

# Discursive Resistance:

Counter-Hegemonic Pan Americanisms in the Early Cold War

By

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## Introduction:

### Cold War Pan Americanism: Between Imperialism and Resistance?

On September 2, 1960, Fidel Castro stood before a mass gathering of supporters in Havana's *Plaza de la Revolución* and delivered a speech that would later become known as the First Declaration of Havana. The public assembly came as a response to the Seventh Meeting of Consultation of the American Foreign Ministers, held in San José, Costa Rica, in late August of that year. At San José, the U.S. delegation had attempted to unite the Western Hemisphere against Castro and the Cuban Revolution, fearing Cuba's newfound anti-Americanism and its increasingly friendly relations with the communist Soviet Union. Although the United States did not succeed in securing a resolution condemning Cuba, it did at least gain enough support to issue a proclamation against the "interference" of "extracontinental powers" in Latin American affairs, a thinly veiled message that further Soviet influence in Cuba would not be tolerated.<sup>1</sup>

Castro's speech in Havana was a diatribe against the San José Meeting and the immense power demonstrated by the United States to control hemispheric affairs. He began by calling the Declaration of San José a "document dictated by North American Imperialism" and "an assault on the national self-determination, the sovereignty, and the dignity of the brotherly peoples of the Continent."<sup>2</sup> Going beyond the immediate instance of the Seventh Foreign Ministers Meeting, the Cuban Prime Minister further condemned "the open and criminal intervention that North American Imperialism has exercised for more than a century over all the peoples of Latin

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<sup>1</sup> Clara Nieto, *Masters of War: Latin America and U.S. Aggression from the Cuban Revolution through the Clinton Years* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), 57.

<sup>2</sup> "...documento dictado por el Imperialismo Norteamericano..."; "...atentatorio a la autodeterminación nacional, la soberanía y la dignidad de los pueblos hermanos del Continente." Fidel Castro, "Primera Declaración de La Habana" (Communist Party of Cuba, September 2, 1960), [http://www.pcc.cu/pdf/documentos/otros\\_doc/primer\\_a\\_declaracion\\_habana.pdf](http://www.pcc.cu/pdf/documentos/otros_doc/primer_a_declaracion_habana.pdf).

America.”<sup>3</sup> He cited repeated U.S. invasions of Mexico, Nicaragua, Haiti, and Cuba, among others, as evidence that the United States had committed itself in the twentieth century to protecting the interests of private U.S. corporations, even when those interests ran afoul of Latin American sovereignty.

Castro also explicitly linked the imperialist tendency of the United States to the concept of Pan Americanism. Although nebulous, Pan Americanism can be conceived of broadly as encompassing both a rhetorical-ideological dimension comprised of a series of values and interests supposedly derived from the common history of the American peoples, as well as the practical dimension of a system of formal institutions and mechanisms of regional governance. For Castro, however, Pan Americanism was fully “hypocritical.” While it claimed hemispheric cooperation, it was in reality the “predominance of the Yankee monopolies over the interests of our peoples and the Yankee manipulation of governments prostrated before Washington...”<sup>4</sup> Castro posited in the First Declaration of Havana that the organs of inter-American governance and the shared commitment to hemispheric solidarity on which those organs were purportedly built were a front for the exertion of U.S. hegemony over the peoples of Latin America. Fidel was not the first to suggest an association between Pan Americanism and imperialism,<sup>5</sup> but the fact that the message came backed with the full force of the successful Cuban Revolution gave it a particularly powerful resonance in the hemisphere.

The perspective on inter-American affairs articulated in the Declaration of Havana would prove in some ways to be prophetic. As relations between the United States and Cuba

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<sup>3</sup> “...la intervención abierta y criminal que durante más de un siglo ha ejercido el Imperialismo Norteamericano sobre todos los pueblos de América Latina...” Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> “...predominio de los monopolios yankis sobre los intereses de nuestros pueblos y manejo yanqui de gobiernos posternados [sic] ante Washington...” Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> For an early discussion, and refutation, of the connection between Pan Americanism and U.S. imperialism, see Joseph B. Lockey, “Pan-Americanism and Imperialism,” *The American Journal of International Law* 32, no. 2 (April 1938): 233–43.

deteriorated rapidly through 1960 and 1961, the U.S. government became increasingly desperate to isolate Castro and end the experiment in revolution. As such, it adopted policies to isolate the Cuban government from the hemispheric community and to destabilize it economically and politically. At the Eighth Foreign Ministers Meeting in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in January 1962, representatives of the United States managed to push through a resolution declaring the Marxist-Leninist Cuban government to be “incompatible with the principles and objectives of the inter-American system,” or, in other words, in violation of the spirit of Pan Americanism as dictated by the United States. As a result, Cuba was prohibited from further participation in regional organizations.<sup>6</sup> Complete expulsion of an American state from the formalized hemispheric community was a punishment without precedent at the time, and the ban on Cuba’s membership in the Organization of American States (OAS), the principal regional governance body, remained in place until 2009. As Castro had warned, the inter-American system served at Punta del Este as a conduit for bolstering the power of the United States and pushing its interests in the Americas.

Still, the actions taken against Cuba were not examples of U.S. imperialist policy accepted without question by Latin American governments, but were instead intensely debated. The U.S. delegation had originally arrived at Punta del Este hoping to impose economic sanctions on the Cuban government, but a powerful bloc of Latin American countries, which included Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, and Chile, called for a more moderate approach. It was ultimately the delegates from Argentina who worked out the compromise solution that Cuba’s form of government would be declared incompatible with the principles of the inter-American system, but that sanctions would not be applied. They viewed such a decision as balancing the

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<sup>6</sup> “Final Act of the Eighth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs” (Organization of American States, 1962), [www.oas.org/columbus/docs/OEASerCII.8Eng.pdf](http://www.oas.org/columbus/docs/OEASerCII.8Eng.pdf).

anticommunist goals of the United States with the desire of the Latin American countries to maintain bilateral relations with Cuba. Even after the United States agreed to the compromise, Argentina pulled its support. In a letter to the Foreign Minister, Argentine President Arturo Frondizi framed his decision as upholding the ideal of Pan Americanism, specifically writing that he was trying to “save the unity of the inter-American system” and protect the principle of nonintervention.<sup>7</sup> Six countries in all broke with the United States to abstain from voting on expulsion, while Cuba cast the lone negative vote.<sup>8</sup>

In the decades since the expulsion of Cuba from the Organization of American States, the association of that institution with U.S. imperialism has gained traction within Latin America, with the result that Latin American confidence in the traditional inter-American system has fallen. This has been especially true in the past twenty years, during which a new “Pink Tide” has brought leftist and anti-imperialist political leaders to power in many Latin American countries. For example, former Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, the ideological leader of the Pink Tide, said of the OAS: “You can’t expect much from the OAS. It’s like a corpse that must be buried.”<sup>9</sup> Latin Americans have thus launched a number of alternative regional organizations that specifically exclude the United States and Canada from their membership. Among these new organizations are the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), created by Chávez in 2004, and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), formed in 2011 as an alternative Latin American political grouping to the OAS. The third meeting of

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<sup>7</sup> Robert A. Potash, *The Army & Politics in Argentina, 1945-1962: Perón to Frondizi* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 343–344.

<sup>8</sup> For a full account of the Punta del Este Conference, see Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1965), 715–717.

<sup>9</sup> Adam Isacson, “Conflict Resolution in the Americas: The Decline of the OAS,” *World Politics Review*, May 22, 2012, <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/11979/conflict-resolution-in-the-americas-the-decline-of-the-oas>.



CELAC was held in January 2014 in Havana, representing a symbolic break with the precedent of denying Cuba's participating in the multilateral affairs of the hemisphere.

Leftist thinkers and writers in the region have presented the Pan Latin Americanism of CELAC and the other alternative regional organizations as a counter to the imperialist Pan Americanism of the U.S.-dominated inter-American system. For example, José Reinaldo Carvalho, the editor of the Communist Party of Brazil-aligned news portal *Vermelho*, stated in 2014 that CELAC signaled the “death knell” of imperialist Pan Americanism.<sup>10</sup> The Cuban government's newspaper *Granma* published an article that same year titled “The Crisis of Pan Americanism,” which argued that more than a century of “Pan Americanism made in Washington” was finally coming to an end as Latin Americans found an “independent intraregional understanding.”<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, although the United States has continued to invoke Pan Americanism in particular ceremonial circumstances, for example in the annual presidential address on Pan American Day, and has promoted several efforts for hemispheric integration, like the currently-stalled Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), U.S. foreign policy has in general shifted its focus from Latin America to the other parts of the developing world.

Under criticism from the Latin American left and with little of its previous support, Pan Americanism today has lost much of its resonance, be it as an ideal, as a set of multilateral treaties and policies, or as a discourse. As the relevancy of Pan Americanism in hemispheric affairs has declined, the tendency of political and journalistic circles to avoid critical examination of the history of Pan Americanism has been strengthened. Particularly in the context of the Cold War, Pan Americanism has come to be accepted as little more than American imperialism and

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<sup>10</sup> “...*dobre de finados...*” “Reinaldo: Integração É O Dobre de Finados Do Pan-Americanismo Imperial,” *Vermelho*, October 17, 2014, <http://www.vermelho.org.br/noticia/251601-7>.

<sup>11</sup> “...*panamericanismo made in Washington...*”; “...*entendimiento intrarregional independiente...*” Pedro De la Hoz González, “La Crisis Del Panamericanismo,” *Granma*, February 2, 2014, <http://www.granma.cu/mundo/2014-02-02/la-crisis-del-panamericanismo>.

militant anticommunism. The intense conflict over what to do with Cuba during the Punta del Este Conference suggests, however, that in the historical and contemporary process of constructing Pan Americanism as an extension of the U.S. imperial project, a level of complexity in understanding the dynamics and historical trajectory of the concept has been lost.

### Pan Americanism in the Historiography

The lack of detailed historical analysis of Pan Americanism is also present in much of the North American historiography on inter-American affairs and on the Cold War in Latin America. In his book *Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations*, for example, Peter H. Smith argues that one way Latin Americans resisted U.S. imperialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was by voicing their opposition to the Pan Americanism promoted by the United States. According to Smith, Pan Americanism and the Monroe Doctrine, the declaration propagated by President James Monroe in 1823 that Latin America would thereafter fall into the United States' and not Europe's sphere of influence, were "twin symbols of U.S. preponderance" in the hemisphere.<sup>12</sup> While Smith does examine attempts by Latin Americans to introduce legal mechanisms into the inter-American system to limit U.S. imperialism and protect national sovereignty, he does not consider these efforts to have been part of the narrative of Pan Americanism, despite the fact that their principles and terminologies fundamentally altered how Pan Americanism was understood and articulated throughout the twentieth century. Moreover, when later discussing how the Cold War affected U.S.-Latin American relations, Smith does not bring Pan Americanism into his analysis, and as a result, he misses what we will see was an

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<sup>12</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 95.

important rhetorical strategy for the United States and for the countries of Latin America in advancing their disparate interests.

The role of Pan Americanism in Cold War Latin America is similarly underdeveloped in Stephen G. Rabe's *Eisenhower and Latin America*, an investigation of U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's foreign policy in the Western Hemisphere. Rabe speaks at length about the diplomatic measures taken by the Eisenhower administration to leverage U.S. power in the inter-American system in order to advance anticommunist policies in Latin America. He also describes several instances of resistance to these measures and of initiatives proposed from within Latin America to make U.S. policy less imperialistic and less interventionist. Such disputes over power and anticommunism were critical points of contention within the hemispheric community, and as we shall see they were often rhetorically framed as differing conceptions of Pan Americanism. Nevertheless, Rabe does not consider the significance of articulating the hemispheric disagreements of the 1950s in the language of Pan Americanism, preferring to focus his attention on the practical implications of these disagreements for U.S. and Latin American economic and political policy.

Although it has been broadly overlooked in the historiography on U.S.-Latin American relations, there does exist a subset of scholarly work that specifically analyzes Pan Americanism from a variety of methodologies, including history, political science, gender studies, and literature. One of the most noteworthy examples of this trend is *Beyond the Ideal: Pan Americanism in Inter-American Affairs*, a collection of essays that, according to editor David Sheinin, is intended to highlight new approaches to understanding Pan Americanism as a multi-faceted phenomenon not solely confined to the sphere of high-level policy. K. Lynn Stoner, for example, demonstrates that some Latin American feminists attempted to utilize Pan

Americanism as a vehicle to advance their goals for improving the rights of women, while W. Michael Weis shows how Brazilian diplomat Oswaldo Aranha's views on Pan Americanism changed over the course of his life. Several of the essays in *Beyond the Ideal* therefore break with the standard assumptions that the United States was the sole promoter of Pan Americanism and that Pan Americanism functioned exclusively as an extension of U.S. imperial policy in the hemisphere, instead demonstrating the significant role of Latin Americans in shaping and contesting this idea.

Stephen M. Streeter's "The Myth of Pan Americanism: U.S. Policy toward Latin America during the Cold War, 1954-1963," the only essay in the collection that looks specifically at Pan Americanism in the Cold War, is an exception to the revisionist attitude in *Beyond the Ideal*. Streeter argues that "Pan Americanism served as a hegemonic myth that justified U.S. imperialism,"<sup>13</sup> and was employed most frequently in this period in order to impose anticommunist policies on Latin American governments. Furthermore, according to Streeter, the occasional appearance of the Pan American myth in internal documents of the U.S. government demonstrates that Pan Americanism functioned as an "imperial ideology," which, in a similar manner to Social Darwinism or Orientalism, came to be perceived as real by the agents of imperialism themselves.<sup>14</sup> Like Rabe, Streeter acknowledges that Latin Americans frequently contested the United States' Cold War imperialism, and he presents these critiques as attacks on Pan Americanism levied from outside of the concept's rhetorical and practical structure. Thus, he writes that Latin American resistance "exposed many of the fallacies of Pan Americanism," but that, when faced with evidence of these fallacies, the United States failed to "reexamine the

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<sup>13</sup> Stephen M. Streeter, "The Myth of Pan Americanism: U.S. Policy toward Latin America during the Cold War, 1954-1963," in *Beyond the Ideal: Pan Americanism in Inter-American Affairs*, ed. David Sheinin (Westport: Praeger, 2000), 168.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

premises of Pan Americanism.”<sup>15</sup> This narrative problematically assumes that Latin Americans saw Pan Americanism as false and were entirely beholden to the United States to alter it.

A related issue in Streeter’s argument is that he takes the rhetoric of Pan Americanism as given and unchanging. In the opening of his essay, he connects Pan Americanism to a set of “common ideals based on Enlightenment values of democracy, justice, and human rights” and on the “belief that most nations in the hemisphere had liberated themselves from European colonialism in order to establish less tyrannical forms of government.”<sup>16</sup> While Streeter is correct in locating the origins of the Pan American ideal in these shared histories and values, he fails to consider how Pan American discourse evolved over the course of its existence, or that this evolution involved nearly constant attempts to redefine which values and principles were deemed most important to a united hemispheric community. As such, when Streeter later writes about the “sharp contrast between the rhetoric of Pan Americanism and the historical reality,”<sup>17</sup> he cannot provide a precise, historically contextualized explanation of just what that rhetoric entailed.

The conclusions Streeter reaches are also reflected in some Latin American accounts of Pan Americanism. In *Pan Americanism: From Monroe to the Present*, Alonso Aguilar states that his purpose is to “clarify the true character of Pan-Americanism” in order to “contribute to the understanding of the manner in which the imperialism behind it has succeeded in holding back our development” and to “stimulate the struggle for the full emancipation of Latin America.”<sup>18</sup> He begins by drawing a sharp distinction between Pan Americanism, which he views as an imperialist creation of the U.S. government, and other Latin American streams of regional integration dating back to the independence leader Simón Bolívar. Aguilar then traces the history

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 173.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 169.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 172–173.

<sup>18</sup> Alonso Aguilar, *Panamericanism: From Monroe to Present*, trans. Asa Zatz (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1968), 21–22.

of Pan Americanism, connecting it at each step with the expansion of the U.S. imperial project in Latin America. Although Latin American voices are present to a much greater degree in Aguilar's account than in those of North American historians, he still tends to present Latin American critiques of the inter-American system as operating entirely from outside of and on behalf of the dismantling of Pan Americanism.

There are thus several common problems running through the works of Smith, Rabe, Streeter, and Aguilar. First, although Latin Americans voices are present and are granted at least a limited degree of power and agency to resist U.S. imperialism in all the texts, the historians construct narratives of Cold War hemispheric relations in which Pan Americanism is a single, hegemonic, and unassailable creation of U.S. imperialism. Latin American resistance to the policy of the United States is seen in every case as being a rejection of Pan Americanism, rather than as a potential way to reform or revitalize Pan Americanism from within. Second, Pan Americanism is almost always conceived of exclusively as a set of political and economic policies in the inter-American system. When the rhetorical dimensions of Pan Americanism are recognized, they are presumed to be decided upon by the United States and entirely unchangeable. Given these limiting assumptions in how historians have approached the study of Pan Americanism in the Cold War, it hardly seems surprising that many would reach the conclusion that it amounted to nothing more than the kinder face of imperial strategy.

In contrast to these accounts, there are a small number of scholars who view Pan Americanism as less a manifestation of the imperialism of the United States than as a proactive effort by Latin Americans to protect their own rights and sovereignty. Thomas Farer argues, for example, that Latin Americans played an enthusiastic role in shaping the inter-American system and its associated bodies and treaties so as to be able to institute legal measures that might

prevent U.S. intervention. Farer writes: “They [Latin Americans] devised the institutions of the Inter-American System not to legitimate but rather to contain American power.”<sup>19</sup> This narrative positions Latin Americans at the forefront of the inter-American system and emphasizes their agency in negotiating relations with the United States, yet it overlooks the absolute importance of U.S. hegemony for understanding why the hemispheric community took on the form it did. Whereas Streeter denies Latin American interest in or influence on Pan Americanism, Farer underemphasizes the extent to which possessing unrivaled power in the hemisphere gave the United States the capacity to counter those Pan American discourses it did not find satisfactory.

### Between Imperialism and Resistance

The purpose of this investigation is to begin to construct a more nuanced understanding of Pan Americanism in the early Cold War than has been presented previously in either political discourse or the historiography by reexamining a series of major events in the inter-American system in which alternative discourses of Pan Americanism served important strategic functions. I seek to introduce greater complexity into the historical narrative in two principal ways: through expanding the analysis of Pan Americanism to consider rhetoric in addition to policy, and through highlighting the agency of Latin Americans operating within a U.S.-dominated Pan American structure.

First, I argue that the discursive dimension of Pan Americanism served as a constant source of contention between the various actors in the inter-American system. Latin Americans could and did draw on Pan American rhetoric to voice opposition to U.S. hegemony, to imagine more cooperative orderings of hemispheric relations, and to advance disparate personal and

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<sup>19</sup> Tom J. Farer, *The Grand Strategy of the United States in Latin America* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988), 25.

national interests in light of the increasing anticommunist domination of the inter-American system. Rather than discard it outright, many Latin Americans attempted to redefine Pan Americanism in ways that were more beneficial to the region's needs. This rhetorical strategy often did not directly translate into significant shifts in U.S. or hemispheric policy, in large part because the United States held ultimate control over the Organization of American States, but that does not mean that the opposition levied by Latin Americans was meaningless. In order to detect and analyze these alternative conceptions of Pan Americanism, it is necessary to examine the particular types of discourses that representatives of the United States and of the Latin American countries employed in bilateral and multilateral forums.

Second, I propose that Pan Americanism be thought of as a space of rhetorical and political competition, albeit one with highly unequal sides. The United States held an overwhelming degree of power in shaping the inter-American system and in defining Pan Americanism. As it consolidated its global economic dominance of the capitalist world at the end of World War II, the power imbalance between the United States and other actors in the international arena only increased. The intensification of the Cold War in the late 1940s caused the U.S. government to gradually shift its attention back to Latin America, which was seen as a key battleground in the struggle against Soviet communism, and this led to new attempts by the United States to control the inter-American system. A historical narrative of Pan Americanism in the early Cold War therefore must have the United States as one of its key characters.

At the same time, Latin Americans should be seen as having played a highly significant role in the construction of Pan Americanism as discourse. This role was often one of opposition to the United States' articulation of an ideal hemispheric solidarity, and indeed Latin Americans were responsible for the values of nonintervention and respect for national sovereignty that



would later be recognized, at least rhetorically, as at the core of Pan Americanism. On the other hand, there were many Latin American governments that were supportive of the direction of U.S. policy in the hemisphere, either because of ideological alignment or because support for the United States netted them particular material benefits. The tensions between these factions grew even deeper during the Cold War, as Latin American anticommunists received the full financial, political, and military support of the United States against their enemies. The inter-American system served as a space for Latin Americans to articulate their differing perspectives on the Cold War, with Pan Americanism often the language through which this agency was expressed. While the ability of Latin American states to induce systemic change in the hemispheric order was certainly less than that of the United States, they did impact the discursive and symbolic dimensions of Pan Americanism in ways that existing narratives of U.S. imperialism are unable to fully capture. My objective is to craft a history of Pan Americanism in the 1950s that raises and centers Latin American voices of all types, but that also reflects their position of weakness when in conflict with the United States.

To undertake this new, more nuanced analysis of Cold War Pan Americanism, I rely primarily on the international conference and bilateral political records of the U.S. Department of State, housed at the U.S. National Archives. These documents reveal how officials in the U.S. government thought about Pan Americanism and the inter-American system, both in public expressions and in internal deliberations about U.S. policy in the hemisphere. Many of the State Department files also report on meetings between representatives of the United States and of the Latin American governments, thereby providing insight into how Latin Americans communicated their perspectives, whether with Pan American rhetoric or otherwise, to the United States. Along with documents of the State Department, the international conference files

at the U.S. National Archives also contain the official publications of the Organization of American States, including transcripts of speeches and proposed resolutions, for all major inter-American meetings during the early Cold War period. U.S. and Brazilian newspaper archives as well as primary document collections compiled by the Argentine, Mexican, and Brazilian governments are also consulted in this investigation to add greater depth and complexity to the narrative of Latin American interaction with Pan American discourses.

Before turning to the question of Pan Americanism in the early Cold War, however, it is first necessary to establish the evolution of the concept through time. Chapter 1 opens with an overview of Pan Americanism from its origins in Simón Bolívar's plans for hemispheric unity in the early 1800s through Franklin Delano Roosevelt's popular Good Neighbor Policy in the 1930s. This historical narrative demonstrates that Pan Americanism was from its very beginning a disputed and continually shifting discourse. Latin American participation was critically important in driving these shifts. The chapter closes with a discussion of the intersections of Pan Americanism and anticommunism in the increasingly militarized inter-American system of the late 1940s and early 1950s, laying the contextual foundation required to understand Pan American discourse in the Cold War.

Chapter 2 explores how the rhetoric of Pan Americanism was employed in the period leading up to and during the Tenth Inter-American Conference in Caracas, Venezuela, in 1954. The Caracas Conference marked a significant turning point in the history of hemispheric relations. At the conference, the United States launched a diplomatic attack against the supposed communist infiltration of the progressive government of President Jacobo Árbenz in Guatemala, an attack that foreshadowed similar efforts against Cuba at the Punta del Este Meeting in 1962. Representatives of the United States and Guatemala appropriated similar Pan American

discourses in building their vastly different political strategies at Caracas. In the case of the former, the United States tried to redefine the Pan American value of nonintervention in order to win broad support for an anticommunist resolution that would set the stage for multilateral action against Guatemala. As for the latter, Guatemalan officials argued that they were the true agents of the spirit of Pan Americanism, and that U.S. imperialism at the employ of transnational corporations was the single most important threat to hemispheric solidarity. Although the conference ultimately approved the anticommunist resolution and the Árbenz government was overthrown in a coup later that year, I argue that the Guatemalan government succeeded at Caracas in launching significant debates about the incompatibility of Pan Americanism with anticommunist intervention, and about the possibility for alternative Pan Americanisms based in cooperative social and economic development.

In Chapter 3, I shift my focus to Operation Pan America, a program proposed by Brazilian President Juscelino Kubitschek in 1958 to transition the inter-American system from collective defense to economic development and to demand that the United States play a larger role in bringing about Latin American development. Following the progression of debates about whether and how to implement Operation Pan America between 1958 and 1961, I show that the Brazilian government experimented with several different discursive framings, each drawing on a different conception of the relationship between Pan Americanism and U.S.-Latin American relations. The changes in framing were, above all, a reflection of the changing strategies of the Kubitschek government as it tried to win U.S. support for the program in the context of the Cold War, but without sacrificing the Operation's goal of economic solidarity under Brazilian leadership. Furthermore, I argue that the battle that emerged between Brazil, the United States, and revolutionary Cuba over the future of Operation Pan America was in large part a struggle

over the right to control the rhetoric of Pan Americanism and thus to articulate a vision for the future of the inter-American system. Although the United States reluctantly tolerated Brazilian attempts to modify Pan Americanism as part of the fight against communism in the hemisphere, it could not accept Fidel Castro capturing the ideas surrounding Operation Pan America and transforming them into a campaign against imperialism. In the end, the U.S. government circumvented both Brazil and Cuba by appropriating the language and the values of Operation Pan America to launch its own economic development initiative, the Alliance for Progress.

In both of these cases, U.S. power did eventually win out over Latin American resistance, with the result that anticommunism became even more firmly entrenched in the Western Hemisphere. I therefore do not suggest that critiques of the Cold War hemispheric order as firmly under the control of North American imperialism, whether from Latin American leaders at the time or from academic historians today, are inaccurate. Rather, I hope to show that the victory of the United States on the level of policy obfuscated a much more complicated battle over Pan Americanism as discourse in the 1950s. By revealing the history of counter-hegemonic Pan Americanisms, we begin to gain a greater understanding of the nature and extent of Latin American participation in the shaping of the Cold War inter-American system, as well as of the transition from Pan Americanism to alternative forms of regional integration.

## Chapter 1:

### Pan Americanism and the Creation of the Inter-American System, 1800-1948

When the Cold War arrived in the Western hemisphere, it encountered an already complex inter-American system of political and economic relations. This does not mean that the hemispheric order went unchanged during the fifty years of U.S.-Soviet competition; the Cold War altered how the American states organized their internal structures and interacted with each other in profound and lasting ways. As Odd Arne Westad argues in *The Global Cold War*, the tendency to view the Cold War as simply a continuation of centuries of imperial domination by the “pan-European” nations (including the United States and Russia) neglects that “Moscow’s and Washington’s objectives were not exploitation or subjection, but control and improvement.”<sup>1</sup> In other words, the United States and the Soviet Union saw themselves as the saviors of the Third World from traditional European imperialism, and were legitimately concerned with improving those societies over which they exerted influence, even if improvement still meant imperialism of a certain sort.

At the same time, the emergence of the Cold War in the Americas was a historical phenomenon in the sense that it was shaped by a number of political, socioeconomic, and cultural antecedents based in the Western Hemisphere. The conflicts that arose in the hemisphere in the first decade and a half of the Cold War in large part emerged from and were understood through the lens of the century-long, ongoing processes of defining an identity for the Americas and of clarifying the hemispheric community’s relationships with external actors and forces. The purpose of this chapter is to trace the history of contested conceptions of inter-American relations, and in particular disputes about the concept of Pan Americanism, beginning with the origins of a regional integration in the newly independent Western Hemisphere, and ending with

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<sup>1</sup> Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3–5.

the intersection of hemispheric solidarity and anticommunist ideology in the militarized inter-American system that emerged in the late 1940s. This broad historical overview of hemispheric relations highlights events, terminologies, and conceptual frames that will be shown in subsequent chapters to have influenced the types of Pan American discourses that disparate political actors employed to work through inter-American conflicts in the early Cold War.

### Early Notions of Hemispheric Solidarity

The concept of a strand binding the Americas together first took shape in the upheaval of the Spanish American wars of independence and in the early attempts at state building. After living under colonial rule for centuries, and faced with a successful plot by Napoleon to oust the Spanish royal family and place his brother on the throne in 1808, the *criollos* (those of Spanish descent born in the Western hemisphere) started in the early 1800s to declare their desire to be independent of the Spanish Empire. One by one, *juntas* were formed in cities across the region to reject Napoleon's meddling and rule in the absence of the rightful Spanish king. Upon the defeat of Napoleon and restoration of King Ferdinand VII to the throne in 1814, however, events could not return to normal. Many who had been initially supportive of the *juntas* re-declared their allegiance to the monarchy, but others had too greatly enjoyed independence to revert to the status of imperial subjects. They would instead wage a prolonged war against the Spanish army and Latin American loyalists to secure permanent autonomy. By 1825, most of continental Spanish America had won its freedom from colonial rule.

The process of independence occurred quite differently in Brazil, the major non-Spanish speaking country in South America. As with the Spanish royal family, the House of Braganza in Portugal came under the direct threat of Napoleon's invasion in 1808. Hoping to save the

monarchy, the prince regent, João VI, and his mother, Queen María, fled Portugal for Brazil, where they converted the colonial port city of Rio de Janeiro into an imperial capital. After Napoleon was ousted from the Iberian Peninsula in 1815, João chose to maintain the capital of the Empire in Rio, and elevated Brazil to equal status as a kingdom alongside Portugal. A Liberal Revolution in Portugal in 1820 created a constituent assembly that rejected the growing autonomy of Brazil vis-à-vis Portugal and demanded that João return to Portugal to rule over both kingdoms. This time, João did return to Europe, but he left his son Pedro to oversee the Kingdom of Brazil in his absence. When the assembly began to petition for Pedro to travel back to Portugal, he refused to follow their orders and declared Brazilian independence. He would later make himself Emperor of Brazil and oversee the creation of a constitutional monarchy in the country, which lasted until 1889.<sup>2</sup> Unlike most of the Spanish American colonies in Central and South America, Brazil did not wage war against a European imperial power for its independence, and it did not immediately reject monarchism as a form of government.

Chief among the pro-independence belligerents in Spanish America was the Venezuelan General Simón Bolívar, known as *El Libertador* for his central role in the struggles in what became the countries of Venezuela, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia. In addition to being an able military commander, Bolívar was an avid believer in Spanish American unity. In 1815, at a low point in Bolívar's military campaign that forced him to seek refuge in Jamaica, he wrote a letter to Scottish physician Henry Cullen outlining his vision for the post-independence period. Bolívar told Cullen that, despite sharing a language, a religion, and customs, the people of the former Spanish colonies were too divided in their geographies and goals to fall under the control of a single, cross-continental government. At the same time, he argued that a union of independent states would be necessary in "expulsing the Spanish" and "completing the work of

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<sup>2</sup> Michael Reid, *Brazil: The Troubled Rise of a Global Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 54–57.

our regeneration.”<sup>3</sup> Bolívar articulated a conception of regional unity that was undergirded not so much by shared social or cultural elements as by a common history of oppression by the Spanish and a need for mutually beneficial political and economic relations. The role of the United States in this plan for solidarity was unclear, and Bolívar generally had a mixed opinion about the newly independent country to the north. Furthermore, Bolívar’s emphasis on the material benefits of cooperation would emerge again and again over time as a discursive strategy for justifying attempts at unification.

In 1826, Bolívar decided to put his plan for unity into action by calling a conference of Central and South American states, including Portuguese-speaking Brazil, at the Isthmus of Panama. The purpose of the Congress of Panama was to build trade and political relations in the region, as well as to provide a bulwark against future external intervention, particularly by the Spanish, who retained control of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Bolívar found, however, that support for his project was shaky at best among the new governments of the Americas. In some cases, governments voted to reject the invitation because of mistrust of the conference’s intentions or because of outstanding intraregional conflicts. In others, disease or poor planning caused representatives to arrive late to the Congress or to miss it altogether. The work of the Congress itself was fraught with disagreements. Ultimately, only the delegations from Gran Colombia (today Venezuela and Colombia), the Federal Republic of Central America, Mexico, and Peru signed onto the final treaty, with Gran Colombia as the lone ratifying country. According to Germán A. de la Reza, the failure of the Congress of Panama reflected the widely varying interests and perspectives of Latin American politicians with regards to unification.<sup>4</sup> Bolívar was certainly not alone in his interest in strengthening ties within the hemisphere, but neither was the

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<sup>3</sup> Simón Bolívar, “Carta de Jamaica,” (1815).

<sup>4</sup> Germán A. De la Reza, “El Congreso Anfictiónico de Panamá (1826): Determinaciones Hispanoamericanas de Su Desenlace,” *Revista de Historia de América*, no. 134 (June 2004): 185–216.



need for intraregional cooperation the only or most significant idea emerging out of the rubble of the wars of independence. In fact, fervent, militaristic nationalism would become one of the most significant countercurrents to confederation in the nineteenth century, resulting in a series of wars between the countries of the region over land and influence. Reflecting this divide in the interests of the Panama Conference participants, Martin Sicker writes: “The harsh reality was that, despite the common experience of colonial subjugation, there was no real sense of identity among the Latin American states.”<sup>5</sup>

Around the same time that Bolívar was calling for unity based on common defense, the U.S. government was in the process of forging a new understanding of relationships within the Americas and between the Western Hemisphere and the outside world. During his State of the Union Address in December 1823, U.S. President James Monroe stated definitively that the Latin American countries “are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers,” and that any attempt at colonization would be considered “as dangerous to our peace and safety.”<sup>6</sup> At the same time, Monroe promised that the United States would not intervene in the affairs of any of the remaining European colonies elsewhere around the world. The Monroe Doctrine created a system of spheres of influence, with Latin America firmly placed within the U.S. sphere and the rest of the globe falling in the European sphere. It additionally demanded that absolute noninterference be respected between the spheres.

Despite these promises to help Latin Americans resist European imperialism, the Monroe Doctrine was not at its core a vision of hemispheric cooperation, nor was it a moral cry against imperialism. By communicating directly with the European powers to determine the future of Latin America, Monroe created a decidedly imbalanced power dynamic within the Americas: the

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<sup>5</sup> Martin Sicker, *The Geopolitics of Security in the Americas: Hemispheric Denial from Monroe to Clinton* (Westport: Praeger, 2002), 26.

<sup>6</sup> James Monroe, “Transcripts of Monroe Doctrine” (U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, 1823).

United States would take on the role of the arbiter of American affairs and the caretaker of the weaker Latin American states. Also implicit in this promise was the idea that the United States would be able to take advantage of its special relationship with Latin America to advance its own territorial and economic interests. In other words, the Monroe Doctrine was inextricably tied to the goal of ensuring that Latin American markets would be open to U.S. trade and not subject to the traditional mercantilist policies of Europe. As Mark T. Gilderhus points out, however, the Monroe Doctrine had little immediate, tangible impact either in Europe or in the Americas, both because the United States refused military alliance with the Latin American states and because it *de facto* permitted the Europeans, particularly the French and British, to maintain considerable political and economic power in the Americas.<sup>7</sup>

The cooperative relationship between the United States and Latin America was also tested during the Mexican-American War (1846-1848). The conflict, which began after the United States annexed Texas in 1845 and was spurred by the expansionist vision of President James K. Polk, quickly escalated into a full military engagement and ended with the occupation of Mexico City by U.S. forces in 1847. The following year, the two sides signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which required Mexico to cede more than a million square miles of its territory to the United States.<sup>8</sup> The Mexican-American War demonstrated that the United States was more committed to enlarging its borders than to building hemispheric solidarity.

As the nineteenth century progressed, the United States government began to employ the Monroe Doctrine with greater force to limit European involvement and guarantee U.S. hegemony. One such application of the Monroe Doctrine came in response to the French invasion of Mexico in the 1860s. After a debt dispute between Mexico and France, Napoleon III

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<sup>7</sup> Mark T. Gilderhus, "The Monroe Doctrine: Meanings and Implications," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (March 2006): 8.

<sup>8</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 22–25.

sent French troops in 1863 to occupy Mexico City and install the Austrian Archduke Maximilian as Emperor of Mexico. The immediate reaction of the United States, which was deeply embroiled in civil war, was minimal. With the war ending in 1865, the U.S. government began to pressure France through diplomatic channels to withdraw from Mexico, and even assembled a force of some twenty-five thousand troops under General Philip Sheridan at the U.S.-Mexican border to demonstrate the seriousness of its petitions. The French agreed to remove their soldiers in 1866, leaving Maximilian to fend for himself against the rebel forces under the leadership of Benito Juárez. When Maximilian tried to hire an army from Austria, representatives of the United States told the Austrian government that any cooperation with Maximilian would be understood as an act of war against Mexico, and that the United States would not hesitate to get involved in defense of its neighbor. The threat was sufficient to convince the Austrians not to support Maximilian, who was promptly captured by the independence fighters and executed.<sup>9</sup>

Through the 1880s, there continued to be no formal system of inter-American relations, and no concrete discourse through which to articulate why such a system would be important. Several Latin American countries pursued efforts to encourage regional or sub-regional integration, but these efforts were generally successful. At the same time, the United States was becoming through the Monroe Doctrine increasingly involved in influencing the economic and political affairs in Latin America and in shaping the direction of the Western Hemisphere.

### The First Conference of American States

The inter-American system was formally institutionalized with the meeting of the First Conference of American States, held in Washington, D.C., in 1889. The conference was the idea of James G. Blaine, who served as Secretary of State under Presidents Garfield, Arthur, and

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<sup>9</sup> Sicker, *The Geopolitics of Security in the Americas: Hemispheric Denial from Monroe to Clinton*, 43–44.

Harrison. Blaine saw the assembly of countries as an opportunity to build closer ties between the United States and Latin America, albeit in the context of a U.S. mission to civilize its morally deficient and warlike southern neighbors.<sup>10</sup> He first proposed such a meeting in 1881, but it did not gain immediate traction in the U.S. government. As Republicans and Democrats in the Congress came increasingly over the next several years to agree on the goal of exploiting Latin America markets to help the United States escape economic recession, they reappraised Blaine's proposal. With the passage of the McCreary-Frye Act in 1888, Congress called on the President to invite Latin American leaders to Washington and approved \$100,000 to fund the conference. The North American press quickly took to calling the meeting the "Pan American Conference," and indeed is credited with introducing and popularizing the term Pan Americanism to refer to the conception of U.S.-promoted hemispheric cooperation and solidarity that was formally birthed with the opening of the conference.<sup>11</sup>

After some political wrangling, seventeen Latin American countries ultimately assembled in Washington for the conference, which ran for six months. With the exception of debate on the topic of arbitration of regional disputes, the agenda items were predominantly economic in nature, including discussions about the creation of a customs union and copyright and patent laws. As was the case in Panama in 1826, the delegates were deeply divided over the substantive issues, but were also, as we shall see, more generally mistrustful of the intentions of the United States as the conference organizer. In the end, the representatives failed to form the customs union, as many Latin American delegates argued that the U.S.-sponsored proposal unfairly

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<sup>10</sup> Joseph Smith, "The First Conference of American States (1889-1890) and the Early Pan American Policy of the United States," in *Beyond the Ideal: Pan Americanism in Inter-American Affairs*, ed. David Sheinin (Westport: Praeger, 2000), 21.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 17, 22.

prevented them from engaging in commercial relations with Europe.<sup>12</sup> They did reach a series of agreements paving the way for further discussions about copyrights and transportation infrastructure. The most significant success of the conference, however, was the formation of a Commercial Bureau of the American Republics to encourage intra-hemispheric trade. This Bureau, later to be renamed the Pan American Union, would form the center of the burgeoning inter-American system.<sup>13</sup>

Organization of the First Pan American Conference was heralded by some as the culmination of the dream of hemispheric unity Bolívar presented in the Letter of Jamaica, albeit one with the presence of the United States. Secretary of the Latin American Trade Commission William E. Curtis, for example, wrote in an anonymous article in 1889 that the “primary purpose of this congress is international fellowship, as desired by Bolívar.”<sup>14</sup> In referring to Bolívar in this way, Curtis not only situated the historical roots of the conference in the glory of the Latin American wars of independence, but also figured it as the fulfillment of a mission for unification launched but never completed by *El Libertador*. As Curtis’s statement evidences, Bolívar had by the end of the nineteenth century come to be understood by some as a father of inter-Americanism (or, as it would now be called, Pan Americanism), or at least as a figure associated closely enough with the movement toward hemispheric solidarity that the invocation of his name could generate symbolic resonance. Indeed, the decision to frame the conference as part of Bolívar’s mission was likely in large part a political maneuver to win the sympathy and support of the Latin American states for this U.S.-driven attempt at integration. Over time, Pan Americanism would increasingly become associated with Bolívar’s dream, even though the man

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<sup>12</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 95.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Smith, “The First Conference of American States (1889-1890) and the Early Pan American Policy of the United States,” 26–27.

<sup>14</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, 24.

himself never used the term and clearly understood hemispheric cooperation differently than did Blaine and other officials of the U.S. government.

The sincerity of claims to the legacy of Bolívar aside, early Pan Americanism clearly owed much to the Monroe Doctrine's conception of U.S.-Latin American relations. That the First Pan American Conference was born in a bipartisan attempt to pull the United States out of recession, and that the United States imposed an emphasis on economic integration over political cooperation, aligned closely with the Doctrine's goal of promoting U.S. commercial interests by opening up Latin American markets. Despite their continued importance in hemispheric affairs, the European powers were also conspicuously absent from Washington, further suggesting that U.S. officials viewed the meeting through the lens of the Monroe Doctrine and the principles of spheres of influence. Many Latin Americans echoed the perception that the United States was paradoxically encouraging cooperation out of political and commercial self-interest. The Cuban writer and anti-imperialist José Martí noted in a column in the Argentinian newspaper *La Nación* that the United States' proposal came about because it was "glutted with unsaleable merchandise and determined to extend its dominions in America."<sup>15</sup> Others rejected outright the idea of using the Washington conference to institutionalize the Monroe Doctrine's rejection of European political and economic influence in the hemisphere. Roque Saenz Peña, the Argentine representative at the conference, condemned the creation of an "America for the Americans," as opposed to an "America for all humanity."<sup>16</sup>

Reflecting on the First International Conference of American States, its connection to U.S. commercial concerns, and the backlash it generated among some Latin Americans, the historian Joseph Smith argues that "Modern Pan Americanism... began not in a context of inter-

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<sup>15</sup> Cited in *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 95.

American cooperation but as a function of U.S. political and economic expansionism in the Americas.”<sup>17</sup> Accurate as Smith may be in identifying the context for the conference, several caveats should be made to the statement. First, the Pan American Conference would not have been possible without the participation of the seventeen Latin American governments, which were also motivated by self-interest. Just as the United States viewed cooperation as a path to economic and political advantages, so too did the Latin American states approach the conference hoping to reap the tangible rewards of integration. Second, the conference and the surrounding press propelled into the public lexicon a series of symbols that would continue to be employed in discussing hemispheric relations for decades. Although Pan Americanism would often be decried as an agent of U.S. imperialism, it would also frequently be articulated as having been birthed from the Bolivarian project of unification. Thus, although the formal structures for facilitating hemispheric solidarity may have emerged in the 1880s as an acute response to the expansionist interests of the United States, the Pan American rhetoric with which North and Latin Americans spoke about and made sense of these structures was considerably more complex.

### Challenges to Pan Americanism, 1900-1933

Any progress, tangible or rhetorical, that was made at the First Pan American Conference toward an ideal of unity in the Americas was severely challenged at the turn of the twentieth century by the United States’ rising military and economic might, as well as the increasingly aggressive nature of its foreign policy. After defeating the Spanish in the War of 1898, the United States took control of Cuba and Puerto Rico, its first formal dependencies in the Americas. Additionally, during his State of the Union address in December 1904, President

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<sup>17</sup> Joseph Smith, “The First Conference of American States (1889-1890) and the Early Pan American Policy of the United States,” 20.

Theodore Roosevelt announced a sweeping modification to the Monroe Doctrine. While affirming the traditional idea of nonintervention between spheres of influence, Roosevelt claimed the right of the United States to intervene within its own sphere in the event that “it became evident that their [Latin Americans’] inability or unwillingness to do justice at home and abroad had violated the rights of the United States or had invited foreign aggression to the detriment of the entire body of American nations.”<sup>18</sup> In essence, the Roosevelt Corollary permitted the U.S. government to act as a police force in the Americas, dangling the threat of armed intervention over the heads of Latin American leaders in order to ensure that they would respect their debts and obligations both to the United States and to the European nations. According to Serge Ricard, the assumption implicit in Roosevelt’s policy was that Latin Americans were too backwards and uncivilized to manage their own affairs. As such, he refers to the Roosevelt Corollary as the “the Americanized version of the ‘white man’s burden’ for the Western Hemisphere.”<sup>19</sup> This Big Stick policy as articulated through the Roosevelt Corollary was not at all an empty threat; U.S. military power was deployed in the hemisphere (primarily in the Caribbean and Central America) over thirty times between 1898 and 1934.<sup>20</sup>

Latin American politicians and scholars strongly opposed the position advanced by Roosevelt and others in the U.S. government that national sovereignty could be violated when a state failed to fulfill its international financial obligations. Pan American discourses and institutions became important battlegrounds in the fight for respect for the principle of nonintervention. One of the first and most prominent articulations of this principle in the context of Pan Americanism came from the Foreign Minister of Argentina, Luis María Drago, in 1902.

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<sup>18</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, “Transcript of Theodore Roosevelt’s Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine” (U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, 1905), <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=56&page=transcript>.

<sup>19</sup> Serge Ricard, “The Roosevelt Corollary,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (March 2006): 19.

<sup>20</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 52.



Responding to the blockade of Venezuelan ports by the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy over unpaid debts, and inspired by the writings of Andrés Bello and Carlos Calvo on nonintervention in the middle of the nineteenth century, Drago argued that European armed intervention was illegal and counterproductive in disputes over public debts in the Latin American countries. In this way, the Drago Doctrine corresponded to the official U.S. policy of separate spheres of influence, and indeed Drago initially referred to the proposal as his own “economic corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.”<sup>21</sup> After the issuing of the Roosevelt Corollary, however, Drago shifted his focus to the prevention of U.S. intervention. In 1906, he brought the doctrine before the Third Pan American Conference in Rio de Janeiro, hoping to demonstrate its broad support among the Latin American states and thereby convince the United States to agree to its stipulations. Instead, the U.S. delegation and Secretary of State Elihu Root were successful in pressuring the conference attendees to avoid taking definitive action to enshrine noninterference as a component of the Pan American ideal. In the end, the delegates simply passed a resolution recommending that the issue of settling public debts be postponed until discussion at the Second Hague Conference scheduled for the following year.<sup>22</sup>

At the convening of the Second Hague Conference, the United States had its own proposal prepared that prohibited armed intervention to settle debtor disputes, except in those cases in which the debtor failed to enter into or comply with decisions of international arbitration. Many of the Latin Americans present at the conference saw the U.S. resolution as violating Drago’s intent by still allowing for intervention on their soil, and only four Latin American states chose to ratify it.<sup>23</sup> Ultimately, however, Drago agreed to the proposal, possibly

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<sup>21</sup> Cited in G. Pope Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1997), 147.

<sup>22</sup> H. Edward Nettles, “The Drago Doctrine in International Law and Politics,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 8, no. 2 (May 1928): 207.

<sup>23</sup> Atkins, *Encyclopedia of the Inter-American System*, 148.

because he recognized that any chance of salvaging his original vision for Pan Americanism was lost. His support came with several reservations, one of which was specifically intended to limit the ability of creditor states from intervening on American soil. H. Edward Nettles interpreted this as evidence that Drago “still clung to the idea that his plan was an exclusively American policy” and that “he still hoped to secure greater approval of his scheme.”<sup>24</sup> The Drago Doctrine would not formally be adopted in the Americas, but its underlying notion of universal nonintervention would become the principle most closely associated with an idealized Pan American community, at least as conceived by Latin Americans.

The events surrounding the Drago Doctrine demonstrate the considerable internal difficulties that Pan Americanism and the inter-American system faced in the era of expanding U.S. imperial might. By 1906, institutions were already established to at least theoretically promote economic and political integration in the hemisphere, such as the Commercial Bureau and the now semi-regular Pan American Conferences. Latin American proposals within these institutions were often more or less vaguely framed in the context of advancing Pan American values, and some even explicitly appealed to a U.S. conception of inter-American relations by referencing the language or principles of the Monroe Doctrine. If these proposals were deemed in any way to challenge U.S. hegemony or freedom of action in the hemisphere, the sheer diplomatic and economic power of the United States could ensure that they would not be successful. The United States tried to maintain the rhetorical façade of adhering to the spirit of cooperation by actively participating in the inter-American system while also shaping that system however it saw fit, often at the expense of its southern neighbors.

Indeed, U.S. domination of hemispheric affairs was intensifying so rapidly at the turn of the twentieth century that some Latin Americans became disillusioned with the prospects for

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<sup>24</sup> Nettles, “The Drago Doctrine in International Law and Politics,” 221.

building cooperative, mutually beneficial relationships with the United States and searched for methods to build regional solidarity outside of Pan Americanism. The foundational text of the growing anti-North American sentiment in Latin America was Uruguayan author José Enrique Rodó's essay "Ariel." Drawing on the characters of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Rodó equated Latin America with Ariel, "the noble and winged part of the spirit."<sup>25</sup> The United States, meanwhile, was Caliban, the "symbol of sensuality and of clumsiness."<sup>26</sup> Rodó attacked the United States-Caliban for its obsessive adherence to utilitarianism, and called on the youth of Latin America to defend their sense of spirit and idealism from the threat of U.S. political, economic, and culture imperialism. It would be through the creation of a uniquely Latin American model of democratic society, Rodó argued, that prosperity would be brought to the region. Rodó's anti-U.S. perspective was necessarily in opposition to the notion of Pan Americanism that had emerged from the 1889 conference and gained traction as a shared hemispheric discourse, both because it rejected the assumption that citizens of the Americas were united by a history of subjugation and a set of common values, and because it denied the validity of fostering closer relations between the United States and Latin America.

After the loss of its final American colonies following the War of 1898, Spain played an increasingly active role in the early 1900s in encouraging the development of the vague *Hispanismo* espoused by Rodó and others as an alternative to the United States' conception of Pan Americanism. A Hispano-American Economic and Social Conference was held in Madrid in November 1900 to discuss fortifying the economic and political connections between Spain and her former imperial holdings. The following year, Spanish officials warned Latin American delegates to the second Pan American Conference in Mexico City to resist attempts by the

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<sup>25</sup> "la parte noble y alada del espíritu", José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel* (Barcelona: Linkgua ediciones S.L., 2008), 11.

<sup>26</sup> "...símbolo de sensualidad y de torpeza...", Ibid.

United States to forcibly impose its agenda, and justified its intervention in Western hemispheric affairs on the basis of shared “history, tradition, and blood as well as commercial interest.”<sup>27</sup> Spain would continue similar efforts to develop a pro-Spanish, anti-U.S. bloc in Latin America on and off through the 1920s, although to little practical avail. Richard Salisbury suggests that Spanish dreams of *Hispanismo* were just that, idyllic dreams that had little to do with actual political and economic circumstances. Faced with the growing dominance of the United States in Latin America and internal stability issues in Spain, an effective alternative system of hemispheric relations based on *Hispanismo* was impossible.<sup>28</sup>

The failure of these alternative models of the hemispheric order meant that, for the most part, Latin American officials had to articulate their views on the highly unbalanced nature of inter-American relations through the rhetoric of Pan Americanism in the first decades of the twentieth century. As with the Drago Doctrine, this often took the form of trying to guarantee U.S. respect for nonintervention as a Pan American value. Latin Americans also used Pan American conferences to express their support for upholding international law in the hemisphere and for observing a principle of equal treatment among the states of the Americas.<sup>29</sup>

At the same time, Latin Americans encountered a U.S. government that was also trying to reshape its Pan American discourse. In *Pan American Visions*, Mark T. Gilderhus argues that President Woodrow Wilson was especially concerned with crafting a new “Pan American” foreign policy that would combine a commitment to a particular U.S. understanding of hemispheric solidarity with the promotion of U.S. economic and political interests.<sup>30</sup> Although

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<sup>27</sup> Cited in Richard V. Salisbury, “Hispanismo versus Pan Americanism: Spanish Efforts to Counter U.S. Influence in Latin America before 1930,” in *Beyond the Ideal*, 70.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas M. Leonard, “The New Pan-Americanism in U.S.-Central American Relations, 1933-1954,” in *Beyond the Ideal: Pan Americanism in Inter-American Affairs*, ed. David Sheinin (Westport: Praeger, 2000), 96.

<sup>30</sup> Mark T. Gilderhus, *Pan American Visions: Woodrow Wilson in the Western Hemisphere, 1913-1921* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1986), xi.

the theme of the United States civilizing Latin America had surfaced before, for example with James Blaine in the lead-up to the First Pan American Conference, Wilson was adamant that the United States had a responsibility to bring democracy to its “sister republics” in the hemisphere.

In 1913, the U.S. President issued the Wilson Doctrine, which stated that the United States would not formally recognize any Latin American governments brought to power through undemocratic means. This was quite similar to a non-recognition proposal put forth by the Ecuadorean diplomat Carlos Tobar in 1907, but the Wilson Doctrine still received condemnation from some Latin American leaders, who viewed it as yet another step in the cycle of U.S. intervention in Latin American affairs by threatening to punish any country that did not follow the United States’ desired path of political development.<sup>31</sup> In 1915, Wilson tried to take his promise of hemispheric cooperation a step further by making Washington host to the first Pan American Financial Conference, at which representatives from eighteen Latin American countries engaged in discussions with the U.S. government and business sector on topics such as financing, tariffs, and expansion of hemispheric trade. Wilson stated in his opening speech that the conference was meant to “draw the American republics together by bonds of common interest and of mutual understanding.”<sup>32</sup> Head of the Pan American Union John Barrett acclaimed that the assembly was “the inevitable climax of a great present-day Pan American movement...”<sup>33</sup> Once again, the response from Latin America was decidedly more mixed. While continuing to decry U.S. imperialism in the region, Latin Americans also recognized and welcomed the potential benefits of closer economic integration.

The United States’ gradual entry into World War I in 1917 accelerated attempts by Wilson and other U.S. government officials to solidify hemispheric solidarity under Pan

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<sup>31</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 53–54.

<sup>32</sup> Cited in Gilderhus, *Pan American Visions*, 57.

<sup>33</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, 61.

Americanism. They were motivated both by the political goal of preventing the Latin American states from siding with the Central Powers and by the economic goal of ensuring easy access to valuable resources for the war effort. Almost immediately after the United States broke diplomatic relations with Germany over the latter's indiscriminate submarine warfare on February 3, several Latin American states expressed their support for the U.S. position, and a few including Brazil even went as far as to sever their own diplomatic relations. The Brazilian government under President Venceslau Brás took the position that "Pan America must stand together" to counter the threat of the Central Powers.<sup>34</sup> Mexico and Argentina, on the other hand, resisted pressure coming from the United States and led a group of ten South and Central American countries in declaring their neutrality in European conflicts. One of the loudest Argentine voices in favor of neutrality was former Foreign Minister Estanislao S. Zeballos, who argued that the inter-American system was a commercial enterprise and that Pan Americanism did not obligate diplomatic or military cooperation. He also criticized Wilson's stance on neutrality as violating the mutual respect between the United States and Latin America.<sup>35</sup>

Barrett, meanwhile, announced in November 1917 a plan to create an inter-American committee to coordinate resource flows and reduce the German presence in Latin America. The neutral countries were to be excluded from this committee because their inclusion would be, in Barrett's words, "contrary to the true principles of Pan Americanism and harmful to the Pan American Union..."<sup>36</sup> World War I thus raised the question of the extent of solidarity in the hemisphere. While some Latin American states claimed that adherence to the inter-American system was principally about engaging in trade and therefore not exclusive of neutrality in international conflicts, the United States and its allies in the hemisphere understood Pan

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<sup>34</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>36</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, 115.

Americanism as a political doctrine that demanded that the American states also align their diplomatic policies. Similar arguments would emerge over Pan Americanism's relationship to economic development and anticommunism in the early Cold War.

With the end of the First World War, inter-American relations returned to a kind of normalcy. The United States resumed its periodic military interventions in the region, and Latin American diplomats once again called to no avail for the United States to abide by the commitment to nonintervention as the heart of Pan Americanism for Latin Americans. At the Pan American Conference in Havana in 1927, Charles Evan Hughes, one of the representatives of the United States government, justified his country's policy with the argument that mandating respect for nonintervention in an inter-American treaty would prevent a country from acting if its nationals in another country were in danger and the government of the latter country was unwilling or unable to assist them. The need for such an "interposition of a temporary character,"<sup>37</sup> as Hughes referred to it, suggests that U.S. officials at the time continued to believe that the Latin American states were too unstable to properly manage themselves, and belies that the United States was intent on maintaining the authority to intervene in Latin American affairs when it was deemed necessary to protect economic and political interests.

Increasingly frustrated with the United States' unfaltering position, Latin Americans pushed harder than ever at the opening of the 1930s to guarantee respect for nonintervention as part of Pan Americanism. Carlos Saavedra Lamas, the Argentine Foreign Minister, drafted the "Anti-War Treaty of Non-Aggression and Conciliation," requiring that states settle their disputes with "the political, juridical, or economic means authorized by international law" and "in no case

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<sup>37</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 104.

resort to intervention, either diplomatic or armed...”<sup>38</sup> He managed to convince six Latin American countries to sign on to the treaty and campaign for its adoption at the 1933 Pan American Conference in Montevideo, Uruguay. The stage was set for yet another showdown between Latin America and the United States over the meaning and direction of Pan Americanism. Instead, in a surprising shift in U.S. policy, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, only newly settled into the Oval Office, agreed to the Anti-War Treaty and pledged that the United States would truly respect the principle of nonintervention in Latin America.<sup>39</sup>

### The Good Neighbor Policy

The decision to abide by the Anti-War Treaty formed part of a larger reimagining of the U.S. approach to Pan Americanism by the Roosevelt administration that came to be known as the Good Neighbor Policy. Roosevelt first proposed the Good Neighbor during his inaugural address in March 1933:

In the field of world policy I would dedicate this Nation to the policy of the good neighbor - the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others - the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors.<sup>40</sup>

Although vague in this early stage, the policy began to take greater shape over the first several years of Roosevelt’s presidency as a series of political, economic, and cultural shifts in U.S.-Latin American relations.

On the political side, the Good Neighbor Policy focused on nonintervention, including the renouncement of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, and noninterference,

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<sup>38</sup> Carlos Saavedra Lamas, “Anti-War Treaty of Non-Aggression and Conciliation,” 1933, The Avalon Project, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/intam01.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/intam01.asp).

<sup>39</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 104.

<sup>40</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “First Inaugural Address,” March 4, 1933, History Matters, <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5057/>.



referring to the larger promise to not obstruct the internal affairs of another state through any means (military, diplomatic, economic, etc.).<sup>41</sup> As part of this policy, for example, Cuba was freed of the Platt Amendment, an addition to its constitution imposed by the United States in the early twentieth century in order to permit U.S. intervention on the island, maintain political order, and protect foreign commercial interests. The dedication of the United States to nonintervention brought its Pan American discourse more closely in line with the conceptions originating in Latin America, where nonintervention had been seen as the single most important element of Pan Americanism since the proposal of the Drago Doctrine.

On the economic side, the Roosevelt administration pledged to expand commerce with the Latin American states and to promote their economic development through such measures as bilateral trade agreements and the creation of an Export-Import Bank to provide credits for the purchase of U.S. goods and services.<sup>42</sup> The Export-Import Bank made loans totaling \$61,436,534 between 1934 and 1938, a relatively large percentage of which were directed toward Latin American governments.<sup>43</sup> Once again, this policy shift responded to the desire among Latin Americans to see the United States promote economic cooperation as part of its responsibilities under Pan Americanism.

On the cultural side, the United States invested millions of dollars into programs like the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA), which was tasked with the creation of propaganda to educate Latin Americans about a supposed shared hemispheric culture. The administration also advanced a series of resolutions in the inter-American system extolling the common democratic values of the American states and promising to work cooperatively “to

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<sup>41</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 71.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 73.

<sup>43</sup> Edward O. Guarrant, *Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy* (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1950), 102.

eradicate from the Americas the spread of doctrines that tend to place in jeopardy the common inter-American democratic ideal.”<sup>44</sup> In one such case, the United States supported the adoption of the Declaration of Principles of Inter-American Solidarity and Co-operation at the special Inter-American Conference in Buenos Aires in December 1936.<sup>45</sup> This declaration proclaimed Pan Americanism to be “principle of American international law... a moral union of all of the American Republics in defense of their common interests based upon the most perfect equality and reciprocal respect for their rights of autonomy, independence, and free development...”<sup>46</sup>

Although Roosevelt thus shied away from an interventionist interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine, he did not intend to refute the Doctrine’s principle of spheres of influence. Under the Good Neighbor Policy, Latin America was to follow the path of development of the United States and continue to build economic and political ties with its northern neighbor, while foreign (that is, non-North American) models and influences would not be tolerated.<sup>47</sup>

The promise of the Good Neighbor came under strain in 1938, when the government of President Lázaro Cárdenas in Mexico expropriated the holdings of foreign oil companies and nationalized the oil industry. In a statement made shortly after the expropriation, U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull said that he respected Mexico’s right to take such action, but that he was concerned that U.S. companies would not be compensated promptly for their losses.<sup>48</sup> When months passed with little progress toward an agreement on payment, the United States increased its political pressure, temporarily suspended purchases of Mexican silver, and petitioned unsuccessfully for Mexico to enter into an international arbitration process to settle the dispute.

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<sup>44</sup> From the 1939 Pan American Conference, cited in Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 83.

<sup>45</sup> Guerrant, *Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy*, 73–74.

<sup>46</sup> “Declaration of Principles of Inter-American Solidarity and Cooperation” (Organization of American States, December 21, 1936), The Avalon Project, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/intam07.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/intam07.asp).

<sup>47</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 83.

<sup>48</sup> Guerrant, *Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy*, 106.

At the same time, the Mexican Supreme Court issued a series of rulings defending the expropriation of the properties and rejecting the claims of the oil companies for immediate compensation. A final agreement was reached only in November 1941, after Manuel Avila Camacho had assumed the presidency in Mexico and demonstrated himself to be more interested than Cárdenas in negotiating. Edward O. Guerrant argues that “in agreeing to the only settlement that could be made with Mexico without resorting to force, the United States proved to the Latin Americans that the day of armed intervention had passed and that the Good Neighbor Policy was more than an empty phrase.”<sup>49</sup> In confronting Mexican oil nationalization, the U.S. government could theoretically have relied on military intervention, a policy that it had employed frequently in the first decades of the twentieth century, but it instead favored the diplomatic means of the Good Neighbor and the upholding of a noninterventionist interpretation of Pan Americanism to reach a mutually agreeable resolution.

Roosevelt also drew on the popularity of the Good Neighbor Policy in seeking Latin American solidarity as the United States moved toward joining the Allies in the Second World War. In this regard, he was quite successful. At the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the American Republics in Rio de Janeiro in 1942, just months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, all but Argentina and Chile declared solidarity with the United States and severed their diplomatic relations with the Axis Powers. Under threat of having economic assistance cut off, Chile agreed to join the other Latin American states in support of the Allies the following January. Peronist Argentina, which was deeply sympathetic to the Nazi cause, succeeded in resisting U.S. pressure for much of the war, but it too eventually agreed to cut ties with Japan and Germany as the war came to a close in 1945.<sup>50</sup> Unlike in World War I, when the Latin

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>50</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 87.

American states were divided over supporting the initiatives of the United States with regards to Europe, Latin Americans were for the most part willing to accept and emulate U.S. policy in the Second World War. This did not necessarily imply that their understanding of Pan Americanism had changed to include the diplomatic and military cooperation that Zeballos had rejected in the 1910s, but it did indicate that Roosevelt's promises to respect nonintervention and funnel U.S. economic assistance to the region had won him many Latin American allies.

Historians have often viewed the Good Neighbor Policy as a paradigm shift in U.S.-Latin American relations and as the apex of Pan Americanism. Thomas M. Leonard argues, for example, that the Good Neighbor ushered in a "new cooperative Pan Americanism" that succeeded in strengthening U.S.-Central American relations after decades of suspicion and ill will.<sup>51</sup> As Leonard suggests, it is certainly true that there were significant differences in how the United States approached Latin America and Pan Americanism under Roosevelt as compared to under any of the presidents before him. Rather than understanding those differences as representing a true departure from prior policies, however, Peter Smith views them as "the *culmination* of trends in U.S. policy toward the region" and as demonstrating "a hardheaded sense of *realpolitik* that promoted and protected the long-standing U.S. quest for hegemony throughout the hemisphere" (his emphasis).<sup>52</sup> With economic relations between the United States and Latin America growing ever stronger in the 1930s, and with European influence minimal due to internal conflicts, the United States could pursue a less interventionist, more cooperative approach to establish its dominance in the Americas. Shifting global and regional conditions in the late 1940s would, however, change the parameters by which the United States could achieve

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<sup>51</sup> Leonard, "The New Pan-Americanism in U.S.-Central American Relations, 1933-1954," 95.

<sup>52</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 65.

hemispheric hegemony, thereby necessitating the reevaluation and ultimately the abandonment of the Good Neighbor Policy and its noninterventionist Pan Americanism.

### Militarizing Pan Americanism

In the post-war years, U.S.-driven Pan Americanism intersected with anticommunism in the form of a militarized inter-American system. Anticommunism had long been a powerful ideology in Latin America, where intense conflict between leftist and anti-leftist political factions had existed in a cyclical fashion since at least the urban, working-class anarcho-syndicalist movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During that time, the United States often supported anti-leftist actions in Latin America, particularly because U.S. officials had difficulty making sense of the growing nationalism and anti-imperialism in many countries in the region, and assumed incorrectly that such trends were manifestations of the encroaching radical anarchist and later Soviet influence in the region. In reality, however, the Latin American Left was not a single political movement under the direct control of the Soviet Union, but rather a series of ideological factions, whether socialist, communist, nationalist, anti-imperialist, or otherwise, that were often in as much conflict with each other as they were with the state and with conservative political groups.

As the threat of Nazism in Europe grew in the 1930s and early 1940s, however, repression against the Latin American Left temporarily declined in many countries. Socialist and communist parties in Latin America declared a “Popular Front” with conservative political parties against the threat of fascism. The Cuban Communist Party, for example, reached an agreement with President Fulgencio Batista in the late 1930s to trade its political support for legalization and the right to restructure Cuban labor unions. This led to a massive increase in

party membership, from 5000 people in 1937 to 122,000 in 1944.<sup>53</sup> Two of the leaders of the Cuban Communist Party, Juan Marinello and Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, were made cabinet ministers in 1942, and other Cuban communists were present in the Congress and in provincial politics. Even the United States reluctantly approved of leftist organizing in Latin America provided that it prevented the Axis Powers from gaining a foothold in the hemisphere. Alan Angell writes that, in the years of the Second World War, “communist movements in Latin America enjoyed unusually high prestige and tolerance as a result of their involvement in anti-fascist movements and because of admiration for the war efforts of the Soviet Union.”<sup>54</sup>

With the end of the war, the alliance between leftist and conservative forces against fascism ceased to be necessary. Over time, concerns about fascism in Latin America were replaced by the growing specter of communism, facilitated by the rapidly escalating tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. Increasing anticommunist sentiment and the desire of the United States to guarantee its continued dominance of Latin America combined to produce a movement for militarization of the inter-American system against external threats.

At a hemispheric conference held in Mexico City in early 1945, delegates signed the Act of Chapultepec, laying out plans to create a collective treaty and defense system in the Americas.<sup>55</sup> Two years later, representatives from the American states met at Rio de Janeiro to formally undertake the promises of the Act of Chapultepec. The resulting Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (also known as the Rio Pact) stated in Article 3 that: “an armed attack by any State against an American State shall be considered as an attack against all the American States, and, consequently, each one of the said Contracting Parties undertakes to assist in

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<sup>53</sup> Alan Angell, “The Left in Latin America since C. 1920,” in *The Cambridge History of Latin America Volume 6: 1930 to the Present, Part 2: Politics and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 187.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

<sup>55</sup> Joseph Smith, *Historical Dictionary of United States-Latin American Relations* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2007), 45–46.

meeting the attack...”<sup>56</sup> Each country in the Americas was, by the Rio Pact, obligated to come to the defense of any other country if attacked by a force outside the hemisphere. As Martin Sicker points out, the Rio Pact did not create a joint military command structure like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), nor did it specify how multilateral action would function.<sup>57</sup>

The promise of mutual defense was further strengthened at a meeting in Bogotá in 1948. The most significant accomplishment was the creation of a new organization to replace the Pan American Union and shift the focus of hemispheric affairs from economic and cultural to political solidarity. Called the Organization of American States (OAS), the new institution’s charter guaranteed respect for nonintervention and reiterated the centrality of the principles of the Rio Pact to hemispheric relations. The Bogotá conference also produced the resolution “Preservation and Defense of Democracy in America,” which called on the countries of the Americas to take steps to prevent the encroachment of subversive foreign influence in their political, economic, and social affairs. The resolution made explicit reference to the threat of “agents at the service of international communism or of any totalitarian regime...”<sup>58</sup> Communism was thus clearly on the minds of the conference delegates in drafting measures to protect the hemisphere from external aggression. At the same time, the United States did not endorse “a multilateral inter-American anti-Communist agreement” pledging the entire hemisphere to fight collectively against communism. Although supported by several conservative Latin American governments at Bogotá, the United States rejected the proposal because it did not perceive communist penetration of Latin America to be an immediately serious threat, and because it

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<sup>56</sup> Cited in Alonso Aguilar, *Panamericanism: From Monroe to Present*, trans. Asa Zatz (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1968), 83.

<sup>57</sup> Sicker, *The Geopolitics of Security in the Americas: Hemispheric Denial from Monroe to Clinton*, 108.

<sup>58</sup> Organization of American States, “Final Act of Bogotá, Resolution XXXII, The Preservation and Defense of Democracy in America,” 1948, <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/dept/polsciwb/brianl/docs/1948finalactofbogota.pdf>.

feared that rightwing dictators, in power in much of the hemisphere, would use the agreement to justify repression of all political opposition.<sup>59</sup>

Historians have disagreed about the extent to which the Rio and Bogotá meetings cemented anticommunism as a facet of post-World War II Pan Americanism. Peter H. Smith writes that at these meetings “the United States continued to forswear the use of force in its relations with Latin America and to cultivate cooperation in the name of hemispheric unity.”<sup>60</sup> He sees the Rio Pact, the OAS Charter, and the United States’ rejection of an anticommunist resolution at Bogotá as evidence that the U.S. government was still guided by Franklin Roosevelt’s Good Neighbor Policy. Furthermore, he suggests that “it was fascism, not communism, that was seen as the principle challenge to democracy in Latin America” in these years.<sup>61</sup> While anticommunism would come eventually to play a central role in inter-American relations in the 1950s and 1960s, according to this interpretation such a shift of focus away from antifascism was not yet clear at Rio or at Bogotá.

Joseph Smith, on the other hand, notes that, only a few months prior to the Rio Conference, U.S. President Harry Truman had in a message to Congress articulated what would become known as the Truman Doctrine, a promise to provide support for the purposes of containing the spread of communism worldwide. The Rio Pact and the creation of the OAS can therefore perhaps both be understood as steps towards the Pan Americanization of the global U.S. policy to contain of the spread of communism and Soviet influence.<sup>62</sup>

The anti-imperialist author Alonso Aguilar takes Joseph Smith’s point a step further, arguing that the Rio Pact “modified the very foundation upon which Pan-Americanism had

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<sup>59</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 125; Stephen G. Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 15.

<sup>60</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle* 124.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>62</sup> Joseph Smith, *Historical Dictionary of United States-Latin American Relations*, xliii.



rested until then” by “alleging that the advance of Socialist countries and of liberation movements was the worst threat to the world that had arisen out of the war [World War II].”<sup>63</sup> Aguilar adds that, as a result of the Bogotá conference, “the Churchill and Truman Doctrines were shifted to the inter-American plane” and “the Anglo-Saxon version of ‘Communism’ and ‘democracy’” was thrust onto the Latin America people.<sup>64</sup> By 1948, Aguilar contends, the United States was already actively exerting pressure on the hemispheric community to embrace an anticommunist conception of Pan Americanism, and in this process of forced ideological alignment it was fundamentally changing the nature of inter-American relations.

There is likely a degree of truth in each of these views. Certainly, the U.S. government could not have fully anticipated in the late 1940s that Latin America would become one of the most important battlegrounds of the Cold War. Thus, the National Security Council’s report NSC 16, released in 1948, concluded that: “communism in the Americas is a potential danger, but that, with few exceptions, it is not seriously dangerous at this time.”<sup>65</sup> Still, U.S. officials likely recognized that an inter-American defense treaty would be of great value in protecting the country’s interests at a time when alternative, non-capitalist worldviews were growing in power and importance across the globe. The creation of a militarized Pan Americanism may not have entirely been in response to the growing global competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, but it did put in place mechanisms that could be used to fight communism in the hemisphere should it turn from a “potential” to a “serious” threat. Militarization also encouraged alignment with the United States against the Soviet Union by facilitating Latin American governments’ access to U.S. military supplies and resources. There were tangible benefits to acceptance of the reshaping of Pan Americanism in a Cold War context.

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<sup>63</sup> Aguilar, *Panamericanism: From Monroe to Present*, 83–84.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>65</sup> Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism*, 15.

## Conclusion

Beginning with its birth as the vision of independence fighter Simón Bolívar and continuing through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, hemispheric integration was an intensely contested concept in the Americas. There was much disagreement about how integration would occur, what values would be stressed, and who would be a part of the resulting hemispheric community. Pan Americanism, the model of integration that emerged out of the efforts of the United States to build its power in Latin America in the late nineteenth century, also reflected this dialectical nature as it was cast and recast as enforcement of the Monroe Doctrine, respect for nonintervention, economic cooperation, solidarity against fascism, and finally a militarized system of collective defense. Although the United States held a great deal of power over the shape of the inter-American system, Latin Americans frequently attempted to exert their influence on Pan Americanism, and occasionally were successful.

The peoples of the Americas thus entered the Cold War in the early 1950s with a collection of memories and interpretations of the evolution of hemispheric solidarity, as well as of the increasing militarization of the inter-American system under the doctrine of anticommunism. Out of the long history of steps and missteps towards integration, there had emerged a series of often intensely disputed symbols that could be invoked in different ways and by different actors to explain and propose solutions to the major Cold War conflicts facing the inter-American system. These symbols included Simón Bolívar, the Monroe Doctrine, the Drago Doctrine, the Good Neighbor Policy, and the increasing threat of the Soviet Union, among others. In the next two chapters, we will examine how these symbols were discursively employed in early Cold War conflicts in the hemisphere to support, oppose, or manipulate the increasingly staunch anticommunist nature of the United States' practice and discourse of Pan Americanism.

## Chapter 2:

### Pan Americanism, Anticommunism, and the Battle for Guatemala

In 1954, the small Central American country of Guatemala became the focus of one of the first Cold War conflicts in the Western Hemisphere. There, a center-left government under President Jacobo Árbenz had initiated a number of significant socioeconomic reforms with the support of the communist Guatemalan Party of Labor (PGT). As these reforms progressed, the Guatemalan government came under the scrutiny of the United States as a case of potential communist penetration of the hemisphere. Ultimately, the U.S. government adopted a multi-pronged approach to Guatemala: for one, along with its anticommunist allies in the region it pursued a series of diplomatic measures designed to gradually turn the collective defense apparatus of the inter-American system against the Árbenz regime. Additionally, the United States orchestrated a covert intelligence and military operation that culminated in a coup against Árbenz and the establishment of a military dictatorship under Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas.

Although much of the literature on the case of communism in Guatemala has focused on the covert policy and its wide-reaching implications for U.S. Cold War strategy, there has been some discussion of the United States' decision to take its claims against the Árbenz government to the Organization of American States, as well as how U.S. and Latin American officials debated the Guatemala case there. In particular, historians have focused on the events of the Tenth Pan American Conference, held in Caracas, Venezuela, in March 1954. The Conference is of importance because, after much debate, the delegates passed a resolution condemning international communism that the United States would later use in an attempt to justify action against Guatemala. Piero Gleijeses' *Shattered Hope*, for example, devotes a chapter to the Caracas Conference as part of a larger study of the role of the United States in Guatemalan

affairs in the 1940s and 1950s, while Max Paul Friedman has examined the Caracas Conference in order to shed light on anti-Americanism in Latin America. Thomas Leonard speaks briefly about the Caracas Conference in the context of the “new Pan Americanism” of U.S.-Central American relations in the 1930s and 1940s, but he interprets the conference from the perspective of the United States as it moved from the Good Neighbor to the Cold War. There has so far been no comprehensive investigation of the Caracas Conference in the context of exploring how Pan Americanism and anticommunism intersected discursively in the early Cold War.

In this chapter, I examine in detail the discourses surrounding the consideration of the anticommunist resolution at the Caracas Conference. As we shall see, the actors in the inter-American system consistently articulated their arguments by drawing on the concepts of intervention, nonintervention, mutual assistance, and solidarity that had dominated debates in the inter-American system for decades, as well as by crafting politically expedient historical narratives of hemispheric relations. Through leveraging these alternative conceptions of Pan Americanism, Latin American representatives to the conference were able to voice their opposition to the United States’ staunchly anticommunist position, envision new formulations of hemispheric relations, and fight to reclaim power and influence in the inter-American system. At the same time, U.S. officials and their anticommunist allies in Latin America employed their own discursive and incentive-based strategies to silence critics and advance a definition of nonintervention that permitted incursions in the domestic affairs of an American state under the aegis of fighting communism. While the actions and events of the Tenth Inter-American Conference were clearly shaped within the context of the emerging hemispheric Cold War, the battle for Guatemala was also inextricably connected to the long-term process of crafting Pan American discourses that could bolster or resist U.S. hegemony.

## Guatemala before the Caracas Conference

In the early twentieth century, Guatemala was controlled by an oligarchy comprised primarily of *criollos* (descendants of the original Spanish colonizers of the Americas), many of whom owned vast coffee plantations known as *fincas* and maintained close relations with corporations from the United States and Europe. Indeed, the entire Guatemalan economy was focused on the export of coffee and bananas, which constituted 90% of foreign exchange between 1871 and 1944.<sup>1</sup> The labor supply for this massive production of crops for export came from the impoverished, majority Indian population of the country. The Guatemalan state, and particularly the military, played an important role in guaranteeing the oligarchic structure through suppression of uprisings and the passage of laws aimed at limiting the freedom of laborers.<sup>2</sup> In exchange for government cooperation, the oligarchy backed a number of autocratic civilian and military presidents. One such president was Manuel Estrada Cabrera, who as head of the government from 1898 to 1920 oversaw the transfer of most of Guatemala's transportation and power infrastructure to a U.S. multinational corporation, the United Fruit Company.<sup>3</sup>

A rapid drop in coffee prices in the early 1930s threatened to upend the Guatemalan economy. In hopes of maintaining social order in the moment of economic crisis, the coffee oligarchy threw its support behind Jorge Ubico, a military man and the former governor of the province of Alta Verapaz. Ubico's assumption of the presidency in 1931 ushered in a thirteen-year military dictatorship that promoted development and modernization in Guatemala at the cost of brutal repression. Under Ubico's authority, the state launched a road construction program

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<sup>1</sup> Paul J. Dosal, "The Political Economy of Industrialization in Revolutionary Guatemala, 1944-1954," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 15, no. 29 (1990): 19.

<sup>2</sup> Nick Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA's Classified Account of Its Operations in Guatemala, 1952-1954*, Second (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 9.

<sup>3</sup> Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 27.

that linked disparate parts of the country and bolstered economy activity. Pro-business policies gradually resulted in the emergence of a middle class, although Ubico and the oligarchy paid this new group little attention.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, Ubico approved measures to crack down on dissent, increase the power of the Guatemalan military while concentrating its senior positions in the hands of his supporters, and even permit landowners to kill their Indian laborers.<sup>5</sup> Like Estrada Cabrera, Ubico was also very closely tied to U.S. multinational corporations, especially United Fruit, which the dictator awarded with vast expanses of land for banana production.<sup>6</sup>

As the Ubico regime became more firmly entrenched, the public opposition to the dictator mounted. In June 1944, student-led protests brought activity in Guatemala City to a halt. The regime responded by suspending constitutional guarantees and enacting martial law. Meanwhile, negotiations between the government and the demonstrators failed. On June 30, Ubico, who had promised that he would resign if given no other feasible options, announced that he was stepping down from the presidency. Immediately, a military junta came to power and undid the restrictions Ubico had put in place. Less than a week later, the oligarchy-dominated National Assembly announced the election of General Federico Ponce, a minor military figure but Ubico loyalist, as President. The choice of Ponce signaled, in the words of Kenneth J. Grieb, “a changing of the guard rather than a significant alteration of the power structure.”<sup>7</sup>

Despite the lack of immediate substantive change, there was some reason to believe in the weeks immediately following the start of Ponce’s provisional presidency that structural reform was possible. By August, however, the student movement had grown even stronger and many opposition groups had endorsed the university professor Juan José Arévalo for President.

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<sup>4</sup> Kenneth J. Grieb, “The Guatemalan Military and the Revolution of 1944,” *The Americas* 32, no. 4 (April 1976): 524–525.

<sup>5</sup> Cullather, *Secret History*, 9.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>7</sup> Grieb, “The Guatemalan Military and the Revolution of 1944,” 534.

In response, Ponce resorted to many of the same repression tactics that Ubico had used. Ultimately, a divide in the military between the old guard and a group of young officers halted the government's plan to suppress the opposition and keep Ponce in power. The younger officers, headed by Major Francisco Javier Arana and Captain Jacobo Árbenz, resented Ponce and his cronies, who they saw as unprofessional, outdated, and unfit to rule. As such, they formed an alliance with rebel leaders, including Arévalo. On October 20, the officers launched a successful military coup d'état to overthrow the provisional government. Arana and Árbenz formed a new junta, which proceeded to purge any older military figures from the ranks of the government. When presidential elections were finally held in December, Arévalo won an overwhelming majority of votes and the junta disbanded to return Guatemala to civilian rule.<sup>8</sup>

Entering power as the leader of the Revolution of 1944, Arévalo enacted a number of radical reforms to Guatemala's economic and political systems. In 1945, he approved a series of wage and price controls designed to stabilize the economy. The next year, the revolutionary government introduced a new law that guaranteed the right of laborers to safe working conditions, basic education and healthcare, and injury compensation. These policies brought Arévalo into conflict with industrialists, who viewed the economic intervention as counter to the ideal of laissez-faire capitalism.<sup>9</sup> In many ways, however, Arévalo preferred to stake out a middle road between the traditionalist Old Guard and the most radical factions of the revolution. For example, while he overturned many of the repressive policies that had been implemented under previous regimes and tolerated unionization of the urban workforce, Arévalo also

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 539–542.

<sup>9</sup> Dosal, "The Political Economy of Industrialization in Revolutionary Guatemala, 1944-1954," 23–24.

maintained the national prohibition on rural labor organization and kept most political parties under the ultimate authority of his Revolutionary Action Party (PAR).<sup>10</sup>

Despite drawing the ire of the powerful industrialists and *finqueros*, Arévalo was incredibly popular among Guatemalans, and it was essentially guaranteed that his successor as candidate of the PAR would win the 1950 presidential election. Árbenz and Arana, the leaders of the revolution, quickly emerged as the frontrunners. When Arana attempted to force Arévalo to transfer some of his executive power back to the military, however, the President allied himself with Árbenz, and Arana was killed in a firefight. With Arana out of the picture, Árbenz became the PAR candidate and easily beat out his opponent on the right, Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, in a landslide victory in 1950.<sup>11</sup>

Jacobo Árbenz rapidly established himself as the inheritor of Arévalo's revolutionary legacy, but also as a powerful reformer with his own vision. Espousing an economic nationalism, Árbenz focused his policy efforts on two primary goals: rapid industrialization and agricultural reform. He raised tariffs on the industrial sectors to promote the development of heavy industry in Guatemala, and he tried to challenge the immense wealth and power of foreign companies operating in Guatemala through the creation of state-sponsored, competitive enterprises. This latter measure divided the support of the industrialists. While some approved of reducing Guatemala's dependence on foreign countries, others believed that international cooperation was the only way to maintain the inflow of capital and machinery required for industrialization.<sup>12</sup> The industrialization plan, cut short by the coup against Árbenz in 1954, proved only moderately effective. Industrial production grew at a healthy 4.68% on average between 1944 and 1954, but

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<sup>10</sup> Cullather, *Secret History*, 11.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 11–12.

<sup>12</sup> Dosal, "The Political Economy of Industrialization in Revolutionary Guatemala, 1944-1954," 30–31.



the productivity increases in agriculture outpaced any progress made in the industrial sector, so the economic dependence on export of agricultural goods was not significantly reduced.<sup>13</sup>

Agricultural reform proved an even more difficult project for the Árbenz administration. The need for structural changes in the agricultural sector was apparent: the wealthiest two percent of the Guatemalan population owned seventy-two percent of arable land in the country, and only twelve percent of private land was being cultivated.<sup>14</sup> In 1952, the Guatemalan Congress passed Decree 900, with the stated purpose “to liquate feudal property in the countryside” in order to “prepare the way for the industrialization of Guatemala.”<sup>15</sup> The Árbenz government thus saw agrarian reform as a step in the process toward industrialization, as well as an important reform in its own right. Decree 900 called specifically for idle *finca* lands over eighty-five hectares to be expropriated, divided, and then redistributed to the Guatemalan people. This process was to be initiated by the individuals seeking land, not by the government. The original landowners would receive compensation for the declared value of their lands in the form of twenty-five year bonds with three percent interest.<sup>16</sup>

Although the land reform program was moderate in scope, it drew widespread ire in the international community. The landowners in Guatemala were unhappy to have their lands expropriated. Many of the neighboring states of Central America, firmly under the control of conservative dictators like Nicaragua’s Anastasio Somoza, saw the reform as a radical leftist action. The U.S. government, while initially calling the program “constructive and democratic in its aims,” joined the opposition after learning that a quarter of a million acres of land were to be expropriated from United Fruit. On top of the expropriation, United Fruit had for years vastly

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 34–35.

<sup>14</sup> Douglas W. Trefzger, “Guatemala’s 1952 Agrarian Reform Law: A Critical Reassessment,” *International Social Science Review* 77, no. 1/2 (2002): 32.

<sup>15</sup> Cited in Ibid., 35.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

underreported the value of its holdings in Guatemala, so while the company claimed it should be compensated \$20 million, the Guatemalan government only planned to pay \$1 million.<sup>17</sup> As it had for decades, the U.S. government gave its support to a private American corporation in a dispute with a sovereign Latin American government.

During the early 1950s, the United States also became increasingly concerned with leftist political activity in Guatemala. At the end of Arévalo's presidency, several hardline leftists abandoned the PAR to launch their own Marxist-Leninist party, the Guatemalan Party of Labor (PGT). Under Árbenz, the PGT had about 4,000 members and only a handful were elected to Congress or appointed to sub-Cabinet positions. The general secretary of the PGT, José Manuel Fortuny, was, however, a personal friend of Árbenz and frequently advised the President. Thus, Nick Cullather writes: "The PGT leadership's ties to the President gave the party influence in Guatemala entirely out of proportion to its electoral strength."<sup>18</sup> The U.S. government, having already pledged itself to contain communism around the world, saw the PGT's political influence and the agrarian reform as evidence of increasing communist penetration of Guatemala.

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) began as early as 1951 to explore options for removing Árbenz from power. On July 9, 1952, it approved Operation PBFORTUNE, a covert mission to fund and supply the Guatemalan exile Carlos Castillo Armas in staging a coup against Árbenz. When it found out in October that details of the plan had leaked to Central American government officials, the U.S. government canceled PBFORTUNE. Dean Acheson, the Secretary of State, had feared that a public connection between the United States and the coup organizers would tarnish the image of cooperation and nonintervention that had been established with the Good Neighbor Policy in the 1930s and 1940s. After the failure of PBFORTUNE,

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<sup>17</sup> Cullather, *Secret History*, 23.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

Truman continued to monitor the situation in Guatemala, but preferred to wait out the remainder of his final term rather than authorize further direct action.<sup>19</sup>

President Dwight D. Eisenhower came into the Oval Office in early 1953 promising to fight communism with more ardor than had his Democratic predecessor. In its first summer, the administration released NSC 162/2, known as the “New Look,” which called for the Cold War to be waged with greater emphasis on clandestine operations and on the arming of allies. The success of the CIA-orchestrated coup against nationalist Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh that summer further emboldened the government officials calling for New Look strategies to be applied to the Árbenz regime. By the end of the year, the CIA had developed Operation PBSUCCESS, a plan to bring down the Guatemalan government through a combination of “psychological, economic, diplomatic, and paramilitary actions.”<sup>20</sup> While two of the central thrusts of PBSUCCESS were to renew funding of Castillo Armas’s rebel army and bolster the opposition in Guatemala through anti-Árbenz propaganda, also important was isolating the Guatemalan government from the inter-American community. It was with this goal in mind that the United States announced in late 1953 its intention to introduce an anticommunist resolution at the Tenth Inter-American Conference in Caracas the following March.

### Preparing for Caracas

Before passing such a resolution, the first diplomatic step for the United States to curb perceived communist encroachment in Guatemala was to have an item on communism included on the agenda for discussion at the Caracas Conference. It was at this point that the role of Pan American rhetoric began to appear. In November 1953, delegates to the Council of the

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 27–31.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 40.

Organization of American States met at the OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C., to set the agenda for the conference. At the meeting, the U.S. government presented its proposal to “examine the intervention by international Communism in American affairs, including efforts to weaken American solidarity and subvert authentic national, social, and political movements for its own ends, and to direct attention to that intervention.”<sup>21</sup> According to U.S. officials, the reaction to the proposal was more or less positive,<sup>22</sup> and on November 10 the item was accepted onto the agenda with virtually no resistance, except for a negative vote from Guatemala.

Still, not everyone initially approved of a discussion of communist intervention at Caracas. The delegates from Mexico in particular voiced concern. During a committee session in Washington, Luis Quintanilla, Mexico’s representative to the OAS, announced that he had been instructed by his government to vote against inclusion of the communist item on the agenda. Quintanilla expressed fear that a resolution specifically prohibiting certain political ideologies in the hemisphere would be “interventionist” and would sow “disharmony” among the American states.<sup>23</sup> In a telegram sent from the State Department to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, U.S. officials in Mexico were instructed to relay to Minister of Foreign Affairs Luis Padilla Nervo “our regret” that the Mexican government was not supporting the United States on “this subject of basic importance to peace and security of [the] Americas.”<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, they were told to highlight to Padilla Nervo three aspects of the proposal that might allay Mexico’s concern. First, the discussion of communism was intended not as an act of intervention in sovereign domestic affairs or as a battle against ideology, but was rather “concerned with interventionist activities of

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<sup>21</sup> Cited in “Guatemalan Administration Parties, Union, and ‘Mass’ Organizations Oppose Discussion of Communism at Caracas, 362/12-253” (State Department, December 2, 1953), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>22</sup> “Matters Affecting the X Conference, 362/11-353” (State Department, November 3, 1953), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>23</sup> “Telegram 503 to Mexico City, 362/11-553” (State Department, November 5, 1953), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

Communists and their organizational links to Moscow” and “directed toward determining what further means can be found for combatting this form of intervention in America.”<sup>25</sup> Second, the proposal was the natural extension of the warnings against international communism to which Mexico had agreed in the Bogotá Treaty. Third, action by the hemispheric community against communism would not prohibit or override similar domestic efforts.

Although the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico was unable to speak with Padilla Nervo, he did meet with Under-Secretary José Gorostiza, whom he reminded of the seriousness of the threat of communist infiltration of the hemisphere. Gorostiza replied that his concern was not actually interventionism. Rather, he worried that the agenda-setting committee was steering too close to discussing the substance of the issues instead of simply whether or not they would be included on the agenda. Gorostiza promised that he would reconsider Mexico’s position vis-à-vis the U.S. proposal.<sup>26</sup> Evidently the Under-Secretary did change his mind; Ambassador Quintanilla informed the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City on November 9, the day before the vote to set the agenda, that his delegation would support the U.S. proposal, while recognizing that Mexico was “in no sense committing itself” to supporting the anticommunist text introduced at Caracas.<sup>27</sup> The following day, Mexico voted in favor of including the communist item on the agenda.

The disagreement between Mexico and the United States demonstrates how and when Cold War concerns were articulated with Pan American rhetoric. The Mexican government chose to publicly express its disapproval of a discussion about communism in the hemisphere by drawing on the recurring Pan American conceit of respect for nonintervention. When engaged in bilateral conversations with U.S. officials, however, Mexican representatives noted that

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> “Telegram 520 to Secretary of State, 362/11-653” (State Department, November 6, 1953), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>27</sup> “Telegram 534 to Secretary of State, 362/11-1053,” November 10, 1953, Record Group 59, National Archives.

intervention was not necessarily their primary concern. Mexico thus employed two strategies, one public and one private, in advancing their position on the agenda for the Caracas Conference. Pan American appeals to nonintervention and hemispheric “harmony” likely functioned as the base of Mexico’s public strategy because these appeals produced greater effect in the inter-American community than rote procedural arguments.

For its part, the United States relied on diplomatic pressure on the Mexican Foreign Minister, but also on a reframing of nonintervention to portray international communism as the real intervener in the hemisphere. If communism were intervention, then the efforts of the United States and its allies to fight communism in the Americas could only be intended as upholding nonintervention. U.S. officials additionally drew on the prior legal doctrine of the inter-American system in order to connect the proposed communist item to the question of collective security.

Representatives from several other countries in the hemisphere, while not publicly threatening to oppose the U.S. proposal, privately expressed to the State Department their potential issues with the discussion of communism at Caracas and recommendations for how to approach it. The most ardent condemnation of the proposed item came, however, from the Árbenz government, which perceived the U.S. proposal as targeted at Guatemala even if it did not say so explicitly. On November 10, Guatemalan representative Guillermo Toriello announced his government’s vote against the proposed agenda for the Tenth Conference. Two days later, after the motion to include the item had passed, an article appeared in *Diario de Centro América*, a newspaper owned by the Guatemalan government, justifying Guatemala’s decision to cast a negative vote on the grounds that “investigation of Communist activities in the American countries would be...nothing but a legal authorization to intervene in the life of our people,” and further that “such intervention would nullify the very substance of the democratic

system of the American states, to which they subscribed in the Bogotá Charter.”<sup>28</sup> The U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City also reported that the Guatemalan Foreign Minister, Raúl Osegueda, was considering not sending a delegation to Caracas in protest.

The Árbenz administration and the Guatemalan Left continued to voice opposition to a discussion about communism at the Caracas Conference through the winter of 1953-1954, all the while maintaining that Guatemala might choose to simply boycott the conference if it did not believe its arguments would receive fair consideration. This opposition, which came from a variety of sources, coalesced into a powerful publicity campaign on behalf of Guatemala’s sovereignty. On November 25, the government issued a joint statement from the PAR, PGT, the communist-controlled General Confederation of Workers of Guatemala (CGTG), and a number of other sympathetic political parties and civil society organizations. The statement, addressed to the “People of Guatemala,” attacked the domestic anti-Árbenz opposition for its obsessive use of the label of communism to refer to any reformist measures undertaken by the government. “All the good and anything which has brought positive benefits to our people,” it alleged, “has been opposed by the reactionary opposition in the name of ‘anti-Communism.’”<sup>29</sup> The pro-government groups also noted the frequency with which anticommunism was used by “the most discredited dictatorship and the bloodiest oligarchical regimes in America” in order to “shield their anti-democratic policy.”<sup>30</sup> Finally, the authors argued that the real reason for the United States introducing its proposal to examine communist intervention at Caracas was “the agrarian

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<sup>28</sup> Translated and quoted in “Guatemalan Leftists Protest Proposal to Discuss Communism at Caracas Conference, 362/11-1853” (State Department, November 18, 1953), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>29</sup> Translated and quoted in “Guatemalan Administration Parties, Union, and ‘Mass’ Organizations Oppose Discussion of Communism at Caracas, 362/12-253.”

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

reform, the expropriation of the uncultivated lands belonging to the United Fruit Company, ... the refusal to broaden the United Fruit Company's concessions..."<sup>31</sup>

The pro-government factions in Guatemala thus tried to portray the transforming of anticommunism into a Pan American value as an illegitimate political ploy to protect the anti-democratic governments of the Americas and advance the United States' traditional strategy of exploiting Latin American resource wealth. Although the November statement did not deal explicitly with the Cold War or with U.S.-Soviet competition, it rejected the Cold War parameters set by the United States and other anticommunist regimes for Pan Americanism and implicitly raised the argument that such rhetoric was simply a new face for the recurring issues of power, intervention, dictatorship, and empire in the hemisphere.

This strategy combined with another discursive approach adopted by the Guatemalan government to situate the impending discussion about communism in the hemisphere explicitly in the context of the history of Pan Americanism. In an editorial published in the *Diario de Centro América* on January 6, Pan Americanism was described as "an old regional instrument established at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century" that "throughout its history has not been entirely bad; conversely it has not been entirely good."<sup>32</sup> The editorial went on to discuss the significant improvements to Pan Americanism undertaken during the Good Neighbor presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the initial hope that the policy shift in the United States toward cooperation and nonintervention would be long lasting, and the disappointment after the Second World War as the United States returned to interventionism. Speculating on the potential of the Caracas Conference to lead to direct action against Guatemala, the author concluded: "If the prediction comes to pass, there will no longer be any reason to continue the talk of inter-Americanism as an

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Translated and quoted in "Guatemalan Official Newspapers' Attitude Towards the Caracas Conference, 362/1-1154" (State Department, January 11, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.



instrument to strengthen friendship and mutual aid... Inter-Americanism will have died as does everything which is born, grows, matures and declines.”<sup>33</sup> The Caracas Conference was presented as a potential watershed moment for Pan Americanism, holding the power to destroy a system of hemispheric relations that, while always deeply problematic, had at least appeared to be moving toward mutual respect and cooperation in the very recent past.

Like the November joint statement, this article was likely intended as an appeal to sympathetic sectors of the Guatemalan population in order to increase support for the Árbenz government. The *Diario* article also seemed to be a cry for help to the less fervently anticommunist hemispheric leaders, who had for the most part abandoned Guatemala during the vote on the Caracas agenda. Pan Americanism functioned in the Guatemalan campaign as a shared language and history for the people of Latin America, who could remember the repeated interventions of the United States in their countries in the early twentieth century and the substantive changes that had been brought to the inter-American system under the Good Neighbor Policy. While they may not have approved of Árbenz or the industrial and agrarian reforms he was advancing in Guatemala, they could perhaps appreciate the threat of allowing the United States to undo any progress made toward advancing a noninterventionist concept of Pan Americanism through interference in Guatemalan affairs.

Former President Arévalo, the hero of the Revolution of 1944 and a friend of Árbenz, also jumped to the defense of the Guatemalan government and spoke out against the Caracas Conference in a number of countries in the Americas. In mid-December 1953, Arévalo met with Cuban President Fulgencio Batista in Havana to carry out, in his words, “a very important mission: that of explaining to President Batista the position of Guatemala regarding the next Pan-

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

American Conference.”<sup>34</sup> Batista listened to the ex-president and promised that Cuba, while officially anticommunist, would respect the right of self-determination and would not commit aggression against another state in the hemisphere. Two months later in La Paz, Bolivia, Arévalo gave a speech at the University of San Andrés denying the allegations made by the United States of communist penetration of Guatemala. He accused the United States of trying to build a coalition of Latin American countries to oppose Guatemala and reiterated that U.S. policy was aimed at protecting the interests of the United Fruit Company. Arévalo’s attacks on the United States received loud applause, which an official from the U.S. Embassy in La Paz interpreted as evidence of the “Communist sympathies of the audience.”<sup>35</sup> As a consequence of this media blitz, Árbenz succeeded in mobilizing the Latin American Left to show solidarity with Guatemala, but official support from the chiefs of state was not particularly forthcoming.

At the same time that the Guatemalan government was organizing networks of solidarity based on anti-imperialism and noninterventionism, U.S. officials were developing their own strategies to guarantee that they would have the necessary support for an anticommunist resolution. Beginning in early February 1954, the State Department circulated a series of briefing memoranda on its plans for the communist item to the U.S. Embassies across Latin America, with the recommendation that their contents be used to guide “high level” consultations with members of the local governments.<sup>36</sup> In one of the memos, dated February 2, embassy representatives were advised that, if the topic of Guatemala were to come up in one of these consultative meetings, they were to reply that the United States was not planning to explicitly

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<sup>34</sup> “Visit to Habana and Conversation with Batista of Ex-President of Guatemala, 362/12-2453” (State Department, December 24, 1953), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>35</sup> “Arévalo Ridicules United States Charges of Communist Infiltration in Guatemala, 362/2-2554” (State Department, February 25, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>36</sup> “Communist Item for Tenth Inter-American Conference, 362/2-254” (State Department, February 2, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

accuse Guatemala at the conference.<sup>37</sup> This decision was not one made out of a lack of conviction within the Eisenhower administration about the need to prevent further leftist interference in Guatemala, but was rather a calculated political maneuver. Indeed, a subsequent memo dated February 5 stated that the resolution, while general in language, was meant to establish “positive steps for individual and multilateral action by the other American Republics to hinder and combat Communist intervention in the hemisphere *such as is developing in Guatemala*” [emphasis added].<sup>38</sup> There was clearly agreement within the State Department that the anticommunist resolution at the Caracas Conference would be used to target the Árbenz regime, but it was first necessary to create the illusion that Guatemala was not being singled out and thereby avoid allegations of Yankee interventionism under the guise of Pan Americanism.

The U.S. delegation to Caracas may have planned to avoid mention of Guatemala, but it anticipated the issue coming up anyway and prepared accordingly. The most likely scenario was that the Guatemalan government would name itself as the recipient of U.S. aggression. To avoid losing allies in that event, the February 5 memo set out a number of points to be made to Latin American leaders before the conference to prove beyond a doubt the extensive communist presence in Guatemala, including that “Guatemalan Communists have penetrated in force the highest levels of the political parties supporting the present government” and that “Communists and their sympathizers dominate the Government’s Agrarian Reform Program...”<sup>39</sup> Though exaggerated, these claims effectively exploited conservative fears of communists coming to power and of radical land redistribution that would upset traditional power hierarchies. The memo further labeled it “essential to the attainment of our objective” that the OAS countries be

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> “Tenth Inter-American Conference Agenda Item on Communism, 362/2-554” (State Department, February 5, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

convinced that the anticommunist resolution was not meant as a defense of the interests of North American corporations,<sup>40</sup> as that argument would necessarily invalidate the United States' outward purpose of protecting hemispheric solidarity.

U.S. officials correctly recognized that the Guatemalan government would try to take advantage of decades of resentment over U.S. imperialism to garner sympathy in the inter-American community, and therefore that it was essential to obscure any interventionist intentions for Guatemala when dealing with the other nations of the hemisphere. The State Department's plan to introduce a general resolution against international communist intervention at Caracas that did not mention Guatemala would accomplish this goal. Simultaneously the U.S. government used the channels of diplomacy to launch its own counter-propaganda campaign aimed at proving the seriousness of the threat of communist penetration in Guatemala to the stability of the hemisphere, both to ensure the success of the resolution at Caracas and to increase the likelihood of multilateral intervention at some later point. This campaign appropriated the Pan American discourse of noninterventionism, just as Guatemala's did, but in this case the pursuit of a hemisphere free of external intervention was framed as justifying intraregional intervention in other countries facing the supposed threat of communism.

The United States was not alone in pursuing these objectives in the months before the Caracas Conference. Several Latin American countries, including those under the control of rightwing dictatorships, joined the United States. The regime of Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic drafted its own anticommunist resolution to be introduced at Caracas, which it showed to the U.S. Ambassador to the Dominican Republic on February 8. The draft resolution called on the American states to outlaw communist parties and organizations and also created a

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<sup>40</sup> "Tenth Inter-American Conference Agenda Item on Communism, 362/2-554."

“Commission of Vigilance” with the power to review cases of potential international communist interference in the hemisphere and make recommendations for fighting it. Although the location of the Commission was not specified, Panama was offered as an option because of “proximity of that country to a dangerous center of communist penetration,”<sup>41</sup> a clear reference to Guatemala.

The positions laid out in the proposal by the Dominican Republic were even more extreme than those favored by the United States, which had not yet outlawed its own Communist Party (although it would do so later that year under the Communist Control Act of 1954) and feared that a watchdog committee would simply provide the grounds for Latin American countries to clash over longstanding disagreements.<sup>42</sup> Trujillo had long been among the most ardent anticommunists in the hemisphere, and the Dominican leader had in fact called for a Pan American conference to discuss combatting communist intervention in the hemisphere in March 1953, months before the Eisenhower administration stated its intention to include the matter on the Caracas agenda. In his proposal, Trujillo had described the fight against communism in the hemisphere within the framework of a global “cold war” against the Soviet Union.<sup>43</sup> Thus, even while Latin American governments often framed the issue of communism within the language of Pan American values, they could also draw on the Cold War-centric discourse of an encroaching red tide to justify an anticommunist version of hemispheric solidarity.

On February 12, less than three weeks before the start of the Caracas Conference, newly appointed Foreign Minister Guillermo Toriello announced that Guatemala would attend, and that he would head the delegation. Toriello noted that he and his co-delegates would strongly oppose

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<sup>41</sup> “Communist Item for Tenth Inter-American Conference, 362/2-854” (State Department, February 8, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>42</sup> “Dominican Ambassador Wishes to Discuss Caracas Conference - Dominican Draft Resolution on Communism, 362/2-1254” (State Department, February 12, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>43</sup> “Anti-Red Parley Urged: Trujillo Reveals Proposal to Call Pan-American Conference,” *The New York Times*, March 24, 1953.

the U.S.-led communism discussion. He also expressed confidence that the other Latin American countries would not tolerate interference in Guatemalan affairs,<sup>44</sup> despite evidence that Guatemala's campaign had been relatively unsuccessful at eliciting widespread support outside of leftist organizations and sympathizers. With the announcement that Guatemala would attend the Caracas Conference, the stage was set for a showdown between Guatemala, the United States and anticommunist partners, and other Latin American governments concerned about the redefining of nonintervention under Pan Americanism.

### The Caracas Conference

The Tenth Inter-American Conference began in Caracas, Venezuela, on March 1, 1954. In his opening speech, Venezuelan President Marcos Pérez Jiménez called for hemispheric unity on the basis of Americans' shared history of colonialism and independence. On the issue of Guatemala, Pérez Jiménez spoke diplomatically, suggesting that Venezuela would not support any attempt to enforce a particular ideology or doctrine on any another country in the hemisphere due to its commitment to unity and nonintervention. Sam Pope Brewer of *The New York Times* initially reported that, despite the presence of the communism item on the agenda, "the delegates were in a conciliatory mood and ... means would be sought to avoid heated clashes."<sup>45</sup> An article appearing in the *Folha de São Paulo* similarly commented on the "atmosphere of cordiality" that marked the first official session.<sup>46</sup> Based on much of the first day's proceedings at Caracas, it appeared that the hostility that had characterized the inter-American system in the months before the conference would give way to relative calm and agreeableness.

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<sup>44</sup> "Telegram 318 to the Secretary of State, 362/2-1254" (State Department, February 12, 1954), 318, Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>45</sup> Sam Pope Brewer, "Unity Plea Opens Caracas Meeting," *The New York Times*, March 2, 1954.

<sup>46</sup> "Reunião Preliminar," *Folha de São Paulo*, March 2, 1954.

Tensions first flared openly on March 4, when U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles spoke before the conference attendees. Dulles was a militant anticommunist and was instrumental in intensifying the State Department's fighting of the Cold War during the Eisenhower administration. He was also the brother of CIA Chief Allen Dulles, who had previously worked as a lawyer with Sullivan & Cromwell, the firm that represented United Fruit in Guatemala. As Stephen Kinzer explains, Guatemala was the obsession of both of the Dulles brothers, for whom "it became the place where Moscow's global conspiracy reached closest to American shores, led by a Kremlin puppet masquerading as a nationalist."<sup>47</sup> It was not at all surprising, then, that John Foster Dulles decided to attend the Caracas Conference and personally oversee the drafting of an inter-American anticommunist resolution, even postponing his planned early return to Washington to ensure its successful passage.

Dulles's opening speech at the Tenth Conference was a prime example of the United States' strategy to reframe its Cold War concerns in the rhetoric of Pan Americanism and thereby to weaken the resistance of the Guatemalan delegation as it tried to claim its own firm adherence to the same principles. Dulles began by telling an anecdote of a recent conversation with Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov in which Dulles had advised Molotov that the Soviet Union "could never reproduce in Europe what we had in the Americas merely by copying words."<sup>48</sup> What was present in the Western Hemisphere but missing in the Soviet sphere of influence was "a unity which exists because of a harmony of the spirit," which included belief in a "spiritual world," "mutual respect and equal dignity," and "moral law."<sup>49</sup> This spirit he

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<sup>47</sup> Stephen Kinzer, *The Brothers: John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles, and Their Secret World War* (New York: Times Books, 2013), 147.

<sup>48</sup> "Address by The Honorable John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State of the United States of America, Before the Tenth Inter-American Conference, Caracas, March, 1954" (State Department, March 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

attributed directly to *El Libertador* Simón Bolívar, whom he quoted at length about the danger of remaining ignorant to hemispheric threats and opportunities. It was within this framework of unity derived from shared history that the Americas faced the threat of international communism and that Dulles called for collective action to “deny it the right to prey upon our hemisphere.”<sup>50</sup>

In drawing on the spirit of Bolívar, the idealized father of Pan Americanism, Dulles placed the waging of war against communism within a largely imaginary narrative of over a century of hemispheric cooperation against foreign threats. The Soviet Union and its communist satellites were new manifestations of the same meddling European powers that had threatened the sovereignty of the hemisphere since the Wars of Independence and that had necessitated the United States’ promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine. Bolívar himself was presented as the antithesis of the Soviet Minister Molotov, with the implication that *El Libertador* would have been just as staunch an anticommunist as Dulles had he been present at Caracas. Of course, Dulles avoided mentioning Bolívar’s discomfort with the inclusion of the United States in his American system or the myriad conflicts between the United States and Latin American countries in the decades following Bolívar’s death. With this direct line drawn between Bolívar and the Caracas Conference, Dulles created a streamlined historical narrative that preempted resistance to U.S. policy on the grounds that it violated the Pan American spirit.

Guillermo Toriello, the head of the Guatemalan delegation, was given the chance to respond to Dulles’s arguments the following day. Standing before the assembly, Toriello delivered an impassioned appeal for solidarity with Guatemala that touched on many of the same points the Árbenz government had made previously. Contrary to the claims of the U.S. delegation, Toriello maintained that the anticommunist resolution on the agenda “was merely a

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.



pretext for intervening in our [Guatemalan] internal affairs.”<sup>51</sup> The radical policies of the U.S. government vis-à-vis Guatemala were not, furthermore, reflective of the concerns of the people of the United States, but rather were the result of “the interference and maneuvers of the monopolistic enterprises and of some officials connected therewith...”<sup>52</sup> This was likely meant to be, and perhaps even recognized as, a jab at Dulles for his family’s conflicts of interest with regards to United Fruit. Raising the specter of intervention in Guatemala also served once again to refute the U.S. government’s strategy of presenting communism in the country as foreign intervention and anticommunist action against it as respect for the principle of nonintervention.

Even more noteworthy, however, was the way in which Toriello mirrored Dulles in his crafting of a Pan American history that could justify Guatemala’s position. He invoked Bolívar as the founder of the “true spirit of Pan Americanism,”<sup>53</sup> which was “an instrument of progress and cooperation, contributing to international peace and security.”<sup>54</sup> This rendering of Bolívar’s legacy seemed quite similar to Dulles’s musings on Bolívar and the spirituality he supposedly provided to the peoples of the Americas, but unlike Dulles, Toriello did not directly connect the age of Bolívar to the current move to institutionalize anticommunism in the hemisphere. Instead, the Guatemalan Foreign Minister described what he saw as a corruption of Pan Americanism that had occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a result of increased U.S. intervention in Latin America. This corruption came about a time

when great monopolies had a predominant influence over the politics of certain countries, through fear of the ‘big stick’ and the dismal ‘dollar diplomacy’ and when the landing of United States Marines in Latin American ports was a common occurrence or customhouses were seized ‘to guarantee investments’ or to punish political acts that did not coincide with those interests.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Guillermo Toriello, “Address by His Excellency Guillermo Toriello, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, in the Third Plenary Session, March 5, 1954,” March 5, 1954, Emory University Library, 6.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 6.

While Toriello noted that considerable improvements had been made in U.S. policy toward Latin America under Franklin D. Roosevelt, he warned that “certain United States officials wish to restore the policy that did so much damage to the true progress of Pan Americanism...”<sup>56</sup> As the Guatemalan government had done in its pre-conference campaign, Toriello hinted that an anticommunist resolution would deal a serious blow to hemispheric solidarity and cooperation. He also took this argument a step further by placing the blame for prior and impending failures in Pan Americanism squarely on the United States and its imperialist, free-market foreign policy.

In addition to offering an alternative, anti-U.S. history of inter-American relations, Toriello declared that the Guatemalan Revolution of 1944 advanced the only version of Pan Americanism that could truly uplift the people of Latin America. Pan Americanism must, according to Toriello, recognize

the tremendous fact of a majority of nations with an underdeveloped economy, the peoples of which are prisoners of ignorance and poverty, in comparison with the other highly industrialized nations, in relation to which they are kept in a semi-colonial dependent situation as suppliers of raw materials and cheap food, and as certain markets for their manufactured goods.<sup>57</sup>

A fairly standard anti-imperialist critique of U.S. and European policy in Latin America became the basis for articulating an alternative Pan Americanism in which the inter-American system would tackle the issues of underdevelopment and inequality, and in which Guatemala would be upheld as the hemisphere’s leader rather than its communist-infiltrated pariah. Toriello evidently hoped that focusing the entirety of the hemisphere’s energies on combatting suspected communist infiltration of a democratically-elected, populist Central American government would appear misguided when judged alongside the need of Latin American states to break out of cycles of political and economic dependency, a neo-colonial situation that he blamed on the very country leading the anticommunist charge.

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 9.

Toriello's comments were met with overwhelming approval from the Latin American delegates, who listened attentively throughout the speech and then gave him a rousing ovation as he concluded. Sydney Grurson, a reporter with *The New York Times* who had been forced to leave Guatemala earlier in 1954 for allegedly distorting the truth about communist influence in the government,<sup>58</sup> noted in a report from Caracas that the applause "lasted a minute, almost twice as long as that given Mr. Dulles" the day before.<sup>59</sup> According to Piero Gleijeses, Toriello had become the first representative of a "banana republic" to speak openly against the position of the United States in an international assembly,<sup>60</sup> and the significance of such a symbolic challenge to U.S. power and influence over hemispheric affairs was certainly not lost on any of the representatives in attendance. Dulles himself accused Toriello of having committed an "injurious attack... against the United States" with the goal to "disturb the harmony of our meeting." In response, the Guatemalan delegation retorted that it was the United States that was destroying hemispheric solidarity by not permitting an American state to pursue its own development.<sup>61</sup>

Although it was actually Árbenz, not Toriello, who had decided that Guatemala would take such an aggressive stance at Caracas,<sup>62</sup> the Foreign Minister quickly stepped into the role of head of the faction that resisted the United States and the strongly anticommunist Latin American states. On March 11, Dulles reiterated the alleged U.S. position that its proposal to combat communism was not directed at any American state in particular, but rather at agents of

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<sup>58</sup> "Reporting on Guatemala by New York Times Correspondent Sydney Grurson" (Central Intelligence Agency, May 27, 1954), [http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document\\_conversions/89801/DOC\\_0000923198.pdf](http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000923198.pdf).

<sup>59</sup> Sydney Grurson, "Guatemala Lays Plotting to U.S.," *The New York Times*, March 6, 1954.

<sup>60</sup> Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 272.

<sup>61</sup> Dulles's complaint is quoted in "Communique of the Delegation of Guatemala," March 7, 1954, Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>62</sup> According to Gleijeses, Toriello was opposed to the aggressive stance, but was overridden by Árbenz before he could deliver a more conciliatory speech. See Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954*, 273.

foreign governments operating in the hemisphere.<sup>63</sup> Toriello shot back that Guatemala would not tolerate a rewriting of the Rio Treaty to permit multilateral intervention. His country would remain “firm in the determination to carry on its struggle for complete liberation on behalf of its people,” Toriello promised, and intervening parties would find “Guatemalans defending their native territory inch by inch, ready for any sacrifice, in defense of their national dignity.”<sup>64</sup> When the representative of the Dominican Republic gave a speech in support of the United States and an anticommunist inter-American system, Toriello walked out of the chamber in protest.<sup>65</sup>

As the conference progressed, the dispute between Toriello and Dulles came to capture the attention of the international press. In left-leaning Latin American newspapers, Toriello was generally portrayed as the hero of Caracas, with one article in the Cuban paper *Carteles* calling him the David to Dulles’s Goliath.<sup>66</sup> *The New York Times* printed several articles focusing on the rising tensions at Caracas as Dulles and Toriello battled for support. The U.S. press coverage of the personal conflict was so exhaustive that officials from the State Department sent an emergency telegram to the U.S. delegation at Caracas on March 8 recommending that Dulles deflect further attention by convincing Latin American delegations to make their own statements critical of Toriello’s behavior.<sup>67</sup>

The aggressive Guatemalan campaign in support of an anti-imperialist, pro-development conception of Pan Americanism succeeded in publicizing the Árbenz government’s case to the international community, but it did not deter the United States from pursuing hemispheric

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<sup>63</sup> “Statement by The Honorable John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State, Before Committee One, Tenth Inter-American Conference” (State Department, March 11, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>64</sup> “Statement by His Excellency Guillermo Toriello, Minister of Foreign Relations of Guatemala, at the Fifth Session of Committee I” (Organization of American States, March 11, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>65</sup> “Carteles Report on Caracas Conference” (State Department, March 22, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> “State Telegram 25 to USDEL Caracas” (State Department, March 8, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

approval for its anticommunist position. The U.S. delegation came to Caracas prepared with a draft resolution entitled “Declaration of Solidarity for the Preservation of the Political Integrity of the American States against International Communist Intervention.” Grounding itself in prior statements against communism at the Ninth Inter-American Conference and the Fourth Meeting of Foreign Ministers, the proposal described international communism as “constituting an intervention in American affairs” and therefore subject to “appropriate action in accordance with existing treaties” of collective defense against intervention.<sup>68</sup> It also recommended that the American governments adopt measures to gather and share information on agents of international communism acting within their borders. The resolution would institutionalize the United States’ definitions of intervention and nonintervention while converting the inter-American system into an international anticommunist network.

Almost immediately after the resolution was introduced, several Latin American delegations expressed concern that its language was unclear about what constituted international communism and about whether it could be used to intervene in the sovereign affairs of an American state. Mexico, having already demonstrated a willingness to criticize the United States’ proposals in the months before the conference, led this effort. In a series of speeches on March 11, representative Roberto Cordova affirmed the Mexican government’s belief that the American states should unite against international communism, but called into doubt the efficacy of the anticommunist resolution in fostering that unity. The threat of invoking the Rio Treaty was, in Cordova’s opinion, a “coercive” measure that would prohibit certain governments in the hemisphere from practicing self-determination and would infringe on their sovereign rights. In that case, the entire purpose of the Treaty, to protect the American states from extra-hemispheric

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<sup>68</sup> “Declaration of Solidarity for the Preservation of the Political Integrity of the American States against International Communist Intervention” (Organization of American States, March 6, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

aggression, would be invalidated.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, Cordova took issue with the resolution's listing of a number of policies that American governments should implement to combat communism internally. This amounted to "an external imposition on internal legislation," its own form of interventionism, that was still a violation of Pan American values even if coming from an ally.<sup>70</sup>

In essence, the Mexican delegation was through Cordova's critiques articulating its own distinct conception of Pan Americanism. Unlike Toriello's lambasting of U.S. claims of communist infiltration, Mexico recognized and legitimized the threat of international communism to the inter-American community, but ultimately judged interventionism and violations to national sovereignty as even greater threats. Any attempts to fashion an inter-American system that would combat communism through the Rio Treaty or other methods of intervention in the internal affairs of an American state were necessarily contrary to the spirit of a noninterventionist Pan Americanism and the pursuit of continental solidarity. The U.S. proposal was misguided not because it targeted communism, but because it was destructive to the shared commitment to national autonomy that held the inter-American system together.

Opposition to the resolution also came from the representatives of the Argentine government. During general debate on the communist item, one of the Argentine delegates delivered a speech in which he outlined his country's basic points of contention with regards to confronting communist aggression in the hemisphere. In addition to questioning the lawfulness of establishing mechanisms to combat a communist problem that in his opinion had not yet materialized and whose characteristics were still unknown, the Argentine delegate also discussed the implications of the U.S. proposal for Guatemala and for American unity. "We have heard pleasingly that the projects in discussion are not against any state," he said, "but we understand

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<sup>69</sup> *México En La X Conferencia Interamericana*, vol. 1 (Gobierno de México, 1958), 70.

<sup>70</sup> "...una imposición extraña en su legislación interior..." Ibid., 1:72.

at the same time the attitude of a sister republic that feels affected.”<sup>71</sup> If, as Toriello claimed, the resolution were to be used against Guatemala, it would threaten to destroy solidarity, and the Caracas Conference “would be marked in history as the period of disintegration of the union of our peoples.”<sup>72</sup> Like Toriello, the Argentine delegate offered a warning that a poor decision at Caracas could spell the end of Pan Americanism by undoing the commitment to nonintervention.

Building on this point during the particular debate on the American proposal, the Argentine delegation reminded the assembly that its own country had faced U.S. intervention under the State Department’s policy of “Bradenism.” This referred to the attempts of former U.S. Ambassador to Argentina Spruille Braden to destabilize and isolate President Juan Perón in response to Perón’s decision to not break relations with the Axis Powers in the Second World War.<sup>73</sup> Recognizing that “interventionism is a synonym for ‘Bradenism,’” Argentina promised that it would not tolerate intervention in its own affairs nor in the affairs of any of its “brothers of America.”<sup>74</sup> The Argentine delegation established the Caracas Conference as a referendum on the United States’ interventionist tendencies and forcefully pledged itself to upholding a conception of Pan Americanism as first and foremost noninterventionist.

In addition to offering arguments against the anticommunist proposal rooted in nonintervention, self-determination, and hemispheric unity, the Latin American delegations also introduced a series of amendments to the resolution designed to weaken its language. One Mexican amendment changed each vague reference to “the international communist movement”

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<sup>71</sup> “... hemos oído complacidos que los proyectos en discusión no van contra Estado alguno, pero comprendemos al mismo tiempo la actitud de una república hermana que se siente afectada.” *Argentina En La X Conferencia Interamericana*, Presencia de América (Buenos Aires: República Argentina, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, 1954), 66.

<sup>72</sup> “...la señalaría en la historia como etapa desintegradora de la unión de nuestros pueblos.” *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>73</sup> Glenn J. Dorn, “‘Bradenism’ and Beyond,” in *Anti-Americanism in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ed. Alan McPherson (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 61–62.

<sup>74</sup> “...el intervencionismo es sinónimo de ‘bradenismo’”, “hermanos de América” *Argentina En La X Conferencia Interamericana*, 79.

to the more specific “the agents of foreign international communism”.<sup>75</sup> Another modified the prescriptive measure of applying the collective defense treaties to combat international communism in the hemisphere to instead recommend that a consultative meeting be arranged to discuss a case of suspected communist infiltration and develop potential action steps.<sup>76</sup> The Mexican delegation sought to reorient anticommunism in the inter-American system away from the use of force against a poorly defined ideological threat to the hemisphere and towards mutually agreeable, coordinated steps to protect the American states from the direct intervention of foreign governments or individuals covertly working on behalf of those governments. This was a fundamentally important distinction because, while the U.S. proposal could use the PGT’s political influence as evidence of “the international communist movement” at work in Guatemala, the Mexican language would only permit action against Guatemala if it could be demonstrated that the Soviet Union was directly controlling the Árbenz government.

The delegation from Mexico also put forward a proposal to add a paragraph to the anticommunist resolution calling for the American states to renew their commitment to strengthening democratic institutions in the hemisphere through “maintaining and stimulating an effective politics of economic welfare and social justice” that could improve the quality of life of their peoples.<sup>77</sup> The mention of a connection between economic progress and democracy was reminiscent of Toriello’s articulation of Pan Americanism as development. The thrust of the amendment was that, even if the U.S. resolution were to pass, its anticommunist measures would be only a temporary and imperfect solution to the deeper problem of Latin American

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<sup>75</sup> “*el movimiento comunista internacional*” to “*los agentes del comunismo internacional extranjero*” *México En La X Conferencia Interamericana*, 1:59.

<sup>76</sup> “...*se efectuará sin demora una Reunión de Consulta en los términos de la Carta de la Organización de los Estados Americanos para examinar la situación y decidir lo procedente.*” *Ibid.*, 60-61.

<sup>77</sup> “...*mantener y estimular una efectiva política de bienestar económico y justicia social...*” *Ibid.*, 60.



underdevelopment, which the U.S. government would eventually have to address if it were truly concerned with strengthening Pan Americanism and continental solidarity.

Additional amendments from the delegations of Argentina and Uruguay, among others, sought to reiterate the importance of self-determination and to put in place additional safeguards against invoking the Rio Treaty to justify intervention in Guatemala. In all, the Latin American countries introduced fifty-one such amendments to the anticommunist resolution, most of them coming up for vote on March 13. During the course of three hours of discussion that day, the United States managed to defeat forty-eight of the proposals, some of them with votes as close as eleven against to nine in favor and the majority of support coming from Latin America's rightwing, anticommunist dictatorships.<sup>78</sup> The only amendment that ultimately passed was the Colombian delegation's suggestion that the language "...and would call for appropriate action in accordance with existing treaties" be changed to "...and would call for *a meeting of consultation to consider the adoption of* appropriate action in accordance with existing treaties."<sup>79</sup> Dulles also included his own friendly amendment promising that any anticommunist measure directed at an external threat would not "impair the inalienable right of each American State freely to choose its own form of government and economic system and to live its own social and cultural life."<sup>80</sup>

Historians have disagreed over the practical effects of these additions. Stephen Rabe writes that the Colombian amendment "seriously weakened the resolution" by requiring a consultative process,<sup>81</sup> while Piero Gleijeses labels it "an insignificant change" to Dulles's plan for the hemisphere.<sup>82</sup> At the very least, the modifications made to the resolution required that,

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954*, 274.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism*, 52.

<sup>82</sup> Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954*, 274.

should the Caracas delegates approve it, an additional step would need to be taken before multilateral intervention could be deployed in Guatemala. In accepting the concepts of self-determination and nonintervention, U.S. officials conceded a symbolic victory to those delegates, including Toriello and Cordova, who had used the very same language in articulating their governments' resistance to the proposal. It seemed both a validation of the concerns that had been expressed about the potential implications of an anticommunist resolution, as well as a demonstration that Dulles did not have absolute control over the proceedings of the conference.

At the same time, Dulles's acceptance of these changes had the effect of coopting the language of hemispheric solidarity, which might otherwise have been subversive to the United States' goals, into the anticommunist paradigm. As with the prior U.S. strategy of equating communism with intervention and anticommunism with nonintervention, the presence of guarantees of respect for self-determination alongside anticommunist measures weakened the standard anti-interventionist and anti-imperialist arguments that had been levied against the anticommunist recasting of the inter-American system. It also allowed the U.S. government to respond to the narrative of Pan American decline outlined in Toriello's speech by showing that, contrary to what the Guatemalan Foreign Minister had suggested, it continued to abide by the spirit of the Good Neighbor. In the same vein, the United States Information Agency advised the U.S. delegation in the hours leading up to the final vote on the resolution to drive home the idea that the amended version demonstrated "strict adherence" to "non-intervention in internal affairs" in the American states "as absolute principle."<sup>83</sup> Finally, there was a practical, consensus-building dimension to the inclusion of the language of Pan Americanism as respect for national sovereignty. The U.S. government was willing to sacrifice a partial weakening of its

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<sup>83</sup> "Infoguide: Tenth Inter-American Conference, USITO 264" (State Department, March 12, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

anticommunist resolution if it meant that a greater number of Latin American delegations would cast their ballots to approve it.

After nearly five months of political strategizing and heated debate, the “Declaration of Solidarity for the Preservation of the Political Integrity of the American States against International Communist Intervention” came up for a final vote at the very end of committee on Saturday, March 13. Guatemala submitted the lone vote against the resolution, while Mexico and Argentina each chose to abstain. Seventeen other countries, including the United States, voted in favor.<sup>84</sup> Toriello had failed to rally the support of a majority of Latin American states against the resolution. Dulles, meanwhile, achieved the U.S. goal of further orienting the inter-American system against communism, and paved the way for concrete hemispheric action to be taken on his pet project: the destabilization of the Árbenz regime.

On March 15, the following Monday, the delegates were given an opportunity to explain their votes, and once again many cast their decisions within the frame of a struggle to uphold the values they saw as integral to Pan Americanism. The Argentine representative gave a short speech in which he stated that his government could not vote favorably on the resolution because it only approved of two of the paragraphs, one reiterating the commitment to representative democracy, and the other Dulles’s text promising respect for self-determination.<sup>85</sup> Mexican Foreign Minister Luis Padilla Nervo explained once again that, although his government appreciated the need for action against communist infiltration, he did not support the interventionist measures of the U.S. proposal and believed they could destabilize “the international solidarity of the American family.”<sup>86</sup> Toriello reaffirmed that Guatemala could not

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<sup>84</sup> “Telegram 32 from USDEL Caracas to the Secretary of State” (State Department, March 13, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>85</sup> *Argentina En La X Conferencia Interamericana*, 80–81.

<sup>86</sup> “...la solidaridad internacional de la familia americana.” *México En La X Conferencia Interamericana*, 1:97–99.

tolerate any resolutions that might later be used to violate the principle of nonintervention.<sup>87</sup> Even the representative from Uruguay, who voted in favor of the resolution, noted that his delegation had done so “without enthusiasm, without optimism, without the happiness of thinking that we were agreeing to the adoption of a norm with constructive and progressive direction.”<sup>88</sup> Only Latin American dictatorships like the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Nicaragua expressed their firm approval, a fact Dulles would later admit was “a bit embarrassing” during a closed congressional hearing on the conference.<sup>89</sup>

The large number of affirmative votes for the resolution thus did not necessarily correspond to overwhelming support for the United States’ conception of Pan Americanism as a militarized, anticommunist inter-American system. Rather, collective defense seemed to be for many Latin American governments a merely tolerable policy in a larger program of resistance to external aggression that would focus above all on developing democratic institutions and facilitating economic cooperation. Max Paul Friedman has shown that the United States actually resorted to buying the votes of many of the Latin American countries at Caracas with elaborate assistance packages. Peru, for example, received a \$30 million loan a week before the start of the conference, while Eisenhower made an emergency decision to forgive the Colombian debt when the delegation expressed some resistance to Dulles’s proposal.<sup>90</sup> Amendments and statements of disapproval became viable and symbolically powerful instruments of Latin American resistance when mass economic coercion guaranteed formal support of U.S. hegemony.

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 1:99–100.

<sup>88</sup> “...sin entusiasmo, sin optimismo, sin la alegría de pensar que estábamos concurriendo a la adopción de una norma con sentido constructivo y de progreso...”; “...los ideales y las angustias de los pueblos americanos.” Ibid., 1:100–103.

<sup>89</sup> Cited in Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954*, 274.

<sup>90</sup> Max Paul Friedman, *Rethinking Anti-Americanism: The History of an Exceptional Concept in American Foreign Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 135–138.

If the statements from the Latin American delegations belied their real unhappiness with the final anticommunist resolution, the U.S. government and press publicly ignored these criticisms and expressed tremendous enthusiasm at the success of the Caracas Conference. In his farewell remarks, Dulles lauded the passage of a “momentous declaration” that would “help preserve the integrity of this hemisphere...” He also remarked that the task would now fall to the inter-American community to ensure “that the enemies of freedom do not move into the breach which has been disclosed in our ranks,”<sup>91</sup> referring to Guatemala’s vote against the resolution as if it had been the only sign of disapproval and a clear indication of sympathy towards communism. *The New York Times* proclaimed “Victory at Caracas” and called the resolution “a triumph for Secretary Dulles, for the United States and for a common sense in the hemisphere.”<sup>92</sup> For *Time*, the declaration was “the first Western Hemisphere agreement that gives real promise of stopping Communist infiltration in the Americas.”<sup>93</sup> Even as it was clear that the United States did not achieve all it had hoped in terms of building support for its anticommunist Pan Americanism, public efforts were made to create an understanding of Caracas as a turning point in inter-American relations and a victory in the fight to protect the hemisphere from communism.

### Aftermath

In the months following the Tenth Inter-American Conference, the U.S. State Department moved to turn the general language of the anticommunist declaration into targeted action against the Árbenz government. A telegram circulated to several American Embassies in Latin America in May 1954 alerted diplomats that the government was “considering invocation [of the] Rio

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<sup>91</sup> “Farewell Statement of Secretary of State Dulles” (State Department, March 13, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>92</sup> “Victory at Caracas,” *The New York Times*, March 14, 1954.

<sup>93</sup> “The Americas: Success at Caracas,” *Time*, March 22, 1954.

Treaty against [the] Communist threat in Guatemala, under terms [of the] anti-Communist resolution [of the] Caracas Conference.”<sup>94</sup> In order to reach the required two-thirds vote of the inter-American community, embassy officials were instructed to present evidence of communist penetration of the Árbenz government in high-level meetings with Latin American leaders, similarly to how the United States had lobbied for support for the declaration prior to Caracas.

Unsurprisingly, several governments pushed back on the proposed action, noting that their delegations had approved the resolution with the specific promise that it not be used to justify intervention in Guatemalan affairs. Others were more sympathetic, especially given the revelation in mid-May that Árbenz had purchased a shipment of arms from the communist Czech Republic. Argentine President Juan Perón went so far as to override his government’s earlier concern about intervention when, in a private meeting with U.S. officials, he promised his support for a consultative meeting to discuss the communist penetration of Guatemala.<sup>95</sup> By the end of May, the State Department expressed its belief that the two-thirds vote was “assured,”<sup>96</sup> and the meeting was tentatively scheduled for the coming July.

On June 18, 1954, the CIA implemented the final piece of the anti-Árbenz Operation PBSUCCESS. Several hundred soldiers under the command of Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas landed on the shores of Guatemala and launched a guerrilla campaign against the government. As war intensified in Guatemala, the United States continued planning for the consultative meeting, likely in order to keep it as a backup option in case the coup failed. On June 27, under increasing pressure from the insurgents and his own military, President Árbenz announced his resignation and left for Mexico. The next day, the OAS formally approved the petition for a

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<sup>94</sup> “State Telegram to Bogotá, Lima, Santiago, and Buenos Aires” (State Department, May 11, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>95</sup> “Telegram 680 from Buenos Aires to the Secretary of State” (State Department, June 1, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>96</sup> “State Circular Telegram 442” (State Department, May 29, 1954), Record Group 59, National Archives.

consultative meeting to discuss Guatemala, but with Árbenz out of office and the country under the control of pro-Armas forces, the need for such a meeting vanished. In a June 30 cable to all American embassies, the State Department announced that it would request that the consultative meeting be postponed indefinitely.<sup>97</sup> Nearly a year of political wrangling for a diplomatic assault on Guatemala came to a sudden end as the CIA's covert operation terminated the populist Guatemalan Revolution and instituted an anticommunist, anti-democratic military regime.

### Conclusion

The events surrounding the passage of the anticommunist resolution at the Caracas Conference demonstrate the complex ways in which Pan American rhetoric and early Cold War ideologies intersected in the Western Hemisphere. Three general groups of actors were involved in these events, each with disparate political, economic, and ideological motivations. First, there was the United States as well as a number of conservative Latin American dictatorships, all of whom were united by a commitment to enacting a strong anticommunist declaration that could be used to combat supposed communist intervention in Guatemala and elsewhere. Second, there were the Guatemalan government and leftist political factions from across Latin America, for whom the claims of communist infiltration were nothing more than an attempt to stifle the independent Guatemalan Revolution and overthrow the Árbenz administration. The third group consisted of the remaining Latin American governments, among them Mexico, Argentina, and Uruguay. The members of this final group came into the conference with widely varying goals and perceptions. Many were anticommunist, although not to the extent of the first group, while others were sympathetic to the cries of intervention from Guatemala, but were unwilling to

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<sup>97</sup> "State Circular Telegram 522" (State Department, June 30, 1954), 522, Record Group 59, National Archives.

officially pledge their support for Árbenz. Most, however, fell somewhere in between the U.S. and Guatemalan blocs. It was the support of this non-aligned third group of countries that the United States and Guatemala spent most of their energy before and during the Caracas Conference trying to win.

Despite the radically different positions of each of these groups on the issues of international communist penetration of the hemisphere and of the nature of an appropriate and effective inter-American response to communism, each framed their perspectives within similar discourses about the common values of Pan Americanism, the history of inter-American relations, and the future of hemispheric solidarity. This does not mean that delegates exclusively used this type of language to articulate opinions about the anticommunist resolution and Guatemala. Dominican President Trujillo framed his belief of the need for a hemispheric anticommunist declaration as a matter of advancing the West's fight against the Soviet Union and global communism. Still, there was clearly a recurring and intentional pattern of Pan American rhetoric in the months leading up to and during the conference.

Within this shared series of discourses, a number of conceptual and terminological debates emerged. One concerned the nature of intervention and nonintervention in the hemisphere. While all of the American states professed their respect for the principle of nonintervention, a principle that they defined as at the core of Pan Americanism, they disagreed as to what constituted each. The United States' representatives argued that international communism, as a doctrine forcefully advanced by the Soviet Union and its allies and contrary to Western democracy, necessarily represented an intervention in the Americas. The overthrowing of a left-leaning, democratically-elected Latin American government was a permissible act under Pan Americanism if that action was taken with the purpose of blocking further communist



intervention. This argument was not convincing to Guatemala, whose officials maintained that communist ideology was universal and thus could not constitute an intervention. Further, the Guatemalan government claimed that any U.S. action to influence the domestic politics of an American state was in violation of nonintervention regardless of its anticommunist character. The majority of the Latin American countries were sympathetic to Guatemala's claim that it was being targeted for intervention, leading the United States to accept a general anticommunist resolution with language guaranteeing the right to self-determination.

American leaders and diplomats also clashed over differing historical narratives of Pan Americanism. U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles crafted a narrative that situated the roots of his anticommunist policy in Simón Bolívar and early attempts at Spanish American cooperation, despite Bolívar's own reluctance to include the United States in his designs for the hemisphere. Árbenz and Toriello also drew on Bolívar as a symbol of the true spirit of American cooperation, but unlike Dulles they described a radical break with the Bolivarian system of inter-American relations that had come about as a result of the increasingly aggressive U.S. foreign policies of the Big Stick and Dollar Diplomacy. Theirs was not an entirely anti-U.S. narrative, however, and the Good Neighbor Policy of Franklin Delano Roosevelt took on powerful resonance as an example of the potential for a positive Pan Americanism. Similarly, Argentina warned about the return of "Bradenism" under the guise of building anticommunist solidarity. These interpretations of inter-American history served to contextualize the Cold War battle between communism and anticommunism within shared memories of cooperation, intervention, and imperialism, thereby strengthening the emotive appeal of the various actors' positions.

A final battleground at the Caracas Conference was the conflict over the future of Pan Americanism. The Latin American delegations by and large rejected as destructive the U.S.

vision for Pan Americanism as primarily a vehicle for collective defense against communism, even if they agreed in principle that international communism was a serious threat to the hemisphere. The debate on the anticommunist resolution became a forum for proclaiming Pan Americanism as a shared project of economic and social development, as well as for lashing out at the United States for its failure to bring a Marshall Plan to Latin America. Drawing on the example of the Guatemalan Revolution, development could be presented as the antithesis of U.S. anticommunist policy, which was itself criticized as subverting the advances made by Latin American countries to reduce their dependence on foreign corporations.

The picture that emerges from the Caracas Conference is, then, one of disagreement and rupture, even if the end result was the passage of the U.S. anticommunist resolution with little formal Latin American resistance. Discourses of Pan Americanism played a prominent role in shaping this rupture principally because they were malleable enough that actors with disparate political goals and amounts of power could simultaneously adapt and employ them. That representatives from Guatemala, the United States, Mexico, and elsewhere all chose to articulate their positions through these discourses suggests that, rather than see Pan Americanism as a concept devoid of substance or meaning, it is more appropriate to understand it as a constellation of resonant words, symbols, and collective memories through which the inter-American system filtered, digested, and responded to the changing hemispheric circumstances of the Cold War.

### Chapter 3:

#### Operation Pan America and the Economics of the Cold War

Although the Tenth Pan-American Conference held in Caracas in 1954 is most often remembered for the conflict that broke out between the United States and Guatemala over the anticommunist orientation of the inter-American system, the vast majority of Latin American delegates came to the conference concerned above all with the questions of how to correct their countries' economic and social underdevelopment, and what role the United States would play in facilitating such development through financial assistance. It was precisely because of U.S. promises of substantial aid and of further discussions about economic cooperation that so many Latin American governments gave in to the United States' demands and voted against Guatemala on the anticommunist resolution. As the regional hegemon, however, the U.S. government had the ultimate ability to decide whether and how the hemisphere would divide its attention between the strengthening of economic relations that was preferred by most Latin Americans and its own policy of militarized anticommunism. Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Organization of American States made little progress in coordinating a comprehensive hemispheric development program throughout the early and mid-1950s.

In 1958, President Juscelino Kubitschek of Brazil attempted to override years of U.S. neglect of Latin American underdevelopment when he announced a new program of economic cooperation for the hemisphere, Operation Pan America (OPA). Framing his plan as a developmentalist revision of Pan Americanism, as well as a tool for the use of the West in fighting its Cold War against the Soviet bloc, Kubitschek quickly won cautious support for Operation Pan America from both the United States and most of Spanish America. As Operation Pan America entered the lexicon and practice of the inter-American system, however, it

underwent a series of redefinitions, ultimately to end up simultaneously promoted as a U.S.-backed program for gradual capitalist development and as an aggressive Latin American challenge to U.S. imperialism in the hemisphere. The advent of the Cuban Revolution in January 1959, deteriorating U.S.-Cuban relations, and Fidel Castro's subsequent declaration of support for OPA only further complicated Kubitschek's ambitious new vision for Pan Americanism. By 1961, Operation Pan America had fallen out of favor in Brazil and the United States, and the Kennedy administration had announced its own related plan for economic assistance to Latin America, namely, the Alliance for Progress.

While historians of Brazilian history have carefully considered Operation Pan America as part of Kubitschek's foreign policy with the United States,<sup>1</sup> the historical literature on Pan Americanism and inter-American relations has tended to minimize discussion of the program, if it is mentioned at all. Stephen Streeter entirely ignores Operation Pan America in his analysis of Pan Americanism in the early Cold War, while Peter Smith mentions it very briefly in *Talons of the Eagle* to set the context for Kennedy's Alliance for Progress. In his chapter on the Brazilian diplomat Oswaldo Aranha in *Beyond the Ideal*, W. Michael Weis describes Aranha's participation in Operation Pan America, but quickly disregards the program for never winning the full support of the Eisenhower administration. Alonso Aguilar lauds Operation Pan America as an ambitious program to increase U.S. investment in Latin America, but attributes its rapid failure to the resistance of the United States to change its economic policy in the hemisphere. The relationship between Operation Pan America and hemispheric disputes over Pan American discourse has so far not been explored with enough depth.

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed analysis of Operation Pan America in the context of Brazilian politics and economics, see, for example, Alexandre De Mello e Silva, *A Política Externa de JK: Operação Pan-Americana* (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getulio Vargas CPDOC, 1992).

This chapter begins to address that gap by examining the evolution of Operation Pan America as a disputed political program and rhetorical device for articulating normative understandings of the relationships between Pan Americanism, economic development, and the Cold War. I argue that the Brazilian government's perpetual reframing of OPA reflected a strategy of experimentation with different discourses of Pan Americanism in order to determine how best to win support from the hemisphere, particularly from the United States, and position Brazil as the leader of the initiative for economic solidarity. Furthermore, I suggest that, as the United States and Cuba became embroiled in conflict over the future of the hemisphere, both attempted to capture the rhetorical power of Operation Pan America to advance their visions. The combined effect of this discursive pulling of Operation Pan America in many different directions at once was to subvert its potential power as an agent of change in Pan Americanism. Finally, in crafting the Alliance for Progress out of a depoliticized interpretation of Operation Pan America, the United States was able to claim its adherence to a new spirit of Pan Americanism as economic solidarity while freeing itself from the complicated political and rhetorical struggle over the particular Brazilian program. In short, Operation Pan America reveals the intense conflict between the United States and Latin America, as well as within Latin America, over the language and leadership of economic Pan Americanism in the early Cold War.

#### Brazil, the United States, and the Struggle for Development, 1945-1958

During the Second World War, the Latin American states, with few exceptions, joined the United States in opposing the Axis Powers. Many were spurred to declare their support by guarantees of economic assistance from the United States, promised by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as part of his plan to build a coalition to repel Nazi diplomatic, military, and economic

influence. In the case of Brazil, the United States agreed in September 1940 to provide funding for the government of semi-dictatorial President Getúlio Vargas to construct the Volta Redonda steel mill, a vitally important part of Brazil's plan for national industrialization. In return, Brazil provided the United States with raw materials, access to ports, and an expeditionary force of over 25,000 men that fought alongside the Allies in Italy.<sup>2</sup> Although Brazil was the only country in Latin America to send troops to Europe, other regimes in the hemisphere exchanged resources and bases for loans and participation in the Lend-Lease program.

The Allied victory in 1945 caused the wartime economic system that had emerged in the hemisphere to abruptly collapse. With little need for continued military and material support from Latin America, the United States shifted its attention to other regions in the world. In 1948, the Truman administration announced the European Recovery Program, also known as the Marshall Plan, to funnel billions of dollars to Europe for reconstruction. Similar programs were also unveiled in East Asia. In Latin America, meanwhile, spiraling inflation forced a series of currency devaluations in Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, and Chile, among other countries, from 1948 to 1950.<sup>3</sup> Still, impending economic problems in Latin America were of comparatively little importance to the United States, representing only a "common cold" to Europe's "case of smallpox," at least as U.S. Ambassador to Brazil Herschel Johnson put it in an interview with the *Brazil Herald* in July 1948.<sup>4</sup>

The absence of a Marshall Plan for Latin America reflected the intersections of the United States' increasing attention to the Cold War and its free market ideology.<sup>5</sup> As competition

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<sup>2</sup> Frank D. McCann, "Brazil and World War II: The Forgotten Ally. What Did You Do in the War, Zé Carioca?," *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina Y El Caribe* 6, no. 2 (December 1995), [www.tau.ac.il/eial/VI\\_2/mccann.htm](http://www.tau.ac.il/eial/VI_2/mccann.htm).

<sup>3</sup> Aguilar, *Panamericanism: From Monroe to Present*, 106.

<sup>4</sup> Cited in Stanley E. Hilton, "The United States, Brazil, and the Cold War, 1945-1960: End of the Special Relationship," *The Journal of American History* 68, no. 3 (December 1981): 604.

<sup>5</sup> Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism*, 18.

with the Soviet Union intensified, the United States needed to focus its efforts at combatting communism in those areas that it thought most vulnerable to Soviet power. In the late 1940s, that included Europe and Asia, but not Latin America, which U.S. officials still perceived as squarely within their sphere of influence.<sup>6</sup> According to the United States, the biggest threat to Latin America in the immediate postwar years actually continued to be fascism, and thus U.S. policy in the region was directed toward eliminating the vestiges of pro-Axis sympathy.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, the United States rebuked petitions for greater economic assistance in the region on the grounds that private investment, not direct governmental aid, was the proper method by which the Latin American states should pursue development. If Latin American leaders were serious about improving their countries' economies, they were advised to eliminate regulations and encourage the influx of foreign, and principally North American, capital.

Perhaps the country most concerned with the United States' decision to pivot away from Latin America was Brazil. Since the early 1800s, Brazil and the United States had maintained a "special relationship" of close cooperation, based in part on the shared feeling that, as a result of their unique linguistic and cultural heritages, their interests did not closely align with those of Spanish America. Indeed, lusophone Brazil often served as an informal mediator between the English-speaking United States and the Spanish-speaking countries of Central and South America. At least from the perspective of Brazilian diplomats, however, the special relationship also demanded that the United States would be forthcoming with economic and military assistance. Brazil's contributions to the war against Nazi Germany only compounded those expectations. The announcement of massive European and Asian aid programs without a similar plan for Latin America therefore raised doubts within the Brazilian government as to whether the

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 129.

United States was revoking the special relationship. “If the Marshall Plan reflected the strength of Washington’s commitment to the defense of Europe,” writes Stanley E. Hilton, “in Brazilian eyes it symbolized American disregard for Brazil’s needs and aspirations.”<sup>8</sup> This feeling was only exacerbated by the repeated failures of Brazilian President Eurico Dutra to secure loans and other forms of assistance from the Truman administration.<sup>9</sup>

The 1950 presidential election in Brazil brought to power Getúlio Vargas, the former leader of the authoritarian *Estado Novo* (1937-1945), who had since shed his somewhat dictatorial persona and been reelected as a democratic populist. At the same time, the outbreak of the Korean War prompted the United States to seek Brazilian assistance against North Korea, including perhaps even a small force of Brazilian soldiers. Having led Brazil through the Second World War and the subsequent feeling of abandonment when the United States shifted the bulk of its economic programs to Europe and Asia, Vargas was not enthusiastic about committing Brazil to the war effort in Korea. He did hint that he would be willing to offer Brazil’s support in exchange for the participation of the United States in his ambitious plan for national industrialization and development. During a radio address early in his presidency, Vargas noted that “whoever wants our collaboration must aid us with our needs.”<sup>10</sup> Although Brazil under Vargas would not entirely reject the concept of a special relationship, it would also no longer follow the United States into war without first receiving a guarantee of compensation in the form of capital and materials. Between 1950 and the end of Truman’s second term in January 1953, however, U.S.-Brazilian relations only worsened as both sides failed to reach substantive

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<sup>8</sup> Hilton, “The United States, Brazil, and the Cold War, 1945-1960: End of the Special Relationship,” 604.

<sup>9</sup> Brazil received only \$46 million of its requested \$1 billion in assistance in 1946. An additional \$90 million in 1947 did little to ameliorate tensions. See *Ibid.*, 602–606.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Smith, *Brazil and the United States: Convergence and Divergence* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 135.



agreements on questions of economic and political cooperation. According to Hilton, these failures showed that “the long-standing special relationship had suffered dramatic erosion.”<sup>11</sup>

Dwight D. Eisenhower ran for President of the United States in 1952 on a platform of attacks on the mistakes of the Truman administration, particularly for its failure to maintain close relations with Latin America after World War II. At a campaign speech in New Orleans in October of that year, the Republican candidate accused Truman of having turned the “Good Neighbor Policy” of Franklin Delano Roosevelt into “a poor neighbor policy.”<sup>12</sup> Eisenhower also had begun to view U.S. policy towards Latin America, as well as growing nationalism in the region, within the context of the Cold War and the global threat of international communism. Closer ties, economic and otherwise, between the United States and the Latin American countries would ensure that the red tide would not be allowed to reach the Western Hemisphere and upset U.S. hegemony there.<sup>13</sup> After winning the election in November, it appeared that Eisenhower would enter the Oval Office with a strong commitment to overturning Truman’s hands-off approach to the hemisphere and to rebuilding severed U.S.-Latin American relations.

The tangible results of the commitment to improving ties with Latin America were mixed during Eisenhower’s first years in office. The President did give his support to an expansion in military aid to Latin America, but shipments of arms and supplies were delayed by the U.S. military’s involvement in skirmishes in other parts of the world, such as Indochina, where the colonizing French were fighting against the independence movement of Ho Chi Minh.<sup>14</sup> On the issue of loans, although Eisenhower recognized the importance of exchanging funds for Cold War cooperation, as a fiscal conservative and believer in free markets, he was not interested in

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<sup>11</sup> Hilton, “The United States, Brazil, and the Cold War, 1945-1960: End of the Special Relationship,” 611–612.

<sup>12</sup> Cited in Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism*, 6.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 29–32.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

dramatically increasing U.S. expenditures in Latin America. For example, he reluctantly approved a \$300 million loan to Brazil from the Export-Import Bank only because it had been promised to Brazil in the last days of the Truman administration and Eisenhower felt himself “hooked” into the deal.<sup>15</sup> As it had operated under Truman, Eisenhower’s State Department, now headed by John Foster Dulles, encouraged Latin American governments as much as possible to rely on free trade and deregulation to meet their goals. Milton Eisenhower, the President’s brother and advisor, summarized this policy in his November 1953 report on Latin American economics when he stated that development must occur by way of private capital and that “it must be attracted by the nation desiring the capital,” not by the United States.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, the economic situation in Latin America continued to worsen. Prices of major export goods like sugar, meat, cotton, and tin plummeted during the 1950s. Average per-capita GDP growth in the region fell from 3.5 percent between 1940 and 1950 to 2.2 percent between 1951 and 1955, and continued falling thereafter. Decreased economic activity and export revenues meant that Latin America was losing around \$1.5 billion per year on average by the end of the decade.<sup>17</sup> These circumstances spurred Latin American calls for economic solidarity in bilateral discussions with the United States and in multilateral forums, but the Eisenhower administration was unwilling to consider serious revision of its free-market policies.

The combination of economic upheaval and Eisenhower’s reluctance to provide economic aid contributed to Vargas adopting an even stronger nationalist development policy. The Brazilian President announced in February 1953 that he was establishing a state-owned petroleum corporation, *Petróleo Brasileiro* (Petrobras), to place state control over the extraction and export of Brazil’s oil reserves. Vargas also turned to other countries in Latin America and to

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>17</sup> Aguilar, *Panamericanism: From Monroe to Present*, 106–107.

Europe for financial assistance. Brazil even went so far as to sign economic agreements with several countries that formed part of the Soviet bloc, a decision that the U.S. government eyed with much suspicion. However, these moves toward an independent (not aligned with the United States or with the Soviet Union) foreign policy did not signify that Brazil had entirely abandoned its close relationship with the United States. The Brazilian delegation, for example, still sided with Dulles to vote to pass the anticommunist declaration at the Caracas Conference in 1954.<sup>18</sup>

After finding himself mired in political scandals and without the support of the military, Vargas committed suicide by shooting himself in the chest in the presidential palace in Rio de Janeiro on August 24, 1954. He left a handwritten suicide note in which he decried the enemies of his government for having acted without consideration of the welfare of the Brazilian people, as well as a second, typed note defending his nationalist program and blaming the subversive activities of “international groups” against his presidency.<sup>19</sup> In the aftermath of Vargas’s death, a caretaker government under Vice President João Fernandes Campos Café Filho came to power. Café Filho maintained U.S.-Brazilian relations much as they had been under Vargas.<sup>20</sup> When the normally-scheduled presidential elections were held in 1955, the winner by a very small margin was Juscelino Kubitschek, a physician and former governor of the state of Minas Gerais who had campaigned on the promise of spurring Brazil’s development forward “fifty years in five.”

The new President of Brazil quickly proved himself to be a capable politician, combining a skillful maneuvering of the traditional political patronage system with an ambitious modernization program and highly enthusiastic appeals to the Brazilian people for support. Sheldon Maram describes Kubitschek’s reliance on resonant words and symbols to repeatedly

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<sup>18</sup> W. Michael Weis, *Cold Warriors & Coups D’Etat: Brazilian-American Relations, 1945-1964* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), 72–79.

<sup>19</sup> Getúlio Vargas, “As Duas Cartas de Getúlio Vargas,” 1954, [www2.uol.com.br/historiaviva/artigos/as\\_duas\\_cartas\\_de\\_getulio\\_vargas.html](http://www2.uol.com.br/historiaviva/artigos/as_duas_cartas_de_getulio_vargas.html).

<sup>20</sup> Hilton, “The United States, Brazil, and the Cold War, 1945-1960: End of the Special Relationship,” 616.

justify his administration and its development goals to the public as a “politics of exuberance.”<sup>21</sup> This rhetoric was backed by a series of concrete actions to promote Brazilian development. Among the most notable were the *Programa de metas* (Target Plan), a list of development goals for the next five years, and a National Development Council to oversee that plan.<sup>22</sup> Preferring immediate results to long-term, gradual actions, Kubitschek also led the government to finance massive public projects, including the new capital of Brasília in the country’s interior, which increased the rate of inflation dramatically. Overall, during his presidency, Brazil experienced an average GDP growth of seven percent, a significant improvement over the 6.1 percent annual average growth from 1947 to 1955, and the contribution of industry to GDP rose dramatically.<sup>23</sup>

In the international sphere, Kubitschek was an anticommunist. His foreign policy often aligned with the United States, particularly with regards to anti-Soviet measures in the United Nations.<sup>24</sup> Still, he followed in the footsteps of Vargas in his willingness to implement international policies that promoted Brazilian industrialization and development, even at the cost of U.S. support. When U.S. Vice President Richard Nixon visited Brazil for Kubitschek’s inauguration and spoke about the importance of steadfastly combatting communism, Kubitschek replied that Brazil would need \$1.2 billion in capital to achieve a level of development at which radical leftism would cease to be an attractive option.<sup>25</sup> The Brazilian President also desired to build closer ties with the Latin American republics so as to present a front of underdeveloped countries in the hemisphere seeking financial assistance from the United States.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Sheldon Maram, “Juscelino Kubitschek and the Politics of Exuberance, 1956-1961,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 27, no. 1 (Summer 1990): 33.

<sup>22</sup> Robert J. Alexander, *Juscelino Kubitschek and the Development of Brazil*, Ohio University Monographs in International Studies, Latin America Series 16 (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1991), 175.

<sup>23</sup> Maram, “Juscelino Kubitschek and the Politics of Exuberance, 1956-1961,” 33–34.

<sup>24</sup> Joseph Smith, *Brazil and the United States: Convergence and Divergence*, 143.

<sup>25</sup> Hilton, “The United States, Brazil, and the Cold War, 1945-1960: End of the Special Relationship,” 618.

<sup>26</sup> Alexander, *Juscelino Kubitschek and the Development of Brazil*, 280.

As with previous Brazilian governments, the Kubitschek administration learned quickly that the United States was not enthusiastic about contributing the levels of aid required for the *Programa de metas* to be fully implemented. A particular point of contention was Kubitschek's lax spending policy, which drew calls for austerity from lending institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the IBRD. Because industrialization required the importation on a mass scale of oil and machinery, by the beginning of 1958 Brazil had developed a one billion dollar external debt and was projected to experience a trade deficit of \$250 to \$350 million for the year.<sup>27</sup> While the U.S. government supported these institutions' recommendations for measures like currency devaluations and wage controls, Kubitschek was determined to maintain his industrialization program moving forward.<sup>28</sup> In mid-1958, as Kubitschek sought methods to induce the United States to provide greater economic assistance in the hemisphere and the U.S. government reiterated to Kubitschek the importance of a strong anticommunist government in Brazil, it appeared that U.S.-Brazilian relations had once again reached a diplomatic impasse.

#### The Birth of Operation Pan America, May - December 1958

A unique opportunity to break the impasse presented itself to the Brazilian government after U.S. Vice President Richard Nixon's visit to South America in May 1958. As Nixon traveled across the region, he found increasing evidence of widespread anti-American sentiment, from a demonstration against U.S. imperialism in Uruguay to an angry crowd of stone-throwing students in Peru. In Caracas, Venezuela, where the U.S.-backed conservative dictator Marcos Pérez Jiménez had stepped down only months earlier, protestors blocked Nixon's motorcade from the airport to the city, while spitting, hurling rocks, and attempting to overturn his car.

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<sup>27</sup> Weis, *Cold Warriors & Coups D'Etat: Brazilian-American Relations, 1945-1964*, 111.

<sup>28</sup> Joseph Smith, *Brazil and the United States: Convergence and Divergence*, 144.

Officials of the U.S. government immediately concluded that the protests were evidence of the increasing influence of communism in Latin America. Nixon himself stated that there was “no doubt that the riots were Communist-planned, Communist-led, and Communist-controlled.”<sup>29</sup>

The Vice President’s unwelcome reception in South America shook the Eisenhower administration and elevated the voices of a group of officials in the State Department who had argued for some time that continued U.S. resistance to economic cooperation with Latin America threatened its Cold War policy. One of the most significant developments to come out of the ideas of this group was the reversal of the U.S. position on an intraregional development bank.<sup>30</sup> After a series of internal discussions, the administration decided that promoting Latin American development through such an institution would help win the support of disgruntled leaders and turn the interest of the masses away from leftist political and economic ideologies.

At the same time, Kubitschek astutely recognized that the revelation of anti-American sentiment, and perhaps also of communist penetration, in the hemisphere would make the United States more willing to compromise on its previously steadfast position on economic assistance. In May 1958, he sent a letter to President Eisenhower to discuss the Nixon fiasco and his increasing conviction that “the ideal of Pan American unity has suffered serious impairment.” In light of that point, Kubitschek called for the inter-American community “to undertake jointly a thorough review of the policy of mutual understanding on this Hemisphere and to conduct a comprehensive re-appraisal of the proceedings already in motion for the furtherance of Pan American ideals in all their aspects and implications.” Such a process would override the

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<sup>29</sup> Cited in Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 140.

<sup>30</sup> For more information on the disagreements within the Eisenhower administration over using economic cooperation to advance U.S. interests in Latin America, see Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism*, 109–115.

“unpleasant memory of the ordeal undergone by Vice President Nixon.”<sup>31</sup> Kubitschek strategically combined an emotional appeal to the still raw feelings surrounding Nixon’s South America trip with the discourse of Pan Americanism in order to articulate a new vision of hemispheric solidarity that would presumably reduce anti-American sentiment and prevent another publicity disaster. He did not specify how this new form of Pan Americanism would function practically, presumably because to press immediately the issue of U.S.-financed economic development would risk alienating the Eisenhower administration.

Eisenhower’s response, which he ordered Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Roy Rubottom to hand deliver to Kubitschek in Rio de Janeiro, was one of tentative approval, also framed with Pan American rhetoric. The President praised Kubitschek’s call for Brazil and the United States to work together “on measures that would produce throughout the continent a reaffirmation of devotion to Pan Americanism.”<sup>32</sup> Unlike Kubitschek, Eisenhower did offer one area in which he thought hemispheric relations could be improved: implementation of the anticommunist Declaration of Solidarity approved at the Caracas Conference in 1954. He also promised that the proposal would be discussed further upon Secretary of State Dulles’s visit to Brazil in August. Eisenhower was willing to accept a reworking of Pan Americanism, provided that the reforms would strengthen action against communism. From early on, he demonstrated his desire to set Kubitschek’s proposal within the context of the Cold War.

By July, Kubitschek had given a name to his program, Operation Pan America, and had begun to present it to parties beyond the Brazilian and U.S. governments, framing it as a recalibration of hemispheric relations to meet the economic needs of Latin America. Speaking

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<sup>31</sup> Juscelino Kubitschek, “Letter to the President of the United States from the President of Brazil” (The White House Press Office, June 6, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>32</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Letter from the President of the United States to the President of the United States of Brazil” (The White House Press Office, June 10, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

before the American ambassadors stationed in Brazil, he said that he intended OPA to be a cooperative effort to improve the underdeveloped economies of South and Central America. He also hinted that he would support the calling of a special meeting of the presidents of the Americas to discuss OPA. In an interview with *The New York Times* on July 6, he said that, while Pan Americanism was “an ideal, almost perfect, construct for political and juridical affairs,” there was still much to be done to improve its economic dimensions.<sup>33</sup> Kubitschek thus constructed a historical narrative of Pan Americanism as a generally successful, but incomplete, project of hemispheric solidarity. OPA was the natural next step in the development of Pan Americanism as it moved beyond the political and juridical spheres in which it already accomplished much. This public statement slightly contradicted the message Kubitschek had personally conveyed to Eisenhower about the decay of Pan Americanism, but both ultimately expressed the same idea that Pan Americanism was important and needed to be revitalized.

Similarly to Kubitschek, Brazilian officials did not provide any details as to OPA’s methods or goals at this early stage, preferring to focus on the program’s rhetoric. In an interview with the Brazilian newspaper *Correio da Manhã*, Foreign Minister Negrão de Lima noted simply that Operation Pan America had arisen from Kubitschek’s growing anxiety about the conflict between the Soviet bloc and the capitalist countries. Development of Latin American economies was, according to Negrão de Lima, “an imperative of Western political strategy” that had to be addressed if the democratic West was to win out over the communist East.<sup>34</sup> The Kubitschek government accepted and reinforced the United States’ framing of Operation Pan America as a weapon of the Cold War, even before it had specified the substance of the program. This is turn

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<sup>33</sup> “*O pan-americanismo é uma construção ideal, quase perfeita, sob os aspectos político e jurídico.*” “Entrevista do Presidente Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira ao *New York Times*, 6 jul. 1958” in *Cadernos Do CHDD*, 10 (Brasília: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, 2007), 219–223.

<sup>34</sup> “Telegram 58 from Rio de Janeiro to the Secretary of State” (State Department, July 13, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.



validated the conception of Pan Americanism as principally a program of collective defense against communism, even if this was not Kubitschek's primary concern. Indeed, the decision to accept Cold War framing for OPA probably reflected Kubitschek's own anticommunist beliefs to a limited extent, but more importantly was derived from recognition that Operation Pan America could not be successful without the backing of the United States, and that the best way to win that country's support was to discuss OPA in a language that U.S. officials would understand.

The Brazilian government finally offered Eisenhower and the U.S. State Department some specificity for Operation Pan America in the form of an aide memoire in late July. The official letter reiterated the previous messaging that OPA was a Cold War program to help the West compete against the Soviets. It then affirmed that "the inadequacy of economic cooperation is the main factor impairing inter-American relations today," thereby positing underdevelopment as a cause both of Nixon's treatment during the South America trip and of the growing appeal of communism in the hemisphere. To overcome that inadequacy, the aide memoire recommended that the American states adopt measures to bolster investments in economically-depressed areas, improve technical assistance programs, control fluctuations in commodity prices, and increase the amount of money that international lending institutions could provide to Latin American governments.<sup>35</sup> This was not a radical economic proposal, but it did indirectly confront the United States for its prior failures to induce the IMF and IBRD to offer loans for Brazil and other Latin American countries at adequate levels for development.

On August 4, Secretary of State Dulles arrived in Rio de Janeiro, ostensibly to consult with members of the Brazilian government about Operation Pan America and other issues of importance for U.S.-Brazilian relations. Briefing documents prepared for Dulles by State

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<sup>35</sup> "Aide Memoire on Operation Pan America" (Brazilian Government, July 25, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

Department officials demonstrate, however, that one of the primary purposes of the trip was to receive a “firm commitment” from Kubitschek that he would do more to eliminate communist influences in his country and spread anticommunist doctrine through the hemisphere.<sup>36</sup> Kubitschek had, until that point, not severely repressed the Brazilian Communist Party, even though it was technically illegal. On the issue of Latin American petitions for greater U.S. economic assistance, one memo noted that “the United States feels that much more could be done by Latin America on its own” to secure the foreign and domestic capital necessary for development.<sup>37</sup> Dulles arrived in Rio with Eisenhower’s tacit support for incorporating economic cooperation into Pan Americanism under the OPA banner, but he was not prepared to break with the administration’s policy of economic self-help. His approval of Operation Pan America was entirely contingent on Brazilian acceptance of further anticommunist measures.

The contrast between U.S. and Brazilian priorities for Pan Americanism resulted in disagreement in meetings between representatives of the two governments. In a conversation between Kubitschek and Dulles, the Brazilian President suggested once again that underdevelopment was the root of many of the political problems in Latin America, to which Dulles replied that the suggestion that communist penetration of the hemisphere was a result of underdevelopment was a dramatic oversimplification and that communism needed to be combatted “on all fronts and by all means.”<sup>38</sup> In another discussion the following day, Dulles and Kubitschek argued over whether to include specific references to communism and to the Caracas anticommunist resolution in a joint communiqué on Operation Pan America. While Dulles strongly favored the inclusion, Kubitschek suggested that mentioning the Caracas Conference

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<sup>36</sup> “Secretary’s Visit: Anti-Communist and Anti-Subversive Measures” (State Department, August 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>37</sup> “Secretary’s Visit: United States Financial Relations with Latin America” (State Department, August 1958).

<sup>38</sup> “Secretary’s Visit: Memorandum of Conversation on ‘Operation Pan-America’” (State Department, August 5, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

alongside “the new Pan Americanism could promote trouble.”<sup>39</sup> He instead recommended a paragraph connecting Operation Pan America to the shared values of the inter-American community. Ultimately, Dulles agreed to omit mention of the Caracas resolution but to include a line that described Pan American values as being under attack by communism, while Kubitschek promised that the anticommunist rhetoric of OPA could be enhanced once the Spanish American countries had expressed their support for it.<sup>40</sup>

The final text of the Declaration of Brasília, signed by the two countries at the site of the new Brazilian capital, declared that Brazil and the United States had come to agreement that, because Latin America had “an important role to play among the nations of the world,” they must cooperatively pursue policies to simultaneously “overcome the problems of underdevelopment” and defend the “values which constitute the heritage of Western civilization and the culture and the spirit and soul of the Americas.”<sup>41</sup> Kubitschek had succeeded in getting the United States to declare publicly its support for OPA as a revitalization of a failing Pan Americanism, but he did so without significantly altering the stated U.S. position on developmental aid and with the further formalization of OPA’s anticommunist character. At the same time, the debates between Dulles and Kubitschek leading up to the communiqué’s release had revealed a serious disconnect between the Pan American visions of the two men. Unlike Dulles, Kubitschek saw the anticommunist rhetoric of OPA as only secondary to the program’s goal to bolster Latin American development. His “new Pan Americanism” might include elements of anticommunism, but if so, they were more or less incidental to the economic aspects.

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<sup>39</sup> “Secretary’s Visit: Discussion of Joint Communique on Brazil-US Discussions of ‘Operation Pan-America’” (State Department, August 6, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> “Text of Joint Dulles-Kubitschek Communique” (State Department, August 6, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

On August 9, while Dulles and Kubitschek were engaged in negotiations on the Declaration of Brasília, Itamaraty, the Brazilian Foreign Ministry, released a new aide memoire on Operation Pan America to the American states. This message once again positioned OPA as a dual solution to Latin American underdevelopment and the Soviet threat. In fact, the aide memoire suggested that “From many standpoints and in all of its implications, the battle of the West *is* the battle for development” [emphasis added].<sup>42</sup> The Brazilian government also made specific reference to the existence of the Marshall Plan and reciprocal economic assistance treaties elsewhere. As for corrective measures, the aide memoire called for a special Committee of the 21 American republics to be formed to discuss OPA, although it did not explain whether this committee would exist inside or outside of the formal mechanisms of the OAS.<sup>43</sup>

Following his meeting with Dulles, Kubitschek also set to work actively recruiting Latin American support. In addition to speeches and interviews, he also wrote personally to a number of heads of state across the hemisphere outlining in broad strokes the purposes of OPA. For the most part, the Latin American response was positive, with praise given to the focus on economic issues and, in some cases, its Cold War orientation. For example, Alfredo Stroessner, the anticommunist dictator of Paraguay, wrote a letter to Eisenhower pledging his country’s “fullest assistance and cooperation” to Operation Pan America as a way to “strengthen international security and peace in the anti-Communist struggle in which Paraguay is engaged.”<sup>44</sup>

The fiercest opposition to Operation Pan America came from the government of Mexico, which criticized Kubitschek for attempting to build the program outside of the normal channels of the OAS with his proposals for an emergency meeting of the chiefs of state and for a special

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<sup>42</sup> “An Aide Mémoire Sent by the Government of Brazil to Governments of Other American States, August 9, 1958” (Fordham University, 1958), Internet Modern History Sourcebook.

<sup>43</sup> De Mello e Silva, *A Política Externa de JK: Operação Pan-Americana*, 22–23.

<sup>44</sup> Alfredo Stroessner, “Message from Paraguayan President to Eisenhower” (State Department, September 24, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

committee of the 21 American nations. Foreign Minister Padilla Nervo also expressed his reluctance to allow a Brazilian President to become the spokesperson for Mexico and other Spanish American countries in negotiating economic policy with the United States.<sup>45</sup> Because Mexico had not been consulted prior to the meeting between Dulles and Kubitschek in Brazil, Operation Pan America appeared to Padilla Nervo to be taking shape as a predominantly bilateral program with hemispheric implications but limited Spanish American input.<sup>46</sup> Deeply concerned by the potential effects of the Mexican government's negative opinion on the future viability of OPA, Kubitschek dispatched a former Ambassador to Mexico City to meet with officials and to try to win their support.<sup>47</sup> The Brazilian government also clarified publicly and privately that it had not meant to bypass the OAS but rather to, as paraphrased by a State Department official, "avoid OPA becoming enmeshed in machinery which over the years had not been productive of dynamic results."<sup>48</sup> As a sign of good will, Kubitschek offered to accept the Mexican, Colombian, and U.S.-supported proposal of an informal meeting of American Foreign Ministers to discuss OPA, as opposed to his original idea for a meeting of presidents.

The Mexican reaction to OPA demonstrates the complexities of the Latin American countries' relationships to Pan Americanism and to each other in the 1950s. Mexico's support for routing OPA through the formal inter-American system did not signify its approval of the unrivaled power of the United States or its rejection of development as a significant problem. Indeed, Mexican diplomats had long argued for many of the measures Kubitschek proposed

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<sup>45</sup> "Telegram 327 from Mexico City to Secretary of State" (State Department, August 8, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>46</sup> "Operation Pan America: Announcement of Secretary's Invitation to Foreign Ministers (Mexico FSD 246)" (State Department, September 8, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>47</sup> "Telegram 311 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State" (State Department, August 27, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>48</sup> "Telegram 313 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State" (State Department, August 28, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

under Operation Pan America.<sup>49</sup> It reflected instead a degree of discomfort with allowing Brazil to use U.S. support for OPA to take on a position of leadership in the inter-American system, a position to which the independent-minded Mexican government had also long aspired, but from which it had been blocked by the diplomatic power of the United States. Mexico's behavior at the Caracas Conference was one example of these failed attempts to stake out a position of authority. Having Kubitschek in control of shaping a new Pan Americanism for the hemisphere was not necessarily any more desirable to Mexico than having U.S. officials in charge. A sense of Latin American solidarity in opposing U.S. conceptions of Pan Americanism, if once existed, was not necessarily as strong as the desire of each country to see itself as a regional leader.

Although Mexico perhaps overstated the extent to which Operation Pan America was meant as a political move to position Kubitschek as leader of Latin America, its critique pointed to the important note that the reasons for Brazil launching OPA were primarily personal and domestic, not regional. For one, Brazil's objective for OPA was certainly in large part to secure U.S. government assistance and looser lending restrictions from international financial institutions to ensure that the *Programa de metas* would continue unhindered. In framing OPA as a hemispheric program, Kubitschek had adopted a very different strategy than Dutra or Vargas to bring foreign capital for industrialization to Brazil, but the ultimate economic goal was similar. Additionally, as Alexandra de Mello e Silva argues, Kubitschek's decision to win the support of the hemispheric community before supplying OPA with concrete details demonstrates that Kubitschek intended to make OPA a multilateral initiative.<sup>50</sup> The Brazilian President was very interested in building relations with other Latin American countries in light of the weakening special relationship with the United States. At the same time, there was always an element of

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<sup>49</sup> For example, see Ezequiel Padilla, "The Meaning of Pan-Americanism," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1954, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/71085/ezequiel-padilla/the-meaning-of-pan-americanism>.

<sup>50</sup> De Mello e Silva, *A Política Externa de JK: Operação Pan-Americana*, 19.

pomp to Kubitschek's presentation of OPA, from the original letter to Eisenhower to his interview with *The New York Times*, which belied that he was indeed preoccupied with his role as leader of the initiative. As we shall see, Kubitschek would only become more concerned with cultivating his image as the founder of OPA and the spiritual guide of economic Pan Americanism as OPA became the target of various attempts at appropriation.

In any case, Operation Pan America continued to surge ahead in September 1958. Early that month, Dulles issued a formal invitation to the Foreign Ministers of the Latin American countries, asking that they travel to Washington, D.C., to discuss problems of shared interest. On September 22, a day before the meeting was scheduled to begin, Dulles spoke with members of the Brazilian delegation. Those present included Foreign Minister Negrão de Lima; Augusto Schmidt, a Brazilian journalist and poet who served as a close adviser to Kubitschek on Brazilian foreign policy and had been instrumental in crafting Operation Pan America; and João Carlos Muniz, a former Brazilian Ambassador to the United States. Muniz told Dulles bluntly that Brazil's publicizing of OPA had won it much support across the hemisphere, and that Latin Americans therefore expected the United States to follow through on its promise to jumpstart hemispheric economic agreements. Failure to do so would "prove such a blow to inter-American relations as to shake them to their foundations."<sup>51</sup> Schmidt added that previous unsuccessful attempts at building economic solidarity had weakened the position of the United States vis-à-vis Latin America, and indicated that Operation Pan America might serve as a way of recovering U.S. standing in the hemisphere. Similarly to Kubitschek, Schmidt appealed to a historical narrative of Pan Americanism in which the United States' continual failure to build economic cooperation posed serious problems for overall hemispheric solidarity.

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<sup>51</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation on Operation Pan America" (State Department, September 22, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

On September 23, Dulles spoke to open the meeting of the Foreign Ministers. The Secretary's speech was a forceful justification of the United States' policy in East Asia and its support of Taiwan in the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis. According to Dulles, any sort of retreat from the communist threat in East Asia would mean catastrophe for the region, as well as for Latin America.<sup>52</sup> Dulles's words clearly set the tone for the meeting: Operation Pan America's plan to introduce economic cooperation into Pan Americanism would be discussed against the backdrop of U.S. leadership in the global struggle against communism. Negrão de Lima likewise reminded the Foreign Ministers in his address that, while OPA was intended as a dramatic "re-evaluation" of Pan Americanism and reorientation of the hemisphere toward the problem of underdevelopment, the Brazilian government envisioned underdevelopment "as a measure of strategic significance to our collective security... and not merely as a practical consequence of the generous and fraternal sentiments of some countries towards others."<sup>53</sup> Once again, the Brazilian government articulated a vision of Pan Americanism that more or less conformed to the U.S. expectation of the continued anticommunist orientation of the hemisphere.

The Foreign Ministers ultimately agreed on a deal in which a special OAS Committee of the 21 American republics would be established for the purpose of formulating measures to meet OPA's goals. While Kubitschek received official approval of Operation Pan America and a committee specifically designed to ensure the program's successful implementation, the Mexican government managed to contain OPA within formal inter-American channels. The Ministers also called for the OAS to proceed as quickly as possible with the creation of an inter-American economic development institution, given special impetus now that the United States had

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<sup>52</sup> John Foster Dulles, "Remarks of Secretary Dulles, Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Pan-American States" (State Department, September 23, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>53</sup> Francisco Negrão de Lima, "Statement by His Excellency Francisco Negrão de Lima, Minister of External Relations of Brazil before the Informal Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the American Republics" (State Department, September 23, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.



announced its change of position to support the development bank. These steps were to be taken before the Eleventh Inter-American Conference scheduled for the following year in Quito, Ecuador.<sup>54</sup> A circular telegram sent out from the State Department to Embassies in Latin America called the meeting a “definite success” for the United States.<sup>55</sup>

During the summer of 1958, the Brazilian government had presented Operation Pan America as a plan to enhance efforts at economic solidarity within Pan Americanism, as well as a strategy to foster greater cooperation between Latin America and the United States in their shared fight against communism. As the Committee of 21 convened for its first meeting in November, however, the narrative of Pan Americanism as articulated through Operation Pan America became more complex. Kubitschek had appointed Augusto Schmidt to lead the Brazilian delegation to the meeting, while Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs Thomas Mann headed the U.S. team. In early sessions, Mann and Schmidt voiced different opinions on the appropriate next steps for OPA. While Mann favored immediate discussion of specific economic policies that could be implemented in the hemisphere to promote development, Schmidt argued that it was first necessary to build consensus on a new political theory of inter-American affairs that would ensure that subsequent policies could be implemented successfully. Resolutions and studies on economic issues would be meaningless, Schmidt observed in his speech before the Committee on November 17, without “a cause, a banner, a principle - perhaps a common fear or intuition -” that could imbue those decisions with meaning and longevity.<sup>56</sup> In essence, the diplomats disagreed on whether OPA should operate

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<sup>54</sup> “Communique of the Informal Meeting of American Foreign Ministers, Washington, D.C.” (State Department, September 24, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>55</sup> “Circular Telegram 331” (State Department, September 25, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>56</sup> “*uma causa, uma bandeira, um princípio - quiçá um temor comum ou uma intuição*” “Discurso do Senhor Augusto Frederico Schmidt, Chefe da Delegação do Brasil à OEA, pronunciado na sessão inaugural do primeiro período de sessões da Comissão dos 21 (17 nov. 1958)” in *Cadernos Do CHDD*, 247.

within the U.S. conception of Pan Americanism as primarily a system of collective security, or should entail a complete reimagining of the values underpinning the hemispheric community.

Schmidt's behavior in the following days demonstrated his determination to carve out a more expansive and aggressive space for Operation Pan America within the discourse of Pan Americanism. Most blunt was his declaration on November 25 that the communist economies would soon reach levels of per capita income higher than those in the West, and that the failure of the United States to adopt measures for economic development in Latin America would force Brazil and other countries in the hemisphere to seek closer relations with the Soviet bloc.<sup>57</sup> Although still discussed within the context of the Cold War, Schmidt's suggestion that Latin America would have to turn to the Soviets for economic support was substantively different from previous explanations of Operation Pan America. OPA was no longer about North Americans and Latin Americans coming together to build through economic cooperation a strong system of collective defense, but rather about pressuring the United States to change its practice of Pan Americanism or risk losing the ideological and material support of its "backyard."

Kubitschek claimed following the speech that he was not informed of what Schmidt would say. Still, the President himself delivered an address at the National War College of Brazil on November 27, only two days after Schmidt's announcement, in which he reiterated that only an immediate change in U.S. economic policy toward Latin America would keep the Latin American countries from exploring trade with communist nations.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, the Brazilian government had already demonstrated publicly that it was considering such relations. In fact, at the time of Kubitschek's discourse at the War College, the Brazilian Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Assis Chateaubriand, was in Prague to investigate the potential for commercial

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<sup>57</sup> De Mello e Silva, *A Política Externa de JK: Operação Pan-Americana*, 28.

<sup>58</sup> "Telegram 739 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State" (State Department, November 27, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

relations.<sup>59</sup> Schmidt was certainly not breaking rank in threatening the United States over its mixed support for the Brazilian vision of OPA. It seems that both he and President Kubitschek had consciously adopted this aggressive approach, perhaps as a calculated decision to win greater U.S. support for OPA by presenting a revision of Pan Americanism as absolutely necessary.

Over the course of the second half of 1958, then, Operation Pan America was born as Kubitschek's idea for closer economic relations in the hemisphere, packaged to the United States as an anticommunist weapon of the Cold War, institutionalized in a Special Committee of 21 through the Organization of American States, debated as a primarily political or economic program, and finally reframed as the United States' last hope of keeping Latin America allied with the First World. Although conceptions of Operation Pan America had changed dramatically during its first six months, every method of framing the Brazilian government had employed maintained the central idea that Pan Americanism could only be truly successful if it included economic solidarity. Each frame was also designed to attract the interest and attention of the United States, whether through sympathy or coercion. As the year came to a close, the Brazilian government had positioned Operation Pan America as a powerful appeal to the United States to recognize economic assistance as part of its Pan American obligation to the hemisphere, but also risked losing the support of the very government Kubitschek had initially sought out.

#### Operation Pan America and the Cuban Revolution, 1959

The year 1959 opened with three developments that would have significant impact on the course of Operation Pan America. First, the Brazilian government further increased the scope of the program and the pressure on the United States to accept it. During a series of speeches and

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<sup>59</sup> "Telegram 727 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State" (State Department, November 26, 1958), Record Group 59, National Archives.

interviews to mark the New Year, Kubitschek lauded the success of the Committee of 21 meeting the previous month and called for a comprehensive inter-American economic treaty that would make OPA's achievements official. This treaty would be signed by the Presidents of the American states at a special assembly held concurrently with the Eleventh Inter-American Conference in Quito, now rescheduled for 1960. Officials from the U.S. Embassy in Rio de Janeiro remarked that Kubitschek had "resumed his policy of dramatizing OPA,"<sup>60</sup> but this was more than simple dramatization. After having jettisoned some of the loftier goals of OPA in its early stages, Kubitschek had become re-energized to push for his vision of a full realignment of Pan Americanism along economic dimensions.

Representatives of the Brazilian government also began to express candidly that they believed the United States was not being supportive enough of Operation Pan America. Kubitschek sent a message to the U.S. government in February expressing his concern that its representatives serving on the special OPA Working Group that had been created after the Committee of 21 meeting the previous year were "unable to contribute effectively to the work probably due to a lack of authorization." The slow progress of the Working Group was, he alleged, directly attributable to "this extremely cautious attitude."<sup>61</sup> Along similar lines, Brazil announced that it was planning a special Inter-American Student Congress to discuss methods to strengthen the trajectory of OPA. Speaking before a group of university students in early March, Brazilian Ambassador to the United Nations Oswaldo Aranha suggested that vestiges of the "imperialism and colonialism" in the United States were causing OPA to fail and that the Student

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<sup>60</sup> "Telegram 901 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State" (State Department, January 8, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>61</sup> "Memorandum" (Brazilian Government, February 19, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

Congress was necessary to build strong Latin American support so as to “force” a change in the program’s status.<sup>62</sup>

As Brazilian rhetoric around OPA became more aggressive, the U.S. government’s opinions of the program and of the Kubitschek administration grew increasingly negative. In a telegram entitled “New Look in Brazil’s Conduct of Inter-American Affairs,” diplomats from the U.S. Embassy in Rio de Janeiro declared to State Department officials that while Brazil had once been a “balance wheel between the more vociferous demands of the Spanish American countries and the conservative positions of the US,” Brazil had now “assumed, as part of her bid for leadership in the hemisphere with OPA, the mantle of Chief Prosecutor in a mock trial of the US as principally responsible for the woes of the other American republics.”<sup>63</sup> The blame for this shift in policy was placed on Schmidt, Aranha, Assis Chateaubriand, and, of course, Kubitschek. The United States argued that it was Brazil who had abandoned the special relationship between them. Operation Pan America was understood as an outcome of Kubitschek’s spurning of the traditional Brazilian position of mediator in the inter-American system.

Second, and in spite of these signs of worsening relations, the Working Group on OPA made progress on at least one issue of major significance for Latin American countries: the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). From January to April, U.S. and Latin American representatives in the Working Group met regularly to negotiate the details of the Bank, from funding sources to loan types. The Brazilian government took on a leadership role in these discussions, in particular pushing the United States to agree to a greater amount of initial capital. Ultimately, the Working Group reached a compromise for a fund of US\$1 billion from which

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<sup>62</sup> “Telegram 1188 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State” (State Department, March 10, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>63</sup> “New Look in Brazil’s Conduct of Inter-American Affairs” (State Department, January 30, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

loans could be made to Latin American countries for development projects beginning in 1960.<sup>64</sup> The agreement on the IADB marked a watershed moment for economic Pan Americanism and a significant victory for those who had argued in favor of greater U.S. assistance in the development of the hemisphere. It was not, however, the tremendous achievement of Operation Pan America for which Kubitschek had been hoping. Although OPA did provide the forum in which the hemispheric community could reach a plan, the Eisenhower administration had, as noted above, changed its position on the bank in the immediate aftermath of Nixon's trip.

The third major development was not in Brazil or the United States, but in Cuba. On January 1, 1959, the revolutionary movement led by Fidel Castro triumphed over the regime of President Fulgencio Batista, who fled into exile abroad. The first several months of the Cuban Revolution saw dramatic reforms in all areas of political, economic, and social life on the island. There were, however, many unknowns in the early days of 1959, including the political direction in which Castro would lead the Cuban people and what the anti-imperialist leader's relationship would be with the other heads of state in the hemisphere, particularly President Eisenhower. The Cuban Revolution did not immediately impinge on the progress of OPA, but as the government radicalized and developed closer ties with the Soviet Union throughout 1959 and 1960, it would come to shape the discussion and success of the program.

These three factors converged in late April and early May 1959 at the meeting of the Committee of 21 in Buenos Aires. Kubitschek once again appointed Augusto Schmidt to lead the Brazilian delegation, while the fiscally conservative Secretary of the Treasury Robert Bernard Anderson, a close advisor to President Eisenhower, headed the U.S. delegation.<sup>65</sup> The biggest surprise came, however, with the announcement that Fidel Castro would postpone his goodwill

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<sup>64</sup> De Mello e Silva, *A Política Externa de JK: Operação Pan-Americana*, 30.

<sup>65</sup> "Telegram 1357 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State" (State Department, April 7, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

tour of South America to attend the conference, and that he planned to address the assembly directly. After meeting with representatives of the Cuban government about the meeting, Schmidt expressed concern to Kubitschek that Castro's presence would cause an "enormous popular repercussion" owing to his larger-than-life persona.<sup>66</sup>

The first few days of the conference were for the most part uneventful. Schmidt happily informed Kubitschek that all of the Latin American speakers had specifically mentioned the Brazilian President and Operation Pan America, and that all were in agreement that "a new era in inter-American relations" was beginning.<sup>67</sup> The widespread support demonstrated to Schmidt that "the spirit of OPA is becoming more and more rooted in the American countries" and would soon become the foundation of all conversations about the hemisphere's political and economic problems.<sup>68</sup> In his own speech, Schmidt once again drew on the rhetoric of the growing economic might of the Soviet bloc as a threat to the hemisphere that could only be overcome through economic Pan Americanism.<sup>69</sup> The U.S. delegation, although offering little in the way of creativity or enthusiasm in Schmidt's opinion, did express its formal support for the recommendations that the Working Group had put forward before the meeting.<sup>70</sup> Thus, the opening sessions of the Committee of 21 revealed an emerging consensus around using Operation Pan America as a rhetorical device to signal the shifting priorities of Pan Americanism, as well as general agreement as to how new economic priorities would be translated into concrete measures to promote development.

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<sup>66</sup> "libertação democrática"; "enorme repercussão popular" "AHI, 77/04/12, Telegrama, 27 abr. 1959" *Cadernos Do CHDD*, 292–293.

<sup>67</sup> "uma nova era nas relações interamericanas" "AHI, 77/04/12, Telegrama, 30 abr. 1959" *Cadernos Do CHDD*, 293–294.

<sup>68</sup> "o espírito da OPA torna-se cada vez mais arraigado nos países americanos" *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> "Brazil Urges U.S. Hurry Aid to Latins," *The New York Times*, April 30, 1959.

<sup>70</sup> "AHI, 77/04/12, Telegrama, 30 abr. 1959" *Cadernos Do CHDD*, 293–294.

On May 2, Fidel Castro rose to speak as head of the Cuban delegation. Eschewing a pre-written speech, Castro delivered an 85-minute address on the problems facing the hemispheric community and potential ways to surmount them. He began by explicitly affirming Cuba's support for "the happy initiative of the illustrious President of Brazil" and the importance of successful implementation of Operation Pan America.<sup>71</sup> Castro identified that a significant obstacle to advancing OPA through international conferences like the meeting of the Committee of 21 was that these conferences were often disconnected from the real needs of the people, and therefore served as "mere oratory tournaments" instead of workshops for effective policy.<sup>72</sup> He urged the delegates to recognize this fact and to dedicate themselves to representing faithfully their national interests in constructive discussions of economic issues. As an outsider in the diplomatic circles of the inter-American system, Castro critiqued the system's tendency to fail to connect the rhetoric of Pan Americanism with tangible measures of hemispheric solidarity.

The Cuban Prime Minister then went on to discuss the economic crisis in Latin America. Denouncing the arguments made by certain delegates to the contrary, Castro claimed that "the political instability of the governments and of the peoples of Latin America in these times is not the cause of underdevelopment, but rather the consequence of underdevelopment."<sup>73</sup> There were, according to Castro, three sources of money for development theoretically available to Latin American countries: self-financing, private capital, and public financing by the United States. The first was impossible because Latin American governments would only earn enough money to pay for their own development if the United States eliminated the protectionist measures that

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<sup>71</sup> "...*la feliz iniciativa del ilustre presidente del Brasil...*" "Discurso Pronunciado Por El Señor Comandante Doctor Fidel Castro Ruz, Jefe de La Delegación de Cuba En La Sexta Sesión Plenaria Celebrada El 2 de Mayo de 1959" (Organization of American States, May 2, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>72</sup> "...*meros torneos oratorios.*" Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> "...*la inestabilidad política de los gobiernos y de los pueblos de América Latina en estos tiempos no es la causa del subdesarrollo, sino la consecuencia de subdesarrollo.*" Ibid.



weakened Latin American industry, something it was not willing to do. The second was equally unreasonable because private capital tended to be invested where there was already a base level of development and political stability, perpetuating existing inequities. The only viable option for development was for the United States to provide funds to Latin America. Furthermore, Castro audaciously proclaimed that Cuban analysts had calculated that US\$30 billion would be required from the U.S. government over ten years for development programs in the hemisphere.<sup>74</sup>

Although Kubitschek and Schmidt had framed Operation Pan America as a call on the United States to understand Pan Americanism as necessitating its financial involvement in Latin American development, Castro's demand for tens of billions of dollars in funds was unprecedented. It also drew an extremely positive response from a majority of Latin American representatives. According to the newspaper *La Prensa*, at the mention of underdevelopment as the cause of political instability, Schmidt had energetically applauded and shouted: "you are defending perfectly the spirit of Operation Panamerica."<sup>75</sup> The U.S. delegation was much less enthusiastic about the speech. After announcing that he would formally respond to Castro's request, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Roy Rubottom canceled that reply, providing as justification that "We don't feel that Castro speaks for all Latin America" and "We don't intend to engage in polemics."<sup>76</sup> When the Latin American delegations recognized that U.S. opposition to the proposal was strong, most dropped their support. In the end, the Cuban delegation pulled the proposed resolution before a vote could be held to decide whether to formally introduce it for debate.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Cited in "Castro Calls for Vast Program of Economic Aid to Latin America" (State Department, May 5, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>76</sup> Cited in "U.S. Foregoes Reply to Castro Aid Talk," *The New York Times*, May 5, 1959.

<sup>77</sup> "Telegram 1681 from Buenos Aires to Secretary of State" (State Department, May 8, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

Although the Cuban gambit ended in failure, Castro had left an indelible mark on the future of Operation Pan America. Whereas the framing of OPA within Pan Americanism had prior to Buenos Aires been forged in a predominantly bilateral, and often dialectical, process between Brazil and the United States, in the post-conference period the governments of these two countries also had to contend with the efforts of the revolutionary leadership in Havana to control the drive for economic solidarity. The Cuban discourse around Operation Pan America aligned generally with the goals and principles of Kubitschek's program for a new Pan Americanism, but its aggressive call for the United States to atone for over a century of imperialist policy by completely funding Latin American development was not an approach that the United States could tolerate. This of course placed a burden on Brazil, which was trying to walk the difficult line between resistance to and acceptance of U.S. economic imperialism. Thus, the Cuban proposal was as much a challenge to Kubitschek's bid for the power to advance economic solidarity as it was a critique of the United States' existing policy.

The end of May 1959 marked the one-year anniversary of Kubitschek's original letter to Eisenhower proposing a re-evaluation of Pan Americanism, and a ceremony was held in Brazil to commemorate the milestone. In contrast to earlier attitudes, the leaders of Operation Pan America showed deference to the United States in their remarks. Schmidt praised U.S. leadership in the struggle against the Soviet Union and support for OPA, but also asked that the United States do more to promote development in Latin America.<sup>78</sup> Kubitschek surprised U.S. diplomats in attendance when he stressed that, as modernization occurred in the hemisphere, Latin Americans would be responsible for putting their own "house in order" economically and

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<sup>78</sup> "Telegram 1715 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State" (State Department, May 28, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

politically.<sup>79</sup> In other words, the United States was not responsible under Brazil's new Pan Americanism for providing all that Latin America needed to develop. Participants also observed a moment of silence in memory of former U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who had died only days before.<sup>80</sup> If this was not an attempt at a complete rapprochement after Kubitschek and Schmidt's threat to turn to the Soviet Union, it at least indicated a willingness on the part of the Brazilian government to return to the earlier rhetoric of Operation Pan America as a tool to promote a Pan Americanism friendly to the United States, perhaps as part of a larger effort to distance the Brazilian discourse on OPA from the Cuban version articulated at Buenos Aires.

The Cuban government stepped in and obstructed efforts to strengthen U.S.-Brazilian relations once again at the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the American States, held in Santiago, Chile, in August 1959 for the purpose of discussing the escalating political tensions between countries in the Caribbean. In the weeks before the meeting, Cuba announced that it would introduce an item on the agenda concerning the connections between economic underdevelopment and political instability, as Fidel Castro had spoke about at length in his address at Buenos Aires. The proposed item made explicit reference to OPA and to its goal of adopting a "dynamic and progressive program for the fight against underdevelopment."<sup>81</sup> Castro later told the press that it was his opinion that the supposed tension in the Caribbean was a myth and that the only appropriate reason to bring together the Foreign Ministers would be to discuss

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<sup>79</sup> "Speech by President Kubitschek in Ceremony Commemorating First Anniversary of O.P.A." (State Department, June 4, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>80</sup> "Telegram 1715 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State."

<sup>81</sup> "...un programa dinámico y progresivo para la lucha contra el subdesarrollo..." "Exposición de Motivos Que Presenta La Delegación de Cuba En Relación Con El Tema 'Subdesarrollo Económico E Inestabilidad Política'" (State Department, July 27, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

economic concerns.<sup>82</sup> This was a statement against the transition of Pan Americanism to a system of collective security that had been occurring since the start of the Cold War.

The U.S. State Department quickly mobilized in response to the proposal to convince the Brazilian government against offering its support. At a luncheon with Ambassador Walther Moreira Salles, Assistant Secretary Rubottom told the Brazilian diplomat that the United States had firmly expressed its support for Operation Pan America in the past, but that discussion of the Operation and its associated economic issues at the conference in Santiago would not be appropriate. Moreira Salles replied that he understood and agreed.<sup>83</sup> Later, when representatives from Chile, Brazil, and the United States met to discuss the items that had been suggested for the meeting, the Brazilian representative expressed reluctance to vote against an economic item, but ultimately bowed to pressure to reject it. His explanation for doing so, that “discussion on [the] Cuban proposal would hinder rather than help progress of OPA and related OAS economic projects,”<sup>84</sup> suggested that the Brazilian government recognized the potential to lose U.S. backing for OPA if too much influence over the course of the program were to be ceded to Cuba.

Days before the vote, Brazilian officials informed the State Department that they could not follow the United States in voting negatively or abstaining on the Cuban proposal. They provided as justification that, as the proposal mentioned OPA explicitly, it would seem contrary to Brazil’s prior rhetoric to express disapproval. Brazil would vote in favor of adding the item on economic underdevelopment to the agenda.<sup>85</sup> For a second time, Cuban appropriation of OPA had driven a wedge between Brazilian and U.S. expectations for economic Pan Americanism.

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<sup>82</sup> “Telegram 248 from Habana to Secretary of State” (State Department, July 28, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>83</sup> “Brazilian Position Regarding Agenda of Foreign Ministers Meeting” (State Department, July 24, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>84</sup> “Telegram from State Department to Lima, Rio de Janeiro, and Santiago” (State Department, July 27, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>85</sup> “Telegram 173 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State” (State Department, July 29, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

When the matter came to a vote on July 30, Cuba, Brazil, and six other countries supported it, but the other American states either rejected the proposal or abstained, and the item failed to make it on the agenda.

Once the Meeting of Foreign Ministers had begun on August 12, the Brazilian and U.S. delegations sparred over whether the United States was doing all it could to support OPA and to ameliorate the problem of underdevelopment in Latin America. Brazilian Foreign Minister Horácio Lafer complained of the “lack of correspondence” between the hemispheric community’s unanimous declaration of support of the objectives of OPA and the serious delay in implementing measures to achieve those objectives.<sup>86</sup> The Brazilian delegation also submitted a resolution with the delegations from Argentina, Peru, and Ecuador that urged the Council of the Organization of American States to take all actions possible to ensure the efficient implementation of the measures that the Committee of 21 had recommended during the Buenos Aires conference.<sup>87</sup> Christian Herter, the new Secretary of State after Dulles’s death, defended the United States and its policy in the hemisphere, pointing specifically to the “approval of the Charter of the Inter-American Bank, and the progress made in the formulation and execution of Operation Pan America” as evidence of the United States’ commitment to rethinking Pan Americanism along the lines of the Brazilian program.<sup>88</sup>

Despite Herter’s promises, the perception that the United States was not doing enough to advance Operation Pan America permeated U.S.-Brazilian relations for the remainder of the year. In November, Schmidt told the press that he was disappointed with the U.S. government’s

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<sup>86</sup> “Discurso Del Excmo. Señor Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores Del Brasil, Doctor Horácio Lafer, Pronunciado En La Sesión Plenaria de Apertura Del 12 de Agosto de 1959” (Organization of American States, August 12, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>87</sup> “Draft Resolution: Measures to Accelerate and Intensify ‘Operation Pan America’” (Organization of American States, August 13, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>88</sup> “Address by the Honorable Christian A. Herter, Secretary of State of the United States of America, at the Second Plenary Session, August 13, 1959” (State Department, August 13, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

continued indifference to Latin America and OPA.<sup>89</sup> That month, he also met with officials from the U.S. Embassy in Brazil and asked them to convince the White House to offer firmer support. Evidently believing that terminology was what was making the United States hesitant, Schmidt added that Brazil would even tolerate changing the name of the program.<sup>90</sup> In response, U.S. officials argued that they were unable to provide additional support to Operation Pan America until they understood more clearly what Schmidt and Kubitschek intended for the program to accomplish and what tangible mechanisms would be used to achieve those goals.

There was likely a significant degree of accuracy in Schmidt's assessment of the hesitation of the United States to join OPA fully. The U.S. government had in the past been strategic in its avoidance of directly engaging with Brazilian terminology, both to ensure flexibility in its economic policy and to appease Latin American governments that were not entirely convinced by Kubitschek's pitch. The Cuban revolutionary government's appropriation of the rhetoric of OPA as a demand for U.S. developmental financing only compounded the political dangers associated with adherence to the new vision of Pan Americanism implied by the name. Perhaps, then, an economic development program with a title less directly associated with claims of North American indifference would be easier for the United States to embrace.

At the same time, Schmidt overestimated the extent to which economic issues, whether under the banner of Operation Pan America or not, figured into the U.S. conception of Pan Americanism. The Eisenhower administration had always viewed reforms to its economic policy in the hemisphere as part of a larger strategy of guaranteeing the continued support of Latin America in the Cold War, a fact that the Brazilian government clearly understood and around

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<sup>89</sup> "Statement to Press by Augusto Frederico Schmidt" (State Department, November 10, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>90</sup> "Telegram 770 from Rio de Janeiro to Secretary of State" (State Department, November 20, 1959), Record Group 59, National Archives.

which it had effectively constructed the initial messaging of OPA. The objective of U.S. Pan Americanism in the early Cold War was to gain maximum support for anticommunism with minimum disruption to free-market capitalism in Latin America. As relations between the United States and Cuba deteriorated, the White House and State Department became acutely concerned with developing a plan to prevent Soviet influence in the hemisphere, but the grand reimagining of Pan Americanism as economic development that Kubitschek desired was not part of it. The U.S. government would accept OPA to the extent that in so doing it prevented Cuba from using economic underdevelopment as a symbol around which to build a campaign against imperialism. If economic solidarity were no longer considered an effective tool for bolstering military Pan Americanism, the United States would presumably discontinue its attachment to OPA.

#### From Cooperation to Cooptation, January - September 1960

The three parties remained locked in struggle over Operation Pan America at the beginning of 1960, employing old and new strategies in an attempt to take control of Pan Americanism. Entering his last full year in office, Eisenhower shifted his position to more openly embrace developmental assistance as one of several mechanisms designed to block the influence of the Cuban Revolution. Brazil, meanwhile, alternated rapidly and not always with clear purpose between a variety of conceptual frames for Operation Pan America, from highly technical economic program, to instrument of the Cold War, and to reordering of the priorities of Pan Americanism to reduce emphasis on political solidarity and collective defense. For its part, Cuba resumed its efforts to rewrite Operation Pan America to demand a Pan Americanism divorced from U.S. economic imperialism.

In January 1960, the Cuban government announced that it would be holding a conference of underdeveloped countries from Latin America, Asia, and Africa, and invited a delegation from Brazil to attend. After internal discussion, the Brazilian government ultimately decided to turn down the invitation out of concern that it would create obstacles for the promotion of Operation Pan America, most importantly by upsetting the United States. Cuban officials responded, however, that they saw the conference as perfectly in line with the spirit of Kubitschek's program and were upset with Brazil's rejection of the invitation.<sup>91</sup> Deploying the rhetoric of OPA in reference to this conference was an attempt to draw Brazilian support for an alternative model of economic cooperation that was more aggressively antagonistic to the United States, as Cuba had done with its resolutions in the inter-American system. Indeed, the Cuban invitation to specifically discuss OPA at the Havana Conference suggested a radical vision for Pan Americanism in which the United States was absent, replaced by the countries of the Third World. Ultimately, Brazil balked at the possibility of accepting such a vision if it meant losing the cooperation of the United States. At least on a practical level, Operation Pan America was for Kubitschek about winning U.S., not Latin American, support for economic development in the rhetoric of Pan Americanism.

The following month, Eisenhower embarked on a two-week long goodwill tour to South America, where his record during the Second World War meant that he was generally greeted with warmth and enthusiasm, in contrast to Vice President Nixon in 1958. He met with Kubitschek in Brazil on February 23 and signed a second "Declaration of Brasília" that recommitted the United States to working with the Brazilian government to advance economic solidarity in the Americas. Speaking subsequently at the Brazilian Congress, Eisenhower called

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<sup>91</sup> De Mello e Silva, *A Política Externa de JK: Operação Pan-Americana*, 36–37.



for a new meeting of the Committee of Nine to consider steps to enhance economic solidarity.<sup>92</sup> He thus presented himself as open to reconsidering the United States' aloofness towards Operation Pan America, although this of course implicitly carried the provision that such a shift would win hemispheric allies in the battle against Cuba.

Kubitschek took advantage of Eisenhower's trip to Brazil to present the U.S. President with another aide memoire laying out plans for the continuation of Operation Pan America through the year and beyond. The proposed agenda included many of the topics for which OPA had failed previously to produce results, like technical assistance programs and stabilization of commodities markets, as well as new recommendations that included a hemispheric organization to oversee research into technological and productivity innovations. The aide memoire offered little in the way of rhetorical aggrandizement, only stating briefly that there was an overwhelming need for a plan of unity and that Operation Pan America could provide "the necessary political and psychological doctrinal instruments to attain such a purpose."<sup>93</sup> The decision to make the message highly technical rather than rhetorical was partly surprising given the United States' clear interest in advancing anticommunist ideology. On the other hand, the aide memoire responded to prior justifications of U.S. hesitation on the grounds that OPA had been too poorly defined and broadly ideological. Kubitschek intended for the aide memoire to reoffer OPA to the United States not as a dramatic re-envisioning of Pan Americanism, but as a concrete proposal for development that would operate within existing inter-American structures.

Despite signs that he was moving toward greater approval of OPA, Eisenhower followed up his meeting with Kubitschek by unveiling in July a new economic program called the Social

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> "Aide-Memoire Presented by the President of Brazil to the President of the United States on February 23 1960, and Submitted by the Brazilian Delegation to the Subcommittee of the Committee of 21 at Its Meeting at the Pan American Union from June 6 to 24, 1960" (Organization of American States, May 3, 1960), Record Group 59, National Archives.

Progress Trust Fund for Latin America. Under this proposal administered by the Inter-American Development Bank, the United States would provide \$500 million for Latin American projects to improve health, education, and housing infrastructure. Money would even be offered to encourage gradual land reform. The U.S. Congress quickly accepted the proposal on the grounds that Latin America was becoming the site of an increasingly vital Cold War conflict, and thus that greater funding to prevent the victory of communism there was justified. As the first true example of a U.S.-generated program of economic assistance in the hemisphere in decades, the Fund represented, in the words of Stephen Rabe, “a turning point in inter-American relations.”<sup>94</sup> Beyond signifying that the United States would now seriously accept the responsibility of financing economic development in Latin America, it also demonstrated that Eisenhower would not leave the crafting of an economic Pan Americanism to the control of Kubitschek or Castro.

Both Operation Pan America and the Social Progress Trust Fund were on the schedule for discussion at the Committee of 21 Meeting in Bogotá, Colombia, in September. In the weeks leading up to the conference, Kubitschek, who had been initially enthusiastic about the prospects for the Social Fund to induce progress in Latin American development, came to realize that, unless the Fund was explicitly associated with OPA, it might overtake Operation Pan America in popularity, rendering Brazil’s project irrelevant to the redefinition of Pan Americanism and Kubitschek’s influence on the inter-American system negligible. As such, his officials requested that the United States agree to publicly framing the Eisenhower plan as part of the spirit of OPA and to developing the program in consultation with Brazil.<sup>95</sup>

The Eisenhower administration clearly intended the Social Progress Trust Fund to indicate its willingness to embrace economic Pan Americanism, but not adherence to Operation

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<sup>94</sup> Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism*, 142.

<sup>95</sup> “Brazilian Views Relating to Sixth and Seventh Meetings of Foreign Ministers” (State Department, August 12, 1960), Record Group 59, National Archives.

Pan America. Still, changing attitudes within the State Department about the threat posed by the Castro regime prompted a concurrent reevaluation of the government's policy on OPA. This new approach was reflected in a policy memo written by Gerard C. Smith, the Assistant Secretary of State for Policy Planning, in late July. According to Smith, Bogotá represented "a crossroads for the United States to lead Latin America away from Castroism and toward development firmly within the democratic orbit." Because OPA would inevitably be brought up at Bogotá, Smith proposed that the United States should "stop resisting Operation Pan-America and stop defending ourselves against its objectionable features," and that it "should instead try to capture the Operation by ... proposing a cooperative program under US leadership which promises progress toward its broad goals." In other words, the United States should usurp Brazil as the leader of OPA. "Our grand strategy," Smith concluded, "should be to convert Operation Pan-America to our way of thinking and to obtain Brazilian and Latin American acceptance of its revised orientation..."<sup>96</sup> As per Smith's suggestions, the United States would in essence redefine its understanding of Pan Americanism to focus on development rather than collective security as the guarantor of freedom. This would in turn prevent more aggressive conceptions of economic Pan Americanism from taking hold in the hemisphere.

The new approach of the Eisenhower administration resulted in Bogotá becoming perhaps the apex of U.S.-Brazilian support for OPA. Under Secretary of State Douglas Dillon praised the "inspired concept of Operation Pan America" as "an irreversible objective of the Americas" and pledged the United States to pursue social, economic, and industrial development

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<sup>96</sup> Gerard C. Smith, "Meeting of Committee of Twenty-One: A Conceptual Approach" (State Department, July 29, 1960), Record Group 59, National Archives.

in Latin America within the OPA framework.<sup>97</sup> Schmidt, speaking directly to the new approach, remarked that the purpose of the Operation was “to defend the Americas, unite the nations of the hemisphere, avoid the cold war, and create prosperity for all which will strengthen the cause of democracy and liberty.”<sup>98</sup> The final document of the conference, the Act of Bogotá, outlined measures to advance social and economic development in the pursuit of giving “further practical expression to the spirit of Operation Pan America.”<sup>99</sup> A telegram from Dillon on September 11 summed up the feeling of cooperation with the note that “For the first time in many years of economic conferences complete agreement seems in sight with no U.S. abstentions.”<sup>100</sup>

The Cuban delegation would not allow the positive mood to go unchallenged. Towards the end of the conference, it once again introduced a resolution calling for the United States to provide \$30 billion to Latin America. As in the past, the Brazilian delegation broke with the United States to abstain from the vote, which failed by a count of 12 against to one in favor with seven abstentions. U.S. officials initially expressed concern about the abstentions of Brazil and Argentina because, in their analysis, the two differed from the other abstaining countries in not falling under the heavy influence of communism and Castroism.<sup>101</sup> However, that the measure was defeated meant that the disagreement did not have serious repercussions in the U.S.-Brazilian relationship, and the Bogotá conference closed with renewed possibility of a joint vision for the future of Pan Americanism.

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<sup>97</sup> Douglas Dillon, “Statement by the Honorable Douglas Dillon, Under Secretary of State of the United States, at the Third Meeting of the Committee of Twenty-One, Bogotá, Colombia, September 6, 1960” (State Department, September 6, 1960), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>98</sup> Augusto Schmidt, “Address Delivered by the Head of the Brazilian Delegation, Ambassador Augusto Schmidt, at the First Plenary Session, September 6, 1960” (Organization of American States, September 7, 1960), Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>99</sup> “Act of Bogotá” (Organization of American States, September 13, 1960), The Avalon Project, [avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/intam08.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/intam08.asp).

<sup>100</sup> Dillon, Douglas, “Telegram 6 to SECSTATE and SECUN,” September 11, 1960, Record Group 59, National Archives.

<sup>101</sup> “Memorandum of Conversation between Maurice Bernbaum and Arturo Frondizi” (State Department, September 16, 1960), Record Group 59, National Archives.

## The End of Operation Pan America, October 1960 - March 1961

Events in late 1960 and 1961 ultimately rendered the prospect for cooperation on Operation Pan America elusive. In fact, by the end of 1961, both the United States and Brazil would see OPA as of marginal importance for the hemisphere. First, presidential elections were held in Brazil in October 1960 to choose Kubitschek's successor and the immediate inheritor of OPA. Jânio Quadros, the candidate for the center-right National Democratic Union (*União Democrática Nacional*, UDN), ran on an anti-corruption and anti-inflation platform and won the election in a landslide, receiving nearly as many votes as the next two candidates combined.<sup>102</sup> The new President of Brazil proved to be somewhat of a political enigma for U.S. officials. While they praised his commitment to economic austerity and to ridding the political system of the corruption that he claimed had been rampant under Kubitschek, they also viewed with concern Quadros's emerging independent-minded foreign policy. Most politically contentious was that Quadros did not see the Cuban Revolution as a serious problem and was sympathetic to Castro's anti-imperialist messages.<sup>103</sup> The pursuit of an independent foreign policy weakened U.S.-Brazilian relations by subverting the established Cold War order in the hemisphere.

In the field of inter-American affairs, Quadros held similar views to Kubitschek about the importance of prioritizing economic over political solidarity. Thus, in an article explaining Brazilian foreign policy that appeared in the North American journal *Foreign Affairs* in 1961, he wrote: "My government is convinced that it is fighting for the recovery of Pan Americanism and that this must start with the economic and social fields."<sup>104</sup> Quadros did not, however, mention Operation Pan America by name in the article, and even if his government was sympathetic to OPA, it did not promote the program with vigorousness at all comparable to that of Kubitschek's

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<sup>102</sup> Joseph Smith, *Brazil and the United States: Convergence and Divergence*, 147.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 148-149.

<sup>104</sup> Jânio Quadros, "Brazil's New Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 40, no. 1 (October 1961): 23.

administration. To do so would have associated Quadros with the very corrupt government against which he had campaigned.

Another round of elections ultimately proved more important for the demise of Operation Pan America: the U.S. presidential election of 1960. John F. Kennedy, the young Democratic Senator from Massachusetts, ran against Vice President Richard Nixon. Kennedy frequently excoriated Eisenhower's Latin America policy, just as then-candidate Eisenhower had done with Truman's hemispheric policy in 1952. As Kennedy and other leaders of the Democratic Party argued, Eisenhower had failed to properly build networks of trust and cooperation with Latin Americans and had lost the support of a vitally important region in the global struggle against the Soviet Union.<sup>105</sup> Nixon's trip to South America in 1958 served as clear evidence that the Republican Party was out of touch with Latin American needs and beliefs.

This practice of distancing himself politically from Eisenhower helped Kennedy win the election in November, but upon entering the White House in January he did not immediately chart a new course in inter-American affairs. According to Stephen G. Rabe, Kennedy inherited a Latin America policy from Eisenhower that was defined by the willingness to combat communism through any means available, be they political, economic, military, or cultural. Beyond the theoretical strategy, Eisenhower had also left Kennedy with several tangible programs already in the early stages of development. For example, planning for Kennedy's unsuccessful and politically embarrassing Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 had been initiated by the CIA under Eisenhower's authorization in 1960.<sup>106</sup>

Kennedy also built on the shift toward greater economic assistance in Latin America that had begun late in Eisenhower's second term. On March 13, 1961, Kennedy unveiled the Alliance

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<sup>105</sup> Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism*, 3–4.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 170–173.

for Progress, a development program that he grandiosely described 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 school.”<sup>107</sup> Representatives from the Latin American countries signed the charter for the Alliance in August at Punta del Este, Uruguay, pledging themselves to six principal goals: increase per capita income, promote social reform, diversify trade, industrialize, improve education, and stabilize prices. The United States also promised that an additional \$20 billion worth of capital would flow into Latin America over 10 years, half from the U.S. government and half from private sources stimulated by public pressure to increase their expenditures.<sup>108</sup> Designed with the express purpose of shoring up U.S.-Latin American relations in the context of the Cold War, the Alliance for Progress looked much like Eisenhower’s Social Progress Trust Fund. Eisenhower himself would later claim that all Kennedy had done was choose an attractive name for his predecessor’s economic program.<sup>109</sup>

The Alliance for Progress bore the most resemblance not to any U.S. program, however, but rather to Kubitschek’s Operation Pan America. Several of the goals of the Alliance, including price stabilization and increases in per capita income, were borrowed directly from Kubitschek’s original aide memoire. The dramatic increase in U.S. government spending, while not on the level of the Cuban appeal at Buenos Aires, responded to OPA’s suggestion that the United States finance Latin American development in exchange for support in the East-West struggle with the Soviet bloc. The similarities between the Alliance for Progress and Operation Pan America were not lost on Kennedy, who noted in his presentation of the Alliance in March 1961 that he aspired

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<sup>107</sup> Cited in W. Michael Weis, “The Twilight of Pan-Americanism: The Alliance for Progress, Neo-Colonialism, and Non-Alignment in Brazil, 1961-1964,” *The International History Review* 23, no. 2 (June 2001): 322.

<sup>108</sup> Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle*, 149–150.

<sup>109</sup> Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism*, 148–149.

to make the program match in ingenuity the “majestic concept of Operation Pan-America.”<sup>110</sup>  
The Alliance for Progress was a successor to OPA conceptually and rhetorically.

While the Alliance for Progress continued Kubitschek’s vision for greater economic cooperation between the United States and Latin America, it also erased the complexities and debates that had characterized OPA between 1958 and 1961. Kennedy’s version of Operation Pan America as articulated through the Alliance ignored the at times harsh critiques of U.S. policy in the hemisphere that Schmidt and Oswaldo Aranha had raised under the banner of the Brazilian program. The U.S. President made no mention of the efforts of the Cuban government to leverage support for Operation Pan America to build anti-imperialist sentiment. Most significantly, the paradigm of the Alliance denied Kubitschek’s larger purpose of using OPA to advance a thorough, Brazil-led reimagining of Pan Americanism as economic solidarity first and political solidarity second. As a Cold War program, the Alliance for Progress did not supplant the United States’ focus on collective security and policing of the hemisphere. Rather, it added a practice of coercion through economic assistance that could increase the efficiency of other approaches to preventing communist encroachment. From this perspective, the Alliance for Progress appeared to be the fulfillment of Assistant Secretary of State Gerard Smith’s call for the United States to “capture” and “convert Operation Pan-America to our way of thinking.”<sup>111</sup>

## Conclusion

As a series of tangible measures to promote hemispheric cooperation in economic development, Operation Pan America had mixed success. While the Brazilian government succeeded in launching the Committee of 21 and the Committee of 9 to make economic policy

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<sup>110</sup> Cited in Weis, “The Twilight of Pan-Americanism: The Alliance for Progress, Neo-Colonialism, and Non-Alignment in Brazil, 1961-1964,” 322.

<sup>111</sup> Gerard C. Smith, “Meeting of Committee of Twenty-One: A Conceptual Approach.”



recommendations, cautiousness from the U.S. government meant that the Organization of American States did not implement these policies efficiently or effectively. The most significant new economic policy of the OPA period (summer 1958 to spring 1961) was the Inter-American Development Bank, but the creation of the IADB was less a result of the appeal of Kubitschek's program than it was of the growing realization within the Eisenhower administration that U.S. neglect of economic problems in Latin America was damaging relationships vital to the Cold War effort. Still, policies regarding price stabilization, U.S. financial assistance, and per capita income, although not originating with Operation Pan America, found their expression in the Alliance for Progress in large part because OPA had made them primary concerns. If Operation Pan America did not significantly change the economic landscape of the Americas, it at least had more success in opening conversations and guiding preliminary work on economic cooperation than had any Latin American initiative before it.

What Operation Pan America lacked in substance, it more than made up for in symbolism. Naming the program as such conveyed that it was less about instituting specific developmental policies than it was about undertaking a revision of the principles and values underlying Pan Americanism. Operation Pan America came at a time when Latin American disillusionment with Pan Americanism was growing, but when the concept was not entirely discredited. Kubitschek's vision for a revitalization of Pan Americanism through a transition from collective security to economic solidarity was not a new concept, but the effort with which he advanced that vision in bilateral and multilateral discussions was certainly noteworthy.

The part of the Operation Pan America that most absorbed the focus of the hemisphere was, however, its rhetoric. The Brazilian government tried various frames for OPA, some more successful than others. Over the course of three years, Operation Pan America was packaged as a

weapon against the Soviet East, the last chance for U.S.-Latin American relations, a critique of U.S. imperialism, a remaking of the inter-American system to prioritize economic cooperation over defense, and a call for greater Latin American participation in world affairs. While not always dramatically different, these frames shifted understandings of the purpose of Pan Americanism and of the roles of the United States and Latin America in advancing hemispheric solidarity in ways that were often subversive to the established hemispheric order.

Experimentation with the rhetoric of Operation Pan America was intended above all to win support for the program, particularly the support of the United States. The language of Pan Americanism was one that resonated with all actors in the inter-American system to some extent, but especially with the United States because it conveyed at least reluctant Brazilian acceptance of the U.S.-dominated, militarized inter-American system. On that Pan American base, Kubitschek and his colleagues in the Brazilian government crafted a superstructure of messages that would hopefully win over U.S. officials. Whether those messages were delivered politely, as in the early and late stages of OPA, or more aggressively, as in 1959, had much to do with the receptivity of the United States as determined by the political policies of the Eisenhower administration. As initial U.S. support turned to dragging of feet, Kubitschek and Schmidt intensified their rhetoric of OPA to prevent the death of economic Pan Americanism and the marginalization of their efforts in transforming the inter-American community. When changing U.S. policy renewed interest in collaboration on Operation Pan America, the rhetoric became about Pan Americanism as cooperation against a common enemy once again.

At the same time, Kubitschek was also clearly concerned with packaging Operation Pan America in a way that would ensure his, and by extension Brazil's, position as a leader of the program in the hemispheric community. This was demonstrated by Kubitschek's initial decision

to reach out directly to Eisenhower rather than introduce the program through normal multilateral channels, by the pomp surrounding the anniversary celebration of the birth of Operation Pan America in 1959, by Schmidt's positive report that Latin American delegates were recognizing Kubitschek's role in launching OPA at the Buenos Aires Conference, and by the Brazilian government's insistence that Eisenhower's Social Progress Trust Fund be marketed as an extension of the Brazilian vision. Beyond simply desiring to promote an expansion of U.S. economic assistance for Latin American development, Kubitschek wanted to be recognized for his role as the guide of economic Pan Americanism.

Increasing competition between Cuba and the United States complicated Kubitschek's plans for Operation Pan America. Once Fidel Castro declared his support for OPA at the Buenos Aires conference in 1959, the program could no longer be shaped solely through bilateral discussions between the United States and Brazil. The rhetoric of OPA was instead appropriated and transformed as part of the Cuban revolutionary government's attempt to pressure the United States into providing massive financial assistance to Latin America, a request it surely knew could not be fulfilled, or else risk the Latin American states exploring opportunities for economic solidarity with the countries of the Second and Third Worlds. Brazilian officials reluctantly accepted this development, because to not do so would have required them to speak out against their own program. At the same time, they resisted broader Cuban efforts to capture OPA because those efforts undermined the practical effectiveness of the program and Kubitschek's position as leader of the movement toward economic Pan Americanism. After the Cuban appropriation of Operation Pan America, the United States also sought to take control of the program, a strategy that was clearly stated in Assistant Secretary of State Gerard Smith's policy memo and demonstrated in the U.S. approach to OPA at the Bogotá meeting in 1960. The

Alliance for Progress was the United States' final step in capturing OPA and ensuring that the Cuban Revolution would not dictate the direction of Pan Americanism in the Cold War.

Operation Pan America was thus characterized at every step of its evolution by debate, disagreement, and political maneuvering. The discourse of OPA as a new economic form of Pan Americanism allowed Latin Americans to press for greater U.S. participation in economic development, the United States to explore new methods of winning support for anticommunist policies, and the very concept of a hegemonic Cold War Pan Americanism to be problematized.

## Conclusion:

### From Cold War Pan Americanism to Pan Americanisms

A careful analysis of early Cold War conflicts in the inter-American system reveals that Pan Americanism was not simply a hegemonic discourse imposed by the United States on Latin America to advance its imperialist program and silence critics. Certainly, there were elements of imperialism in the United States' approach to Pan Americanism at the Caracas Conference in 1954 and in the debates over economic cooperation during the Operation Pan America years, particularly with regards to the policy outcomes of each. Despite U.S. efforts to enforce a militantly anticommunist orientation for the inter-American system, however, Latin Americans consistently articulated their own Pan American discourses, frequently in order to subvert U.S. hegemony and demand more cooperative relations in the hemisphere.

These counter-hegemonic presentations of Pan Americanism were built primarily on a discursive level using a common set of terms, memories, and values drawn from the long history of conflicted U.S.-Latin American relations. For example, the Mexican government stressed at the Caracas Conference in 1954 its belief that Pan Americanism was defined by the adherence to nonintervention, a principle that Latin Americans had first introduced when faced with repeated U.S. military interventions in the early twentieth century, and its concern that the militarized anticommunism promoted by the United States would violate that principle. Recognizing that the Caracas anticommunist resolution would be used to justify unilateral or multilateral action against his government, Guatemalan Foreign Minister Guillermo Toriello also made respect for nonintervention and national sovereignty the core of his complaint against the United States at the Caracas Conference. Brazilian President Juscelino Kubitschek framed Operation Pan America in the program's first months as a response to Pan Americanism's success in the

juridical and political fields but lack of action on economic issues. When the Brazilian government decided to intensify its rhetoric around OPA in 1959, the diplomat Oswaldo Aranha explained U.S. indifference to the Operation as evidence that the remnants of imperialist and colonialist attitudes toward Pan American cooperation remained in the White House and State Department. In each of these cases, Latin Americans drew on resonant tropes and symbols of hemispheric relations to express the disjuncture between their understandings of the Pan American ideal and the actual reality of the U.S.-dominated inter-American system.

Latin American articulations of Pan Americanism were also cognizant of and responsive to the unique political and economic circumstances of the early Cold War. Thus, at the Caracas Conference, the Mexican delegation first validated the concern about growing Soviet influence in the Americas, but then denied that such a threat warranted the rewriting of Pan Americanism to encompass a militarized, anticommunist inter-American system. Similarly, many of Kubitshek's discursive frames for Operation Pan America leveraged the fear of the United States about the growing attractiveness of communist ideology among Latin Americans to demonstrate the necessity of restructuring Pan Americanism as a program of economic cooperation alongside collective security. Toriello and Árbenz argued, in contrast, that the claim of communist penetration was a myth constructed by the Eisenhower administration to justify intervention on behalf of U.S. corporations, and that militant anticommunism of the sort proposed in the United States' resolution at Caracas had no place in an ideal Pan Americanism.

Above all, alternative Pan Americanisms originating from within Latin America were strategic, meant to enhance the power and promote the interests of the Latin American countries in a highly imbalanced inter-American system. They did so by drawing on variations of the discourses that were employed by the hegemon, the United States, and that formed the basis of

the inter-American institutions in which these debates took place. Kubitschek was chiefly concerned with U.S. indifference to underdevelopment in Latin America and with projecting Brazilian influence in the hemisphere, and thus his conception of Pan Americanism reflected these concerns. Although the Brazilian President shifted between aggressive and conciliatory rhetoric for Operation Pan America, this was always in service of articulating and winning U.S. support for an economic Pan Americanism with Brazil at its helm. Castro's strategy was to use Cuban approval of Operation Pan America to pressure the United States to invest tens of billions of dollars into Latin American development projects. Castro surely knew that this plan had very little chance of success, and it seems more likely that his purpose in manipulating the rhetoric of Operation Pan America was to garner Latin American support for the Cuban Revolution when the United States would inevitably fail to increase its economic assistance. Toriello utilized a conception of Pan Americanism as cooperation in economic development not necessarily because he was immediately concerned with the status of economic relations in the hemisphere, but rather to shift the attention of the conference away from claims of communist encroachment in Guatemala and build a coalition of Latin American countries against the proposed anticommunist resolution.

As Latin American leaders formulated these strategic Pan American discourses, they confronted at least two significant problems. First, officials of the U.S. government were also willing to transform existing components and to adapt new dimensions into their framework of defense-focused Cold War Pan Americanism. During the Caracas Conference, the U.S. delegation pushed for a redefinition of the principle of noninterventionism, by then considered a hallmark of the inter-American system, such that intra-hemispheric intervention against countries perceived to be susceptible to Soviet communism would be understood as upholding the

principle, rather than as undermining it. At the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s, the administrations of Eisenhower and Kennedy accepted limited involvement in Latin American development as part of their Pan American responsibilities, and in so doing they appropriated the ideas and rhetoric of Kubitschek's Operation Pan America to create their own assistance programs, namely the Social Progress Trust Fund and the Alliance for Progress. These minor shifts in U.S.-driven Pan Americanism weakened the critics of the United States and subverted the potential power of alternative Pan American discourses, all without substantially hindering the progress toward increasing militarization and anticommunism in the inter-American system.

The second problem was that Latin Americans did not all agree in their conceptions of Pan Americanism. The most obvious divisions existed between the rightwing, anticommunist Latin American governments on one side and the centrist or left-leaning governments on the other. Dominican President Rafael Trujillo adhered to the collective defense understanding of Cold War Pan Americanism to such an extreme that even U.S. officials were cautious to accept his proposed anticommunist resolution. The strong loyalty to the United States that he and other conservative Latin American dictators demonstrated at the Caracas Conference placed them in direct opposition to Toriello's reconfiguring of Pan Americanism to prioritize nonintervention, anti-imperialism, and national development.

There were also disagreements among those Latin Americans looking to express resistance to U.S. imperial policy about what a counter-hegemonic Pan American discourse should be. While the leaders of Brazil and Cuba agreed in 1959 that the United States needed to do more to promote development in Latin America and thus articulated similar beliefs that Pan Americanism should prioritize economic solidarity over collective defense, they diverged on the point of how aggressively economic Pan Americanism should attack the United States for its



previous policy faults and demand that efforts be made to increase the public funds made available to Latin American governments. The Mexican government resisted efforts by Kubitschek to formulate an alternative discourse of Pan Americanism not over a real disagreement about the content of that discourse, but rather because showing support for Operation Pan America might position Brazil to take on the position of leader of Latin America in negotiating hemispheric relations with the United States, once again blocking Mexico from playing the important role to which it aspired in the inter-American system. Indeed, a major point to be drawn from this investigation is that, just as it is erroneous to suggest that the United States held full control over the rhetoric of Pan Americanism, it is also problematic to talk about a singular “Latin American perspective” on Pan Americanism or on hemispheric relations.

Given the obstacles facing these alternative Pan Americanisms from the United States and from within Latin America, we are left to question to what extent they were successful. As a matter of effecting large-scale shifts in inter-American relations, the examples examined here do not seem to have had much success. Although Guatemala’s discursive strategies won the moral support of the other Latin American delegations at the Caracas Conference, it ultimately lost the vote on the anticommunist resolution because many states were financially coerced to go along with the United States. Operation Pan America, despite the creation of the Committee of 21 and the Committee of Nine, never really took off between 1958 and 1961, and after being coopted by the Kennedy administration as part of the Alliance for Progress, it essentially disappeared. U.S. economic power, in short, seemed to beat out Latin American discursive resistance.

Still, I argue that counter-hegemonic Pan American discourses did have some meaningful, if minor, impacts. The United States left the Caracas Conference with a clear understanding, as well as considerable embarrassment, that only the conservative Latin

American dictatorships were supportive of intervention in Guatemala. This was reiterated as the U.S. government sought to organize a meeting of the OAS after the conference to vote whether to invoke the anticommunist resolution against Guatemala, but found considerable hesitation to undertake such a process among many Latin American leaders. Toriello's vigorous campaign during the Caracas Conference certainly played an important role in arousing emotions around the issue of U.S. intervention, as demonstrated by the Latin American delegations' overwhelming approval of his speech. Operation Pan America probably accelerated U.S. action on the Inter-American Development Bank to a small degree, and the Brazilian government was instrumental in getting the United States to accept financing conditions for the bank that were more amenable to Latin American development needs. Furthermore, that the United States was at least in part concerned with the implications of Operation Pan America for its control over the inter-American system is evidenced by the Smith memo's call for the capture and rebranding of the Operation under the U.S. banner. In the end, Operation Pan America provided a language of economic Pan Americanism and a series of steps toward economic solidarity that formed the foundation of the largely unsuccessful, but still highly significant, Alliance for Progress.

It is also important not to overlook the symbolic value of these efforts to reconfigure the U.S.-dominated rhetoric of Pan Americanism to promote Latin American interests. The Latin American states operated in a highly unequal inter-American system that afforded them very little possibility to oppose, let alone change, the policies promoted by the United States. If such open resistance was undertaken, governments risked losing, at the very least, the financial assistance and political support of their northern neighbor. In the absence of diplomatic avenues to bring about structural reforms in the inter-American system, discourse provided an opportunity for Latin Americans to assert their agency and articulate their beliefs. The process of

reformulating Pan American rhetoric served these individuals well because it followed the same approach to hemispheric relations as taken by the United States, and thus did not appear as threatening as a radical critique of hemispheric relations coming from outside. At the same time, alternative discourses of Pan Americanism were particularly subversive to the established hemispheric order precisely because they articulated opposition to U.S. hegemony using the same terms and concepts that the United States employed to obfuscate that hegemony. Counter-hegemonic Pan Americanisms brought to light the divergence between the statements and the actions of the United States in the Western Hemisphere.

The related question of whether Latin American leaders believed the Pan American discourses they advanced in the Cold War inter-American system is more difficult to answer. W. Michael Weis argues that, because it was always associated with the Monroe Doctrine, Pan Americanism “was never popular in Latin America, with the exception of Brazil.”<sup>1</sup> Weis further suggests that even Brazilians became disillusioned with the increasingly militarized Pan Americanism pushed by the United States during the Cold War. Based on Weis’s statements, we might expect that, when Toriello or Kubitschek invoked Pan Americanism, they were doing so for strategic reasons and not because of any particular personal or ideological affinity to the concept. It is also possible that, as Streeter claims, U.S. imperialism imposed Pan American rhetoric on Latin American leaders such that they were forced to adopt this rhetoric and perhaps even came to believe it. Finally, Toriello and Kubitschek may have been legitimately drawn to Pan Americanism’s focus on hemispheric solidarity and concerned with the United States’ seeming indifference toward addressing Latin American needs within its own proposals for integration. Because the documents consulted for this investigation express the internal

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<sup>1</sup> W. Michael Weis, “Pan American Shift: Oswaldo Aranha and the Demise of the Brazilian-American Alliance,” in *Beyond the Ideal: Pan Americanism in Inter-American Affairs*, ed. David Sheinin (Westport: Praeger, 2000), 135.

conversations of only U.S. officials, this claim cannot be definitively tested here. A future examination of the briefing memoranda and personal communications of the Árbenz and Kubitschek administrations may reveal greater information about the relationships of these governments to the counter-hegemonic Pan American rhetoric they publicly espoused.

The significant limitation in sources aside, this investigation shows that the historiography on U.S.-Latin American relations in the Cold War has failed to capture the full experience of the contentious debates over the meaning and direction of Pan Americanism. By moving beyond policy outcomes to consider Pan Americanism as symbol and rhetoric, I have demonstrated the considerable efforts made by Latin Americans to configure alternative Pan Americanisms to resist, and in some cases to bolster, U.S. hegemony in the Western Hemisphere. The new narrative of Cold War Pan Americanisms grants Latin American actors additional agency in negotiating their participation in the inter-American system, while still recognizing the tremendous restraints placed on their actions as a result of the power imbalances between the United States and its southern neighbors.

The revelation of a series of Latin American Pan Americanisms in the early Cold War also leads us to reexamine Castro's claims in the First Declaration of Havana, delivered in September 1960. Although immediately preceded and most directly influenced by the San José Conference of Foreign Ministers that month, the speech also came in the aftermath of Cuba's failed attempt to capture the rhetoric of Operation Pan America to pressure the United States to invest \$30 billion in Latin American development. Castro had been critical of Pan Americanism at the Buenos Aires Conference of the Committee of 21 in 1959, but he had not entirely condemned the traditional inter-American system there as he did in Havana the following year. Indeed, he had even declared Cuban adherence to the language of Operation Pan America.

Perhaps the escalating tensions between the United States and Cuba, the increasing evidence that the United States would use the OAS to isolate and destabilize the Cuban government, and the failure of Operation Pan America to bring about a real change in U.S. economic policy between May 1959 and September 1960 facilitated the change in attitude toward Pan Americanism. Moderate appraisals of Pan Americanism could only be sustained for so long when the entirety of the inter-American collective defense apparatus was being mobilized against the Cuban Revolution.

Another compelling explanation for the differences between Castro's speeches at Buenos Aires and Havana is that the Cuban Prime Minister was strategic in his use of the discursive power of Pan Americanism. At the Committee of 21 meeting in Buenos Aires, Castro was speaking before career diplomats well versed in Pan American rhetoric in an institution created through Operation Pan America for the purpose of exploring opportunities for economic solidarity under the supervision of the OAS. In this setting, the adoption of a discourse moderately sympathetic to Pan Americanism allowed Castro to connect with his Latin American audience and begin to build regional support for the Cuban Revolution. This clearly worked on Augusto Schmidt, the head of the Brazilian delegation, who effusively lauded the speech for capturing the essence of Operation Pan America so perfectly. The First Declaration of Havana was, on the other hand, directed toward an audience of supporters of the Cuban Revolution and came after the United States had attacked the Revolution at the San José Conference. Anti-Pan American rhetoric in this case suited the purposes of energizing the Cuban people and of crafting the United States as the colonizer not only of Cuba, but also of the entirety of Latin America.

Thus, just as alternative discourses of Pan Americanism have been employed strategically to advance Latin American interests when facing U.S. hegemony, so too can anti-Pan American

rhetoric be thought of as a tactical approach to dealing with the power imbalances in the hemisphere. When evaluating the current Latin American movement to build regional solidarity outside of the traditional institutions of the inter-American system within this discursive framework, the narrative of alternative conceptions of Pan Americanism comes to serve as an important historical antecedent. Despite their messages seemingly being in tension with each other, we can understand the counter-hegemonic Pan Americanisms of the early Cold War and the anti-Pan American movement that exists today as representing parts of a historical process in which Latin Americans have employed discursive resistance to combat imperialism and demand greater power in articulating a vision for their shared future.

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