

The unusual world situation, and the conditions now prevailing in Latin America —quite unusual too— makes it advisable to go once more over the <sup>old</sup> question of what the relations of Latin American countries among themselves and the relations of all of them with the United States ~~should~~ are and should be. To attempt it. let us look ~~again~~ at Latin America. What is the present situation of Latin America, except Cuba which must be considered separately?

Unfortunately, from an economic standpoint it is not satisfactory. With all of the Latin American countries determined to develop their economies as rapidly as possible, their imports of capital goods, especially, have increased greatly in quantity, but perhaps still more in value, since these imports must be paid at higher prices than those of ten or fifteen years ago. Their exports, on the other hand, have had since that time an uncertain and not very profitable market. This keeps their balances of payments in deficit, or very close to it. The final result is that the economic development they need and long for almost deliriously is



arrested; or it fails to achieve the <sup>pace</sup>~~same~~ necessary to clearly convince them that they are steadily advancing towards their goal of a material wellbeing definitely greater and more general than before. So they become restless, pessimistic and are inclined to try other methods, copy other models, or perhaps embrace a new political philosophy in order to attain their objectives.

The political picture is better today than a few years ago. Since the disappearance of the shameful dictatorships of Perón in Argentina, Rojas Pinilla in Colombia and Pérez Jiménez, in Venezuela, and the uprooting of Somoza's dictatorship in Nicaragua, there only remains, to a disgraceful extent, that of Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. But the governments of Stroessner in Paraguay and the Somoza brothers in Nicaragua are certainly to be condemned, in addition to which, it will not be possible much longer to postpone the fundamental economic and social changes needed at least in Guatemala, El Salvador and Peru.

On the other hand, it is disheartening to witness the situation of two of the three countries which, after suffering



the humiliations of a dictatorship, succeeded in re-establishing a popularly elected government. The excessive power of the Venezuelan and Argentine armies forces the civilian governments of Betancourt and Frondizi to follow a path ~~which is~~ uncertain and sometimes tortuous and which, in any case, does not express the majority wishes as represented by the parliaments of those two countries. Presumably, without that harmful influence, Betancourt's government would attempt bolder and more basic reforms. And in the case of Argentina, the interference of those forces undoubtedly has the effect, among others, of undermining the prestige of civilian authority and prompting the country to believe that it should return to a military government.

Nonetheless, what is most discouraging is that there is not a single Latin American government which can be said to enjoy either evident or, especially, active popular sympathy. The most traditionally democratic countries —Chile, Uruguay and Costa Rica— certainly do not have brilliant governments which can capture and kindle the support of their own citizens, much less serve as a hope or even still less as a model for the



other Latin American peoples. Brazil, with its superior physical and human resources, is a country of surprises, but not always pleasant ones: alongside President Kubitschek's clever trick of launching Field Marshal Lott as his presidential candidate in order to relieve the country of the threat of a military colossus; alongside <sup>bold,</sup> ~~and drive~~ ~~consequently~~ if extreme—to create a great capital overnight; Brazil lives in a state of chronic administrative disorder and complacently spends more than it has, so that it also lives in a state of chronic inflation which swells the wealth of a bold minority while impoverishing its people.

Colombia, which has never lacked in its government at least a nucleus of men of exceptionally high intellectual and moral caliber, still has not awakened from the nightmare of Rojas Pinilla, nor has it succeeded in eliminating the irrational hatreds which divide liberals and conservatives. In spite of all this, Colombia progress, but not without anxieties and doubts as to whether a new generation has been created which can succeed today's great liberal and conservative

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figures and which will be better able to measure the urgency and discern the shape of the new problems of this country and of Latin America.

Mexico, which for many years led the other countries not only of Latin America but of the world in its reformation of economic, social and political structure, shaking off the lethargy of an economic progress that was undeniable but not general; Mexico, the intrepid leader of so many good causes, has failed in this crucial hour for Latin America. For some time the United States has persisted in presenting Mexico as a model to its brother Americas. This —says the United States— is a country that, after a revolution to get rid of the burden of its useless and cumbersome past, has put its house in order. It lives in peace and has achieved political stability; a civilian government has succeeded a military; it has made spectacular economic progress and the lower classes are entering middle class in ever increasing numbers and with considerable ease. All this is true and, nonetheless, we Mexicans believe that Mexico could have done more, very much more, than it has;

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and that by not so doing, it has lost the initiative in Latin America in basic and just social reform.

LATIN AMERICA'S SITUATION, in spite of the deficiencies commented on —and others that have not been pointed out— was, if not good, at least tolerable, and better than it had been in recent times; but it must be recognized that the Cuban revolution has put it in a state of almost complete confusion.

No one, of course, would dare to make a prediction now on how this revolution is going to finish. Even so, and assuming that right now it were to end in a complete failure, that its governing group were to be replaced by another entirely different in men, aims and methods, it will leave a legacy and exercise an influence that no power on earth will be able to ~~erase~~ <sup>obliterate</sup>. Some of its lessons, firm and clear, have already taken their place in history.

The first lesson —and an important one— is that everything and anything can happen in Latin America; or, put it <sup>in</sup> another way, that in Latin America nothing is stable and solid, nothing



is based on an immovable rock, but everything appears to rest lightly on a gunpowder keg that can explode at any moment.

The second lesson —or the reverse of the first— is the incredible force of inflammatory speech, the more reckless the speech, the greater its force. All of which leads to the sad conclusion that when man joins his fellows in a crowd he loses most of his individual reasoning power and judgment, and he is dominated by blind raging emotion.

However, two other concrete and impressive lessons are more outstanding. One of these is the fantastic vulnerability of the United States: Cuba, its former <sup>submissive</sup> ~~master~~ slave and, furthermore, small, poor and disunited, has literally immobilized it, speechless, in a corner. The other is that, apart from its deep political significance, the Cuban revolution has presented itself as a popular movement yielding to nothing in its determination to better the lot of the masses. That is to say, two characteristics that, more than any others, impress Latin America are determination and firmness, and a determination and firmness that serve a good cause.

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For the last ten or fifteen years it has been fashionable <sup>h</sup>  
in <sup>American</sup> academic circles ~~in the United States~~ to speak of the  
"realistic" concept of international politics. According to  
this, man in his national and the state in its international  
political life are only motivated by the desire to better  
<sup>their</sup> ~~their~~ positions of power at any price. And even though the  
theoreticians who defend that concept are very careful to  
emphasize that physical force is not the only element that  
creates and increases power, they always put it in first  
place. In Cuba there is a living example for all the world to  
see that physical force can be successfully opposed by other  
forces, sometimes as weak as the spoken word which, according  
to a popular saying, is carried away by the wind.

If Latin Americans were intelligent and perceptive, they  
should be deeply impressed by this vulnerability of the United  
States; first, because they have discovered it —rediscovered  
it, a good historian would say— at Cuba's expense; second,  
because, since everything in this world is relative, the  
United States weakness strengthens Latin Americans and, again,



without paying anything for the strength so acquired; finally, *in this case* and above all, because the weakness of the United States is noble, entirely praiseworthy, for strength that does not resort to force in order to resolve its difficulties inspires sympathy and confidence.

The other, perhaps more interesting, lesson is that the admiration aroused by the Cuban revolution in Latin America is due —more than to anything else— to the fact that it has aimed at benefiting the people boldly and directly. It is probable that not all the methods used in Cuba could be employed in other Latin American countries and still more probable that their employment would be undesirable. But what cannot be denied is the following. It is no longer possible to restrain the desire of the poor in Latin America and the whole world to better themselves. The poor man is fed up with hearing that he is going to get better and with seeing that he does not get any better; he is fed up with getting better today, but not tomorrow; and he is also fed up with getting better today and tomorrow, but just a little bit. He wants to get much better,



soon, and all the time. It is possible and, I believe,  
desirable that man ~~sometimes~~ <sup>will</sup> change his mind <sup>in the future;</sup> but for the  
moment and for a long time to come, he believes and he will  
believe that man lives by bread alone and, in order to obtain  
that bread, today's man is capable of selling his soul to the  
devil, or of selling his freedom to communism.

And this is the element of the Cuban revolution that is  
most disturbing to Latin America. Granted that the Mexican  
revolution was the last one that could be pure and innocently  
nationalistic and that all that have followed it have had to  
accept the taint of some international "ism"; and granted that  
it was logical, natural and inevitable that the Cuban  
revolutionaries should believe and still believe that the  
United States will crush their revolution; granted that on  
Fidel Castro, but especially on Che Guevara, the fall of the  
Arbenz pro-communist regime in Guatemala —which Guevara witnessed  
with his own eyes— made <sup>on them</sup> an indelible impression; granted,  
finally, that no revolutionary movement has failed to feed on  
mistrust and hatred and that for Cuba the United States was the



closest and easiest target. And in a further attempt at understanding, still another concession can be made: that the policy of resisting and fighting a great power is a rough game in which almost any weapon can be considered fair, and so the Cuban revolutionaries could flirt a little with the Soviet block.

None of this can prevent an impartial observer ~~with~~ ~~without~~ from concluding that —aside from strategy, tactics, intentions and words— the Cuban revolutionaries have imported communism to their country and to Latin America and that they have set up a communist government. And that same observer has to conclude that this is an absolutely new event, of incalculable importance and destined to profoundly disturb the life of Latin American countries as related to each other and to the United States.

The relations between Latin American countries have never been as intelligent and profitable as they could and should have been; but they have always been based on a tacit understanding which has seldom been disturbed, and then only



temporarily. The predominant characteristic of those relations has been similarity, not difference, and much less <sup>difference</sup> ~~an~~ *which could not be surmounted.* ~~insurmountable difference.~~ For the first time in a hundred and fifty years of independence, Cuban communism presents a difference that can become insoluble. If the ideological loyalty of the Cuban rulers reaches the point of prevailing over Latin America's common historical background, Cuba will not only tend to separate from Latin America, but end up regarding Latin America with inevitable hostility as one more obstacle in its path. And to the extent that other Latin American peoples and governments feel that their friendship with Cuba depends on an unconditional acceptance of everything it does within and without its borders, to that extent <sup>those</sup> peoples and governments will, at best, consider Cuba a black sheep that should be left to its own fate and, at worst, an insufferable burden that must be gotten rid of.

But the Cuban revolutionaries have presented Latin America with another equally serious problem: that of choosing between Cuba and the United States, since they maintain that their



*can not be reconciled.*  
differences with the latter ~~and irreconcilable~~. No Latin  
American country loves the United States, as perhaps no nation  
has ever loved another. In spite of this, it is hard to  
believe that there not in Latin America people sensible  
enough to recognize in the clear light of truth that, besides  
the impossibility of not having relations with the United  
States, it is necessary that those relations be good, firm  
and close. That these relations should be conditioned by  
respect for the rights of others, that they would benefit the  
poor and the weak more than the rich and the strong is one  
thing; and quite another is that it is <sup>wholly</sup> ~~literally~~ impossible  
and undesirable to do without them or to base them on  
recriminations and constant quarrels. Communist Cuba, <sup>then,</sup> places  
Latin America in <sup>a</sup> real dilemma.

I am convinced that the Cuban leaders are perfectly aware  
of the problems that they have created for the Latin American  
countries in their relations with each other and with the  
United States. It happens that, as true revolutionaries, as  
people who seek to subvert everything, turn the world upside



down, they believe that the Latin American people are on their side and that only the governments are against them. So they despise the latter in silence or they insult them openly, and they encourage the people to overthrow them. They so sturdily believe in this idea that they have gone to the fantastic extreme of assiduously cultivating the Negro population of the United States in the certainty that it will embrace their cause without delay. In this way, in addition to gaining sympathy for their cause, they will deal a <sup>mortal</sup> blow at the United States by planting in the middle of its territory a Trojan Horse from which will burst forth eight million armed rebels at the right moment.

At this stage, no thinking person can a priori disdain the destructive force of not only an entire revolutionary doctrine, but of a simple isolated tactic when it is carried out with sufficient determination. In the particular case of Cuba, moreover, it is <sup>unavailable</sup> ~~necessary~~ to recognize and admire the fact that the revolutionaries have not only played <sup>so far</sup> their cards in a magnificently effective fashion, but they have played them on a large scale, in a really universal setting. This is



so true that a poor Mexican conspirator can hardly keep from wondering if the Cuban revolutionaries are the ones who actually play the cards, or if they only move them about. In any event, it is a terrible shame that man, so willing to make laboratory tests when after the secrets of chemistry or biology, does not want to make such tests when dealing with human affairs which may involve the fate of millions of men.

But the truth is that I would give anything to have Fidel Castro, Guevara and Raúl Roa decide to try out their ideas in Mexico. The experiment or test would be made under ideal conditions, for if any country is sympathetic to Cuba, it is Mexico; and in no other is the ground so well prepared for animosity towards the United States. As to the Mexican government, it is as vulnerable to demagoguery as those of Ydígoras and Trujillo. The experiment, then, would be to have the Cuban revolutionaries during just a month make <sup>an open</sup> ~~a public~~ campaign of insults to the Mexican government, addressing the same epithets to López Mateos that Castro, Roa and Guevara so often have spat into the face of Eisenhower and now at



Nixon and Kennedy; and to use on Secretary of State Tello the adjectives that Roa used on the Foreign Affairs Ministers of *after The recent San José meeting.* Chile, Argentina and Brazil, *even* The program of insults to the government would alternate with another of glowing praises of the Mexican "people" and exhortations that they overthrow their government. I would be willing to give odds that the sympathy in Mexico for the Cuban revolution would evaporate as if by magic and I would also bet that *even* as open a friend of the revolution as former President Cárdenas would not again defend it, at least not in public.

What, then, makes up the Latin American sympathy for Cuba? I do not refer, naturally, to the communists for they are, by definition, mere partisans; neither do I speak of the radicals who project their domestic dissatisfactions into a sympathy for other nations, in a clear-cut case of the psychology of the grass *being* ~~the~~ always greener on the other side. I mean the spontaneous sympathy of the ordinary man and woman, without prejudices or ideological ties. In the knowledge that, besides being risky, it is unpleasantly pedantic to engage in collective psychology, I believe that there are one or two principal

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elements and another secondary one, but no more. The principal element of popular sympathy is that the Cuban revolution has sought to benefit the poor, the defenseless, the ones who are in the majority in any society —including the Soviet. The second principal element is the conviction --still held-- that the only aim of the Cuban revolutionaries is the welfare of the people and that they pursue this so sincerely and honorably

that they place it before all else.

*and The incidental*

As deep and enthusiastic as the sympathy bubbling forth

from these elements must be, it may turn out to be perishable.

The welfare of the people must not only be pursued, it must actually be achieved; for, if not, it will take its place among the many good intentions with which hell has so long been paved.

Up to now, the struggle, with its liquidation of economic imperialism and an amoral middle class, has appeared glorious; but now a legitimate doubt exists: can the revolution proceed from its destructive task to the task of creation and construction, using only the instrument of the spoken word and the televised image? And other doubts already felt by some

*element is the natural sympathy for any David in his fight against any Goliath*



are bound to spread. One of these can destroy the second element of sympathy: what are the Cuban leaders more interested in, the welfare of their people or stirring up trouble for the United States? No one, I presume, can claim to have read the complete works of Doctor Castro; but perhaps it would not be too far from the truth that eighty percent of the words that they contain are dedicated to defaming the United States, and a modest twenty percent to discussing the problems of the Cuban people. (I refer only to the words, because I do not know whether any action has been taken and for what purpose). And there are even doubts concerning the secondary element of sympathy: from the beginning David called the Chinese and Russian Goliaths to his aid in his struggle against the ~~United~~ *American* ~~States~~ Goliath. So that David's gallantry is considerably diminished.

The position of Latin America as regards its relations with the United States is still more delicate —if this is possible— than as regards its relations to Cuba. All the governments of Latin America must realize that as Cuba becomes



more insistent and increasingly bitter in its accusations against the United States, the situation becomes more precarious and the crisis more imminent. But it is absolutely impossible for them to sustain any other thesis than the negative one of non-intervention; and now, as never before, with increased vigor. In the first place, because Latin America has had its fill of United States intervention; secondly, because Latin America has gone to a lot of trouble to convince the United States that intervention, in the long run, hurts its author more than its object, and all this painful accomplishment would be abandoned forever as useless; thirdly, because the <sup>lethal</sup> ~~lethal~~ power of modern armaments —even those ironically termed "conventional"— make even a symbolic defense ridiculous. So the weak peoples are left no other choice than to fall abjectly to their knees in order not to disappear from earth.

But there is still a more decisive reason, although it would appear to have been overlooked until now, that would put to test the intelligence of the United States —namely, the latter's ability to solve the problem of Cuba without the use







Presumably, the Latin American governments are fully aware of the situation —already difficult in itself— of the United States as regards Cuba; and of the truly cosmic complications that the Cuban problem represents for the United States, which, with interests all over the world, cannot have any "local" problem, and not even a simply "continental" problem. The problem of Cuba, moreover, has broken out at the worst moment in <sup>American</sup> ~~United States~~ history when, true or false, many have become convinced that, while Russia may have surpassed the United States in physical strength, it has certainly done so in political ability. The United States cannot, then, postpone for very long its decision; and as the fatal moment nears, there is increasing apprehension that the decision will be unwise.

What can this unhappy Latin America do now, placed, as it were, with its back to the wall? There is only one possibility: to mediate, conciliate, or rather try to do so; since up to now the Cubans have not shown the least inclination to even allow themselves to be approached. They have not only failed to



imply any such inclination, but their conduct must be interpreted as a complete negative. It is certain that the United States would be willing to participate in a discussion, although, foreseeably, its demands would be substantial. So, for the moment, apparently Latin America has no recourse but to pray that God help it through this crisis and to hope devoutly that those who are involved in this problem may realize before it is too late, that there is an eternal principle: namely, that everything, absolutely everything in this world --and the next-- has a limit and an end.

AS FOR THE United States, what can it do? In order to explore such a problem, it is necessary to begin with a clear understanding of the position of the United States not only as regards Cuba, but as regards the whole world.

The United States is the head of the so-called Occidental World which is opposed by the Communist Block, its apparently implacable enemy. Between these two camps, is found a series of countries, disunited and dispersed, which, even though taking no part in the contest, even with no desire to do so,



even believing their participation to be unnecessary, may be dragged into it. Any struggle between personal or national interests, still more a struggle of the magnitude and depth of this one, can be resolved by physical force which either eliminates one of the contenders or converts rival into slave by placing one of them in a position of military and political inferiority. Or it can be resolved through a series of provisional compromises and arrangements which, by getting through one difficulty today and another tomorrow, may postpone war indefinitely. Even under this second supposition --de--decidedly the better of the two-- the danger of war will always exist and it is no exaggeration to say that with modern arms it exists every minute of our lives.

Now, to be in real and constant danger of war: not as one of many soldiers, but as the leader, officer, technician, financier; to be in danger of a war in which no arm or artifice may be considered ignoble or unnecessary; to be in danger of a war with no clear possibility of winning it and with the knowledge that even in victory the damages suffered would be,



of necessity, irreparable; all this, it must be wholly admitted, has to create a psychology that is not very favorable to tolerance and understanding. And it must be even more difficult for the United States to suffer the defiance and offenses of Cuba, a small country, traditionally servile and geographically located next door instead of in some remote place like Bolivia, for example.

The United States has to do something about this business of Cuba; but, once again, what can it do? From a juridical point of view, the solution of an international court of justice is out of the question, because Cuba would have to be willing to submit to the court's decision; Cuba can, then, be accused before the Organization of American States and the United Nations. The United States would gain nothing and might lose by this; because, apart from the fact that Cuba knows how to defend itself and is not alone, the dispute would only embitter recriminations and make understanding more unlikely. Still on a legal level, the United States could look for a situation which would lead to a declaration of war on Cuba with the



knowledge and consent of the United States Congress. Such a solution is completely unrealistic for, although there are abundant means of finding a justification for any formal declaration of war, the nations that do so also try to find a moral justification and, in the case of Cuba, this would be literally impossible; first, because no matter how wrong many of the actions of the Cuban government may be, none of these actions, nor all of them together, can be presented as a valid casus belli, even by twisting the facts to the utmost. And we are not speaking of the inequality of the adversaries which, alone, would make it difficult to justify the United States.

With no legal solution in sight, what could the United States do? If a formal declaration of war has been rejected as legally and morally unacceptable, it is even more necessary to reject a military invasion, no matter under what disguise. It is possible to follow the solution mentioned in an unfortunate moment by Senator Kennedy during his presidential campaign: that of aiding and abetting with money and military

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equipment Castro's Cuban opponents to invade Cuba and reconquer it for the friendship of the United States.

This was exactly the procedure used to overthrow Jacobo Arbenz of Guatemala. Aside from the fact that Cuba's island situation would make such a maneuver as transparent as daylight, the truth is that in the case of Guatemala the United States machinations were about as successfully disguised as the sun is hidden by holding up one finger. And this was demonstrated by the fact that Guatemala's best men all refused to collaborate with Castillo Armas whom they considered a traitor to his country; shortly after assuming power, he was assassinated in mysterious circumstances that had the effect, <sup>however,</sup> of national sanction. <sup>But,</sup> ~~However~~ that is not the lesson furnished by the Guatemalan episode. If the United States intervention made any sense, it was that made by all violence: rip out weeds by the roots so that they will not sprout up again anywhere else. Now communism has sprouted up in Cuba and to such a degree that it makes the case of Guatemala seem to have been child's play. Just remember that the final straw was Arbenz's announcement



that Guatemala was ready to receive a few pistols and rifles from Czechoslovakia. Cuba, on the other hand, is arrogantly receiving arms from both Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union itself.

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For me, there is not other solution than that the United States and Latin America grasp at the first possible moment for reconciliation, which may eventually have the unexpected reward of laying the foundations of a new concept in American solidarity.

*Conference Massachusetts*