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THE LATIN AMERICAN REACTION TO THE UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS

BY

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What are the Latin American reactions to the United States involvement in Latin American affairs? Are such reactions expressed in a supportive, indifferent, hostile, or cooperative attitude?

Throughout its history, the United States has been involved constantly in Latin American affairs. These involvements range from economic assistance to direct military intervention, including the use of American troops. Each time the United States gets involved, the Latin American countries express their views and observations based on the nature of the event. To demonstrate such reaction and determine if a trend of Latin American opinion towards the United States has been established, it is best to examine several incidents in which the United States has directly intervened in Latin American affairs. This analysis of historical events will answer the questions posed above. Such examination will be the basis for a comparison of Latin American responses to several examples of United States intervention in Latin America.

USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

**THE LATIN AMERICAN REACTION TO THE UNITED STATES
INVOLVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS**

A GROUP STUDY PROJECT

by

Lieutenant Colonel Jose A. Ocasio, U.S. Army, AG

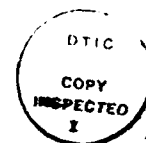
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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
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ABSTRACT

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**THE LATIN AMERICAN REACTION TO THE UNITED STATES
INVOLVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS**

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

How does Latin America react to United States involvement in Latin American affairs? This paper will examine two incidents in which the United States has been directly involved in Latin American affairs: 1) the United States involvement during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis and 2) the United States military intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965. This paper examines these situations from the perspectives of numerous Latin Americans; their views have been expressed in books, periodicals, newspapers, and magazines.

Each incident will be analyzed, especially in view of reactions of Latin American countries to the involvement of the United States. Each event will be analyzed separately to determine if Latin American opinion towards the United States changes according to the nature of the event or remains constant.

Likewise, examination of the Latin American reaction to the United States involvement in these three incidents will reveal Latin American countries' opinion of the United States over a quarter of a century. So while this essay will treat each situation in isolation, it may as well reveal some trends in Latin American views of the United States. It may indicate that Latin Americans are supportive of American involvement in their affairs, or indifferent to it, or hostile toward it, or are generally cooperative toward Americans.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Throughout its history, the United States has been involved constantly in Latin American affairs. These involvements range from economic assistance to direct military involvement, including the use of American troops.

After World War II, the United States developed a virtually unchallenged hegemony throughout the entire Latin American area. This American strength encouraged a long period of neglect, which basically ended in 1959 with a Communist revolution in Cuba and the eventual establishment of a Soviet military and naval presence in what had been an area exclusively within the United States' sphere of influence.¹ For the first time, United States' supremacy over the Americas was being challenged. No longer was it the sole arbiter of events in the region.

The communist revolution in Cuba lent a new perspective to world opinion about the affairs in Latin America. Involvement of a second major foreign power in Latin America raised the curiosity of many and forced Latin American countries to take notice of the United States involvement in their internal affairs. No longer did they accept the United States' position on its face value. Since 1959, they have taken their own stands on different issues and reacted to each involvement in accord with their beliefs and values, expressing their views and observations openly. As a result of this new-found independence, Latin American countries have been able to form and sustain an opinion of the United States. Their reaction to United States involvement in their internal affairs has been registered event by event. In fact, their opinion seems to fluctuate according to the nature of the event.

Since the Communist revolution in 1959 in Cuba, the United States has been involved in several incidents concerning Latin American affairs. Each time the United States gets involved, Latin American countries express their views and observations based on the nature of the event. To demonstrate such reaction and determine if a trend in Latin American opinion towards the United States has been established, it is best to examine two incidents in which the United States has been directly involved. Such examination will provide the basis for a comparison of the Latin American opinion towards the United States. The analysis

of these two historical events will seek responses to these questions: 1) What were the Latin American reactions to the United States involvement in Latin American affairs? and 2) Is the Latin American countries' opinion towards the United States supportive, cooperative, indifferent, or hostile? These questions will be answered in the following chapters.

ENDNOTE

1. Thirty Essays by Statesmen, Scholars, Religious Leaders, and Journalists, The Continuing Crisis: U.S. Policy in Central America and the Caribbean, ed., by Mark Falcoff and Robert Royal, Lanham: Ethics and Public Policy Center, University Press of America, 1987, pp. vii-viii.

CHAPTER II

THE 1962 CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

INTRODUCTION

The Cuban Missile Confrontation of 1962 undoubtedly had its emotional roots deep in the historical past, but the pertinent events leading to the crisis lie well within the contemporary framework of Castro's Cuba. Fidel Castro's seizure of governmental power on 2 January 1959, United States' termination of diplomatic and consular relations with Cuba on 3 January 1961, and finally "The Bay of Pigs" fiasco on 17-19 April 1961 are all meaningful landmarks leading towards the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.¹

On 31 December 1959, Fulgencio Batista left Cuba for exile. At the time of his departure, he was the military dictator of this Caribbean nation, as he had been for the previous twenty-five years. Resentment toward his rule had been building for a number of years. Consequently, an active rebellion had been transpiring in parts of the country. Therefore, Fidel Castro, with the help of his revolutionary forces, was able to step into the void created by Batista's departure. Castro was now Cuba's political head by default.²

As Castro's control over Cuba was consolidated in the months after his initial seizure of power, a coolness toward the United States began to manifest itself progressively in Cuban foreign policy. What was first excused as "social reform" and "nationalism" soon began to be viewed in the United States as "illegal expropriation" and "anti-Americanism." In addition to verbal attacks on the United States and confiscation of private American economic interests on the island, the Cubans began to establish a close relationship with the Communist bloc.³

American response to these Cuban actions was to try to isolate Cuba. For instance, through economic and political sanctions the United States sought to force Cuban policy into a more amenable mold. These efforts by the United States, coupled with the economic needs of the island (which were exacerbated by United States sanctions) and the self-proclaimed Marxist leanings of Castro, made Castro dependent upon the Communist bloc for his survival. As American pressure threatened Castro, the Soviet Union and other members of the Communist bloc were there to aid and strengthen him. Initially, this aid took the form of trade agreements, but later there were military agreements as well. By mid-July of 1960, the tie between Cuba and the Soviet Union had become so strong that the Soviet Union promised to help defend Cuba against a rumored American invasion, even if it meant that the Russians had to use nuclear missiles to do so.⁴

As the ties between Cuba and the Communist bloc were strengthening, American-Cuban relations correspondingly worsened. Cuba was being armed by the Soviets, and she was using her new power in attempts to subvert other nations in the Caribbean area. These attempts troubled the United States. Consequently, it sought to gain some kind of cooperative venture within the Inter-American system which would unite the hemisphere against Cuba and force her to follow a more acceptable course. Failing in this venture, the United States turned toward unilateral action.⁵

When John F. Kennedy was sworn in as President of the United States, Dwight Eisenhower, the outgoing president, had already terminated relations with Cuba.⁶ In addition, Eisenhower had authorized equipping and training a force of Cuban refugees, whose sole purpose was to launch an attack upon Castro and Cuba. This project continued under President Kennedy. In April 1961, these refugee forces attacked the Cuban coast. An anticipated simultaneous uprising in the cities and countryside by anti-Castro forces failed to take place, primarily because Castro had jailed all those whom he distrusted. Without this simultaneous uprising and without American air cover (which the refugee leaders later said they had been promised), the invasion attempt failed completely.⁷

After the termination of diplomatic and consular relations with Cuba and the failure of the "Bay of Pigs" operation, the United States was forced to reevaluate its position and policies

regarding Cuba. First, the United States used such vehicles as the Organization of American States to attempt to exclude Cuba from the hemispheric community. Second, there was a resumption of American attempts to insulate itself from contact from Cuba.⁸ Nonetheless, while the United States sought to avoid contact with Cuba, especially military contact, the United States did formulate certain contingency plans of a military nature which were related to Cuba.⁹

So the United States sought to avoid conflict. But in the event that American interests were threatened, the United States reserved the right to act. In an August 1962 interview, President Kennedy ruled out an invasion of Cuba under prevailing conditions. However, if these conditions changed, it was obvious that the United States reserved the right to do whatever it deemed necessary to secure its interests.¹⁰ For instance, on 13 September 1962, in a Presidential news conference, President Kennedy said:

If at any time the communist build-up in Cuba were to endanger or to interfere in any way, including our base at Guantamo, our passage to the Panama Canal, our missile and space activities at Cape Canaveral, or the lives of American citizens in this country, or if Cuba should ever attempt to export its aggressive purpose by force or the threat of force against any nation in this hemisphere, or become an offensive military base of significant capacity for the Soviet Union, then this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security and that of its allies.¹¹

President Kennedy's message was absolutely clear: if the military build-up in Cuba reached a level which could present

a serious threat to American interests, the United States would act to remove such threat.

However, the United States' position was not accepted fully by Cuba and its friends of the Communist bloc--especially the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union had promised to help defend Cuba, even if it meant that they had to use nuclear missiles to do so. "The Republic of Cuba," as Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev clearly stated, "can always rely upon the help and support of the Soviet people."¹² Hence, the stage for the event which culminated in the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis is set.

To have a better understanding of the Cuban Missile Crisis and to appreciate its overall significance regarding the Latin American reaction to the United States involvement, it is important to examine the graphic events leading to the crisis. Such examination must include the analysis and interpretation of views and observations of the United States and Latin American countries as expressed in books, documents, and other reliable sources.

UNITED STATES VIEWS/OBSERVATIONS

On the twenty-ninth of August 1962, information was being gathered which would affect President Kennedy's appraisal of the present conditions concerning the military build-up in Cuba. High altitude flights over Cuba by American U-2 surveillance

planes took pictures which verified the presence of Soviet SA-2 anti-aircraft missiles. The pictures revealed eight sites on which this weapon was being emplaced.¹³

President Kennedy's Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, John A. McCone, evaluated the information received about the missiles as indicating something more serious than simply the installation of anti-aircraft missiles to protect Cuba from foreign invasion. Mr. McCone based his evaluation on two reasons: First, the missiles were too expensive. Therefore, they had to be of some intrinsic value to the Soviets. Also, they would not protect Cuba from a low-level attack because American planes could fly in under their effective range. Consequently, the missiles had to be aimed at protecting something which would involve high-level flights. There were high-level reconnaissance flights over Cuba by American planes, and Mr. McCone concluded that these flights were what the Soviets sought to prevent. Second, Mr. McCone believed that Cuba was the logical spot for the Soviets to install medium-range missiles with nuclear warheads. In Cuba, the Soviets were given a launching pad within easy reach of much of the United States. Mr. McCone had suspected since the spring of 1962 that the Soviets might try to install these weapons. Therefore, when the SA-2 missiles' presence was verified, Mr. McCone drew the conclusion that the Soviets were planning to place offensive nuclear missiles in Cuba which could be used against the United States.¹⁴ As a result, President Kennedy

ordered weekly air surveillance of Cuba throughout September 1962.¹⁵

Finally, after thousands of intelligence photos were analyzed, one of the pictures gave evidence of two medium-range ballistic missile sites in the area around San Cristobal, Cuba.¹⁶ In his Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Robert F. Kennedy stated:

On Tuesday morning, October 16, 1962, shortly after 9:00 o'clock, President Kennedy called and asked me to come to the White House. He said only that we were facing great trouble. Shortly afterward, in his office, he told me that a U-2 had just finished a photographic mission and that the Intelligence Community had become convinced that Russia was placing missiles and atomic weapons in Cuba. That was the beginning of the Cuban Missile Crisis.¹⁷

President Kennedy had been provided with proof of the presence of Soviet offensive weapons in Cuba. He asserted that the Soviet Union's "urgent transformation of Cuba into an important strategic base" constituted an "explicit threat to the peace and security of all the Americas" and that the Soviet action flagrantly and deliberately defied the "traditions of this nation (the United States) and hemisphere." Moreover, the President noted that "the nations of Latin America have never previously been subject to a potential nuclear threat."¹⁸ Accordingly, to preserve freedom and protect democracy in the Western Hemisphere, the Soviet threat had to be eliminated. The United States had to take immediate action. Such action led to the Cuban blockade or quarantine, resulting in a crisis which brought the world close

to a nuclear destruction. In The Missile Crisis, author Elie Abel states:

Through thirteen beautiful October days in 1962, the young President of the United States played nuclear poker with Nikita Khrushchev and won. How close we came to Armageddon I did not fully realize until I started researching this book.¹⁹

The United States' rationale for its involvement in the Cuban Missile Crisis can be summarized by stating that the United States' primary goal was to eliminate the Soviet nuclear threat. Thus the United States would preserve specific American interests: First, the decision-makers were concerned with the preservation of American security. The missiles were viewed as a direct threat to American security. They represented a significant increase in the nuclear capability of the Soviet Union, enabling the Soviet Union to launch an attack upon the United States with little warning. Second, the Soviet missiles adversely affected American prestige and influence. The United States would no longer be without serious challenge in the Western Hemisphere, and that could decrease American influence in Latin America. More important, however, other allies might begin to doubt American defense commitments and resolution. For instance, faced with a serious deterrent capability on its southern border, the United States might not choose to act to uphold its commitments. Furthermore, the fact that it allowed such a deterrent force to be developed might be viewed as a lack of resolve and will on the part of the United States. Third, the Soviet action in placing the missiles in Cuba was viewed as a

serious threat to peace not only in the Western Hemisphere but in the world as a whole.²⁰

In essence, as viewed by the United States, the Soviet efforts to conceal the missile shipments, and even to deny that the shipments had taken place, together with the speed with which the Soviet Union acted may have left the United States with no alternative but the use of its military power. There was no time to seek a more peaceful solution to the crisis. In other words, by the time a United States' or an Organization of American States' request for United Nations authorization of quarantine measures had been acted on by the General Assembly, the Soviet Union would have accomplished its purpose of deploying a significant strategic nuclear capacity to Cuba. The United States realized that the threat could not have been prevented by action through the United Nations. Immediate action to eliminate the threat was needed, because once the Soviet nuclear weapons had been established, it would have become incomparably more difficult, if not impossible, to secure the removal of that threat without a major war. There was no time for a more peaceful solution to the situation. For President Kennedy, the best course of action to prevent the passage of Soviet nuclear weapons to Cuba was to order an immediate quarantine of the island.

LATIN AMERICAN VIEWS/OBSERVATIONS

It is obvious that the account of any story varies from source to source. On one side, the United States saw the installation of the Soviet missiles in Cuba as a threat to the United States security. On the other hand, Cuba lived under the constant threat of an American invasion.²¹ Fidel Castro maintained that President Kennedy ordered a full-scale plan for an invasion of Cuba.²²

Based on the fear of an American invasion, Fidel Castro asked the Soviets for military assistance. The Soviets supplied him with tanks, artillery, anti-aircraft guns, and some fighter planes.²³ With these new weapons, Castro was able to repel the "Bay of Pigs" invasion. As a matter of fact, Nikita S. Khrushchev made the following comment about the invasion:

We first heard on the radio that a counter-revolutionary invasion had been launched against Cuba. We didn't even know who the invaders were; were they Cuban conspirators or Americans? However, we knew that no matter under whose banner the invasion was launched, it had to have the backing of the Americans.²⁴

Fidel Castro was victorious during the "Bay of Pigs" invasion. After the invaders were defeated and most of them taken prisoners, Castro declared triumphantly that the revolution had "destroyed... the army organized during many months by the imperialist government of the United States."²⁵ Castro's victory was welcomed by the nations of the Communist block, but at

the same time they felt that the "Bay of Pigs" invasion was only the beginning and that the Americans would not let Cuba alone. For these reasons, Cuba turned to the Soviet Union for further assistance. The Soviet Union maintained that Cuba had to be defended against further American sponsored invasions.

Furthermore, the Soviets asked the following: "By what right and by what law does the United States of America organize and direct aggressive action against another country while accusing it of establishing a different social system, a different type of state from the type the United States had wanted to see?"²⁶ At that point the Soviet Union unequivocally indicated that it had taken a stand on the side of the Cuban people and that it would continue to do so, as was customary among people of friendly sovereign states. The Soviet Union also said that in helping Cuba, it was defending the right, sacred to all people, of freedom and independent existence.²⁷ Hence came the commitment by the Soviet Union to defend Cuba from unprovoked aggression. "The Republic of Cuba" as Nikita Khrushchev clearly stated, "can always rely upon the help and support of the Soviet people."²⁸ Therefore, to ensure the proper defense of Cuba, the installation of the missiles was necessary.

Nikita Khrushchev's official rationale was that Soviet strategic weapons were deployed in Cuba solely to defend the island against a United States attack. So once the threat of such an attack was removed by the United States President's conditional undertaking not to launch one, the Soviet weapons, having served

their purpose, would be withdrawn and peace preserved.²⁹ The Soviet position was further supported by a statement made by Ambassador Garcia-Inchaustequi--the Cuban Ambassador to the United Nations:

Were the United States able to give us proof, by word and deed, that it would not carry out aggression against our country, then, we declare solemnly before you here and now, our weapons would be unnecessary and our army redundant.³⁰

It appears thus far that the Cuban Missile Crisis only saw three players--United States, Soviet Union, and Cuba. However, throughout the ordeal of crisis, with the exception of Cuba, the Latin American nations for the most part supported the United States' position and expressed their views on the matter. These views were primarily voiced through the Organ of Consultation of the Organization of American States. For instance, the Organ for Consultation acted to recommend that members of the organization needed to take all measures, individually and collectively, including the use of armed forces, to prevent Soviet military material and related supplies which might threaten the peace and security of the American continent from reaching Cuba.³¹ In addition, the proclamation for the imposition of the quarantine against Cuba makes specific reference to the Organization of American States' resolution to support the United States' action against Cuba and the Soviet shipment of strategic weapons to Cuba.³² In fact, the Organization of American States' resolution recited that:

Incontrovertible evidence has appeared that the Government of Cuba, despite repeated warnings, has secretly endangered the peace of the Continent by permitting the Sino-Soviet powers to have intermediate and middle-range missiles on its territory capable of carrying nuclear warheads....³³

This statement clearly indicates that the quarantine was not a unilateral action by the United States. The United States received support from its Latin American friends. Members of the Organization of American States felt that peace had been endangered by the Soviets' deployment of nuclear missiles in Cuba. It was their consensus that the implications of such build-up was not defensive in nature and therefore could only be for the purpose of threatening both the United States and Latin America with nuclear bombardment.

There are endless accounts of the Cuban Missile Crisis which provide detailed rationale for the termination of the crisis. The real reason that the Soviet Union withdraw the missiles from Cuba, perhaps, will never be known. The fact remains that the missiles were taken from Cuba and the United States pledged publicly not to invade Cuba.

Although the missile crisis came to an end, Latin American nations felt that the episode basically resulted in the annulment of the Monroe Doctrine. Such annulment, they feel, now breeds fear and doubt where there had formerly been a large measure of confidence.³⁴

This statement is rooted on the fact that one of the concessions obtained by Premier Khrushchev in 1962 from President Kennedy in exchange for the removal of the missiles from Cuba was the pledge of "no invasion" of Cuba by the United States. Latin America viewed President Kennedy's decision as a mighty blow at the foundations of society in the Americas. In his Dagger in the Heart: American Policy Failures in Cuba, Mario Lazo explains that "under the banners of a self-righteous 'liberalism,' the American government made a series of policy choices with respect to Cuba that can be fairly called 'decisions of disaster'."³⁵ The climax of such choices is found in the settlement of the missile crisis, which guaranteed a protected sanctuary for communism, without time limit and without consent by other nations directly concerned.³⁶

The impact of the "no invasion" guarantee has been felt by Latin American countries, especially by those in the Central America and Caribbean areas. They must live with the fact that Cuba--under no fear of invasion--has developed into a powerful base, sophisticated and effective, for subverting the hemisphere. Latin America felt that United States final concessions for the withdrawal of the missiles from Cuba basically left Cuba untouchable and free to act at will and without fear of outside intervention--primarily by the United States.

Latin America's reaction to President Kennedy's pledge of "no invasion" of Cuba gives evidence of reduced confidence and trust in the United States' ability to defend and secure the Americas. For instance, in March 1968, the President of Argentina stated that "Latin America could no longer rely on the United States for protection against communist aggression. The United States did not come out a clear winner during the Cuban Missile Crisis."³⁷ "Latin America," he also stated, "would have to follow a go-it-alone policy for its own defense and security."³⁸

Fearful of unchallenged Cuban interference in the hemisphere, Latin American nations were extremely concerned with President Kennedy's "no invasion" pledge. But Cuba interpreted the situation entirely differently. From the on-set of the crisis, Cuba saw the United States' reaction to the installation of the Soviet missiles as a United States involvement in Cuban internal affairs and as a means to induce a provocation by which it could justify an invasion of the island. As a result, Cuba had to take measures to protect herself against such aggression and prepare her people not only to repel the Americans but to initiate subversive action against the so-called United States' "puppet nations" of Latin America. Thus, one of the saddest consequences of the missile crisis was that the new generation in Cuba is being systematically indoctrinated with the idea that the United States is the embodiment of everything evil and that the United States must eventually be destroyed. The whole life of

the country is saturated by anti-American propaganda, and the job is done with typical communist thoroughness. The unvarying communist line calls for struggle against the "Yankee" devils and their "puppet" nations of Latin America.³⁹

In the view of Mario Lazo, Latin America is paying a high price as a result of the United States involvement in the Cuban Missile Crisis. Cuba's hatred of the United States is being reflected in the Cuban support of subversive actions throughout Latin America. Perhaps if the United States had not made the "no invasion" pledge, Cuba would be reluctant to support communism and Latin America would be free of communist insurgencies. Such certainly is a widespread, respected Latin American view.⁴⁰

Latin America considers the communist movements throughout the hemisphere as resulting from Cuban influence behind the protective shield of Kennedy's "no invasion" pledge. It fears that the communist expansion will worsen with the passage of time.⁴¹

Latin American believes that the best brains of the Communist Empire meet in Cuba secretly and openly to conspire and plot the destruction of democracy in the Western Hemisphere. In fact, in January 1966 delegates from several communist parties and liberation fronts met in Havana, Cuba. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss their common struggle against imperialism. As a result, a "Permanent Committee of Assistance to Movements at War with Imperialism" was set up with headquarters in Havana--its purpose to synchronize and promote armed revolution throughout Latin America.⁴²

The nations of Latin America, according to Mario Lazo, believe that the United States' failure to take necessary action against communist expansion is part of the cost of the decisions made during the Cuban Missile Crisis.⁴³ He further emphasizes that four years prior to the Missile Crisis, President Kennedy had announced at a press conference that "If Cuba should ever attempt to export its aggressive purposes by force or the threat of force against any nation in this hemisphere...this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security and that of its allies."⁴⁴ Because of the "no invasion" concession, President Kennedy's pledge proved to be meaningless. Latin American countries feel that Cuba will continue to export and support communism throughout Latin America and that the United States cannot attack the problems at the source--Cuba.

SUMMARY

The Cuban Missile Crisis arose, perhaps, from misconceptions of two major powers and the fight for survival of a new social system. On one side, the United States saw in the Cuban armament a threat to world peace and security and of communist expansion. On the other hand, the Soviets acted on the basis that it saw a fellow government in threat of invasion. In the middle, the newly formed social system of Castro Cuba was seeking survival.

Who was on the correct side? Was there a correct side? The fact remains that the Cuban Missile Crisis marks the closest the world has yet to come nuclear destruction.

Important, however, is also the fact that the communist revolution in Cuba lent a new perspective to world opinion about affairs in Latin America. The direct participation by the Soviet Union in Cuba forced Latin American nations to take notice of the United States involvement in Latin American internal affairs. As a result, Latin American countries were able to form and sustain a new opinion of the United States.

Throughout the Cuban Missile Crisis, the United States received total support from its Latin American friends. It was a consensus among Latin American nations that the Soviet deployment of strategic nuclear weapons to Cuba was a threat to the peace and security of the Western Hemisphere. Consequently, they supported the United States' efforts to have such a threat removed. What was not supported, however, was President Kennedy's pledge of "no invasion" of Cuba by the United States. Latin America viewed President Kennedy's pledge as a mighty blow at the foundation of society in the Americas. Latin America felt that the pledge of "no invasion" guaranteed a protected sanctuary for communism. Such a guarantee has adversely affected the development of democracies in the region. Cuba, without the fear of invasion, has developed into a powerful base, sophisticated and

effective, for subverting the Western Hemisphere--especially Central America and the Caribbean nations.

Certainly the Latin American nations understood that the Soviet strategic nuclear weapons had to be removed from Cuba. As a result, they supported the United States during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Their concern, however, finally concentrated on the pledge of "no invasion" made by President Kennedy in exchange for the removal of the missiles. They felt that the United States' final concession for the withdrawal of the missiles basically left Cuba untouchable and free to act at will in support of communist expansion. Because of such pledge of "no Invasion," Latin American nations feel that the United States has lost its flexibility to defend and secure the Americas from communist expansion.

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CHAPTER III

THE UNITED STATES MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN 1965

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the 1960s, the United States used its military power to intervene in the internal affairs of Latin American nations. In 1962, the United States used its military forces to enforce a quarantine over the island of Cuba. In 1965, the United States sent its troops to the Dominican Republic to protect United States citizens and prevent a communist takeover of that nation government.¹

There was much political instability in the Dominican Republic prior to Rafael Trujillo's regime, which began in 1930. For more than a hundred years, the country's oligarchy of elite families vied for leadership of the nation, ruling the Republic. They furnished its presidents and generals and dominated its business and finance. But they did not provide political stability.² After Trujillo's assassination on 30 May 1961, conventional arguments surfaced and political participation expanded.

Consequently, instability over the next few years was of a wholly different type, reflecting a struggle between the oligarchy and the reformers, drawn primarily from the middle sectors.³ In explaining the aftermath of the Trujillo dictatorship, Abraham F. Lowenthal in The Dominican Republic: The Politics of Chaos cites Doctor Howard J. Wiarda's observation:

In the Dominican Republic, the more traditional groups--the armed forces, the Church, and the business, professional land-holding elite--were considerably stronger and better organized than the more "modern" groups--the political parties, the labor sector, and the peasantry. When the traditional groups worked together they were able to completely dominate the country. This imbalance ultimately caused failure of the first attempt to build a pluralist democracy, represented by the overthrow of the democratically-elected, constitutional, and reform-minded government of Juan Bosch and the break-up of the system.⁴

Lowenthal also states that political instability experienced by the Dominican Republic after Trujillo's death finally resulted in the chaotic and bloody civil war of 1965.⁵ So in fact, the assassination of Trujillo did not pave the way for a peaceful and orderly transition of power.

The Trujillo dictatorship did not collapse with his assassination. Instead, power continued in the hands of his son, Rafael Trujillo, Jr. Even though Juan Balaguer was the President of the Republic, the important decisions were made by the Trujillo family. However, Trujillo's system of absolute personal control over the country had not prepared any group or persons,

including his son, to fill his shoes. Consequently, the dictatorship began almost immediately to disintegrate.⁶

The ruling Trujillos were caught in a political dilemma. On one side, the economic sanctions imposed by the Organization of America States remained in effect. On the other hand, the groups who had plotted to assassinate Trujillo pressured his son to end the dictatorship so that the sanctions would be lifted. Trujillo, Jr. began to initiate a few reforms. In a series of moves to get sanctions lifted, he began to reduce police brutality, gave some of his wealth to the people, forced some people out (including his two uncles--Hector and Arismendi Trujillo), and allowed formation of opposition movements.⁷ Finally, the United States, in response to the limited reforms, suggested to the Organization of American States lifting some of the sanctions. The Trujillos, however, felt they had initiated sufficient reforms to get all the sanctions lifted.

Trujillo's son abruptly resigned his position and fled the country. His resignation left a power vacuum which his uncles--Arismendi--attempted to fill. Anticipating that the Dominican Republic would return to a totalitarian dictatorship and fearing a possible communist involvement, the United States started naval maneuvers three miles off the Dominican Republic, manifesting its opposition to Trujillo's brothers. The Dominican armed forces also refused the Trujillos' power grab and declared their alliance to President Balaguer. The Trujillos capitulated.

On 20 November 1961, together with other family members and associates, they flew into exile. This event marked the end of the Trujillo era.⁸

With the Trujillos gone, President Balaguer sought to counter his affiliation with the Trujillos and cultivate a popular following of his own by distributing government properties. But his efforts to stay in power were not sufficient. He finally resigned on 16 January 1962 and a new civil-military junta was sworn in to take over the government. This movement was considered a military coup d'etat, led by Major General Rafael Rodriguez-Echevaria. However, General Echevaria was imprisoned and Doctor Rafael Bonnelly was approved as the new President.⁹

A new era in Dominican history began. Freedom was now manifested in nearly all aspects of Dominican life. The United States began to pour in enormous amounts of money, manpower, and technical aid in an effort to help the Government master the difficulties of transition. Additionally, a number of international organizations began to tackle the country's many problems.¹⁰

Political activity also flourished in the Dominican Republic. A number of political parties came into existence. Finally, after thirty-eight years of dictatorship, Dominicans had a free election on 20 December 1962. The elections were won by Juan Bosch and his Dominican Revolutionary Party. Bosch was

inaugurated as President on 27 February 1963, carrying with him into office the hopes of most Dominicans, of many Latin Americans, and of the United States Government. He was known as the candidate of the "have-nots."¹¹

Largely self-educated, President Bosch was not well-informed on many subjects he had to deal with as President. However, he faced problems that would have given any President pause. He faced the terrible legacy of Trujillo. He faced the inherent economic problems and the entire terrible history of the Republic--nothing to build on. Additionally, he was caught between the left and the right. He owed political debts to the left for voting for him. He was opposed by the right--by remnants of the political parties he had defeated, by much of the oligarchy, and by nearly all of the rising business middle class. He was also viewed with grave suspicion by segments of the military and the Church.¹² In essence, the Dominican Republic had an elected president, but the elements of the political instability in the Republic remained constant.

The months following Juan Bosch's inauguration as President did not provide the stability and political rest needed by the troubled nation. Finally, on 25 September 1963 a military coup ousted President Bosch and his government. He was deported into exile, and a three-man civilian junta was sworn in as the ruling body. The impression among United States officials and Latin American diplomats was that the Junta was primarily a "front" for

General Imbert Barrera, who was regarded as the chief power behind the coup.¹³ Thus the United States suspended diplomatic relations with the Dominican Republic and halted economic and military aid to that country.¹⁴

The tensions and political instability in the Dominican Republic continued. To gain some control over the situation, in November 1963 the Civilian Junta announced that "municipal elections would be held on January 15, 1965, elections for the Constituent Assembly on March 15, 1965, for Congress on June 24, 1965, and for President on July 15, 1965."¹⁵ As a result of such moves, the United States extended diplomatic recognition to the Civilian Junta, and in March 1964 authorized the release of economic aid for education and public works.¹⁶ However, the situation in the Dominican Republic continued to be tense. On 10 June 1964 in an interview in New York, former President Juan Bosch predicted that a revolution against the Civilian Junta would be initiated soon. He declared:

Corruption is so wide-spread in political and military ranks that it is undermining the politico-military dictatorship led by Donald Reid Cabral, Chief of the Junta...Everything that could be pocketed has been. Given the limited economic possibilities of the country, the looters are falling out among themselves.¹⁷

Political unrest in the Dominican Republic continued, and on 14 April 1965 another military coup ousted the Civilian Junta. The Army wanted to re-install the exiled Juan Bosch in the presidency, but the Air Force and the Navy opposed his return.

The situation in the Republic deteriorated rapidly. Mobs took to the streets chanting for the return of Bosch. There was also looting and arson.¹⁸ In addition, the discord between the armed forces continued, increasing the potential for armed clash among them.

As the situation worsened in the Republic and fighting between the armed forces broke out, the United States Embassy announced that the United States Navy was prepared to evacuate United States citizens who wanted to leave the area. Then about one thousand United States citizens were taken aboard Navy ships. (There were then about 2,500 United States Citizens in the Dominican Republic.)¹⁹

Eventually, the Dominican Air Force, Navy, and some Army forces united against former President Bosch's supporters. The pro-Bosch military-civilian revolt collapsed after heavy fighting in which hundreds were reportedly killed. However, the collapse of Bosch's supporters did not end the hostilities--fighting continued.²⁰

Concerned about the safety of United States citizens in the Dominican Republic, Lyndon B. Johnson, then the President of the United States, announced that 400 United States Marines would be sent to the Dominican Republic to help evacuate United States citizens.²¹ Hence, on 28 April 1965 the United States landed

American troops on the shores of the Dominican Republic, marking another event in the history of United States military intervention in Latin American internal affairs.²²

Since the arrival of American troops on Dominican shores, the motives and methods used by the United States have been a subject of critics and controversies. On one side, the United States' official explanation regarding the military intervention has been rejected by those who maintain that: 1) the danger to American lives was used as a pretext for an intervention that was political in nature, and 2) the communist threat was exaggerated. Therefore, these critics affirm that the revolution was an uprising by the people in search of certain reforms. They claim that negating the seriousness of the crisis and sustaining that situation could have taken place through the use of less drastic measures. In their opinion, the use of the United States military power was unnecessary. On the other hand, however, some assert that the United States had to act according to the opportunity and use the necessary methods to control the situation at hand.

To have a better understanding of the United States military intervention in the Dominican Republic and to appreciate its overall significance regarding the Latin America reaction to such intervention, it is important to examine the incident closely. The examination will expose the views and observations of the

United States and Latin American countries as expressed in books, documents, and other reliable sources.

UNITED STATES VIEWS/OBSERVATIONS

The official explanations given by the United States for the troop landings in the Dominican Republic have been challenged by many--allies and adversaries as well. One of the explanations given was that "hundreds" of United citizens were in danger of being killed. The other reason was that there was a danger of the Dominican Republic becoming another Cuba because the Communists were taking over the revolutionary army. Eugenio Chang-Rodriguez, in The Lingering Crisis: A Case Study of the Dominican Republic, asserts that neither of the two explanations account for what actually was happening in the Dominican Republic. He also states that the most likely explanation was probably that Thomas Mann, then United States Under Secretary of State, and Mr. Tapley Bennet, then the United States Ambassador in the Dominican Republic, favored the military junta and convinced the United States' President to put troops ashore.²³ Notwithstanding the criticism received, the United States asserted that it had to take the necessary action to control the situation at hand.

The reports received by United States officials indicted that during the month of April 1965 the situation in the Dominican Republic became more and more chaotic. The Republic was almost in a state of anarchy. Faced with such a situation,

Ambassador Bennet and his country team therefore unanimously agreed that all authority in the Dominican Republic had deteriorated to the point where the police could no longer protect the lives of Americans or other non-Dominican citizens. They concluded that there was a serious threat to the lives of United States' citizens and other foreign nationals residing in the Dominican Republic. As a result of this determination, Ambassador Bennet suggested to the United States that the time had come to give serious considerations of intervention. In fact, not only was the Ambassador concerned with the immediate danger to the lives of United States' citizens but also with the possible communist seizure of power as well. "If the situation continues to deteriorate," stated the Ambassador, "it was the embassy's opinion that power would be assumed by groups identified with the Communists."²⁴ It seemed that what the Ambassador was interpreting was not mere speculation about a communist threat but rather evidence of a well calculated scheme by communist infiltrators. To substantiate that claim, it is necessary to examine the contents of an article published in Est & Ouest, a Paris bimonthly issued by the anti-communist association "d'Etudes et d'Informations Politiques Internationales." According to Est & Ouest:

The root of the matter was that since November 1964 all the Latin American Communists, urged on by the Soviet Union, decided and publicly proclaimed that the Caribbean region must be regarded as an area of revolutionary decision and action, that every means, including force, should be used and that the Communist International would be mobilized in their behalf...The fact is that it was not what happened in Santo Domingo that set

Latin America on fire. The flames had been steadily spreading for six months to many different countries on the continent when the stop signal went up in a key country in the Caribbean...Communism's own publicized plans for Latin America are the basic cause of their country's misfortunes.²⁵

Undoubtedly, the contents of above article gave the United States reasons for great concerns with the situation in the Dominican Republic. Consequently, based on the reports received about the evolution of the crisis in the Republic, coupled with the possibility of a Communist take over, United States President Lyndon B. Johnson saw no alternatives to sending United States' troops to assist in the evacuation of American citizens and in the control of the situation. Therefore, on 28 April 1965, over a nation-wide television President Johnson announced that "400 Marines have been landed to protect the lives of Americans and other non-Dominicans."²⁶ As the situation worsened, however, the number of persons seeking evacuation increased rapidly--the total number approximated 5,000.²⁷ The increased number of evacuees necessitated landing reinforcing troops. Consequently, additional United States troops landed on Dominican soil. Before the crisis was over, the United States had sent more than 20,000 troops to the Dominican Republic.²⁸

As justification for this direct military intervention in the Dominican Republic, the United States listed four major objectives: 1) the protection of American and other foreign

lives, 2) the halting of violence, 3) the prevention of a Communist seizure of power, and 4) the opening of an option to the Dominican people to choose their leaders in a free election.²⁹

These objectives were recognized and acknowledged by Latin American countries. However, they openly opposed the United States decision to take unilateral action, without prior consultation with the Organization of American States. In response to the opposition presented by the Latin American nations, the United States declared that the pressing danger to Americans arose so quickly that time did not permit prior consultation with any country, especially, the Organization of American States. An immediate action was necessary. In addition, the United States also explained that even though the Organization of American States' charter obligates its members (the United States is a member) not to intervene in the internal affairs of other states, no international commitment precludes the United States from taking action to protect the lives of its nationals, if local authorities are unable to provide such protection. The United States asserted that such were the conditions in the Dominican Republic, which provided full justification for the United States unilateral military intervention. Furthermore, the United States asserted that even after the people had been evacuated, no obligations required the United States to withdraw its forces immediately, especially while there was still no local means for keeping order in the Dominican Republic. The United States emphasized that withdrawal would have been an irresponsible act,

for such action would have allowed the resumption of civil revolt, the loss of additional lives, and the possible communist seizure of power in the government. If the reasons given were not sufficient justification, the United States also interpreted the situation in the Dominican Republic as a major threat to the security of the Western Hemisphere. Hence, once the troops were committed, there was no reason to withdraw them until the situation was under control and the government had been placed in the hands of competent civilian authorities--a democratic electoral process. In fact, the United States' position was that the initial and continued presence of American troops made it possible for the Organization of American States to function in a manner authorized by the Charter: the troops assisted the people of the Dominican Republic to reestablish a democratic government.³⁰

In summary, the United States maintained that its unilateral decision to intervene in the Dominican Republic was fully justified. If the United States had not taken immediate action and sent troops to the Dominican Republic, many American and other foreign lives would have been lost and the government in the Republic would have fallen in the hands of a Marxist-Leninist regime--such as Cuba's. As President Johnson stated, "the pressing danger to American lives arose so quickly that the time did not permit prior consultation with the Organization of American States--there was no alternative to sending troops to the Dominican Republic."³¹

LATIN AMERICAN VIEWS/OBSERVATIONS

Examination of the United States' explanations for landing United States troops in the Dominican Republic in April 1965 does support the justification that there was a serious threat to foreign nationals residing in the Republic. It further supports the justification that there was the opportunity for a Communist seizure of power in the government. Conclusively, the United States used such reasons as the basis for deciding unilaterally to intervene militarily in the Dominican Republic.

As United States' troops were landing in the Dominican Republic, the United States began efforts to notify Ambassadors of the Organization of American States' countries of the problem at hand and of the limited action taken. However, some Latin American diplomats expressed concern that the United States' decision was made without consulting hemispheric leaders, indicating that the landings of American troops on Dominican soil was viewed as a return of "gunboat" diplomacy.³² In essence, the United States' action in sending in American troops without prior consultation with anyone--especially with the Organization of American States--was condemned on all grounds. Such a description of the United States' military intervention in the Dominican Republic is found in the following statement:

It was a violation of the Charter of the Organization of American States, said many papers; it was American imperialism, said others (and not Communist papers); it was morally wrong, it was ethically wrong, it was politically wrong. And the American explanations that followed--that this country was afraid the Communists might "capture" the revolution--only made bad matters worse.³³

As illustrated in above statement, many Latin American countries believed that President Johnson had precipitated actions in the Dominican Republic. Certainly, no support for the United States' action was given by Brazil's liberal daily Correio da Manha (Morning Post), which compared the United States' military intervention in the Dominican Republic with the German invasion of Belgium in 1914. As published in the "World Press Comment", the Correio da Manha stated:

The invasion of the Dominican Republic by the Marines reduced the O.A.S. treaties, agreements and principles to so many scraps of paper. In the same way, Germany turned international agreements into scraps of paper when it invaded Belgium in 1914: its government then declared that no "scraps of paper" would prevent it from protecting its vital interests. Moreover, what happened in the Dominican Republic poses a physical and formal threat to the sovereignty of all the republics on the hemisphere.³⁴

Ironically, Brazil had always sided with the United States in the fight against the expansion of Communism in the Western Hemisphere.

Moreover, Brazil was not the only Latin American country concerned over the United States' actions in the Dominican Republic. In a note of sarcasm, the newspaper Expreso of Lima, Peru,

thanked President Johnson for at last making it possible for all Peruvians to agree on something:

The United States Government's serious mistake in sending troops to Santo Domingo has had one good effect as far as Peru is concerned. For the first time, at least for our present administration, all shades of opinion from extreme Right to extreme left, have reached unanimous agreement on one point: they all condemn the intervention of the Marines in the internal politics of any Latin American country.³⁵

Thus far it is obvious that Latin America felt that President Johnson acted hastily. He acted unilaterally, and such action adversely affected the United States' ability to exercise its influence in the area. Another example of the Latin American reaction to the United States unilateral action, which further supports the judgments that President Johnson acted hastily, is found in the Colombian press: The liberal Espectador of Bogota, Colombia, even expressed doubts concerning the seriousness of Communist Castro's threat. Additionally, the Espectador declared that President Johnson's rapid dispatch of his chief advisers to speak to the governments of Latin American countries indicated the seriousness of the situation in the Dominican Republic. However, the newspaper also emphasized that President Johnson had proceeded in the reverse order, indicating that if he had consulted with the Latin American nations prior to sending troops, the results might have been more positive and less confusing.³⁶ In summary, the Espectador expressed Columbia's disapproval of the United States' unilateral action in the following statement:

The principle of no-intervention is too important, too long established, too precise and too vital to the maintenance of national sovereignty to justify the risks that unilateral action involves. We can only hope that too much has not been lost and that the O.A.S. will be able to change those outward manifestations that have made the landings so unpopular and the risks so grave.³⁷

Columbia reacted not only to the United States unilateral decision to send troops to the Dominican Republic but also expressed concern with the impact or side effects this decision would have throughout the rest of Latin America. For instance, the Espectador also stated that:

Even assuming that the Castro threat to take over the Dominican Republic was substantial and clear, as it is said to be, the landing of Marines does not seem to have proved as effective in combating the movement as the O.A.S. would have been if it had considered the matter. Since no one can say what would have happened had the Marines not landed, the unilateral decision by the United States to put them ashore has become a powerful propaganda instrument in the hands of Castro and the Communists.³⁸

The Dominican Republic itself was no exception to the Latin American disagreement with United States explanations for the military intervention. For example, Rafael Molina-Morillo, an anti-Communist, commented in the Dominican illustrated weekly Ahora that the Dominicans like democracy but simply hated the way the men who were governing the United States treated their Latin American neighbors. He further indicated in reaction to the United States military involvement that the United States demonstrated a low regard for Latin Americans and their dignity:

"Under the anti-Communist banner", stated Molina, "the United States invaded Dominican territory, displaying total disregard for the country's national sovereignty."³⁹ As he explained, such action provided the base for a vast wave of nationalism, which enabled the Communists to launch an effective propaganda campaign. Molina-Morillo further stated that "the masses, their dignity wounded, innocently join the Reds, convinced by demagogues that the Communists are their allies. Thus the Yankees force the people into the arms of Moscow and Peking."⁴⁰

Discontent with President Johnson's administration and his way of intervening in the Dominican Republic grew stronger throughout Latin America. Criterio, a liberal Roman Catholic monthly published in Buenos Aires, Argentina, added Argentina's comments to those expressed by other Latin American nations:

The Big Northern Power now claims for itself the right to judge and classify Latin American governments and to act upon its judgment, as it did in the Dominican Republic...In addition, unilateral intervention by the United States can serve only to consolidate injustice and create new revolutionary situations.⁴¹

It seems that the United States' unilateral action in the Dominican Republic was viewed as a threat to the national sovereignty of the Latin American nations. Hence, open criticism of the United States' unilateral action was voiced throughout the area. In fact, sweetness and light were notably lacking in the Latin American press as far as the United States was concerned, even several months after the conclusion of the Dominican crisis.

For example, Latin America openly opposed a resolution passed by the United States House of Representatives which proclaimed the right of unilateral United States' intervention to "avert a Communist threat" anywhere in Latin America. The resolution was taken with understandable seriousness by all shades of opinion in Latin America. Lima's conservative La Prensa responded that:

As to be expected, the resolution adopted by the United States House was received with dismay and shock in Latin American political circles. Latin America is traditionally opposed to intervention, even when it is authorized by a majority within the O.A.S. The memory of U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic is still fresh. It may have been well-intentioned but it was certainly illegal.⁴²

The Latin American countries for the most part do not oppose United States actions to protect the security and preserve the democratic principles in the Western Hemisphere. In fact, historically most Latin American countries have supported the United States in its direct involvement in hemispheric affairs. Such was the case during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, when the United States received total support from its Latin American friends. It appears that in relation to the security of the Western Hemisphere and the preservation of freedom, Latin American nations shared the same concerns with the United States. Without doubt, in any situation where the security of the hemisphere and the preservation of freedom are in jeopardy, the Latin American nations align with the United States. However, there is

an increasing concern throughout Latin America over the United States' habitual pattern of making independent decisions and taking unilateral actions in the internal affairs of other countries. Therefore, more and more Latin American nations ask to be consulted in issues concerning their internal affairs. No longer do they accept United States' unilateral decisions. This was the case during the 1965 revolution in the Dominican Republic, when Latin American nations openly opposed the United States' unilateral decision to send troops. If the United States had consulted with the Organization of American States prior to sending the troops, perhaps their explanations would not have been subject to the severe criticism and controversies following the Dominican crisis.

SUMMARY

The official explanations given by the United States for its military intervention in the Dominican Republic internal affairs have remained subject to criticism and controversy. Undoubtedly, the United States felt that there was a serious threat to lives of foreign nationals in the Dominican Republic. The United States believed that a such threat justified the initial landing of United States troops on Dominican soil. The United States maintained that the pressing danger to American and other foreign nationals lives and the possible communist seizure of power arose so quickly that time did not permit prior consultation with the Organization of American States. Therefore, immediate action to

control the situation was necessary. Additionally, the United States asserted that immediate withdrawal of its forces from the Dominican Republic while there was still no local means for keeping law and order would have been an irresponsible act, for withdrawal would have allowed for the resumption of civil revolt, loss of more lives, the communist seizure of power, and ultimately the endangerment to the security and peace in the Western Hemisphere. Thus even though, the United States acted without prior consultation, its initial landing and continued presence of American troops made it possible for the Organization of American States to function in a manner authorized by the Charter, assisting the people of the Dominican Republic to reestablish a democratic government.

The United States explanations, however, were not accepted by Latin American countries. These countries objected that: 1) the danger to American lives was used as a pretext for an intervention that was political in nature and 2) the communist threat was exaggerated. Nonetheless, the biggest Latin American concern and most serious opposition to the United States' military involvement in the Dominican Republic were against the United States unilateral decision to send troops. Perhaps many Latin American countries, including Brazil, Honduras, Mexico, Argentina, and Columbia, believed that there was a serious threat to American and other foreign nationals lives and that a communist

seizure of power was possible. What these and other Latin American countries feared, though, was the United States unilateral use of military forces. These countries maintained that if the United States did not hesitate to use its military forces to intervene in the internal affairs of the Dominican Republic, what would preclude it from taking similar action in other countries of the region? Latin American countries felt that such actions would place their national sovereignty in total jeopardy. Therefore, no longer could they allow the United States to take unilateral action in the internal affairs of another nation. To ensure that future actions are conducted in total coordination through existing organizations and diplomatic bodies, they expressed strong opposition to the United States during the Dominican Republic crisis. Therefore, future United States actions will require statesmanship in the United States, in the Organization of American States, and in any other Latin American country facing similar circumstances.

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CHAPTER IV

COMPARISON

The United States has long been interested and involved in the affairs of Latin America. This interest was evident by the time President James Monroe declared the Monroe Doctrine in his annual message of 1823. President Monroe declared that any attempt on the part of European powers to extend their influence to any portion of the Western Hemisphere would be considered by the United States as dangerous to its peace and safety.¹

Yet it is not entirely clear that the Monroe Doctrine has been the driving force behind United States' involvement in Latin American affairs. The fact remains, however, that throughout its history the United States has constantly influenced, directly or indirectly, Latin American affairs. These involvements have ranged from economic assistance to direct military intervention, including the use of American troops. These involvements have been subject to scrutiny by nations throughout the world, particularly by the Latin American countries. Each time the United States has gotten involved, the Latin American nations have expressed their views and observations in accord with the nature

of the event. These views and observations have ranged from total support to complete opposition. A comparison of the Latin American reactions to the United States involvement during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and the Dominican Republic Revolution of 1965 illustrates how different Latin American reactions to United States activities can be.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, the United States asserted that the Soviet Union's urgent transformation of Cuba into an important strategic nuclear base constituted an explicit threat to the peace and security of all the Americas. The United States held that the Soviet action flagrantly and deliberately defied the traditions of the United States and the Western Hemisphere. Accordingly, to preserve freedom, protect democracy, and provide security on the hemisphere, the Soviet threat had to be eliminated. The United States had to take immediate action to prevent the passage of Soviet nuclear weapons to Cuba and proceeded to execute a blockade or quarantine of the island.

An examination of the Cuban Missile Crisis obviously reveals that the United States had valid justifications for the quarantine action against Cuba. Yet, examination of the Cuba's and Soviet Union's views reveals that the official rationale for the deployment of strategic nuclear weapons to Cuba was solely to defend the island against United States attack. They asserted that once the United States gave proof, by word or deed, that it

would not carry out aggression against Cuba then the weapons would have had outlived their purpose.

The Cuban Missile Crisis apparently involved only three players--the United States, the Soviet Union, and Cuba. However, throughout the ordeal of the crisis, the Latin American nations supported the United States' position and its decision to impose the quarantine on Cuba. Members of the Organization of American States felt that peace had been endangered by the Soviet's deployment of nuclear missiles in Cuba. They agreed that such a build-up threatened both the United States and Latin America with nuclear bombardment. Therefore, their total support of the United States on the actions against Cuba was evident throughout Latin America. Such was the magnitude of the support that when President Kennedy pledged "no invasion" of Cuba in exchange for the removal of the missiles, Latin American countries felt that the episode basically resulted in the annulment of the Monroe Doctrine and a blow at the foundation of society in the Americas. In fact, they felt that the United States' concession guaranteed a protected sanctuary for communism, without time limit and without consent from other nations directly concerned. They maintain that Cuba, without fear of invasion, has developed into a powerful base, sophisticated and effective, for subverting the Western Hemisphere. Because of the pledge of "no invasion," the United States has lost its flexibility to defend and secure the Americas from communist expansion.

Compared to the Cuban Missile Crisis, the United States' military involvement in the Dominican Republic Revolution of 1965 has sent repercussions throughout the World, particularly in Latin America. During the Cuban quarantine action, the Organization of American States voted unanimously to support the United States policy towards Cuba. It also voted in July 1964 to require all members to break off diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba.² However, in the Dominican Republic it was another story. Almost all of Latin America indicated strong disapproval of the United States' military intervention. These countries claimed that: 1) the United States neglected to consult with members of the Organization of American States before acting and 2) the United States violated the cherished Organization Charter, which clearly states that:

The territory of a state is inviolable; it may not be the object, even temporarily, of military occupation or of other measures of force taken by another state, directly or indirectly, on any grounds whatsoever.³

But, as already exposed, in the Dominican Republic the United States took not only unilateral action to intervene in the internal affairs of another state but also violated its territorial sovereignty. As a result, the Organization of American States, to which all independent Latin American countries except Cuba belong, was seriously weakened. And the United States was greatly embarrassed. By taking action it had deemed necessary to protect national lives, halt communist subversion in the hemisphere, and restore order in a troubled nation, the United States

impaired the hemispheric unity it has always considered a vital factor in the struggle for the preservation of peace, freedom, and democracy. Most Latin American countries have questioned whether this action meant that the United States would not hesitate to send troops to any other country where it believed its interests were being threatened. Of course, United States interests might not always coincide with those of the Latin American nations.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, the United States received total support throughout Latin America. However, during the military intervention in the Dominican Republic, anti-American sentiment mushroomed in Latin America following the troop landings. Latin American newspapers, political leaders, and other officials condemned the United States' action in a rising crescendo of criticism. Despite this criticism, the United States asserted that it had to take the necessary action to control the situation at hand. In summary, the United States pronounced that its unilateral decision to intervene was fully justified. The United States felt that if it had not taken immediate action and sent troops to the Dominican Republic, many American and other foreign lives would have been lost, the government in the Republic would have fallen in the hands of a Marxist-Leninist regime, and the civil revolt on the island would have continued. It appeared that the danger in the Republic arose so quickly that time

did not permit prior consultation with the Organization of American States. However, Latin American diplomats observed that the United States' unilateral decision to land troops on Dominican soil was viewed as a return of United States' "gunboat" diplomacy. Consequently, the United States' unilateral action to send American troops as a way of intervening in another state's internal affairs was viewed by the Latin America as a violation of their territorial sovereignty and, therefore, condemned on all grounds.

Analysis of the United States' involvement in the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Dominican Republic Revolution reveals clearly that Latin American countries for the most part do not oppose United States actions to protect the security and preserve the democratic principles in the Western Hemisphere. In fact, historically most Latin American countries have supported the United States in its direct involvement in hemispheric affairs. In any situation where the security of the hemisphere and the preservation of freedom are jeopardy, the Latin American countries will undoubtedly side with the United States.

Nonetheless, analysis of Latin America reactions to the United States' involvement during the Cuban Missile Crisis as

compared with reactions to the United States' military intervention in the Dominican Republic reveals that there is an increasing concern throughout Latin America over the United States' decisions to take unilateral action in the internal affairs of other countries in the Americas. The Latin American nations want to be considered and want to be involved in United States' activities in the Latin American region. But most of all, they want to be respected as sovereign nations.

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Latin American nations are excessively dependent on the outside world, and the United States does get involved inordinately in their internal affairs. In fact, the disproportionate power of the United States has affected virtually every aspect of international relations south of the Rio Grande. For better or for worse, Latin American nations have had to adapt themselves to being within the sphere of influence of the United States. However, the great disparities in wealth, standard of living, and military power have made coexistence frequently uncomfortable, and conflicts of interests have been constant.

The United States concerns for defense, economic well-being, and international order free of coercion are directly linked to its actions or reasons for direct involvement in Latin American affairs. However, these concerns may not be well understood or accepted by the Latin American nations. Perhaps they see or interpret the United States' involvement more as an intrusion of their sovereignty, which takes away their right and power to solve internal affairs, and not as an attempt to ensure freedom

throughout the region. Consequently, Latin American nations' reactions can be interpreted as an expression of their fight for sovereignty recognition and respect as free nations.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, the United States received total support from its Latin American friends. In fact, a unanimous vote by the Organization of American States supported the United States' recommendation for a quarantine of Cuba, and several Latin American nations even contributed ships, aircrafts, and material to support the quarantine operations. However, despite the still-general tendency of Latin American countries to adopt an essentially pro-United States position in international forums, such support is increasingly shaky. Therefore, the United States has steadily lost the leverage it enjoyed in the past, and the area that can be reasonably described as its sphere of influence has shrunk. This is not to assert that the United States is without major influence over the Latin American region. In direct and indirect ways, it can still project its will, and such projection is evident by its continuous involvement in international affairs throughout the area. However, no longer the United States possesses autonomy over such involvements. More and more, the Latin American nations express concerns over the United States unilateral decision to intervene in their internal affairs. This reaction was demonstrated during the United States military intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965.

The examination of the United States' military involvement in the Dominican Republic reveals that the Latin American reactions have not always been positive, and often such reactions are hostile in nature. Such hostility is not necessarily expressed because of their disapproval of the United States policy for the defense of Latin America and the preservation of freedom and democracy in the Western Hemisphere, but primarily because they feel deprived as independent nations of having the right and opportunity to solve their own problems. If every incident in Latin America in which the United States has taken direct action to intervene is analyzed, it can be concluded that with proper advice and assistance the affected country, if given the opportunity, would have been able to find a solution to the situation at hand.

Conclusively, the United States has not lost its ability to influence the outcome of events in Latin America. However, no longer can the United States afford to take unilateral actions in Latin America without risking the support from the Latin American nations. The Latin American countries are increasingly becoming cautious about surrendering too much of their autonomy in the interest of continental solidarity and security. Undoubtedly, the Latin American nations will side with the United States in any situation which threatens the survival of the Western Hemisphere.

However, they want to be respected and treated as sovereign nations. As General Fred F. Woerner, Jr., concluded in his report of his visit to Central America in May 1975, "the United States' influence in Latin America is all pervasive; but though bilateral relations are still on solid footing, quiet feelers are being extended that may eventually cause erosion."¹

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