regarded as a successful goodwill visit to Latin America as recently as 1955. CIA Director Allen Dulles considered the reception accorded to the Vice-President in 1958 to be a 'shock' that 'brought South American problems to our attention as nothing else could have done'.[39] In the opinion of the influential columnist, Walter Lippmann, the mission represented a 'diplomatic Pearl Harbor'.[40] A reassessment of Latin American policy took place, in which Eisenhower decided to try and remedy the previous attitude of neglect by making a personal visit to several countries in February–March 1960 'to provide a dramatic stimulus to establish closer United States relations'.[41] At the same time the provision of financial aid for the region was considerably increased. In what was a marked departure from traditional self-help policies, emphasis was placed not only on assisting economic development but also on fighting poverty by allocating funds mainly in the form of loans to promote social reform and improve standards of living. In April 1959 a new federal agency, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) was created for this purpose and provided with initial resources of $1 billion.[42]

The political importance of implementing policies of financial aid was boosted by the rise to power of Fidel Castro Ruz in Cuba in 1959 and the serious challenge that the radicalism of the Cuban Revolution subsequently presented to American democracy and the capitalist system. This coincided with the election in 1960 of a new Democratic president, John F. Kennedy, who promised a 'New Frontier' for the American people. A task force set up to advise the president-elect on policy for the region reported to him 'that the greatest single task of American diplomacy in Latin America is to divorce the inevitable and necessary Latin American social transformation from connection with and prevent its capture by overseas Communist power politics'.[43] The new president was especially concerned about the extent of economic backwardness in Latin America and confided to an aide, Richard Goodwin, his anxiety that 'the whole place could blow up on us'.[44] While Kennedy undertook to continue Eisenhower's policy of financial aid for Latin America, he also sought to expand and make it his own personal programme in the form of the Alliance For Progress (La Alianza para el Progreso). Moreover, Kennedy had a genuine personal interest in Latin America and wanted to stage a news event that would draw the attention of the American public to the importance of the region. Consequently, he chose to announce his policy of a 'Ten-Year Plan for the Americas' before an invited audience of distinguished Latin American diplomats in the White House. In a well-received speech on 13 March 1961 he described the scheme as 'a vast cooperative effort, unparalleled in magnitude and nobility of purpose, to satisfy the basic needs of the American people for homes, work and land, health and schools'.[45]

As with so many presidential initiatives involving Latin America, the programme was proclaimed unilaterally and its contents very much reflected traditional American values and sense of democratic mission. But it was not to be imposed. In a style reminiscent of Franklin Roosevelt and the 'Good Neighbor Policy', the new president stressed that this was to be a joint, cooperative effort and that the United States undertook to listen to the ideas and requests for aid from Latin America itself. A conference of hemispheric leaders, including Che Guevara representing Cuba, subsequently met at Punta del Este, Uruguay, in August 1961 in order to discuss the plan in more detail. In the resulting Charter of Punta del Este the United States agreed to a commitment to provide the nations of Latin America, though excluding Cuba, the substantial sum of $20 billion in aid over a period of ten years. The stated aim was 'to accelerate the economic and social development of the participating countries of Latin America, so that they may achieve maximum levels of well-being, with equal opportunities for all, in democratic societies adapted to their own needs and desires'.[46] The scheme essentially represented a belated Marshall Plan and was similarly politically motivated in seeking to contain the advance of Communism in a strategically important region of the world that was visibly

suffering from extreme poverty and destitution. Moreover, by firmly linking the United States with movements for democratic reform and social justice, the Kennedy Administration was confident that it would successfully counter the challenge of the Cuban Revolution and prevent the occurrence of 'another Cuba' in the hemisphere. 'Just as the Marshall Plan was the United States answer to Josef Stalin', asserted the *New York Times*, 'so the Kennedy Plan is the United States answer to Fidel Castro.'[47]

Despite the large and unprecedented financial commitment made by the United States, the economic goals of the Alliance as stated by President Kennedy proved to be far too optimistic and over ambitious. Only one year after the meeting at Punta del Este an American journalist remarked that 'few great projects in recent memory have been so hopefully launched and so quickly scorned as the Alliance For Progress'.[48] The ensuing decade demonstrated that Latin America could not be easily remade in the American image according to a set plan and a fixed schedule. Too much was expected in too short a space of time and, in marked contrast to the success of the Marshall Plan in Western Europe, the actual performance proved to be acutely disappointing. The American ambassador to Brazil, Lincoln Gordon, who was also a distinguished economist, identified one of the main differences between the European and Latin American experiences when he explained that 'development is a far more difficult undertaking than economic recovery'.[49]

Ironically, while American officials were concerned at the prospect of radical nationalist political leaders and movements emerging in Latin America in imitation of the Cuban Revolution, a major reason for the lack of success of the Alliance was the existence of considerable internal resistance within Latin America from elite and conservative elements whose self-interests and privileges were adversely affected by radical programmes of land redistribution, the extension of democratic reforms and the prospect of having to pay higher personal income taxes to fund programmes of social welfare. The Kennedy Administration wanted and, as it turned out, mistakenly expected a definite political swing in the direction of democratic government. In fact, the decade of the 1960s experienced right-wing military coups in several Latin American countries including Argentina and Brazil. Moreover, there was also criticism from Latin Americans that the programme possessed inherent flaws for which they were not to blame. They pointed out that too many strings were attached to American aid and that the scheme was not as generous as it seemed at first sight. Instead of being seen as a major effort at social, economic and political change, the Alliance For Progress appeared more like a conventional foreign aid programme which was criticized for seeking to put American business interests first. As early as 1962 the US diplomat Arturo Morales-Carrion had reported that to Latin Americans the Alliance 'still looks "foreign" and "imported", it still looks as a "Made in USA" product'.[50] The statistics

made disappointing reading. At the end of the decade it was widely acknowledged that, in terms of economic development since 1961, Latin America had arguably fallen further behind the United States and the developed world. One of the most publicized targets of the Alliance was to achieve an annual economic growth rate of not less than 2.5 per cent. During the decade of the 1960s, however, the annual rate of growth in Latin America remained stuck at 1.5 per cent and was outstripped by the population explosion that averaged an annual increase of around 3 per cent. At the same time unemployment actually grew from 18 million to 25 million.

Although the architects of the Alliance For Progress within the Kennedy Administration sincerely wished to improve inter-American relations, it was evident that American strategic priorities not only remained with Europe but also became increasingly preoccupied with South-east Asia and the escalating war in Vietnam. This was further underscored after Kennedy's assassination on 22 November 1963 and the elevation of Lyndon Johnson to the presidency. In contrast to his predecessor, Johnson was not one of the original architects of the Alliance. Moreover, he also showed a much more limited personal interest than Kennedy in Latin American affairs. Under the 'Mann Doctrine', named after Assistant Secretary of State Tom Mann, the Johnson Administration (1963–9) declared that its Latin American policy would first and foremost stress an anti-Communist approach. This meant that it intended to be pragmatic in its dealings with governments in the region and would no longer put pressure on authoritarian regimes to implement democratic reforms.

At the same time as Administration officials gave progressively less attention to the Alliance, the US Congress adopted a more sceptical view of funding programmes of foreign aid. Latin American issues diminished in political significance as congressmen became preoccupied with the growing inflationary pressures upon the American economy, domestic racial tensions especially in American cities and the damaging political impact of the Vietnam War. Consequently, in 1967 Congress refused Johnson's request for additional funds for the Alliance. When he launched the programme in 1961, Kennedy had thought in terms of a decade of successful implementation and achievement. By the close of the 1960s, however, it was evident, in the words of President Eduardo Frei Montalva of Chile, that the Alliance For Progress had 'lost its way'.[51] President Kennedy's younger brother, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, summed up in 1970 that the programme 'has been a major economic disappointment . . . a social failure . . . a political failure'.[52]

The Cuban Revolution

The Alliance For Progress was the economic aspect of an American strategy that was designed to counter the perceived threat of Communism in the

Western Hemisphere and especially the new revolutionary regime established in Cuba in 1959 under the leadership of the charismatic Fidel Castro. As it had so often been in the past, Cuba, once again, became a major issue not only in American foreign policy but also in American political debate. This was exemplified in the 1960 presidential election contest between the Republican candidate, Richard Nixon, and the Democratic candidate, John F. Kennedy. Both candidates competed with each other in alerting the American public to the danger posed by the new government in Cuba. 'In 1952 the Republicans ran on a program of rolling back the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe', declared Kennedy, and he added: 'Today the Iron Curtain is 90 miles off the coast of the United States.' Nixon replied by condemning Kennedy's 'defeatist talk' and insisted that 'Cuba is not lost'.[53]

The debate between Nixon and Kennedy showed that the American public was uncertain in its attitude towards Fidel Castro. On the one hand, there was the image presented in the media of a brave Cuban patriot fighting against and ultimately overthrowing the reactionary and corrupt regime of Fulgencio Batista. This view owed much to the admiring articles published in 1957 by the *New York Times* reporter Herbert L. Matthews, which had been a journalistic scoop in revealing that 'Fidel Castro, the rebel leader of Cuba's youth, is alive and fighting hard and successfully in the rugged, almost impenetrable fastnesses of the Sierra Maestra'.[54] When Castro talked about replacing a dictator with an honest government, he sounded like a middle-class liberal. But he was also an admirer of José Martí who pledged to bring about major land reform and substantial improvement in the working conditions and standard of living for Cuba's peasants and workers. The puzzle for American diplomats and politicians was to decide whether he was a Communist or a radical nationalist. The answer to this question would determine the extent to which Cuba could avoid becoming involved in Cold War politics. On his brief visit to the United States in April 1959 Castro met Vice-President Nixon. After the meeting Nixon reported rather patronizingly that Castro 'has those indefinable qualities which make him a leader of men', but that he was 'either incredibly naive about communism or under communist discipline – my guess is the former.'[55] A state department analysis in June agreed that Castro's 'temperament and inexperience ill fit him to administer the government'. While the report believed that 'the Communists probably do not now control Castro', it warned that the Cuban Communist Party had shown 'great skill . . . in identifying itself with the Castro revolution' and was steadily increasing its influence within the regime.[56]

Castro was proud of the fact that, in contrast to events in 1898, his guerrilla movement had overthrown an oppressive regime without the military intervention of the United States. Indeed, officials in the Eisenhower Administration were certainly irritated by Castro's frequent condemnation

of American imperialism and his proclaimed determination to break with the past and bring an end to Cuba's humiliating political and economic dependence on the United States. 'We no longer live in times', Castro told the American ambassador in Havana, 'when one had to worry when the American Ambassador visited the [Cuban] Prime Minister.'[57] This defiantly independent attitude was unsympathetically interpreted in Washington as a broad and calculated challenge to American pre-eminence in the hemisphere. Instead of adopting an accommodating attitude like the leaders of the Bolivian Revolution, Castro chose to copy the example of the earlier Mexican Revolution and present an alternative model of economic development to American free-enterprise capitalism. Relations grew increasingly unfriendly when he expropriated American banks and utility companies and signed a trade agreement with the Soviet Union. In turn the Eisenhower Administration imposed punitive economic sanctions, including the suspension of imports of Cuban sugar. Castro proceeded to negotiate the sale of 4 million tons of sugar to the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

Evidently, neither side was willing to compromise or accommodate the other. In fact, the increasing hostility of the United States was useful in helping Castro to demonstrate his nationalist credentials and to win popular support in Cuba for his revolutionary reforms. Eisenhower eventually broke off diplomatic relations in January 1961. He considered Castro a pro-Communist and 'a madman' and earlier, in March 1960, had authorized the CIA to prepare a covert operation to overthrow him.[58] The president envisaged an operation along the same lines as that successfully undertaken in Guatemala in 1954. In similar fashion an army of political exiles would be recruited, trained at a secret Central American location and then provided with logistic support in an invasion to overthrow the government. In the case of Cuba the basic CIA plan was to make an amphibious landing to establish a secure beachhead that would provide a rallying point for a general uprising against Castro. At an appropriate time a provisional government of Cuban exiles would be flown in from Florida and accorded official diplomatic recognition by the United States.

During the summer of 1960 a few hundred anti-Castro Cuban exiles were recruited by the CIA and taken first to the Panama Canal Zone and then to Guatemala and later Nicaragua for training. The actual military effort 'to give Castro the Guatemala treatment' was code named 'Operation Zapata' and was not ready for execution until after Eisenhower had given up his presidential office to Kennedy in January 1961. Following the hard-line views that he had expressed in his presidential debates with Nixon and conscious of current Communist pressure in Berlin and South-east Asia, the new president saw Cuba as a crucial battleground in the Cold War against the Soviet Union. While endorsing Eisenhower's decision to overthrow Castro, Kennedy was well aware that the proposed covert operation

was inherently risky and that its success was by no means guaranteed. He was worried, therefore, that this would lead the CIA to develop the type of large amphibious and airborne assault that had been launched in Europe during the Second World War. As a result the landing site was moved from the city of Trinidad to the much more remote Zapata region on the southern coast of Cuba. At the same time as giving his approval to the operation, Kennedy ordered reductions in size and scale so that it would appear as an infiltration of guerrillas in support of an internal insurgency. He also insisted that American military personnel must not directly take part in any actual combat activity. This would enable his administration to maintain plausible deniability of any participation in the operation.

Once the training was completed in Guatemala and Nicaragua, the operation involved transporting and landing a force (Brigade 2506) of over 1,400 men on 17 April 1961 at the location known as the Bay of Pigs (Bahía de Cochinos or Playa Girón). More than six years earlier in Guatemala, news of invasion had virtually paralysed Arbenz and persuaded him to resign and seek exile. But Castro and Che Guevara had learned the lesson of 1954. In contrast to Arbenz, Castro maintained effective personal control over the army and acted decisively by dispatching all available troops, tanks and airplanes to the invasion area. He also ordered the immediate arrest of suspected opponents of his regime throughout the island. In calling for forceful resistance against the invaders Castro appealed not to Communist ideology but directly to Cuban nationalism and long-standing anti-American feeling. He urged: 'Forward Cubans! Answer with steel and with fire the barbarians who despise us and want to make us return to slavery.'[59] Consequently, instead of gaining a secure beachhead and provoking armed uprisings in the rest of the island as planned, the small invading army was quickly isolated and overwhelmed within two days by forces loyal to Castro. Twelve hundred men surrendered and became prisoners.[60]

Despondency reigned at the White House in Washington. 'It was a long and grim day – the longest and grimmest the New Frontier had known', recalled the presidential adviser, Arthur Schlesinger.[61] If threatened with complete disaster, the anti-Castro brigade had expected to be saved by timely and decisive American military intervention. But Kennedy refused to order air-strikes from the aircraft carrier *Essex*, which was standing by for just such a contingency. Over-ambitious and poorly planned, Operation Zapata ended in disastrous failure. Though the CIA was widely blamed for its faulty planning and ill-conceived advice, Kennedy immediately accepted full responsibility for the disaster. With the benefit of hindsight, he asked one of his aides: 'All my life I've known better than to depend on the experts. How could I have been so stupid, to let them go ahead?'[62]

In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, the US ambassador to the UN, Adlai Stevenson, reported by telegram that the 'atmosphere in UN, among both our friends and neutrals is highly unsatisfactory and extremely

dangerous to US position throughout world'.[63] While Kennedy was humiliated by the setback, Castro jubilantly claimed a great victory for the Cuban Revolution over American imperialism. As a result the Cuban leader's personal prestige was enormously enhanced not only in Cuba but also in Latin America and throughout the world. The failure of Operation Zapata also strengthened the growing bond between Cuba and the Soviet Union. The Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, pledged his support for Castro and declared that the Soviet Union 'will not abandon the Cuban people'.[64] Castro replied by affirming for the first time in public his personal adherence to the ideology of Marxism-Leninism and aligning Cuba with the Communist nations. While the rest of Latin America generally applauded Castro's defiant stand against American bullying and violation of international law, they watched with dismay as the politics of the Cold War were fastened upon the Western Hemisphere. Cuba became a satellite of the Soviet Union and a base for 'exporting revolution' in the form of organizing and launching guerrilla operations designed to overthrow governments on the mainland of Central and South America. 'We have demonstrated', Che Guevara jubilantly declared, 'that a small group of men who are determined, supported by the people, and not afraid of death . . . can overcome a regular army.'[65]

The Kennedy Administration responded by seeking to isolate Castro both politically and economically. The policy was not just confined to the Western Hemisphere but was intended to have world-wide application. After some initial reluctance, the Latin American nations narrowly voted to approve American proposals to expel Cuba from the OAS in January 1962. But agreement to impose mandatory collective economic sanctions was not forthcoming. The argument that carried most weight in favour of political isolation was the fact that Cuba had openly adopted Marxism-Leninism as its state ideology and joined the Soviet bloc in the Cold War, developments that were regarded as 'incompatible with the principles and standards that govern the regional system'.[66] 'The Castro regime has extended the global battle to Latin America', Kennedy's secretary of state, Dean Rusk, informed the OAS and he warned: 'It has supplied Communism with a bridgehead in the Americas.'[67]

Even those Latin American countries that sympathized with Cuba were alarmed by Castro's desire to obtain substantial military assistance from the Soviet Union. Castro argued that a military build-up was necessary to defend Cuba against the threat of an imminent American invasion. It was, however, Khrushchev's secret attempt to construct offensive missile sites on the island in 1962 that brought the very real prospect of a nuclear war occurring in the hemisphere. In the ensuing 'Missile Crisis' of October 1962, Kennedy publicly stated that the whole hemisphere was in danger because the purpose of the missile sites 'can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike capability against the Western Hemisphere'.[68] Nevertheless, he treated the issue purely as a confrontation between the United States

and the Soviet Union and, consequently, preferred to deal directly with Khrushchev. It was only after he had made the decision to place a US naval quarantine around Cuba that Kennedy invoked the 1947 Rio Treaty and sought the endorsement of the OAS to approve the use of armed force. An affirmative vote was forthcoming from the Latin American countries, but there was not unqualified support for Kennedy's technically illegal action. Bolivia, Brazil and Mexico notably abstained in one of the votes in order to show their opposition. In fact, a majority vote in the OAS for punitive economic sanctions against Cuba was delayed until 1964. This occurred not as a result of American prompting but after the revelation in November 1963 from the Venezuelan government that its army had discovered a secret cache of Cuban weapons. Venezuela formally complained to the OAS that the discovery demonstrated that Castro was planning to use violence to disrupt the forthcoming Venezuelan elections. A majority of the Latin American nations, with the notable exception of Mexico, subsequently backed an OAS resolution sponsored by Venezuela to isolate Cuba both politically and economically.

As part of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis accord with Khrushchev, Kennedy gave a secret undertaking not to mount an armed invasion of Cuba to overthrow Castro in return for the supervised withdrawal of Soviet offensive missiles from the island.[69] However, while the United States apparently consented to the existence of a Communist state in the Western Hemisphere, it continued to strive for the political and economic isolation of the Castro regime. In addition, 'Operation Mongoose', which had been authorized by Kennedy in November 1961 and placed under the direction of the CIA counter-insurgency expert General Edward Lansdale, was given extra funds to pursue a strategy of covert operations involving paramilitary sabotage, subversion and even assassination attempts, including the use of exploding cigars and poisonous ball-point pens, to destabilize the Castro regime in Cuba. Like Operation Zapata, Operation Mongoose was unsuccessful because Castro and the Cuban Revolution enjoyed genuine public support in Cuba. Furthermore, Castro shrewdly used evidence of American covert operations to appeal to Cuban nationalism and anti-Americanism while at the same time justifying an increase in his security forces and a strengthening of his personal control of the political system. In April 1963, Kennedy's national security adviser, McGeorge Bundy, acknowledged that Operation Mongoose should be closed down because 'such activity is not worth the effort expended on it'.[70]

On the other hand, American policy in the form of the economic embargo on trade and investment was successful in severely damaging the Cuban economy. For the Soviet Union this meant that the pledge of support for Castro was financially very costly and proved to be an enduring economic liability. During the 1960s the Cuban economy was only saved from collapse by generous Soviet financial subsidies, especially in the form of supplies

of oil and industrial equipment, and an agreement to purchase more than 50 per cent of Cuba's exports. Although the Soviets had successfully established a beachhead in Cuba, their first in the Western Hemisphere, they used the island as a propaganda showpiece and centre of operations for the gathering of intelligence information rather than a fortress or base for offensive military operations. The alarmist American predictions of rapid and relentless Communist advance throughout the Central American–Caribbean region proved to be incorrect. Indeed, no serious attempt was made to integrate Cuba into the Warsaw Pact or formally join a Soviet system of world-wide military alliances. This cautious policy was explained by two facts: the Soviets did not want to fight a war over Cuba and they recognized the Western Hemisphere as a well-established American sphere of influence. By contrast, the Soviet Union was a remote power that had a history of minimal political and economic contact with the region. Only Argentina, Mexico and Uruguay maintained diplomatic relations with Moscow throughout the 1950s. Trade was also relatively very modest. In comparison to products from the West, the Soviet Union and its European satellites had little to offer in terms of quality and price, while their desire for Latin American grain, coffee, wool and minerals resulted in a trade balance that was strongly in favour of Latin America. Furthermore, Marxism-Leninism was regarded as an alien ideology and its appeal was blunted by the fact that the strongly Catholic societies of Latin America had an innate aversion to Communism. Much to the relief of American officials, the Cuban example of armed struggle and enacting a socialist revolution was not successfully copied elsewhere in the hemisphere during the 1960s. Indeed, the failure of Cuba's attempts to 'export revolution' to the mainland was most vividly illustrated by the capture and death of Che Guevara in Bolivia in 1967.

The Johnson Doctrine

The defeat of the Communist guerrilla movement in Bolivia was also a reflection of the substantial efforts undertaken by the United States to build up Latin American internal security and police forces and provide equipment and instruction for use in counter-insurgency techniques. Indeed, American diplomacy placed considerable stress on the value of military assistance programmes and covert operations in containing the spread of Communism in the hemisphere. 'The US', remarked President Kennedy in 1962, 'should give considerably greater emphasis to police assistance programs in appropriate less developed countries where there is an actual or potential threat of internal subversion or insurgency.'[71] A particularly close relationship was established with the Brazilian military. Not only was financial aid considerably increased, but personal relations were greatly strengthened by the appointment in 1962 of Colonel Vernon Walters as